

The White House

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

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U.S. Government Haiti Earthquake Disaster Response Update

On January 12, a massive earthquake struck the nation of Haiti, causing catastrophic damage inside and around the capital city of Port-au-Prince. President Obama has said, "at this moment, we are moving forward with one of the largest relief efforts in our history -- to save lives and to deliver relief that averts an even larger catastrophe. In these difficult hours, America stands united. We stand united with the people of Haiti, who have shown such incredible resilience, and we will help them to recover and to rebuild."

The United States Government has mobilized resources and people to aid in the relief effort. At the direction of President Obama, this is a whole-of-government effort, and USAID has the lead in this swift, aggressive and coordinated response. Military personnel are playing an indispensable role in supporting this humanitarian effort, including making the logistics chain possible and distributing life-saving assistance. Aid workers are working around the clock to deliver more aid more quickly and more effectively to more people in need.

Below, please find some key facts and examples of government actions to date. All numbers below are accurate as of 2 p.m., Wednesday, January 20.

INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION

At the request of the Haitian government, the U.S. continues to coordinate America's relief efforts with the United Nations and the international community. We are coordinating closely with more than 30 nations and hundreds of NGOs to deliver food and water quickly throughout the country.

- Tuesday evening, the President's National Security Advisor convened a Principals Committee meeting with the Vice President, Secretaries of State, Defense, Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, our Ambassador to the UN, the Administrators of USAID and FEMA, and the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs to discuss ongoing efforts and coordination.
- Afterwards, Dr. Shah said the meeting was an opportunity "to take stock of the performance and to make sure we were doing everything we possibly could to accelerate our efforts and do even better by reaching more people in Haiti with needed and critical supplies of food, water, shelter, and other critically needed items like medical kits and access to medical services."
- Secretary Clinton spoke with Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) President Moreno on January 19 about ongoing relief efforts.

HEALTH/MEDICAL

- **The USNS Comfort arrived in Haiti today.** The Comfort brings a hospital with a capacity for over 1,000 beds on board and has already started to receive patients by helicopter.
- Department of Defense personnel have treated over 200 patients and supported the movement of more than 29,000 lbs of medical supplies to date.
- As of January 20, more than 5,000 patients have been treated by Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMATs) from the Department of Health and Human Services. .

AIRPORTS & PORTS

- The airfield is open for 24/7 operations – 153 flights were expected for today. The U.S. was using 38 of those slots.
 - U.S. Transportation Command reports that since commencing air operations, a total of 136 missions have been flown that have carried more than 2,400 tons of equipment and more than 1,900 passengers into Haiti.
- U.S. Army/Navy dive teams with underwater construction teams continued to assess port structural damage with the goal of reopening as quickly as possible.

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- As of today, there are 20 U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard vessels and 51 helicopters deployed.
- The San Isidro airfield in the Dominican Republic is now open for C-130 operations to assist in the Haiti relief effort.

SAFETY & SECURITY

- The major focus of military efforts is establishing water distribution sites, and delivering fuel, food, and medicine.
- As of January 20, approximately 11,500 military personnel (2,000 ashore and 9,500 afloat) are a part of the relief effort.
 - The BATAAN Amphibious Readiness Group (ARG)/22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit with 1,960 Marines and Sailors arrived and began moving forces ashore yesterday. The Marines began relief operations in the vicinity of Leogane.
- The Coast Guard has approximately 516 service members on site assisting with the Haiti recovery effort (24 ashore, 422 afloat, and 70 aircrew). On January 19, Secretary Napolitano authorized the activation of up to 900 reserve U.S. Coast Guard service men and women in to (mission: replace those deployed on the Comfort? And to assist with port security?) .

EVACUATION & RESCUES

- **Evacuations:** The U.S. is conducting evacuations 24 hours a day. 88 American evacuees departed Port-Au-Prince this morning (1/20). On January 19, 1328 were evacuated. To date, more than 6,174 Americans have been evacuated.
- **Search and Rescue:** On January 19, Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams from Virginia Beach and New York rescued two children. And a USAR team from Fairfax worked with locals as well a French USAR team to rescue a female Haitian who had been trapped for seven days without food or water in a supermarket in the Bois Verna neighborhood of Port-au-Prince.
- Currently, 43 international USAR teams, comprised of 1,739 rescue workers, with 161 dogs, are working in Haiti. 6 of those teams are from the United States – with 511 rescue workers from Fairfax County, Los Angeles County, Miami, Miami-Dade, Virginia Beach, and New York.
 - To date, U.S. USAR teams have rescued 43 people from collapsed buildings, while international and U.S. USAR teams together have rescued a total of 122 people.

