

ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti Expresses Solidarity with the People and Government of Haiti Following Devastating Earthquake

New York, 20 August 2021

The ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group¹ expresses its deepest condolences and solidarity with the people and government of Haiti following the devastating 7.2 magnitude earthquake in the southwestern part of the country on 14 August. To date, the earthquake and its aftermath has killed some 2,200 people, injured more than 12,200 people, and caused significant destruction of houses, roads, health centres, schools, and other essential infrastructure. This latest disaster comes as the country continues to seek to rebuild and recover from the devastating 2010 earthquake, which killed over 200,000 Haitians and displaced some two million people.

Following this latest natural disaster, the Group calls for an urgent international response to support survivors, front-line responders, and all those affected, particularly Haitian women and girls. This support is essential as Haiti prepares to mitigate the impact of storms and hurricanes expected over the coming weeks and months. The threat of additional natural disasters compounding the impact of this most recent earthquake is significant, requiring urgent action and support to help prepare and protect the Haitian people, including the most vulnerable. To be most effective, assistance must be provided on the basis of needs, and coordinated with national authorities and humanitarian actors on the ground.

In addition to this devastating earthquake, Haiti remains in the grips of the COVID-19 pandemic, and is seeking to urgently ramp up its pandemic response and recovery efforts. The country is also simultaneously seeking to investigate the assassination of the former President Jovenel Moïse and address the deterioration of the security conditions that has resulted, leaving parts of the country, including key roads, under the control of criminal elements.

Amidst the multidimensional and compounding crises facing the country, the international community must do more to listen to and support the people and government of Haiti.

The Group therefore calls upon the United Nations, Member States, donors, international financial institutions, and all stakeholders to act together and with determination to deliver a swift, sustained response, working closely with the government of Haiti and Haitian civil society.

The Group underscores the particular urgency of responding to the already dire humanitarian situation in the country, where some 4.4 million people, more than 40 per cent of the total population, need emergency assistance. In this regard, the Group calls for increased funding toward UN-coordinated humanitarian funding appeals, and expresses its support for appeals by the UN to ensure greater humanitarian access to reach people in need, including for those who require life-saving medical supplies.

Finally, the Group reiterates its call on the international community to remain collectively engaged in Haiti to address both immediate humanitarian needs *and* the long-term sustainable development of the country. The Group remains actively seized of the situation and will continue to monitor developments closely.

¹ The ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti is composed of Argentina, the Bahamas, Belize, Benin, Brazil, Canada (Chair), Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, France, Haiti, Mexico, Peru, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States of America and Uruguay. The President of ECOSOC is an ex officio member of the Group. It was initially formed in 1999 and its mandate is to follow closely and provide advice on the long-term development strategy of the country.