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USNS Comfort to Arrive in Norfolk After Humanitarian Mission to Caribbean, Central and South America

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Kim Williams, Continuing Promise 2011 Public Affairs
Atlantic Ocean - Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) is scheduled to arrive in Norfolk, Va., Sept. 2, after completing a five-month humanitarian assistance deployment to nine countries in the Caribbean Basin and Central and South America.

Comfort is completing Continuing Promise 2011 (CP11), a five-month humanitarian and civic assistance deployment to the U.S. Southern Command Area of Responsibility. Throughout the deployment Comfort's crew provided medical, dental, veterinary care and engineering support to the host nation populations while working closely with a variety of partner nations, governmental and non-governmental agencies training in civil-military operations. Comfort visited Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Jamaica, Nicaragua and Peru, treating more than 70,000 people.

During this mission, medical personnel from U.S. and partner nation militaries, along with several non-governmental organizations, worked side-by-side with military and civilian medical professionals from the nine host nations to treat patients both ashore and in Comfort's on board medical treatment facility.

Continuing Promise 2011 concluded with a stop in Haiti, where Comfort built relationships during previous mission stops, including its nearly two-month deployment to treat critically injured people in the region immediately after the 2010 earthquake. The ship has

deployed on two previous Continuing Promise missions in 2007 and 2009. During those two missions, Comfort's embarked medical personnel treated nearly 200,000 people in 14 countries.

Comfort is supported by 70 civil service mariners from the U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command who are responsible for operating the ship by providing navigation, propulsion and engineering services. The crew also assists with the transfer of patients and mission personnel between ship and shore.

Comfort is currently scheduled to arrive at pier 12 at noon and will remain in the area through Sept. 8, before returning to Baltimore, where the ship is maintained in a high state of readiness between missions.

For more information about Continuing Promise, and other U.S. Southern Command missions, please visit www.southcom.mil and www.facebook.com/navycp.