FOOD & WATER

- U.S. military aircraft, helicopters, and vessels are giving the highest priority to the shipment of water.
 - 152,000 liters bulk water and more than 165,000 water bottles were delivered yesterday (1/19).
 - The USS Carl Vinson is producing 100,000 gallons of potable water daily – 2,000 gallons were distributed yesterday.
 - Water tanks are being installed in each zone of the city. Potable water is now available at 45 distribution points.
- There are currently four established food and water distribution hubs and 190 distribution sites active and serving 96,000 people.
- The U.S. Coast Guard has distributed a total of 38.5 tons of water (62,880 bottles) to date.
- Over the past several days, JTF-Haiti has distributed more than 400,000 meals/humanitarian rations and more than 600,000 bottles of water.
- C-17 air delivery of food and water will resume Thursday (1/21) -- approximately 15,000 water bottles and 14,500 MREs/Humanitarian Rations are slated for delivery.
 - The first C-17 air delivery was conducted Monday, consisting of 14,000 1-liter bottles and 14,000 packages of daily rations.
- The vessel Americas departed Port Everglades today with 500,000 MREs, 290,000 liters of drinking water, 8,400 cots, 19,500 blankets, 41,800 tarps, 560 rolls of sheeting, and 70,000 comfort kits provided by FEMA, as well as medical supplies provided by USAID.
- On January 19, two USAID/OFDA funded flights carrying emergency relief supplies arrived in Port-au-Prince. Commodities included:
 - 40,200 water containers that provide water for 80,400 people,
 - 13,056 hygiene kits, which will serve 65,280 people,
 - 200 rolls of plastic sheeting that will provide shelter for 10,000 people,
 - 5 U.N. World Health Organization medical kits,
 - 8 water bladders,
 - 6 water purification units – each unit produces 100,000 liters of water per day and will provide water to a total of 60,000 people,
 - 3 industrial air-conditioning units, and
 - 1 generator.
- As of January 19, total USAID/OFDA commodities delivered to Port-au-Prince included:
 - 9 water treatment units to provide 900,000 liters of safe drinking water for 90,000 individuals per day;
 - 71,000 ten-liter water containers to benefit 142,000 people;

- o nearly 24,500 hygiene kits to serve more than 121,000 beneficiaries;
- o 700 rolls of plastic sheeting to support the shelter needs of approximately 35,000 people;
- o 18 water bladders, each with a capacity of 10,000 liters, and
- o five U.N. World Health Organization (WHO) medical kits capable of supplying medical supplies for up to 10,000 individuals for a two-month period.

ADOPTIONS

- As Secretary Clinton said today at the State Department, “We are coordinating closely with the Haitian government, the United Nations, our other international partners, and NGOs on the ground to ensure that aid reaches Haiti’s orphanages and that newly orphaned children are accounted for and cared for...We will also do everything we can to reunite the many children and families who have become separated in the aftermath of the earthquake. And this is a crucial point: we have to be very careful not to exacerbate this difficult situation by removing children from Haiti who might have surviving family members. We will not let red tape stand in the way of helping those in need, but we will ensure that international adoption procedures to protect children and families are followed.”
- The State Department is heading up a **joint task force** with the Departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services to streamline this process and ensure that these families are united as quickly as possible while still ensuring that proper safeguards are in place to protect children in our care.
- An interagency working group has been established to focus on the humanitarian needs of highly vulnerable children. And the Administration is also working closely with the many Members of Congress who are understandably very concerned about this process.

ASSISTANCE

- As of today, in FY 2010, the U.S. Government has provided nearly \$171 million in humanitarian assistance for the Haiti earthquake:
 - o Secretary of Defense Gates signed the Haiti Disaster Relief Execution Order authorizing up to \$20 million in humanitarian, disaster and civic aids funds,
 - o USAID’s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) contribution of nearly \$82 million,
 - o USAID’s Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) assistance valued at \$68 million, and
 - o USAID Dominican Republic (USAID/DR) health assistance valued at \$1 million.

HOW TO SUPPORT RELIEF EFFORTS

We are all deeply affected by the devastation in Haiti. Our common humanity demands that we act, as does America’s leadership and deep ties with Haiti. At the request of President Obama, former Presidents Bush and Clinton are coordinating private assistance and urging Americans to help at www.clintonbushhaitifund.org

- Funding raised through Text Message Program (keyword "Haiti", and short code number "90999"): **\$25 million from over 2.5 million people.**
- You can also contribute online through ClintonBushHaitiFund.org.
 - o Text “QUAKE” to 20222 to charge a \$10 donation to the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund (the donation will be added to your cell phone bill).
- Find more ways to help through the Center for International Disaster Information (www.cidi.org).

Get Information about Friends or Family

- The State Department has set up a web page that will serve as a clearinghouse for information on Haiti: state.gov/haitiquake, including a new tool, the “Person Finder,” to allow people to find and share information on missing loved ones in Haiti.
- The State Department Operations Center has set up the following phone number for Americans seeking information about family members in Haiti: 1-888-407-4747 (due to heavy volume, some callers may receive a recording). You can also send an email to the State Department. Please be aware that communications within Haiti are very difficult at this time.
- The State Department has also partnered with the tech community to launch a free SMS relief information service to help people in Haiti. The text message program allows people with service from Digetel and Voila to text their location and needs to a free short code: “4636.” Since the initiative was launched on January 18, NGO partners have received over 2,000 messages, including on food distribution, missing persons, water.
- **Whitehouse.gov** — The White House website continues to serve as a focal point for information for about the relief effort, including accounting for family and friends in Haiti and contributing to the relief effort.

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