



Public Relations Unit

P.O Box N-831
Mount Royal House
Mount Royal Avenue Nassau Bahamas
Tel: 242-225-5337 Fax: 242-326-0977
Email: immigrationpublicrelationsunit@bahamas.gov.bs

BAHAMAS IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

368 HAITIAN NATIONALS CONVICTED IN THE MAGISTRATE'S COURT, INAGUA

On Monday October 4, two hundred ninety-four (**294**) Haitian males and seventy-four (**74**) Haitian females appeared in the Magistrate's Court, Matthew, Inagua before Chief Magistrate Joyann Ferguson-Pratt and Magistrate Shaka Serville, and pled guilty to the charge of **Illegal Landing**. Subsequently, they were granted a conditional discharge on premise that they do not return to The Bahamas without the permission of an Immigration Officer. Early deportation was also recommended.

Last week the Royal Bahamas Defence Force (RBDF) was informed by a local fisherman that a suspected Haitian vessel had been seen partially submerged off Flamingo Cay. A group of individuals was also sighted on Flamingo and Water Cays, Ragged Island. Operation Bahamas Turks and Caicos (OPBAT) officials were also informed and responded to the area and confirmed the sighting. As a result, RBDF assets, as well as the Royal Bahamas Police Force marines and Immigration officials, were alerted and dispatched to the area. Subsequently, a group of migrants were found retrieved, and turned over to Bahamas Immigration on Friday October 1 for processing. This group consisted of four hundred thirty (**430**) migrants, inclusive of three hundred sixty-eight (**368**) adults and sixty-two (**62**) minors.

Repatriations are expected to begin as early as Wednesday, October 6.

The public is reminded that we are committed to executing the mandates of our agency by effectively coordinating efforts with other Law Enforcement agencies, and international stakeholders to ensure compliance with the Statute Laws of The Bahamas.

For further information, you may visit our website at www.immigration.gov.bs or call our hotline anonymously at 1-242-502-0574.

End.

Mission Statement: *To regulate the movement of people across the borders of The Bahamas so as to ensure the security, facilitate economic advancement and promote the harmonious social development of The Bahamas through the collaborative efforts of responsible government and non-government agencies both nationally and internationally*