



Haiti Earthquake: Crisis and Response

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Summary

The largest earthquake ever recorded in Haiti devastated parts of the country, including the capital, on January 12, 2010. The quake, centered about 15 miles southwest of Port-au-Prince, had a magnitude of 7.0. A series of strong aftershocks followed. Witnesses are describing the damage as severe and catastrophic. Communication services were cut off by the earthquake, so detailed information has been limited. Initial reports indicate that thousands of buildings collapsed, leaving unknown numbers of people trapped, and tens of thousands of people homeless in the streets. Early estimates of casualties are constantly being updated, but already reach into the hundreds of thousands. According to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, “[o]f Haiti’s 9 million people, initial reports suggest roughly a third may be affected by the disaster.” About 45,000 US citizens live in Haiti, and the Embassy has been asked to help account for about 3,000 of them.

Describing conditions in his country as “unimaginable” following the earthquake, President Preval appealed for international assistance. The country’s top priority was to conduct search and rescue operations for survivors. Other priorities included an offshore vessel medical unit and electricity generation capability. The government also requested communications equipment so that government officials can better function and coordinate response efforts. The Haitian government, the United Nations, and donor representatives met in Haiti on January 14 to coordinate their efforts.

The arrival of humanitarian supplies has begun, but access to Port-au-Prince and the distribution of aid to people in need is difficult and hampered by a number of significant challenges that are impeding rescue efforts and movement. People are gathering in open spaces and some are reportedly leaving Port-au-Prince for other areas in Haiti.

On January 12, 2010, President Obama assembled heads of agencies to begin working immediately on a coordinated response to the disaster. On January 13, 2010, U.S. Ambassador to Haiti Kenneth H. Merten issued a disaster declaration, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) authorized \$50,000 for the initial implementation of an emergency response program. The U.S. embassy in Haiti also began facilitating the evacuation of U.S. citizens. On January 14, President Obama announced \$100 million in humanitarian assistance to Haiti to provide significant resources to meet the immediate needs on the ground. The relief effort is expected to last for many months, although it is anticipated that recovery and reconstruction will begin as soon as possible in a parallel effort.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced on January 13, 2010 that it is temporarily halting the deportation of Haitians. On January 15, 2010, DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for 18 months to Haitian nationals who were in the United States as of January 12, 2010.

The focus of this report is on the immediate crisis in Haiti as a result of the earthquake and the U.S. and international response to date.

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Current Conditions

The largest earthquake ever recorded in Haiti devastated parts of the country, including the capital, on December 12, 2010. The quake, centered about 15 miles southwest of Port-au-Prince, had a magnitude of 7.0. A series of strong aftershocks followed.¹ Witnesses are describing the damage as severe and catastrophic. Communication services were cut off by the quake, so detailed information is difficult to come by. Initial reports indicate that thousands of buildings collapsed, leaving unknown numbers of people trapped, and tens of thousands of people homeless in the streets. Early estimates of casualties are constantly being updated, but already reach into the hundreds of thousands. According to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, “[o]f Haiti’s 9 million people, initial reports suggest roughly a third may be affected by the disaster.”² About 45,000 US citizens live in Haiti, and the Embassy has been asked to help account for about 3,000 of them. Aftershocks have the potential to cause further damage, especially to structures weakened by the initial large earthquake; 14 aftershocks greater than magnitude 5 and 36 greater than magnitude 4 were felt within one day, and they could continue for weeks. In addition, steep slopes and rugged topography near the epicenter increase the chances for earthquake- and aftershock-triggered landslides, which pose a further hazard to structures and people downslope from landslide-prone regions.³

Recovery efforts will be made extremely difficult by the loss of personnel and infrastructure that would be part of a recovery effort. Among the missing and dead are Haitian government officials and international aid personnel, including many United Nations personnel. Housing, hospitals, schools, and many government buildings have collapsed. Basic services such as electricity and water are almost completely disrupted. Major transportation routes are damaged and/or blocked. Although the airport continues to function, the control tower was destroyed. The main port suffered heavy damage.

The roof of the Presidential Palace collapsed; President Preval is safe, but was initially unable to communicate with his Cabinet. The Parliament building collapsed, with some Members trapped inside and others dead. Buildings of the Ministries of Finance, Public Works, and Justice are also damaged or destroyed, and government officials report having difficulty finding places to meet.

The United Nations, which has a strong presence in Haiti, and would be at the forefront of on-the-ground response for security and humanitarian assistance, suffered heavy losses as well. Its headquarters collapsed, and about 300 UN personnel are unaccounted for, including the head of the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Special Representative Hedi Annabi, his deputy, Luiz Carlos da Costa, and other civilian staff and peacekeepers. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon sent Assistant Secretary General Edmond Mulet to Haiti on January 13 to direct the UN’s immediate response efforts; Mulet is a former Special Representative of the Secretary General for MINUSTAH.

¹U.S. Geological Survey <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/recenteqsww/Quakes/us2010rja6.php>, Jan. 13, 2010.

² United Nations, *Secretary-General, Briefing General Assembly on Haiti Disaster, Announces Release of \$10 million in emergency Funds to Kick-Start Response*, SG/SM/12701; GA/10912, New York, NY, January 13, 2010.

