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*Haiti: International Assistance Strategy for the Interim  
Government and Congressional Concerns*

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November 17, 2005

**Abstract.** The Interim Cooperative Framework addresses many congressional concerns regarding development in Haiti: promotion of democratic governance and political stability; effective and transparent use of domestic and international funds; and economic development and reduction of poverty. The main congressional concerns expressed regarding the Donors Conference strategy are the rate at which funds are being disbursed and the effectiveness of the aid being provided. Both donors and the interim Haitian government share responsibility for the initially slow disbursement of funds. Disbursement has increased, but Haiti's capacity to absorb funds, donors' concerns over transparency of government spending, and political instability continue to pose obstacles to the execution of the ICF programs.

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## **Haiti: International Assistance Strategy for the Interim Government and Congressional Concerns**

**November 17, 2005**

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# Haiti: International Assistance Strategy for the Interim Government and Congressional Concerns

## Summary

Haiti and its multilateral and bilateral donors developed an international assistance strategy, known as the Interim Cooperation Framework (ICF), to address Haiti's short-term needs between the collapse of the government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in February 2004 and the initial phase of a new government scheduled to be inaugurated in February 2006. The World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations, and the European Union co-sponsored the International Donors Conference on Haiti in Washington, D.C., on July 19-20, 2004. The objective of the conference was to garner international financial support for the ICF, which outlines Haiti's priority needs and programs for 2004-2006.

The Interim Cooperation Framework establishes priority needs and projects that fall under four broad categories, or "axes": political governance and national dialogue; economic governance and institutional development; economic recovery; and access to basic services. For each of these four strategic axes, the Framework provides a strategy, priority objectives, and monitoring indicators.

Many congressional concerns regarding Haitian development are addressed by the priorities and programs outlined in the Interim Cooperative Framework. The main congressional concerns expressed regarding the Donors Conference strategy is the rate at which funds are being disbursed and the effectiveness of the aid being provided. International organizations and governments pledged \$1.085 billion, to be disbursed over a two and a half-year period, from July 2004 through September 2006, eight months into a new administration, if elections proceed according to schedule.

Initial disbursement was slow. According to the World Bank, however, the rate of disbursement began to improve after about six months. At just under the halfway point of the Donors Conference time-frame, a little less than half of the pledged funding had been disbursed, a tentative estimate of \$500 million as of July 2005. Disbursement has been uneven among donors. The United States has disbursed about half of its pledged funds.

Some progress has been made toward the objectives outlined in the Interim Cooperation Framework, including voter registration, improvements in fiscal transparency, jobs creation, and broader access to clean water and other services.

Current law related to funding of U.S. assistance to Haiti includes P.L. 108-25, P.L. 108-199, P.L. 108-324, P.L. 108-447, and P.L. 109-13. Pending legislation related to funding of U.S. assistance to Haiti includes H.R. 611, H.R. 945, H.R. 1130, H.R. 1213/S. 704, H.R. 2601, H.R. 3057, and S. 600.

See also CRS Report RL32294, *Haiti: Developments and U.S. Policy Since 1991 and Current Congressional Concerns*, by Maureen Taft-Morales, and CRS Report RL32733, *Latin America and the Caribbean: Issues for the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress*, Mark P. Sullivan, Coordinator. This report will be updated as warranted.

## Contents

International Donors Conference .....	2
The Interim Cooperation Framework: Establishing Priorities .....	4
Axis 1: Strengthen Political Governance and National Dialogue .....	4
Axis 2: Strengthen Economic Governance and Institutional Development .....	6
Axis 3: Promote Economic Recovery .....	6
Axis 4: Improve Access to Basic Services .....	8
Strengths and Weaknesses of the Interim Cooperation Framework .....	12
Pledges Made to Support the Interim Cooperation Framework .....	13
U.S. Pledge Made at Donors Conference .....	17
Other Pledges Made at Donors Conference .....	17
Progress to Date .....	19
Political Governance and National Dialogue .....	19
Economic Governance and Institutional Development .....	20
Economic Recovery .....	20
Access to Basic Services .....	20
Congressional Concerns .....	21

