

2 Year Haiti Advocacy Week HAWG Report – Washington, DC - Jan. 23-25, 2012

Overview: The Haiti Advocacy Working Group ([HAWG](#)) promoted a week of [2-Year Haiti Commemoration](#) events on Capitol Hill, Jan. 23-25, 2012. The events focused on the need for increased aid transparency and accountability, greater consultation and partnerships with Haitian grassroots networks, stronger US commitment to delivering on aid promises, stronger US support for capacity building within the Haitian government and prioritizing the needs and voices of poor and marginalized Haitian communities, including Internally Displaced Person (IDP) camp communities. As part of the week, 5 members of Congress (Reps Frederica Wilson, Yvette D. Clarke, Barbara Lee, Donald Payne and Maxine Waters) sponsored 5 different congressional briefings on gender-based violence (GBV), cholera, aid accountability, land and housing and democracy and governance. The HAWG sponsored a public Haiti reception in the U.S. Capitol, as well as the participation of 7 Haitian grassroots leaders who traveled from Haiti to testify before Congress. Rep. Lee also sponsored an internal meeting between the Haitian leaders, some Diaspora partners and the heads and sub directors of the Haiti programs for USAID, State Dept. Office of the Special Coordinator, Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Obama Administration.



Rep. Wilson speaks at the Land & Housing Briefing, with speakers Colette Lespinasse & Pierre DouDou.



Marie Ange Noel of Fanm Deside speaks at the GBV Briefing.



Emmaniah Duchard, KOFATIV, & Meena Jagannath, IJDH/BAI, meet Rep. Yvette Clarke at HAWG reception.

[Click here to see more photos from the Haiti Advocacy Week, provided by UUSC.](#)

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Chart of Presenters and Organizers

Haitian Grassroots Leaders who Presented	9	Marie Ange Noel, Fanm Deside Emmania Duchard, KOFAVIV Marguerite Salomon, GCFV Dr. Ralph Ternier, Zanmi Lasante Pierre DouDou, RENHASSA Colette Lespinasse, GARR Antonal Mortime, POHDH Rene Magloire, USIPS, Previous Haitian Justice Minister Jean Robert Pierre, COZPAM
Haitian Diaspora Leaders who Presented	3	Manolia Charlotin, Boston Haitian Reporter Dominique Toussaint, Mobilize for Haiti Kysseleine Cherestal, ActionAid/UUSC/HAN
US Members of Congress who Presented	9	Rep's Frederica Wilson (D-17-FL), Yvette D. Clarke (D-11-NY), Barbara Lee (D-9-CA), Donald Payne (D-10-NJ), Maxine Waters (D-35-CA), John Conyers (D-14-MI), Sheila Jackson-Lee (D-18-TX), Jan Schakowsky (D-9-IL), Dennis Kucinich (D-10-OH)
US Officials/Offices who Presented	5	Thomas C. Adams, U.S. State Dept. Haiti Special Coordinator Beth Hogan, USAID Haiti Task Team Director Eileen Smith, US State Dept Dr. Jordan Tappero, CDC Health Systems Reconstruction Director Ambassador Eric Goosby, US Global AIDS Coordinator Ambassador Melanne Vermeer's Office, State Dept. Global Women's Issues
US NGOs/Academics/Experts who Presented	11	Margaret L. Satterthwaite, NYU Dr. Mark Weisbrot, CEPR Dr. Jon Andrus, Pan American Health Organization Mark Schuller, CUNY Ben Smilowitz, Disaster Accountability Project Nicole Lee, TransAfrica Forum Michele Mitchell, News at 11 Brian Concannon, IJDH Michelle Karshan, Li, Li, Li! Read Peter Sollis, Inter-American Development Bank
US NGOs that Helped Coordinate HAWG Reception and Partner Participation	15	ActionAid American Jewish World Service Center for Economic and Policy Research Church World Service Environmental Justice Initiative for Haiti Gender Action Grassroots International Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti / Bureau des Avocats Internationaux Li Li Li Read! Mennonite Central Committee Oxfam America Partners in Health TransAfrica Forum United Methodist Church, GBCS Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Briefing - January 23, 2012

Sponsors: Rep. Barbara Lee, Rep. Maxine Waters and Rep. Frederica Wilson

Moderator: Eileen Smith, US State Department

Speakers: Marie Ange Noel, Fanm Deside

Emmania Duchard, KOFAVIV

Margaret L. Satterthwaite, NYU

Panelists confirmed that IDP tent camps remain precarious for women and young girls and highlighted many of the major causes of this phenomenon and potential solutions to address it. Camps still lack lighting, locks, and privacy and toilets are often far from the camps. Many women and children find themselves at the mercy of men who provide food or money. They suffer a wide range of psychological, physical, sexual and economic abuse as a result. Camps are headed by male headed committees who abuse their powers and possess weapons. Prosecution of offenders remains difficult due to discrimination, fear, money, and a corrupt and out-dated judicial system. Lack of police and judicial training further hinders this quest. Medical certificates after a rape are not technically required, but they are often treated as mandatory by police and must be obtained within 72 hours. However, the General Hospital is often on strike and other clinics are often too remote, inaccessible or closed, making this acquisition difficult. Many women grow tired of long, drawn out civil processes, particularly because no legal aid exists.