³See CRS Report RL33861, *Earthquakes: Risk, Detection, Warning, and Research*, by Peter Folger for further information.

All of this damage is sustained in a country that already was socially and ecologically at risk. Haiti suffers massive and deep poverty. Over half the population (54%) live in extreme poverty, living on less than \$1 a day; 78% live on \$2 or less a day, according to the World Bank. Hunger is also widespread: 81% of the national population do not get the minimum daily ration of food defined by the World Health Organization. Haiti was already in an acute environmental crisis. Following the hurricanes of 2008, the President of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Luis Moreno, called Haiti the most fragile of IDB's member countries, saying that no other nation in Latin America and the Caribbean is as vulnerable to economic shocks and natural disasters as is Haiti. The United Nations already designated Haiti as one of the 50 "least developed countries" in the world, facing a higher risk than other countries of failing to come out of poverty, and therefore needing the highest degree of attention from the international community.⁴

Prior to the earthquake, the international community was providing extensive development and humanitarian assistance to Haiti. With that assistance, the Haitian government had made significant progress in recent years in many areas of its development strategy, including security, judicial reform, macroeconomic management, procurement processes and fiscal transparency; increased voter registration; and jobs creation. It had also made progress in providing broader access to clean water and other services. Parliamentary elections were scheduled for February 2010. These presumably will be delayed.

The UN Secretary-General had commissioned a report, published in January 2009, that recommended a strategy to move Haiti beyond recovery to economic security.⁵ Indeed, the UN Security Council conducted a fact-finding visit to Haiti in March 2009, and concluded that there was "... a window of opportunity to enable the consolidation of stability and the undertaking of a process of sustainable development."⁶

The destruction of Haiti's nascent infrastructure and other extensive damage caused by January's earthquake will set back Haiti's development significantly. UN Special Envoy and former President Bill Clinton said that Haiti's long-term development plans "will need to be amended..., but they cannot be abandoned."⁷

Haitian Government Response

Describing conditions in his country as "unimaginable" following the earthquake, President Preval appealed for international assistance. The country's top priority was to conduct search and rescue operations for survivors. Other priorities included an offshore vessel medical unit and electricity generation capability. The government also requested communications equipment so that government officials can better function and coordinate response efforts. The Haitian government, the United Nations, and donor representatives met in Haiti on January 14 to coordinate their efforts.

⁴ United Nations Office for Least Developed Countries. Facts About Least Developed Countries (LDCs) available at <http://www.unohrls.org/UserFiles/File/Publications/Factsheet.pdf>, accessed January 15, 2010.

⁵ Paul Collier, "Haiti: From Natural Catastrophe to Economic Security, A Report for the Secretary-General of the United Nations," Jan. 2009, available at <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org>.

⁶ "Haiti: UN Council Mission reports strides in security, worrisome poverty," States News Service, Mar. 19, 2009.

⁷ Bill Clinton, "How We Can Help Rebuild Haiti's Promise," *The Washington Post*, January 14, 2010.

Prior to this disaster, the World Bank and others were working with the Haitian government to incorporate disaster risk management into Haiti's overall development strategy and to develop its capacity for disaster response. The capacity was still in its early stages, however, and the focus of much of its risk management efforts were not geared toward earthquakes, but toward hurricanes, which are the most common cause of natural disasters on the island. The last major earthquake in Haiti was 150 years ago, in 1860.

