

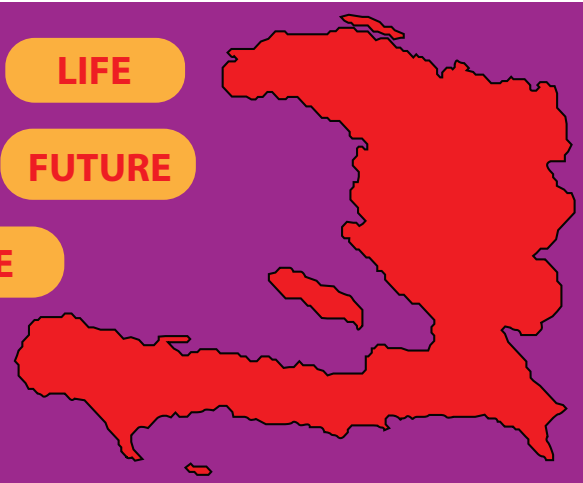
RIGHTS

LIFE

JUSTICE

FUTURE

HOPE



# HAITI

## WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

### MOVING FROM ACTION TO ADVOCACY

The International Community has responded magnificently to an unimaginable tragedy in Haiti. On January 12th, in the space of a few seconds, a catastrophe befell a Caribbean Island who has had her fair share of misfortunes in recent and long term history. Hearts were moved, bank accounts examined, fund-raising activities pondered, donations made and resources dispatched to alleviate the immediate needs of a broken people.

It has been pointed out that never has the human race responded so quickly and so generously to such a tragedy. Even the horrors of the last tsunami were outmatched. People from every walk of life could identify with the plight of our brothers and sisters and they did what they could to help. Countries, so used to being on the receiving end of aid, examined their consciences and held out their hands to assist. In short we were tested and we stood up to the challenge.

#### COULD SOMEONE, THEREFORE, PLEASE EXPLAIN TO ME WHAT WENT SO HORRIBLY WRONG?

- ï Port- au -Prince airport soon became a vast warehouse of useable goods. Major distribution problems developed where the airport remained a warehouse.
- ï Medecins sans FrontiÈres flights were diverted while military planes received priority clearance to land.
- ï There were thousands of United Nations Personnel on the ground when the quake struck.
- ï Media people from all over the world saturated an already difficult situation.
- ï Their somber faces, telling a story of inexplicable suffering, soon paled into insignificance as they blatantly preached ìthere is nobody here to helpî.
- ï Respected aid agencies jockeyed for positions so that ìtheirî aid could be seen to be getting through.

- ï Nations tripped over each other trying to help with no obvious coordination.
- ï Leadership was in very short supply.
- ï Responsibility was ignored.

## **HOW COULD SO MUCH GOOD WILL AND MONSTROUS MOUNTAINS OF RESOURCES BE SO SHAMELESSLY MISMANAGED?**

There are questions that the International Community must ask itself. So many valuable lessons are here to be learned. Do we have the guts to sit down and ask the relevant questions? Can we boldly and without judgment face the issues?

## **ANOTHER NATURAL DISASTER WILL HIT THIS PLANET**

How can we better be prepared to handle it when it comes?  
Who leads? Who prioritizes? Who does logistics? WHO? WHO? WHO?  
We CAN do better – we MUST do better – however we can't if we don't try.

## **WHAT'S AHEAD FOR HAITI?**

Soon the attention of the International Community will be diverted from Haiti. How do I know that? Because the media will once again decide what is good for us. But before we scramble too far from the epi-centre of the disaster let us make a list that might point us in the right direction.

## **HAITI NEEDS**

1. An immediate cancellation of all of Haiti's debt. {France should very carefully examine its role in the collection of illicit fees from Haiti from 1825-1922 under the pretext of compensation and reparation for recognized sovereignty. The current value of this illegal collection of money, according to the 2001 UN Conference on Race held in Durban, South Africa is US\$21 billion}.
2. A "Planning Group", led by Haitians, to draw up a comprehensive plan of the way forward for Haiti.
3. A respected Haitian who will publicly keep account of the promissory notes made by benefactors.
4. An integrated re-building process to be begun using the expertise of Haiti's manpower and resources.
5. A coordinated international response spearheaded by Haitians and experts identified by Haitians.

Let the goodwill and generosity of the International Community be our motto as Haiti moves forward led by Haitians, supported by us.

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