Current opportunities to address GBV, not only in camps, but across the country, include a new piece of Haitian legislation that incorporates responsible paternity and comprehensive legislation on the prevention, punishment and elimination of violence against women. In addition, a parliamentary committee is currently set up to undertake penal and justice system reform as civil codes date back to 1835. Advocacy and education on GBV must be continued at all levels. Rep. Frederica Wilson expressed the need to involve males in the efforts. At the briefing, Rep. Wilson also announced the introduction of H.R.521, a comprehensive GBV resolution that includes recommendations drawn from consultation with HAWG and our Haitian partners. Fifty Members of Congress are original co-sponsors and a companion bill S.352 was introduced by Senator Kirsten Gillibrand.

Speaker Quotes

“GBV goes beyond rape. There is also much domestic abuse. Wife beatings should be included in the GBV category.” – Marie Ange Noel, Coordinator, FANM DESIDE (Women Decide).

“A 5 yr old girl was recently raped by a 24 yr old man. He was protected in the camps; the judge decided to let him go. KOFAVIV and accompanying lawyers had to insist on the case to have the aggressor re-arrested... The judicial system is corrupt – if you have no money, you cannot get justice.” - Emmania Duchard, KOFAVIV (Commission of Women Victims for Victims)

On recent study, “Those with the furthest latrines and bathing facilities were twice as likely to be raped.” - Margaret Satterthwaite, Director, Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at NYU Law School

[Click here to read the HAWG’s gender-based violence policy recommendations.](#)

Cholera Briefing – January 24, 2012

Sponsors: Reps. Yvette D. Clark, Donald Payne, Lee, Wilson and Waters

Speakers: Ambassador Eric Goosby

Dr. Ralph Ternier, Zanmi Lasante/ Partners in Health

Dr. Jordan Tappero, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Dr. Mark Weisbrot, CEPR

Dr. Jon Andrus, the Pan American Health Organization

Panelists asserted that cholera in Haiti continues to be a serious issue as over 7,000 confirmed deaths from the disease have now been reported along with 500,000 other cases of documented infection. Haiti currently has the largest outbreak in the world. The U.N. continues to deny its direct responsibility for bringing the disease to the country despite repeated tests by numerous organizations linking the strain to Nepalese U.N. peacekeeping soldiers. Coordinated efforts with the Haitian government to vaccinate, educate, build infrastructure and train health workers are underway. Cholera threatens the economic development of the Caribbean because of the frequency and ease of travel. There have already been 400 deaths and 21,000 infected in the Dominican Republic due to cholera. Interventions must complement each other, not be either-or programs.

Speaker Quotes

“Capacity and infrastructure are the backbone of sustainable health development.” - Dr. Jon Andrus, Deputy Director of Pan American Health Organization, Regional Office for the Americas

[Click here to learn more about Partners in Health’s work to address the cholera situation in Haiti.](#)

Aid Accountability Briefing & Documentary – January 24, 2012

Sponsors: Reps. Clarke, Lee, Payne, Wilson, Jesse Jackson Jr., Raul Grivalva

Speakers: Mark Schuller, CUNY

Manolia Charlotin, Boston Haitian Reporter

Ben Smilowitz, Disaster Accountability Project

Nicole Lee, TransAfrica Forum

Mark Weisbot, Center for Economic and Policy Research

Michele Mitchell, News at 11

A screening of the documentary “Where Did the Money go?” was sponsored by Rep. Yvette Clarke. The documentary was produced and promoted by TransAfrica Forum and CEPR, as opposed to the HAWG. The documentary focused on aid accountability and transparency following the Haiti earthquake. Millions of dollars were quickly pledged to help Haiti recover post-earthquake, but unfortunately not all money promised was delivered the way donors had anticipated.

Upcoming opportunities to increase US Haiti aid accountability include needed passage of the Assessing Progress Act, S. 1576, in the Senate and contract procurement reform within USAID.

