

Haiti: Canada hosting International Donor Conference on Haiti

The human toll of the devastating earthquake in Haiti last week is just beginning to emerge. The Government of Haiti estimates 100,000 people killed and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) approximate some 3.5 million individuals affected. These shocking numbers only begin to tell the story of disaster. Poverty, state breakdown, political instability, and environmental degradation, have all played their share in ensuring last week's earthquake inflicted terrible damage.

Many CCIC members are among the Aid agencies struggling to get desperately needed food, water, medicines, and shelter to vulnerable women, men, and children. At this critical juncture, the international community must ensure Haitians themselves are, wherever possible, leading in rebuilding their country. Lessons from the Tsunami and other crises too often reveal that local actors and capacities are overlooked with negative ramifications on development and rebuilding over the medium to long term.

CCIC welcomes the announcement by Minister Cannon that Canada will host an International Donor Conference on Haiti on Monday January 25, 2010. As the second largest bilateral donor in Haiti and with Haiti being Canada's second priority country, Canada has a strong interest in enabling Donor Coordination. We call on Canada at next week's Conference to help ensure Haitians themselves are at the forefront of setting the terms of rebuilding their country. In particular, we urge Canada and other donors to ensure women and women's organisations are included in relief, recovery, and rebuilding efforts.

For more information on Canada's aid to Haiti and Earthquake Relief Fund, see CIDA's website: <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/ACDI-CIDA.nsf/eng/JOS-114172324-U9P>.

For information on the CCIC members active in Haiti, click on Haiti in the Who's Who section of CCIC's website: <http://www.ccic.ca/whoswho/index.php?lang=en>.