

Francine Baron
P.O. Box 57
14 Cork Street
Roseau
Commonwealth of Dominica

21st January, 2017

Mr. Lennox Linton
Morne Daniel
Commonwealth of Dominica

Dear Sir,

It has been brought to my attention that for a number of months you, in conjunction with others, have persisted in making allegations about me stating, suggesting and inferring, that I visited Malaysia and received a cheque for USD 10,000 and that I dishonestly, converted, cashed, stole or otherwise dishonestly misappropriated the said USD 10,000 which belonged to the people of Dominica.

The abovementioned allegation has been repeated by you on numerous occasions and is designed to bring me into public disrepute, odium, ridicule and contempt. You have sought to disguise your attacks on my character, under the guise of journalism and the public's need to know or ostensibly to

further your political objectives. This is completely disingenuous of you as you have not made any or any sufficient inquiries to ascertain the true facts.

Not once did you or any of those who have joined you in repeating these allegations, contacted me to ask me about this matter. At the time that I symbolically received the cheque for and on behalf of the Dominica National Development and Disaster Fund, which is an amalgamation of Dominican Associations (the Association), I was then the High Commissioner of Dominica to the United Kingdom. Not once did you contact the High Commission to enquire about the aforesaid Fund, which was at all times the named beneficiary and to find out what happened in respect of that cheque.

Had you enquired, you would have ascertained that I arrived in Malaysia on the 2nd of November, 2014, attended a function on the 3rd of November where a donation was made to the Dominica National Development and Disaster Fund, which is a registered UK Charity, that I left Malaysia on the 4th and got back to London on the 5th. You would also have ascertained that on the 7th of November, 2014, I wrote to the Association informing them of the donation and giving them the contact number of the person who would arrange to transfer the funds directly into their account. See Annex 1. This was transmitted to Mr. John by the High Commission via email on the 10th of November and Mr. John acknowledged receipt on the same day. See Annex 2. You will note that in that letter I also suggested that the Association use those funds to help the Office of Disaster Management who had requested assistance.

Apart from the fact that I cannot possibly cash a cheque that is not in my name, you made no effort to find out if an Association/Fund of that name existed. A casual internet search in the name of "Dominica National Development and Disaster Fund" would reveal the document that I have attached here as Annex 3. It reveals that a Charity in that name was registered in the UK in 1991, it bears a contact name of Vincent John and a physical address, telephone number, website address, email address and the names of the Trustees of the Association.

Had you called Vincent John or any of the named Trustees of the Association, I am certain that they would have provided you with the information that you thought was so vital for the public to know. As it turns out the Association delayed in requesting the funds transfer and I attach hereto a copy of an email from the Honorary Secretary of the Association Mr. John, (Annex 4), which reads:

*"Our Treasury (Treasurer) and I are dealing with the matter of the kind and much appreciated donation of USD 10,000 pledged by the KB Foundation to the Dominica National Development & Disaster Fund, **details of which were communicated to us on 7th November, 2014** by the then High Commissioner for the Commonwealth of Dominica, Ms. Francine Baron.*

It is possible that you require that the necessary Bank Account details for making the donation, unless you preferred to draw a cheque payable to "DNDF" therefore I am providing the necessary information for your use."

A simple inquiry by an “investigative journalist” such as yourself would have easily uncovered these facts. I am also in possession of the relevant excerpt of a management meeting of the said Association that confirms that the USD10,000 was received by them. I am not authorised at this time to release this to you but I encourage you to make your own enquiries. It should be easy enough for you to confirm, as it has always been.

I say further to you that if you were so interested in whether those funds were used to provide relief after Tropical Storm Erika you had an opportunity to ask the Association when it made a donation of \$65,000 to the Dominica Red Cross in September, 2015. I quote from the article reported on, in the Chronicle dated 9th October, 2015 on the front page under the Heading **“UK Based Dominicans Donate \$65,000.”** See Annex 5.

It reads:

“An entity known as the Dominica National Development & Disaster Fund (DNDDF) which is comprised of organisations of Dominican origin operating in England has responded to the needs of the island post Erika.

The DNDDF fronted by Honorary Secretary Vincent M John through Franklyn Georges , his wife Veronica and Eustace Maxim presented the Dominica Red Cross with cheques totalling to £15,000 (EC\$65,000) at the Red Cross Headquarters in Goodwill on September 29, 2015.

Additionally, the Fund donated a container of relief supplies such as clothing, foodstuffs, sanitary supplies and equipment which is valued at £15,000.”

At no time did you make any attempt to ascertain the facts before setting off on a deliberate campaign to besmirch my character with untruths and innuendo.

In the circumstances, I demand a full and complete apology from you in terms to be approved by me. I am aware that I am entitled to aggravated and exemplary damages in respect of this sustained campaign. I am willing however to accept payment of only USD 10,000 payable to a Dominican Charity. If I fail to receive a satisfactory response by Friday 29th, February I shall refer this matter to my Attorneys for further action. In the meantime I reserve all my rights in this matter.



Francine Baron

UK BASED DOMINICANS DONATE \$65,000

In the wake of Tropical Storm Erika, relief has flooded in from Dominicans worldwide, those residing in the UK are no exception.

An entity known as the Dominica National Development & Disaster Fund (DNDDF) which is comprised of organizations of Dominican origin operating in England, has responded to the needs of the island post Erika.

The DNDDF, fronted by Honorary Secretary Vincent M. John, through Franklin Georgea, his wife Veronica and Eustace Maxim, presented the Dominica Red Cross with cheques totaling to £15,100 (EC\$ 65,000) at the Red Cross Headquarters in Goodwill on September 29, 2015.



Representatives of DNDDF presenting their contribution to Red Cross Director General Kathleen Finard-Byrne and President Philip White

Additionally, the Fund donated a container of relief supplies such as clothing, foodstuffs, sanitary supplies and equipment which is valued at £15,000.

Among the groups associated with DNDDF - a charity registered in 1991 for the purpose of preparedness for disasters in Dominica included: the Dominica UK Association (DUKA), Dominica Overseas National Association (DONA), Dominica (Kalinago) Caribbean Organisation (DCCO), Cofihut in Focus UK, and Dominica Secondary Schools Supporters Association (DSSSA) as well as the Dominica-based Dominicans Welfare & Hospital Aid Scheme (DOWHAS).