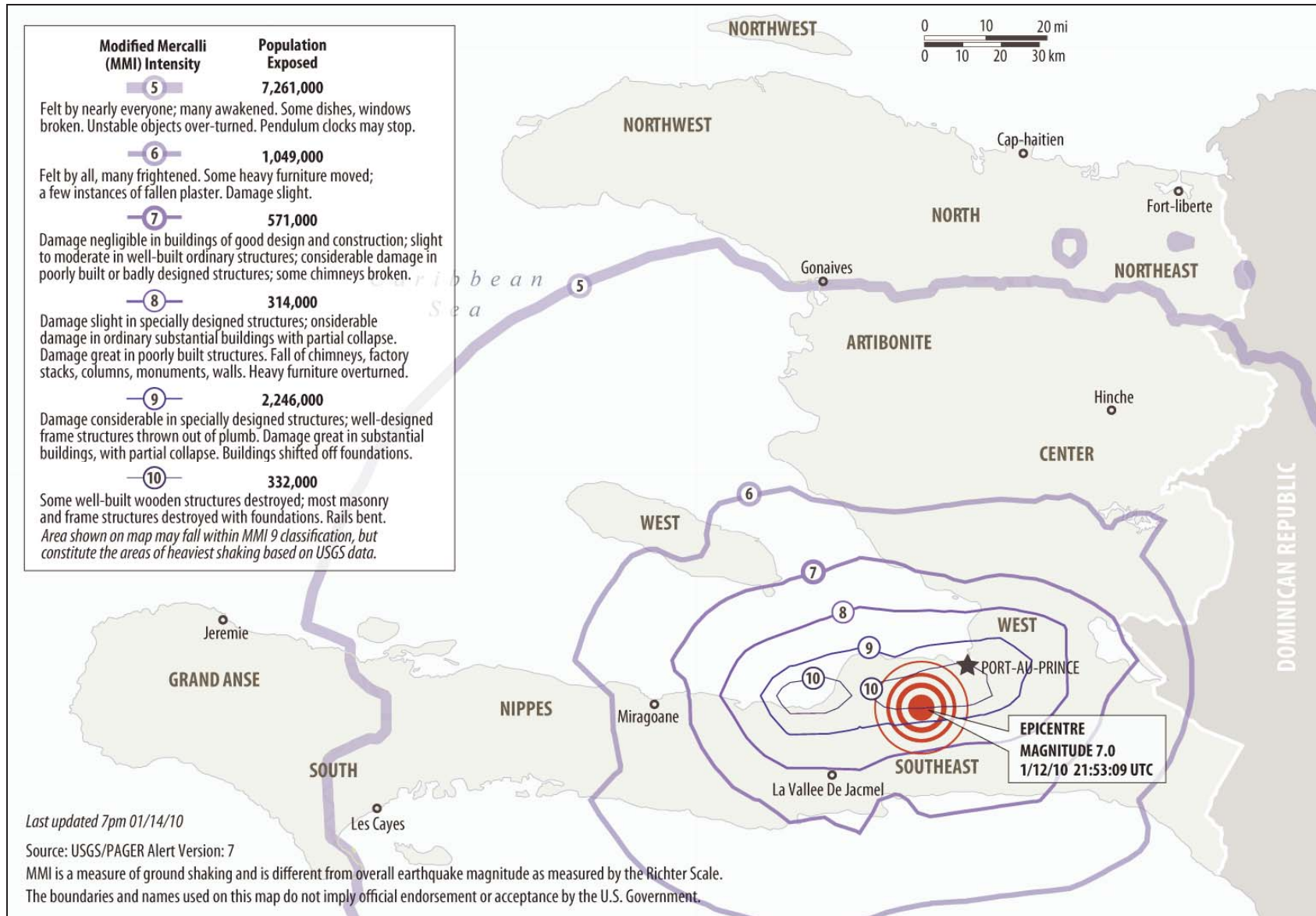
Humanitarian Relief Operation

The massive humanitarian relief operation already underway in Haiti is hampered by a number of significant challenges, including a general lack of transportation, extremely limited communications systems, and damaged infrastructure. In many parts of Port-au-Prince, roads are ruptured or blocked by collapsed buildings, debris, bodies, and people seeking open space, impeding rescue efforts and movement. Lack of electricity and clean water are a major problem. Hospitals that remain functioning have reached full capacity and people are also being treated in unsanitary makeshift areas. Fuel shortages also have been reported, which affect generator power for life-saving equipment.

The priority is search and rescue assistance, including teams with heavy-lift equipment and medical assistance and supplies. In addition, there is a critical need for food, clean water and sanitation, and emergency shelter. In-depth assessments are necessary to obtain a more detailed understanding of the situation on the ground. Until assessments can be completed, the humanitarian needs cannot be fully determined. The arrival of humanitarian supplies has begun, but access to Port-au-Prince and the distribution of aid to people in need is difficult. People are gathering in open spaces and some are reportedly leaving Port-au-Prince for other areas in Haiti. There are increasing concerns about security and potential for looting and violence.

The relief effort is expected to last for many months, although it is anticipated that recovery and reconstruction will begin as soon as possible in a parallel effort.

Figure 1. Haiti Earthquake Epicenter



Status of the Relief Operation

The headquarters of the U.N. Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) was reportedly very badly damaged. Thirty-six military and civilian MINUSTAH personnel have died and more than 300 staff are reported missing or remain unaccounted for. U.N. staff are being deployed to Haiti to increase capacity. MINUSTAH is providing search and rescue operations, security, and assistance. With Mr. Hedi Annabi still missing, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has sent Edmond Mulet, former Special Representative to Haiti and current Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to take command of MINUSTAH and coordinate the relief effort. The United Nations typically works with government ministries on how best to provide assistance. On January 15, 2010, Mr. Mulet met with President Preval to discuss the status of the rescue operation and to address issues of law and order.

The United Nations has also deployed Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) and U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) teams. The United Nations Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator, Kim Bolduc, was deployed to Haiti in November 2009. Traditionally, soon after a disaster, a Humanitarian Country Team, which includes U.N. agencies, international NGOs, national NGOs, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as observers, will be assembled. In Haiti, UNOCHA is helping to coordinate the 27 search and rescue teams and assistance effort while focusing on other humanitarian priorities. The World Food Program (WFP) is supporting immediate relief efforts and working on emergency logistics and telecommunications. Together with the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD), they are providing food from El Salvador as well as distributing relief supplies and food from a depot in Panama. The World Health Organization (WHO) is coordinating medical assistance, particularly victim care. The U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) is focusing on identifying and reuniting children with their families.

