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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS HOLDS NEW YEAR'S EVE SECURITY
BRIEFING WITH NYPD COMMISSIONER SEWELL AND FDNY COMMISSIONER
KAVANAGH**

Deputy Commissioner Julian Phillips, Public Information, Police Department: Good afternoon everybody. I'm Julian Phillips, the deputy commissioner of Public Information for the NYPD, and welcome to Times Square, the crossroads of the world. Starting tomorrow tens of thousands of people will descend upon this area, these few square acres here, to welcome in 2023. The main question that all of you have is, will everybody be safe here and around the city? Well, I'm glad you asked that question because I have an all-star team assembled here to answer each and every one of those questions to satisfaction. We have a few speakers, not many, but the first will be, of course, the Honorable Mayor Eric Adams, who will lead things off. Then he's going to be followed by the police commissioner of New York City, Keechant Sewell, then the fire commissioner, Laura Kavanagh. Then Tom Harris will come up of the Times Square Alliance here. And then we will have Chief McCarthy of Midtown South, and we will also have Chief Tom Galati, who is the chief of Intelligence and Counterterrorism.

So now without further ado, I wanted to introduce the man who never sleeps, the man who gets stuff done, the Honorable Eric Adams, mayor of New York City.

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you so much. Folks in the background, how many of you are from out of town? Anyone visiting? One thing, spend money. Spend a lot of money. That's what we ask when you're here. Spend a lot of money. We are really excited about bringing in the New Year's here, and I think Julian is accurate when he states that this is the crossroad of the entire country right here in Times Square. Last year I was here swearing in as the mayor of this amazing city, but the goal is a very clear goal, and that is public safety. We must be safe, and we can do it in a very organized fashion. But on that day, you see the actual sausage. So much goes into making that sausage, and it's the coordination of all of our agencies. NYPD, FDNY, DOT, all of our agencies coming together to make sure that the people of not only this city, but the millions of people who are coming here to visit, are going to feel as safe as possible.

I want to thank the alliance. Tom has been a real partner. We met earlier this week to talk about how we continue our enhancement of public safety in this area. The alliance has a real partnership with our various agencies to make sure just continue to attract the magnet that we deserve. You look at how well we're doing not only in hotels... We are leading the major hotel

market out of the 25 major markets, New York City is number one. When you look at how well we're doing in our Broadway productions, you're seeing we're getting record numbers of pre or post pandemic returning. Then our tourism, 56 million tourists are predicted to be here this year, 72 million next year. New York is becoming that attractive place for not only our international tourists but also our domestic tourists... I'll let the fire truck...

But the goal of public safety is both seen and intentionally unseen. The NYPD and our other local public safety apparatus, they're going to have a visible presence. But at the same time, they're going to be among the crowds so that people don't know exactly who's present and who's here. We want you to be safe this time of the year during the celebration, bringing in 2023. Want you to enjoy yourselves. And then go on our website, get the items that will slow up your screening into the safety area. There's certain items you cannot bring into the safety zone, the safety area that we have. So become knowledgeable of it beforehand so you can come in without a problem. The lucky ones that are going to be up front and able to see the ball drop, dress warmly. It's going to be a nice day. We expect some rain. But as I recall, years to come, rain or sunshine, it doesn't stop those who come in to bring in the New Year's here in the greatest city, we would like to believe, on the globe.

And so I want to turn it over to our amazing police commissioner who has really brought about the whole theme of public safety in our city. I just wanted to thank her and the entire team that we have here, on how we're going to protect those who come here to bring in the New Year's. Happy New Year's everyone. We're looking forward... Hip-hop is 50 this year, so we are going to have a real celebration around hip-hop is 50. That's part of the celebration as we come in and bring in a new year this year. I wish everyone a very safe and prosperous New Year as we move into 2023. Police commissioner.

