



UNOG Bi-weekly press Briefing: Iota Hurricane WMO - OCHA - WFP

17-11-2020 | Edited News

Shotlist

1. Exterior wide shot, Palais des Nations flag alley, nations' flags flying, a cloudy day.
2. Wide shot, podium with speakers in a near-empty Room XIV in line with COVID-19 distancing measures, Palais des Nations.
3. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Clare Nullis, spokesperson for the World Meteorological Organization (WMO): “We're running out of superlatives for this Atlantic hurricane season. It's, it's record breaking in every sense of the word. We are currently with Iota on the 30th named tropical storm of the Atlantic hurricane season.”**
4. Medium shot, row of seats with journalist sitting to rear, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.
5. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Clare Nullis, spokesperson for the World Meteorological Organization (WMO): “Iota made landfall less than two weeks after Hurricane Eta, which was also a very strong category four hurricane, made landfall just 25 kilometres apart. So we're having these huge impacts hitting basically the same area. Nicaragua, Honduras, other parts of Central America have not recovered from Hurricane Eta, and now they're being slammed by this new terrific powerful hurricane.”**
6. Close-up, camera filming in foreground and podium with speakers to rear, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.
7. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Jens Laerke, spokesperson for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA): “Indeed, in Central America, people are again bracing for the potentially catastrophic consequences of Iota, as we heard, just two weeks after Hurricane Eta made landfall in the region causing death and destruction, as a total of almost 5 million people**

affected by the previous hurricane. Iota, with its strong winds and very heavy rainfall, can cause life-threatening flash flooding, river flooding and landslides, not least because the soil is already saturated by Eta.”

8. Medium shot, row of seats with journalist sitting to rear and typing on phone, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.
9. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Tomson Phiri, spokesperson, WFP (World Food Programme): “It has turned out to be even worse than we thought. It started earlier and is going to end even late. For example, continued flooding in countries like Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, is going to affect the incoming harvest, and this will severely strain subsistence farmers and already, whilst it's still early days, it is quite, it is quite clear that this will extend the emergency even into mid-2021.”**
10. Close-up, UN staff sitting in front of laptop and using listening device, Room XIV, Palais des Nations
11. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Clare Nullis, spokesperson for the World Meteorological Organization (WMO): “This is a time of year when the season should normally be winding down. And it's not. In fact, you know, we're seeing this very tragic late surge in action. Iota is the strongest storm in the hurricane, in this season so far to make landfall.”**
12. Wide shot, near-empty Room XIV in line with COVID-19 distancing measures, side shot, Palais des Nations.
13. Medium shot, podium with speakers, side shot, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.
14. Close-up, journalist looking at his phone, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.

Story

Second hurricane in two weeks hits Central America

The United Nations warned on Tuesday of catastrophic consequences from Hurricane Iota, the second major tropical cyclone to hit Central America this month.

“We're running out of superlatives for this Atlantic hurricane season. It's record breaking in every sense of the word. We are currently, with Iota, on the 30th named tropical storm of the Atlantic hurricane season”, Clare Nullis, spokesperson for the World Meteorological Organization, told a regular UN news briefing in Geneva.

“Iota made landfall less than two weeks after Hurricane Eta, which was also a very strong category four hurricane, made landfall just 25 kilometres apart. So we're having these huge impacts hitting basically the same area. Nicaragua, Honduras, other parts of Central America have not recovered from Hurricane Eta, and now they're being slammed by this new terrific powerful hurricane.”

Jens Laerke, spokesperson for the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, said aid workers were still uncovering the extent of damage from Eta and were now preparing to deal with a second impact.

“Indeed, in Central America, people are again bracing for the potentially catastrophic consequences of Iota, as we heard, just two weeks after Hurricane Eta made landfall in the region causing death and destruction, as a total of almost 5 million people affected by the previous hurricane. Iota, with its strong winds and very heavy rainfall, can cause life-threatening flash flooding, river flooding and landslides, not least because the soil is already saturated by Eta.”

Tomson Phiri, spokesperson for the World Food Programme, said humanitarian agencies had done what they could to prepare for a bad hurricane season.

“It has turned out to be even worse than we thought. It started earlier and is going to end even late. For example, continued flooding in countries like Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, is going to affect the incoming harvest, and this will severely strain subsistence farmers and already, whilst it's still early days, it is quite clear that this will extend the emergency even into mid-2021.”

Ms. Nullis said: “This is a time of year when the season should normally be winding down. And it's not. In fact, you know, we're seeing this very tragic late surge in action. Iota is the strongest storm in the hurricane season so far to make landfall.”