Humanitarian relief sectors are typically established during humanitarian crises to enable the U.N. Humanitarian Country Team to coordinate partners, prioritize resources, and facilitate planning. To date in Haiti, relief sectors have been organized into five clusters led by various agencies, including:⁸

- Emergency Shelter and Non-food Items (International Organization for Migration)
- Food Assistance (WFP)
- Health (WHO)
- Logistics (WFP)
- Water/Sanitation (UNICEF)

A number of other clusters are expected to be mobilized in the coming days. Various international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that were already operating in Haiti before the

⁸ The head of each cluster (indicated in parentheses) reports to the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator and works in partnership with all relevant actors in that particular sector.

earthquake are mobilizing to respond to the crisis. Reportedly hundreds of local staff are assisting with the relief effort.⁹

In addition, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is working with the Haitian Red Cross Society (HRCS) and other national red cross societies, including the American Red Cross, to provide assistance to earthquake survivors. The IFRC is coordinating efforts with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which is focused on medical assistance, tracing the missing and helping to restore family links. The ICRC is also helping with the identification and collection of mortal remains.

U.S. Response

U.S. Humanitarian Assistance

On January 13, 2010, U.S. Ambassador to Haiti Kenneth H. Merten issued a disaster declaration, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), through the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), authorized \$50,000 for the initial implementation of an emergency response program. (See Appendix 1 for further information about the U.S. Government humanitarian response mechanism.) The embassy also facilitated the evacuation of U.S. citizens and issued a travel warning.

On January 14, 2009, President Obama announced \$100 million in humanitarian assistance to Haiti to provide significant resources to meet the immediate needs on the ground. At present, there is reportedly some carry over funding expected from the International Disaster Assistance Account as well as the P.L. 480 food aid account. In addition, money in the FY2010 budget will be made available.

The U.S. government has set up an interagency task force to coordinate and facilitate the humanitarian response to the earthquake in Haiti through the Washington, DC-based Response Management Team headed by USAID/OFDA. At this point, the overall focus of the U.S. government's response is search and rescue, logistics and infrastructure support, provision of assistance where possible, and conducting needs assessments. The activities of some of the key agencies—USAID and DOD—are described below.¹⁰

USAID

USAID/OFDA has deployed a 17-member Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to Haiti. The Washington, D.C. Response Management Team is also in place to support the USAID/DART, which will focus on assessing humanitarian needs and coordinating assistance with the U.S. Embassy in Haiti, the Government of Haiti, and the international community. The Fairfax Urban Search and Rescue Team has deployed 72 staff, and Los Angeles County has also sent teams along with support staff, both including search and rescue canines and rescue equipment. Food

⁹ The airport in the Dominican Republic is also being used as a humanitarian staging area to help with the coordination effort and allow for relief teams and supplies to get to Haiti.

¹⁰ This section does not include all agencies responding to the crisis, such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which has also sent six search and rescue teams.

aid through USAID's Food for Peace Program (FFP) will come from prepositioned stocks in Texas. In coordination with the WFP, USAID has food aid for 1.2 million people over the next two weeks.

Department of Defense¹¹

In response to the crisis in Haiti, the Department of Defense (DOD) has indicated that a broad range of military assets are being deployed to support U.S. and international assistance efforts. U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), located in Miami, Florida is overseeing the Department's response efforts. SOUTHCOM is well-experienced in this type of operation, having supported 14 relief missions in the Latin American and Caribbean area since 2005. SOUTHCOM's initial assessment team consisting of military engineers, operational planners, and command and control communication specialists has deployed to Haiti. U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command personnel dispatched to the Port-au-Prince International Airport have restored air traffic control capability and are enabling round-the-clock airfield operations. These personnel from Air Force 720th Special Tactics Group can also provide emergency medical services and conduct search and rescue missions.

The U.S. Air Force's Air Mobility Command is providing transport aircraft, including C-17 Globemaster IIIs and C-130 Hercules. Air National Guard units from Ohio and Puerto Rico have also provided transport aircraft and, according to Air Force officials, additional transport aircraft will be provided as needed.

The U.S. Navy has deployed eight ships to assist relief efforts: the nuclear aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson, augmented with additional helicopters; the amphibious assault ship USS Bataan; the dock-landing ships USS Fort McHenry and USS Carter Hall; the cruiser USS Normandy, the destroyer USS Underwood; the frigate USS Higgins; and the hospital ship USNS Comfort. The Navy Expeditionary Combat Command is expected to deploy units that can provide explosive ordnance disposal, maritime and riverine security, diving/salvage experts, and naval construction personnel. U.S. Navy surveillance aircraft have performed initial aerial surveys of the earthquake damage to assist remediation efforts.

The amphibious assault ship and the dock-landing ships are transporting the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (2,000 personnel) and the initial company of an expected brigade of the 82nd Airborne Division (3,400 personnel) to conduct security/stabilization operations. Reportedly up to 10,000 members of the military will soon be deployed to Haiti.

The U.S. Coast Guard has undertaken the air-medical evacuation of injured U.S. civilian personnel to the Guantanamo Naval Station, supplied two C-130 transport aircraft, and deployed four cutters: USS Forward, USS Mohawk, USS Valiant, USS Tahoma.

