



**Pan American
Health
Organization**

Regional Office of the
World Health Organization

Situation Report – Hurricane Isabel 12 September 2003



At 9AM CDT, Hurricane Isabel was near 21.5N/57.6W, or about 650 miles east-northeast of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Movement is almost due west, 270 degrees, at 9 mph. Central pressure is estimated to be 921 millibars. Early morning satellite imagery indicates that Isabel's winds remain at 160 mph with gusts close to 200 mph, a category five hurricane. It is estimated that Isabel will reach a point east of the Bahamas on Monday but after that, the forecasting is unclear.

The National Disaster Office (NDO) Bahamas informed that their office, in coordination with the Bahamas Defence Force, is already starting to evacuate people from small cays around the island of Inaguas, Mayaguana, Crooked Island and Acklins (see map). These islands are surrounded by a lot of open water and are inhabited by sometimes not even 50 persons. Shelters have been prepared in churches, schools, and other government buildings..

An Emergency Operation Center has been activated.

The PAHO/WHO Office in Nassau is on stand by and has significant expertise in disaster response (damage assessment).