Police Commissioner Keechant Sewell: Thank you, Mr. Mayor, and good afternoon everyone. Thank you for being here and happy New Year. As with every major event the NYPD prepares for, planning surrounding this event began right after the confetti dropped January 1st. Always involved in these conversations is the FDNY and all of our law enforcement partners. The state police, the Secret Service, the FBI, and more. Equally important, of course, is the Times Square Alliance, and you'll hear from Tom Harris in a moment. All of these collaborations are vital to everything we do throughout the year, leading up to and including the ball drop here, as the mayor said, at the crossroads of the world. Nothing we accomplish in our profession can be done alone. This is how the New York City Police Department is able to carry out its mission of delivering the safest and most enjoyable event possible.

As always, as the mayor stated, you will see thousands of uniformed police officers out there on post in addition to the many officers assigned to their regular duties of patrolling all of our neighborhoods throughout the streets, subways and housing developments. As we ensure the safety of everyone moving around the city and enjoying these festivities, there will also be much that the public does not see, intentionally. It is an elaborate, layered approach the Chief Galati will discuss shortly. At this time there are no specific credible threats to New York City or any of our events surrounding New Year's Eve. That said, I ask the members of the public to always remain vigilant. Every night and day in New York City there are millions of eyes and ears out there, and tomorrow night there'll be millions more. If anyone sees something that does not look right or makes you feel uncomfortable, tell a police officer, call 911 or contact our counterterrorism hotline at 1-888 NYC SAFE and we will investigate.

That is what the women and men of the NYPD do every single day throughout the year, and they do it better than anyone. Remember, public safety takes everyone doing their part. And New Yorkers have proven time and again that they are up to the task. The bottom line is, New York City is excited and looking forward to ringing in 2023 with another enjoyable New Year's Eve, all under the umbrella of the most well-policed, best protected event in the entire world. Thank you all and happy New Year again. I'll turn it over now to the commissioner of the FDNY, Laura Kavanagh.

Fire Commissioner Laura Kavanagh: Good afternoon. Thank you, Commissioner Sewell. As the commissioner and the mayor mentioned, this is truly a partnership. We partner with the NYPD every year for what is one of the busiest nights of the year in EMS for the Fire Department. We have hundreds of additional resources all around Times Square and all around the city, making sure that the ball drops safely and the fireworks go off properly through our Bureau of Fire Prevention, making sure that these buildings you see around you are safe and ready for any response through our firefighters and making sure that any emergency, that you experience in Times Square or anywhere throughout the city on this night, can be responded to by one of our professional, highly qualified members of EMS. We are incredibly excited about tomorrow. I will be here. We're always thrilled to work with our partners in public safety. And we are very much looking forward to the New Year. Thank you.

Deputy Commissioner Phillips: Before I bring up Tom Harris from Times Square Alliance, I want to make it clear that the people who put together the vision, the mayor, the police commissioner, the fire commissioner, have to have an exemplary team to carry out that mission. You're looking at that team that's standing behind me and the mayor and the fire commissioner, police commissioner, and I want to acknowledge them right now. We've got First Deputy Commissioner of the NYPD Edward Caban. We've got Chief of Department James Maddrey, Assistant Chief Judith Harrison, who heads our counterterrorism division, and Deputy Chief John Hart who leads our intelligence division. We also have Deputy Mayor of Public Safety Phil Banks, who will owe me a golf outing after I get my knees replaced in the spring. And we have Chief of Department of the FDNY John Hodges. Right now, I'd like to introduce Tom Harris from the Times Square Alliance. Tom.

Tom Harris, President, Times Square Alliance: Thank you very much. The Times Square Alliance would not be able to host this event without our partners One Times Square and Countdown Entertainment, without the hard work and the commitment from Mayor Adams and his entire team. We are very happy to invite everyone back to a safer Times Square this year. It's a safer Times Square because of the dedicated men and women of the New York City Police Department, the men and women of the New York City Fire Department, and all of the other city agencies that work hand in glove with the Times Square community to make us safe. So this year we are inviting everyone back. Last year we had the restrictions, but they are coming back to a safer Times Square. And I just want to thank Mayor Adams and the entire team. I've met with Mayor Adams, with Deputy Mayor Banks, with the police commissioner, and they are committed to making sure that Times Square and this city is safe.