Overall U.S. FY2010 Assistance

In the FY2010 Consolidated Appropriations Act (P.L. 111-117) Congress provided "not less than \$295,530,000" for assistance for Haiti, about \$2.7 million more than the Administration had requested. Congress also included Haiti in the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, to provide

¹¹ Prepared by Stephen Bowman, CRS Specialist in National Security, Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division.

equipment and training to combat drug trafficking and related violence and organized crime, and for judicial reform, institution building, education, anti-corruption, rule of law activities, and maritime security.

The Administration had requested \$293 million in assistance for Haiti, including \$21 million and \$91 million for Global Health and Child Survival under USAID and State Department, respectively; \$125 million in Economic Support Funds; \$35.5 million in P.L. 480 food aid; \$18.5 million for International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement; \$0.22 million for International Military Education and Training, and \$1.6 million in Foreign Military Financing. Of that funding, \$1.4 million was requested for Disaster Readiness programs. (See “Legislation” section below.)

International Response

Sources of International Humanitarian Assistance

So far, through governments and the private sector, the international community has pledged millions of dollars in aid, materials, and technical support. The following table highlights donor contributions and in-kind pledges.

Table I. Donor Contributions and Pledges to Haiti in Response to the January 12, 2010 Earthquake

Country/Agency Donor	Monetary Pledge (USD)	In-kind Support Pledge
Australia	\$9 million	
Brazil	\$10 million	28 tons of drinking water and food
Britain	\$9.92 million	government assessment team, search-and-rescue team, doctors, firefighters, 10 tons of rescue equipment
Canada	\$5 million	search and rescue team, medical personnel, engineers, helicopters, supplies and equipment, two navy ships and 500 Canadian troops
Chile		15 metric tons of food and medicines, search-and rescue team, 20 doctors
China	\$1 million	60-member team of medical staff, rescuers and engineers
Costa Rica		engineers, health care workers, doctors, and disaster experts
Colombia		rescue team
Cuba		30 doctors
France		three military transport planes, aid supplies, and 100 troops
Germany	\$2.2 million	government assessment team
Guatemala		rescue team
Italy		emergency medical team
Israel		220 medical personnel
Iceland		search and rescue team
Japan	\$5 million	

Country/Agency Donor	Monetary Pledge (USD)	In-kind Support Pledge
Mexico		rescue team
Netherlands	\$2.9 million	
New Zealand	\$1 million	
Norway	\$5.3 million	
Peru		two planes with 50 metric tons of humanitarian aid, mainly food, 18 doctors and nurses, two field hospitals
Russia		mobile air hospital, 20 doctors, rescue team,
South Korea		emergency relief workers and supplies
Spain		40 disaster relief experts, surgeons, medical equipment, field hospitals, sending 150 tons of humanitarian aid to its logistics base in Panama
United States	\$100 million	search-and-rescue team, ships, transport planes, helicopters and thousands of Marines
Venezuela		search and rescue team, including doctors and firefighters
European Union	\$4.3 million	
Inter-American Development Bank	\$200 million	
Pan American Development Foundation		shelter kits with tents, tarps, water purification tables; food; medical supplies; family tool kits, including shovels; telecommunications equipment
Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and World Health Organization (WHO)		12-member team of health and logistics experts, including specialists in mass casualty management, coordination of emergency health response and the management of dead bodies
United Nations (CERF)	\$10 million	
United Nations World Food Program		86 metric tons of ready-to-eat meals and high energy biscuits to feed 30,000 for up to 7 days; first aid kits and satellite phones for Rapid Response Teams
World Bank	\$100 million	

Source: Factiva and LEXISNEXIS.com news databases.

Prepared by Julissa Gomez-Granger and Anne Leland, Knowledges Services Group, Foreign Affairs, Defense and Trade Division.

U.N. Consolidated Appeals Process

Under the U.N. Consolidated Appeals Process, on January 15, 2009 the U.N. Humanitarian Country Team in Haiti issued a Flash Appeal for emergency financial assistance in the amount of \$562 million. The funds will initially support emergency food aid, health, water, sanitation, early recovery, emergency education, and other key needs. The U.N.'s Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) initially made available \$10 million and this number is expected to increase.

Response of International Financial Institutions¹²

Multilateral Lending

The multilateral development banks (MDBs) have been active in Haiti in recent years, providing debt relief, loans, and grants. After the earthquake, the World Bank announced \$100 million in emergency grant funding to support recovery and reconstruction, in addition to its existing \$308 million portfolio of grants projects in Haiti.¹³ The existing projects are in areas including disaster risk management, infrastructure, community-driven development, education, and economic governance. The World Bank is the only international financial institution providing all of its assistance as grants, thus ensuring that Haiti does not accumulate any additional debt to it. In addition to World Bank programs, the World Bank administers several donor-funded trust funds. Since 2003, trust funds administered by the World Bank have given more than \$55 million to Haiti.

On January 12, 2010, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) President Luis Alberto Moreno announced a \$200,000 emergency grant for immediate relief aid. The IDB is Haiti's largest multilateral donor, with a portfolio of programs worth over \$700 million, as of the end of 2009.¹⁴ These programs include both grants and concessional loans. Of this amount, \$330 million is undisbursed, of which \$90 million could be quickly redirected to high-priority civil works and reconstruction projects, according to the IDB.¹⁵ IDB management also announced that it anticipates the approval of up to \$128 million in already-planned grants, potentially providing more resources for reconstruction.

