

STATEMENT BY

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AT

**THE INTERNATIONAL DONORS' CONFERENCE
TOWARDS A NEW FUTURE FOR HAITI**

**AT UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK, U.S.A.**

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The earthquake of January 12 ranks among the worst catastrophe to befall a single nation. The loss of human life, the toll of severe injuries, the destruction of the physical infrastructure, the demolition of public buildings and its consequent damage to the apparatus for governance combined to make the natural disaster one of the worst ever in recorded history.

Following a return to constitutional democracy, it was evident that Haiti had begun to make gradual but meaningful progress in all the right areas. It had become engaged with Partners from the International Community in preparing a bold new plan for development. Within a mere thirty-five seconds all this came crashing down, but as we have witnessed, the spiritual embodiment of the brave and creative Haitian people still remains intact.

The initial response of the international community has been tremendous, but our work has just begun to lift Haiti from the rubble.

In every forum which has met since the earthquake, it has been acknowledged and today's Donor Conference must affirm that we must go beyond rescue and recovery to build with the Government and people of Haiti a land which provides a quality of life for its citizens and future generations which its amazing history and rich culture truly deserve.

The Haiti of the future must be completely different and significantly better than the Haiti of the recent past.

As Donor nations, development agencies, regional groups and established organizations, this is a defining moment in our collective history.

In years to come, the results of this august gathering will not be measured by the eloquence of our rhetoric, but by the honouring of the generous pledges we make, by the timely delivery of tangible results.

We urge the development of a new development model, one which identifies the recipient as the engine of sustainable

development and in which the needs identified by the recipient become the over-riding criteria for the disbursement of funds.

We have before us today an action plan in the form of a Post Disaster Needs Assessment, which was prepared by the Haitian authorities in conjunction with various U.N. agencies, such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) among other international agencies.

The needs identified are enormous. Haiti estimates that \$11.5 billion (US) are necessary to rebuild the country, with 50 per cent of the estimated resources to go to social programmes, 17 per cent to infrastructure and 15 per cent to the environment and disaster management. The actual losses from the catastrophe are estimated at \$7.9 billion (US) which represents 120 per cent of Haitian GDP.

GOVERNANCE AND THE STATE

The proper management of the disbursement of such a large sum will call for a tremendous exercise in governance by Haiti with the Plan envisioning:

- The decentralization of government, economic activity and other services to lessen the present over-concentration in the capital city;
- The re-energizing of the agriculture sector to address food security and cut back on dependency on foreign food aid;
- And the creation of a new sense of the state and of government, which will get the full support and confidence of the Haitian people.

Port-au-Prince is not only the capital of the country, but is the location where public administration, political, business, cultural and other activities are over-concentrated to the detriment of outside locations. Rebuilding must ensure that no future catastrophe can have the national significance of

the recent earthquake and decentralization will ensure that this will not happen again.

The State's human capital, its institutional and administrative capacity, as well as its physical presence (The Presidential Palace, Ministries, Courts, Police Stations, including the Headquarters) has been virtually wiped-out by a single event. Every effort must therefore be made to strengthen this pulverized institutional capacity as the success or failure of the reconstruction efforts will depend on it. The public functions of the state and of its public service must be reinforced as a matter of urgency and priority to ensure that the progress made in the provision of public goods and basic services during this immediate post-disaster stage is sustainable.

To ensure this, we need to facilitate the mobilization and technical assistance of the Haitian Diaspora, which stands ready to play its part.

THE ROLE OF CARICOM

The Caribbean Community CARICOM has a vital interest in the welfare and development of Haiti.

Governance is of primary importance to the process and we are committed to assisting Haiti in the creation of a government of transparency, compassion, efficiency and vision in the wake of this disaster.

A strong Caribbean Community needs a strong Haiti.

As the most populous state in the group of 14 Sovereign Nations, the Community sees its rebuilding as a priority issue for all CARICOM States.

The capacity of CARICOM is at the disposal of Haiti as it seeks to strengthen its own national capacity.

With regard to the rebuilding and strengthening of institutional and technical capacity, CARICOM stands ready to make available its capacities in administrative reform; in education and training, including vocational education and certification; in engineering and construction for earthquake and hurricane resistance, in providing solutions for low and middle income populations; in agriculture, tourism research and development.

Haiti's existing involvement in a number of CARICOM institutions, as well as its geographic proximity and similarity of critical conditions, will enhance relevance; reduce the learning curve and avoid costly errors.

DONORS

This meeting of donor groups is absolutely essential to defining the way forward and how the process of rebuilding will be achieved. It provides an excellent opportunity for the international community to put into practice some of the

principles it has been advocating recently to enhance “**Aid Effectiveness**” such as:

National leadership and responsibility of the State;

Response to local needs and knowledge;

Reduction in conditionalities including tying and shifting from pre-conditions to management through the setting of targets and monitoring of performance by all partners;

Partnerships;

Sufficiency, sustainability and timeliness; and

National capacity building and strengthening.

CARICOM welcomes the establishment of The Multi-Donor Trust Fund. All Donors must now commit to the FFMD and its joint management. The arrangements for the Fund and more generally for support to Haiti, must facilitate, encourage and recognize this collaborative approach. This Donors’ Meeting is a good place to begin to recognize that **all donors and donations**, big and small, in kind or in cash are important.

But we must be wary that, with the gradual withdrawal of the Haitian story from the front pages of major international media, the enthusiasm of donors and facilitators does not weaken and/or dissipate. The actions of this representative group will go a far way in sending a signal that the international community will partner Haiti all the way to the very end, and that nothing less than a revitalized Haiti, that is sustainable, just and equitable will be accepted as a measure of success.

Every delegation in attendance, and every individual at this Conference, is fully committed to the rehabilitation initiative. The consensus is also clear on the imperative to build a new Haiti – to create a Haitian renaissance. The challenge to this international meeting is to create that blueprint, that action plan and organisational arrangement to assure maximum effectiveness of all resources to facilitate the reconstruction of Haiti.

If we can, as an international community, help Haiti rebuild itself into a modern, sustainable State, we would have advanced the cause of humanity everywhere.