Tomorrow night, it's going to rain. I want to remind folks that umbrellas are not permitted. Bring a poncho, bring rain gear, bring your sense of humor. We are going to have a great night in

Times Square. Again, thanks to the partnership of all of the folks in Times Square and the folks behind me. Thank you.

Deputy Commissioner Phillips: Thank you, Tom. I like the applause back there. With the applause, everything that's going on here and the sirens that go by, sometimes your ears get a little clogged, your brain gets fogged up. That is Jeff Maddrey—I owe you something—our chief of department. Moving along with our program right now, we're wrapping it up pretty quickly here. I want to bring up right now the person who's going to oversee a lot of this stuff that's happening right here in this area in Times Square South. And that is Assistant Chief James McCarthy of Manhattan South. Chief.

James McCarthy, Assistant Chief, Patrol Borough Manhattan South Police

Department: Good afternoon. We're looking forward to wishing everybody Happy New Year at the stroke of midnight tomorrow night. Three important items that I'd like to discuss, access points into the viewing area. You can come in from 6th and the 8th Avenue at 38th Street, 49th Street, 52nd Street, and 56th Street. At all these access points, there's going to be heavy screening. Everybody will be wanded before they come in. Important to discuss is prohibited items. Tom Harris mentioned umbrellas. Unfortunately it's going to rain. So like Tom said, dress for rain, but umbrellas will not be allowed into the viewing area, along with chairs, blankets, backpacks. If you like your nice backpack, don't bring it to New Year's Eve because they won't be allowed in, large bags also. Alcohol's prohibited. And lastly, an important note, people get here very early, and they're standing around for a long time. There are no public restrooms in the viewing area, so if you need to use the restroom, you need to go back out, use the restroom and repeat the screening process. All right, thank you.

Deputy Commissioner Phillips: Thank you, Chief. And anchoring our all-star team here is chief of Intelligence and Counterterrorism, Chief Tom Galati. Chief.

Thomas Galati, Chief, Intelligence and Counterterrorism, Police Department: Thank you and good afternoon. Mr. Mayor, commissioner. I would like to start by saying—and the commissioner already mentioned this—but there are no credible or specific threats against this event or any event going on in the city for New Year's Eve. However, our intelligence analysts working very closely with the FBI and the Joint Terrorism Task Force will be monitoring all streams for any kind of threats that may be coming in. Between the Intelligence and Counterterrorism Bureau, Patrol Services Bureau, our Special Operations Bureau, and other support bureaus, we will have an abundance of protective measures in place. Some of them that you will see, and as mentioned before, some that you will not see, to ensure that we have a safe event. We'll have a full deployment of explosive detection canine teams, heavy weapons teams, drone detection and interdiction teams, radiation detection teams and bots. We'll have the bomb squad present. We'll have hotel teams deployed to 29 hotels in the vicinity of Times Square. Plain clothed offices will be amongst the crowds. And a full compliment of agencies in our Regional Intel Center and also in our Joint Operations Command.

As part of the overlay, we will be utilizing 62 sand trucks, compliments to the Department of Sanitation, 173 NYPD blocker cars, 200 blocks of cement, and our Lower Manhattan Security Initiative will be monitoring over a thousand cameras. There will be a multi-layered screening by our counterterrorism officers posted at every entry checkpoint. We ask you to remain vigilant, and if you see something, please say something. Thank you.

Deputy Commissioner Phillips: All right, thank you, Chief. Now we'll open it up to a Q&A. It's going to be on topic only. Carlos, you're going to initiate this?

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