Haiti receives concessional loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as well as from the development banks.¹⁶ In response to the earthquake, the IMF announced it will provide \$100 million in additional concessional loans, following approval from its member countries. This would be additional debt incurred by the country. Including the new lending, total Haiti debt to the IMF would be \$277.9 million. Of this amount, close to \$170 million in concessional lending to Haiti has already been disbursed.¹⁷

Debt Relief

Haiti completed the multilateral Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative in June 2009, making it eligible to receive debt relief from the multilateral and some bilateral

¹² Prepared by Martin Weiss, Specialist in International Trade and Finance, Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division.

¹³ "World Bank to Provide an Additional \$100 Million to Haiti, Following Earthquake," *World Bank*, January 13, 2010.

¹⁴ "December 2009 – IDB Portfolio in Haiti," *Inter-American Development Bank*, December 17, 2009.

¹⁵ "Haiti earthquake: IDB redirects resources for emergency assistance and reconstruction" *Inter-American Development Bank*, January 13, 2010.

¹⁶ Financing under the IMF's concessional lending facility, the Extended Credit Facility, carries a zero interest rate, with a grace period of 5½ years, and a final maturity of 10 years. The Fund reviews the level of interest rates for all concessional facilities under the PRGT every two years.

¹⁷ "IMF to Provide US\$100 Million in Emergency Assistance to Haiti," *International Monetary Fund*, January 14, 2009.

creditors. Under the terms of their participation in the Enhanced HIPC program, the World Bank provided Haiti debt relief for debts incurred through December 2003. According to the World Bank, debt relief under the Enhanced HIPC Initiative amounts to \$140.3 million. Haiti has no outstanding debt to the World Bank.

The IDB, in September 2009, provided \$511 million in debt relief. Debts eligible for cancellation were those incurred through 2004 (compared to 2003 in the case of IDA). According to the IDB, Haiti currently owes \$429 million (principal-only) to the IDB. This includes \$305 million from loans made in 2005 and 2006, after the debt cancellation cut-off date of December 31, 2004, and \$124 million from undisbursed balances of loans made before the cut-off date. Beginning in 2009, Haiti's payments on its debt to the IDB have been made by a US-supported trust fund that currently amounts to \$20 million.

Haiti has also received debt relief from its bilateral creditors. Haiti's completion of the HIPC program triggered debt relief of \$62.7 million by the Paris Club group of official creditors. Haiti's Paris Club creditors agreed to go beyond the requirements of the HIPC program, however, and provide \$152 million in additional debt cancellation, thus completely cancelling Haiti's external Paris Club debt of \$214 million. That said, Paris Club debt relief is not automatic. Creditor nations collectively sign bilateral agreements with the debtor nation, giving effect to the multilateral debt relief agreement. On September 18th, 2009 the United States cancelled \$12.6 million, totaling 100% of Haiti's outstanding debt to the United States. Several countries, however, have not yet completed their debt relief agreements. While most Paris Club members have implemented the sum of their Paris Club debt relief, France has only cancelled €4 million (\$5.75 million) of €58 million (\$83.36 million) owed to them by Haiti. The French Finance Minister asked on January 15, 2010 that debt relief be sped up, and that Taiwan and Venezuela, two of Haiti's largest non-Paris Club creditors, forgive Haiti's debts owed to them, \$71.2 million and \$112 million respectively.

Regional response

Latin American countries have responded to Haiti's crisis with immediate provision of emergency supplies and personnel and pledges of financial and other assistance for its long-term recovery. Members of the Organization of American States (OAS) pledged humanitarian, financial and other support to Haiti, and its Assistant Secretary General, Ambassador Albert Ramdin, will travel to Haiti as soon as possible. The OAS Group of Friends of Haiti met on January 14 to coordinate search and rescue efforts, prompt donations, and discuss ways to promote recovery.

The 15-member Caribbean Community (CARICOM), of which Haiti is also a member, mobilized its disaster emergency response system to assist Haiti, and several members have sent emergency supplies or promised financial assistance. The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency has assembled a response team to assess conditions in Haiti as well.¹⁸ Some CARICOM employees already working in Haiti were missing as of January 13.

¹⁸ Caribbean Media Corporation, "Caribbean heads of state to visit Haiti to assess quake damage," *BBC Monitoring Americas*, January 14, 2010.

Many countries in the region already have peacekeeping troops in Haiti serving with MINUSTAH. Brazil leads the UN peacekeeping mission, and had 1,284 uniformed personnel already serving there as of December 2009.

Implications for Haiti

The impact of the January earthquake on Haiti's people, government, security, and economy is catastrophic. Haiti had built a foundation of social stability over the past five years. That stability was fragile, however, and a disaster of this proportion will test it to the extremes. In the initial days after the earthquake struck, there was chaos, but violence was reportedly sporadic. As hundreds of thousands of people remain without food, water, shelter, and medical services, the challenge of maintaining order will be an enormous task. Those same conditions, along with a limited ability to respond to them, will create a precarious environment.