[Click here to see the video of the panel discussion following the screening of "Where did the Money Go?"](#)

[Click here to read the HAWG’s summary of the Assessing Progress in Haiti Act, S. 1576.](#)

Land and Housing Briefing – January 24, 2012

Sponsors: Reps. Lee, Wilson, Clark, Payne and Waters

Moderator: Brian Concannon, IJDH

Speakers: Pierre DouDou, RENHASSA

Colette Lespinasse, GARR

Antonal Mortime, POHDH

Dominique Toussaint, Mobilize for Haiti

Michelle Karshan, Alternative Chance

Panelists made connections between the ongoing lack of a National Housing Plan and the lack of needed land reform, including the protection of agrarian land in decentralized locations. Critique came up on Martelly's 16/6 relocation plan, to relocate 6 camps into 16 neighborhoods. Panelists asserted that this plan does not represent a comprehensive housing plan and would only affect 5% of the over half million displaced IDP community. Several panelists concluded that a new concerted strategy must be designed to rehouse all half million plus displaced Haitians, better assess the realities of Haitians dispersed throughout the country in order to understand the even larger housing needs of those who have left IDP camps, and require the US and international donor communities to honor their housing commitments and support Haitian government land reform efforts.

Pierre DouDou addressed many of the land rights violations that have taken place for peasants throughout the country, illustrating how the cadastre system has been a long source of conflict throughout the years. He cited some of the massacres that have taken place in order to dispossess peasants of land, such as the Artibonite Massacre of the 1980's that killed 139 peasants. Lack of proper titling and access to the land for peasants, due in large part to the interests and power of elite landlords and corrupt local governments, has led to the diminution of land for grassroots populations. Currently, the Haitian government spends only 3% of its budget on agricultural development, an even smaller percentage of which goes towards staple crops and sustainable development for these peasant communities. Deforestation, soil erosion and other land degradation have all led to a decrease in viable agrarian land for production. This is why the land on which the Northern Industrial Park is to be built was such a significant loss. It constituted one of the richest agrarian areas in the country, but has now been stripped of agricultural production and the peasants in the area have been displaced, constituting a huge human rights violation.

Panelists also discussed the ongoing reality of forced camp evictions and the fact that President Martelly has not yet made a public statement condemning them. At least 2 of the 6 camps within his plan have already faced some sort of eviction. Evictions go against the Haitian constitution and legal parameters. Grassroots based legal initiatives through groups like BAI are underway, however, to help fight against evictions and give victims legal counsel and outlets. Panelists strongly encouraged US government officials and US members of Congress to speak out against forced evictions and include protection against evictions into all shelter and housing plans.

Diaspora leader, Toussaint Dominique, discussed the need for decentralized housing throughout the country and the Haitian government commitment to build/finance 100,000 housing units in order to meet the needs not only of PAP area IDP campers, but of Haitians dispersed throughout the country.

Rep. Barbara Lee spoke, supporting the 'Assessing Progress in Haiti Act' and encouraging NGO's to help it get passed in the Senate, and help secure great accountability for the U.S. Housing plan.

Speakers' Quotes:

“(The choosing of agrarian land to build the Northern Industrial Park) is an extreme violation of people’s human rights. In order for people to produce, they must first have access to land. In Haiti, more than 90% of peasants don’t even have access to land.” – Pierre DouDou, Coordinator of RENHASSA (National Coalition for Food Security and Food Sovereignty).

[Click here to read the HAWG’s recommendations on land and housing development.](#)

Democracy and Governance Briefing – January 25, 2012

Sponsors: Reps. Maxine Waters and Barbara Lee

Moderator: Rep. Maxine Waters

Speakers: Thomas C. Adams, Haiti Special Coordinator, U.S. Department of State
Rene Magloire, USIPS, Previous Haitian Justice Minister
Brian Concannon, Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti (IJDH)
Mark Weisbrot, Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR)
Marguerite Salomon, Groupe Concertation des Femmes Victimes (GCFV)
Peter Sollis, Inter-American Development Bank
Michelle Karshan, Alternative Chance

Panelists confirmed that Haiti’s historic lack of governance continues to be problematic today and has hindered reconstruction efforts. Grassroots organizations along with the government need help in rebuilding capacity. System of rule of law is outdated, corrupt and disorganized and is a focus of reform for the Martelly administration. U.S. procurement contracts largely are awarded to U.S. companies rather than Haitian firms aiding in their economic recovery. In fact, Rep. Waters directly asked Adams to find or create a database of Haitian firms and work with them.

