Coast Guard Repatriates 25 Migrants to Dominican Republic

SAN JUAN,
Puerto Rico – The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Legare (WMEC-912) repatriated 22
Dominicans and returned one Venezuelan and two Haitians to a Dominican navy
patrol vessel Aug. 15 near Samaná, Dominican Republic, the Coast Guard 7th
District said in a release.

The
repatriation followed the interdiction of an illegal migrant voyage Aug. 13 off
the coast of Aguada, Puerto Rico.

Seven
other Dominican migrants traveling in the group remain in federal custody
facing possible prosecution by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of
Puerto Rico on potential charges of attempted illegal reentry into a U.S.
territory.

The
interdiction is the result of ongoing efforts in support of Operation Unified
Resolve, Operation Caribbean Guard and the Caribbean Border Interagency Group
(CBIG).

"The swift
response by Puerto Rico Police Joint Forces of Rapid Action

marine units and efficient collaboration with the crew of the cutter Legare allowed for the safe embarkation of the migrants, while the professionalism of our partners from the Dominican Republic navy ensured their safe and expedited return," said Capt. Eric King, Sector San Juan commanding officer.

Coast Guard Sector San Juan Command Center watchstanders were contacted Aug. 13 by Puerto Rico Police. The watchstanders were told that two Police Joint Forces of Rapid Action (FURA) marine units had interdicted a 25-foot migrant boat about 3 nautical miles off the coast of Aguada.

Coast Guard watchstanders diverted the cutter Legare to the scene. Once there, Legare crew members safely embarked 29 Dominicans, 25 men and four women; 2 Haitian women; three Brazilian men; and a Venezuelan man.

Once aboard a Coast Guard cutter, all migrants receive food, water, shelter and basic medical attention.

The seven migrants facing prosecution are in custody of U.S. Border Patrol agents in Puerto Rico, while the three Brazilian migrants were transferred to Immigrations and Customs Enforcement–Homeland Security Investigations Special Agents for further immigrations processing.