Haiti already had a development and poverty reduction strategy in place, supported by the international donor community. The government had been making strides toward meeting goals of that strategy, and analysts were viewing its potential for sustainable development with optimism. Investors had begun to return to Haiti and the country was promoting its economic development. The earthquake has reversed years of progress. Haiti's strategy will therefore need to be reviewed, revised, and built upon to incorporate new conditions and needs.

The destruction of buildings, equipment, and loss of skilled personnel has drastically reduced the ability of the government, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations to respond rapidly. These losses, plus the difficulty of delivering and transporting material supplies, will hinder delivery of services. In much of the country the government did not provide basic services prior to the earthquake; what little basic services were available, in terms of water, health, and electricity, were mostly destroyed. The lack of medicines or medical treatment, water, and adequate sanitation in Haiti has been exacerbated by the earthquake and may increase the spread of disease.

Parliamentary elections were scheduled for February 2010. These presumably will be delayed, which may add to the political tensions already evident before the earthquake over the exclusion of several parties from the process. The elections were seen as part of the process of consolidating Haiti's democratic institutions.

Migration may become another challenging issue both domestically and internationally, as people try to leave Port-au-Prince for unaffected rural areas, the Dominican Republic, nearby islands, or the United States.

Congressional Concerns

Many Members have already expressed a strong desire to support Haiti and provide it with substantial assistance. The 111th Congress gave bipartisan support to assist the Préval government in the last session, and has continued to respond in that spirit to the crisis generated by the

January earthquake. Fourteen Senators have requested that the chamber's leaders "include robust emergency funds to assist Haiti in the next legislative vehicle before the Senate."¹⁹

Funding

An immediate concern of many is whether there is sufficient funding for the U.S. emergency response. President Obama announced the United States would provide \$100 million in immediate aid for Haiti. That aid is drawn from existing funds from across government agencies. Once USAID and other assessment teams are able to determine the extent of damage, estimates for the amount of immediate emergency and humanitarian aid needed will be determined. Other donors, such as international organizations, international financial institutions, other governments, non-governmental organizations, and the public, are also making substantial donations toward meeting that need.

If funding for the immediate emergency and humanitarian response is met, Congress will likely consider a major request to help fund Haiti's recovery and reconstruction, which will require even greater funding. Congress may reevaluate and revise priorities and approaches of U.S. assistance to Haiti in light of the changed conditions there. Issues that have previously concerned Congress have included democracy building, development assistance and poverty reduction, security enhancement and stability, counternarcotics efforts, police and judicial reform, and disaster recovery and prevention.

Humanitarian assistance generally receives strong bipartisan congressional support and the United States is typically a leader and major contributor to relief efforts in humanitarian disasters.²⁰ When disasters require immediate emergency relief, the Administration may fund pledges by depleting its disaster accounts intended for worldwide use throughout a fiscal year. In order to respond to future humanitarian crises, however, these resources would need to be replenished or it could curtail U.S. capacity to respond to other emergencies. These accounts are typically restored through supplemental appropriations.

Another issue of immediate concern to Congress is likely to involve arrangements regarding elections. Haiti was due to hold parliamentary elections in February 2010. In all likelihood they will be postponed, considering the extent of losses suffered by the Haitian government and the UN, which was to provide security and technical support, and massive humanitarian needs generated by the earthquake.

Immigration²¹

The devastation caused by the earthquake in Haiti prompted calls by some Members of Congress for the Obama Administration to grant Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to Haitians in the United States at the time of the earthquake. The issue of Haitian TPS has arisen several times in the past few years, but the previous Administration did not grant TPS or other forms of blanket

¹⁹ Tim Starks, "Lawmakers Look to Aid Haiti Following Earthquake," *CQ Today Online News*, January 13, 2010.

²⁰ For background information see CRS Report RL33769, *International Crises and Disasters: U.S. Humanitarian Assistance, Budget Trends, and Issues for Congress*, by Rhoda Margesson.

²¹ Prepared by Ruth Ellen Wasem, Specialist in Immigration Policy, Domestic Social Policy Division. For further information, see CRS Report RS21349, *U.S. Immigration Policy on Haitian Migrants*, by Ruth Ellen Wasem.

relief to Haitians, and at that time, Congress opted not to enact legislation that would have provided TPS to Haitians, such as H.R. 522 in the 110th Congress. The scale of the current humanitarian crisis led the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to announce on January 13, 2010 that it is temporarily halting the deportation of Haitians. On January 15, 2010, DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano granted TPS for 18 months to Haitian nationals who were in the United States as of January 12, 2010. The Haitian Protection Act of 2009 (H.R. 144), which would require the Secretary of Homeland Security to designate TPS for Haitians, was introduced last year on January 6, 2009.

Many Haitians in areas devastated by the earthquake are reportedly moving to rural areas of the country. Congress may monitor immigration policy if Haitians begin to take to the seas to migrate to nearby islands or the United States as well.