Forced to relocate to a larger room to accommodate the large crowd, Waters framed the session by stating, *“Effective democratic institutions and stable government infrastructure are crucial for Haiti’s development.”* Adams agreed, noting a recent RAND report that stresses the problem of Haiti’s lack of governance. He stated that 80% of Haitian government workers are either ghosts or show up once per month. Refocusing some of the responsibility, Mark Weisbrot of CEPR, discussed the problem of aid procurement acknowledging 82% of all U.S. government contracts have gone to companies inside the Beltway and not to Haitian firms. Waters directly told Adams that she wants State to work with the banks and Haitian government to create a database of Haitian businesses for contracts. Waters also questioned Peter Sollis from the Inter-American Development Bank on the consultation of programs with the Haitian government before implementation.

Marguerite Salomon, of the women’s organization, GCFV, stressed that after the earthquake, many women’s groups lost their power because they were dealing with the immediate needs and problems after the earthquake, such as food, security and health. She further described the plight of young women and girls in the camps. The high rate of sexual abuse has resulted in a high number of pregnancies in the camps. Salomon also stated the need to give women more support so that they can play a greater economic role in not only in their own lives but in Haiti’s larger recovery.

Rule of law was another heavily discussed issue as problems with the justice system were described. Brian Concannon, from IJDH and Rene Magloire, USIPS and previous Haitian Justice

Minister, spoke of the lengthy procedures, confusing legal texts, dysfunction in penal chain, problems with pretrial detention, and widespread corruption that plague the system. Disorganization and lack of records have resulted in judges and prosecutors not knowing how many trials have taken place in their jurisdiction nor how many are held in prison. Rule of law is one of President Martelly's core pillars for improvement.

Magloire also highlighted 3 existing Haitian laws that needed stronger application and support from both the Haitian and US governments. These include 1) The law on the superior council of judiciary, 2) The law of the status of judges and 3) The law on the school of judges (magistrate's school). He recognized the difficulty in applying these laws due to several vacancies in government, but recognized some room for hope with the positions having been recently filled 2 months ago. Magloire also affirmed that President Martelly recently established a commission on justice reform, of which Magloire is Vice President. Its mandates are to 1) Study and prepare needed measures for justice reform. 2) Study the justice system. 3) Study legal codes. 4) Work on regulations for legal codes. In this capacity, Magloire has identified three problems that need immediate attention, and requested support for the US government in building Haitian government capacity in these areas: 1) prolonged pre-trial retention, 2) fighting against impunity, 3) fighting against corruption.

In order to better understand the political and economic structure of Haiti, Michelle Karshan gave an overview on Haiti's wealthy elite/business class and their role in maintaining an inequitable system, their control of monopolies, commerce, security forces and the government, and further how the business class prospers from disasters and occupations. Karshan also praised many from the elite who fought for democracy and justice while noting that many were tortured, imprisoned or executed under the Duvalier regime as a result. She also discussed the elite's relationship with multinational corporations, the international community and thanked the organizers of this 3-day focus on Haiti for including grassroots and human rights groups from Haiti at the table. Karshan and other panelists like Mark Weisbrot and Brian Concannon also suggested that Haiti's government and its capacity be reinforced and that it be urged to work in compliance with Haiti's 1987 Constitution which institutionalizes democracy, human rights, entitlements and inclusion of the majority as well as clearly lays out the responsibilities of the various branches of government.

Speakers' Quotes

"After the earthquake, many of the women's groups lost their power. They were no longer able to participate in the organizations in the same way, because they had to deal with immediate problems, problems with health, security, food, etc...We ask that everyone who has the means help to reinforce the capacity of the Haitian government and to also reinforce the capacity of grassroots organizations." - Marguerite Solomon, Director of GCFV (Groupe Concertation des Femmes Victimes or Consultation Group for Women Victims).

"This commission (on justice reform) will have a task that is both delicate and extremely important. It's important to note that these codes will be useless unless it's also accompanied by a reform in the management of the justice system." – Rene Magloire, USIPS, Previous Minister of Justice

"You can't have a functioning democracy without a good criminal justice system." – Rep. Waters.

[Click here to read the HAWG's policy recommendations for International Financial Institutions.](#)

[Click here to read the HAWG's USAID procurement policy recommendation.](#)

MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE HAITI ADVOCACY WEEK

[Huffington Post](#)

[HAWG 2 Year Advocacy Week Press Release](#)

BLOGS AND TWITTER ON THE HAITI ADVOCACY WEEK

[ActionAid USA](#)

[Center for Economic and Policy Research](#)

[Church World Service](#)

[Unitarian Universalist Service Committee](#)

[United Methodist General Board of Church & Society](#)

SPEAKERS' BIOS

[Click here for a list of all speakers' bios and links.](#)

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