



Africa to aid Haiti's socio-economic recovery

As headlines on continued suffering, the rising death toll, and mounting desperation dominate the media, people worldwide are united in extending a hand to the people of Haiti.

Due to its own history of receiving assistance in its time of need, Africa now needs to play its role in the global arena by taking an active role in Haiti's long term socio-economic reconstruction. In aid of recovery beyond relief, The Nepad Business Foundation (NBF) has pledged its allegiance to the 'Africa for Haiti' campaign, and commits its resources to uniting African business in finding long-term sustainable solutions that will help rebuild Haiti's socio-economic infrastructure post this emergency phase.

The NBF will mobilise its members – private sector, government and donor institutions – to contribute to the fund that is aimed at reconstruction. The funds will be managed by two key non-governmental organisations, Trust Africa and African Monitor. Graca Machel, who has been a consistent leader in socio-economic concerns in Africa and is heading up this initiative, says that in six months the campaign will send representatives to Haiti, to firstly "show the face and voice of African solidarity [and secondly] to fact-find and identify which are the community organisations and NGOs we can work with so we can channel our support to them, and leave them to be the major implementers of the programmes that we will agree together."

"The NBF commends the enormous impact of the United Nations, and the broader international community in their sterling efforts to better the lives of the victims through emergency assistance," says NBF Operations Chairman, Stanley Subramoney. However beyond the immediate crisis is the problem of rebuilding and reconstructing a devastated country.

"It is time for Africa to play a meaningful role in assisting Haiti to rebuild its economic infrastructure. Support in industry, trade and agriculture will be central to the recovery and renewal of the Haitian nation," states Subramoney. "The tenacity and resourcefulness of the African people will be invaluable in creating a sustainable impact. This is indeed a difficult time for the people of Haiti but it is a time to face down adversity and proclaim that together with the rest of the world they will overcome these enormous challenges and rise to being a proud nation"

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