Constituent Concerns and Private Charities

Lawmakers are also helping constituents find persons missing in Haiti, and helping citizens in Haiti get evacuated from Haiti. Information on how to help them do so is in Appendix 3. Lawmakers may also seek to find ways for the Haitian and U.S. governments to speed pending and potential adoptions of Haitian orphans.

Many constituents want to know how to contribute to relief efforts. Information on how to do so is in Appendix 4. A bipartisan group of Senators is sponsoring a bill designed to increase charitable donations to Haiti. The legislation would temporarily ease tax exemption laws, allowing taxpayers to deduct a larger amount from their annual income for charitable contributions. It would also encourage food donations by temporarily extending special tax rules for them.²²

Legislation in the 111th Congress

P.L. 111-117. In the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010, Sec. 7045(b) deals expressly with Haiti, stating that, (1) The Government of Haiti shall be eligible to purchase defense articles and services under the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2751 et seq.), for the Coast Guard; (2) of the funds appropriated by this Act under titles III, Bilateral Economic Assistance, and IV, International Security Assistance, not less than \$295,530,000 shall be made available for assistance for Haiti; and (3) none of the funds made available by this Act under the heading 'International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement' may be used to transfer excess weapons, ammunition or other lethal property of an agency of the United States Government to the Government of Haiti for use by the Haitian National Police until the Secretary of State reports to the Committees on Appropriations that any members of the Haitian National Police who have been credibly alleged to have committed serious crimes, including drug trafficking and violations of internationally recognized human rights, have been suspended.

Haiti is included in Sec. 7045(c), as part of the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative. Of the funds appropriated under the headings 'Development Assistance,' 'Economic Support Fund,' 'International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement,' and 'Foreign Military Financing

²² Jessica Brady, "Senators Look to Speed Up Charitable Giving to Haiti," *Roll Call*, January 14, 2010.

Program' in this Act, not less than \$37,000,000 should be made available for assistance for the countries of the Caribbean Basin, to provide equipment and training to combat drug trafficking and related violence and organized crime, and for judicial reform, institution building, education, anti-corruption, rule of law activities, and maritime security, of which not less than \$21,100,000 should be made available for social justice and education programs to include vocational training, workforce development and juvenile justice activities: Provided, That none of the funds made available under this subsection shall be made available for budget support or as cash payments.

The Act calls on the Secretary of State to provide a detailed spending plan to the Committees on Appropriations no later than 45 days after this Act is enacted, for funds appropriated or otherwise made available for the countries of the Caribbean Basin, with concrete goals, actions to be taken, budget proposals, and anticipated results. Introduced July 22, 2009, signed into law on December 16, 2009.

H.R. 144. The Haitian Protection Act of 2009 would require the Secretary of Homeland Security to designate Haiti as a country whose qualifying nationals may be eligible for temporary protected status. Introduced January 6, 2009; referred to the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security, and International Law February 9, 2009.

H.R. 264. The Save America Comprehensive Immigration Act of 2009 would amend the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) to provide increased protections and eligibility for family-sponsored immigrants, including to authorize adjustment of status for certain nationals or citizens of Haiti. Introduced January 7, 2009, referred to House Judiciary; House Homeland Security; House Oversight and Government Reform Committees; referred to the Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security, and International Law February 9, 2009.

H.R. 417. The Next Steps for Haiti Act of 2009 would authorize the Director of Foreign Assistance, in consultation with the government of Haiti and Haitian civil society organizations, to establish the Haiti Professional Exchange Program to assign qualified Haitian Americans and others to provide technical assistance to help Haiti improve in areas vital to its growth and development, including education, energy, environment, health care, infrastructure, security, transportation, and disaster preparedness. Directs the Secretary of State to implement a student loan forgiveness program for program participants. Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs January 9, 2009.

H.R. 1567. The Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act (HRIFA) Improvement Act of 2009 would amend the 1998 HRIFA to (1) require determinations with respect to children to be made using the age and status of an individual on October 21, 1998 (enactment date of the HRIFA of 1998); (2) permit an application based upon child status to be filed by a parent or guardian if the child is present in the United States on such filing date; and (3) include document fraud among the grounds of inadmissibility which shall not preclude an otherwise qualifying Haitian alien from permanent resident status adjustment. It would also permit new status adjustment applications to be filed for a limited time period. Introduced March 17, 2009, referred to the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security, and International Law on April 27, 2009.

H.R. 4206. The Haiti Reforestation Act of 2009 seeks to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to provide assistance to the Government of Haiti. The purpose of the Act is to end the deforestation in Haiti within five years and to restore the tropical forest cover to its state in 1990 within a 30-

year time frame. The legislation was both introduced and referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on December 3, 2009.

H.Con.Res. 17. The resolution addresses the humanitarian assistance provided to Caribbean countries affected by past hurricanes and tropical storms. It acknowledges the affected countries' efforts to aid their citizens in recovery. The resolution also expresses support of the international assistance received by the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, the Bahamas, Cuba and Turks and Caicos. Referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs January 9, 2009.

H.Con.Res. 165. Supports the yielding of temporary protected status for Haitian nationals who currently reside in the United States. Introduced July 17, 2009; referred to the Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security, and International Law on August 19, 2009.

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