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Members of the HAWG on the Sixth Anniversary of the Haitian Earthquake

MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

"On this important date in Haiti's collective memory, we at Mennonite Central Committee pause to remember those who lost so much owing to the earthquake and reaffirm our decades-long commitment to Haitian-led relief, development, and peacebuilding work. We look forward to continuing to bring our partners' voices to Washington in 2016 to inform and impact U.S. policy toward Haiti and strive for a more just and peaceful country where the dignity and human rights of all are protected." —**J Ron Byler**, *U.S. Executive Director, Mennonite Central Committee*

CENTER FOR ECONOMIC AND POLICY RESEARCH

"Six years later, the people of Haiti continue to suffer injustices and calamities resulting not just from natural disasters, but from the failures of the international community. Shamefully, the cholera epidemic — which also began six years ago this year — continues to sicken thousands and kill hundreds each year, and the UN, whose troops directly caused the outbreak, has yet to take responsibility for it. Nor has the international community stepped forward to fund a \$2.2 billion plan to eradicate the disease, despite promises.

"Meanwhile, many thousands of Haitians remain homeless, despite the billions in aid offered. And now, Haiti faces a political crisis, after a year without a functioning legislature and an electoral system jeopardized following fraudulent elections that were approved by international organizations and governments.

"To begin solving these problems, there has to be greater accountability and transparency around international aid programs in Haiti. Most importantly, people of Haiti must have control over their institutions, and ultimately over their own destiny, free from unwanted interference. The people of Haiti

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have Haiti's interests at heart; the international community, sadly, often has not.” –**Mark Weisbrot**, *Co-Director, Center for Economic and Policy Research*

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

“Six years ago today, a tremendous earthquake of historic magnitude shattered the lives of Haitian mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers. Their cries of lamentation echoed across Haiti even as the aftershocks continued to rock Port-au-Prince and the surrounding countryside. Haiti, the poorest state in the Western Hemisphere, is also the island-home of a branch of The Episcopal Church. More Episcopal souls live and breathe in the Diocese of Haiti than in any other diocese in the world, and on this day, we stand in solidarity and solemn remembrance with Haitians everywhere.

“We continue to grieve with families who lost their loved ones in the earthquake and with those who were affected by the cholera epidemic that still ravages the Haitian community. We express gratitude for the lives salvaged from the ruins, for the creative resiliency of the Haitian people, and for new dreams imagined and realized as the rebuilding effort continues, including in the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Port-au-Prince. Finally, we recognize that there is still tremendous work ahead of us to heal, transform, and sustain the country of Haiti.

“Tens of thousands of Haitians remain displaced from their homes, subsisting in the dangerous and unsanitary conditions of tent camps. The Haitian cholera epidemic has sickened hundreds of thousands of Haitians and ended over 9,000 lives to date. Faced with these enormous challenges, we find hope and strength in our faith. The Haitians have a proverb: Bondye di ou: fè pa M or “God says to you: ‘Do your part, and I’ll do mine.’” God is at work in Haiti, moving with doctors and engineers, teachers and farmers, and reminding and encouraging us to continue our good work. Indeed, as Episcopalians, we have a crucial part to play.

“We can hold our governments accountable for ensuring that development aid is distributed fairly and transparently, and we can call on policymakers to adequately fund the Cholera Elimination Plan that delivers much-needed supplies and vaccinations to at-risk Haitians. We can give our time, our expertise, and our funds to the ongoing effort of restoring Haiti and promoting sustainable development therein. And last, we can remember that the Haitian people are our family, our brothers and sisters in Christ, and by working together with them and with our God, we can fulfill the holy task of healing Haiti.” –**The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry**, *Presiding Bishop and Primate, The Episcopal Church*

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CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

“6 years after the January 2010 earthquake, CWS continues to act and advocate for access to safe housing. In line with government priorities for food security, CWS also accompanies farmers in the arid Northwest of Haiti to increase agricultural production, which today is all the more important because of devastating drought in some areas and changing weather patterns in others, which have decreased food production and increased hunger. In all of its programs, community participation is essential, while special attention is given to children and people with disabilities. Haiti's political context also confirms the importance of a good and stable government in the development and functioning of the country.

“Despite the progress made by CWS, its partner organizations, dozens of similar organizations and indeed the Haitian people themselves in the last six years, the perpetuation of poverty leaves most of the Haitian people vulnerable to future disasters. The combination of effective and accountable governance, protection for all of her citizens, increased economic foreign assistance -in line with transparent governmental programs and respect for all human rights - remains an essential foundation for a sustainable and developed Haiti.

“CWS and its partners will continue to advocate for this.” –**Rev. John L. McCullough**, *President and CEO, Church World Service*

GENDER ACTION

“Haiti’s post-earthquake donor response highlights the importance of HAWG’s role holding aid accountable. While the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank have been among Haiti’s largest post-earthquake funders, their investments have little reduced Haiti’s acute income and gender inequalities. Of the roughly \$1 billion that the World Bank committed to Haiti since the earthquake, only a fraction of one percent of World Bank funds targeted Haiti’s chronic gender-based violence. The IDB’s keystone Caracol Industrial Park project has delivered only 8,000 of 65,000 promised jobs, mainly to women apparel assembly workers who are pressured to produce ever more for minimal wages insufficient to make ends meet, in inhumane conditions that sometimes include sexual harassment by male supervisors. The IFIs must do better in meeting their promises to reduce poverty and gender discrimination.” – **Elaine Zuckerman**, *Founder and President, Gender Action*

SOLIDARITY CENTER

“So much for millions of dollars and "building back better." Six years after the Haiti earthquake, women and men are still struggling to find decent work that pays a dignified wage. Until Haitians can earn a living that allows them to do more than barely survive, there will be no real recovery. The international community and Haitian government should be ashamed of the policies that guarantee poverty wages and grant concessions to multinational corporations instead of providing real opportunities for Haitians workers to improve their lives and livelihoods and build a better country for themselves and their children.” –**Shawna Bader-Blau**, *Executive Director, Solidarity Center*

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AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

“Six years have already passed since the earthquake struck Haiti on January 12, 2010. The earthquake’s epicenter was near Port-au-Prince killing over 300,000 persons, affecting numerous communities, leaving about 2 million people homeless. We know that better construction could have saved lives.

“We continue to miss those who are gone, knowing they left too early. What we did not know at the time is how long it would take to build back and how challenging it would be to build back better. Today, many Haitians continue remain homeless and rumors abound about funds that disappeared or were misused. Countless families continue to live in tents or make-shift homes that cannot protect them from the elements.

“Today, Haiti is facing a turbulent election period that could impact on Haiti’s future as much as the previous earthquake. Governance structures need to be solid to use our resources in such a way that Haiti can respond to the basic needs of its population. Haiti needs a government that can constructively manage the migration of numerous Haitians and persons of Haitian descent from the Dominican Republic.

“The international community needs to make good on the assistance it was supposed to give after the earthquake. Supporting Haiti to better manage its resources for greater more equitable development is the best homage to those who lost their lives.” –**Regine Dupuy**, *Country Representative, American Friends Service Committee, Haiti*

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