## List of Figures

Figure 1. Haiti-Pledges & Disbursements .....	16
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## List of Tables

Table 1. Haiti-International Donors Conference Pledges as of October 2004 ..	15
Table 2. Haiti-International Pledges and Disbursements .....	16

# Haiti: International Assistance Strategy for the Interim Government and Congressional Concerns

Haiti and its multilateral and bilateral donors saw the need to develop an international strategy for assistance to address Haiti's short-term needs in between the collapse of the government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and the installation of a new, elected government. Haiti experienced a socio-economic crisis surrounding Aristide's departure in February 2004, followed by disastrous floods in May 2004. Armed violence, and the absence or further deterioration of public services, further exacerbated these conditions. International donors agreed that all of these factors made the needs for humanitarian aid and protection extremely urgent.

In response to these urgent needs, Haiti's interim government and international agencies developed a strategy for international assistance entitled the Interim Cooperation Framework. The authors of this framework presented it at an International Donors Conference on Haiti in July 2004. Bilateral and multilateral donors made pledges of financial and other support at the conference.

The Interim Cooperation Framework establishes priority needs and projects that fall under four broad categories, or "axes." The first axis, "Strengthen Political Governance and National Dialogue," addresses security, police, and disarmament; the judicial system and human rights; and the electoral process. The second axis, "Strengthen Economic Governance and Institutional Development," promotes improved and more transparent management of public finances; strengthening the capacities of public institutions; and decentralization in favor of regional, urban, and local preparation of development strategies. The third axis is "Promote Economic Recovery." It aims to reverse Haiti's trend of economic regress by promoting macroeconomic stability; providing reliable electricity; reviving the private sector; and providing jobs and access to micro-finance. Economic Recovery programs also aim to help farmers meet their needs; improve roads and transport; and rehabilitate and protect the environment.

"Improve Access to Basic Services" is the fourth axis. Because basic services are so scarce in Haiti, the priorities in this category are many. They range from immediate goals such as providing emergency humanitarian aid to more long-term goals. Health-related goals include increasing the availability of potable water and lavatories; extending minimal health services and improving access to them, improving the ability to address food security, and improving solid waste management. Programs also include improving the quality of and access to education at all levels; engaging disadvantaged youth; supporting Haitian artisans; and reinforcing the media as a means of promoting pluralism and democracy. Other priorities include improving slums and the government's ability to provide social

safety nets and protection. For each of these four strategic axes, the Framework provides a strategy, priority objectives, and monitoring indicators.

Authors of the Interim Cooperative Framework cite as one of the strategy's strengths its inclusive and participatory nature; they consulted members of civil society, the private sector, and political parties. The ICF is designed to be a link between short-, medium-, and long-term efforts at revitalizing Haiti. Some observers believe that the international community must be prepared to make a long-term commitment to make the changes begun under the ICF sustainable and long-lasting. Haitian institutions have limited capacity to absorb assistance and execute plans. The ICF authors themselves warn that absorptive capacity "can only be improved in a gradual manner, [and] must be taken into consideration; otherwise, the system will collapse." (ICF, p. 6) The plan therefore emphasizes strengthening Haitian government structures. Some observers argue that, until those institutions are made more capable, however, international actors should take a stronger role in implementing the Interim Cooperative Framework.

Progress has been made under all of the ICF axes. With the support of international donors, the interim government has registered voters; prepared a budget before the fiscal year began for the first time since 1996; begun to implement fiscal discipline; and extended some basic services. Much remains to be done. Some critics believe that the government and/or international donors have not done enough to establish conditions for free and fair elections, reduce human rights violations, or include all parties, especially the Lavalas party, in political dialogue.

The Interim Cooperative Framework addresses many congressional concerns regarding development in Haiti: promotion of democratic governance and political stability; effective and transparent use of domestic and international funds; and economic development and reduction of poverty. The main congressional concerns expressed regarding the Donors Conference strategy are the rate at which funds are being disbursed and the effectiveness of the aid being provided. Both donors and the interim Haitian government share responsibility for the initially slow disbursement of funds. Disbursement has increased, but Haiti's capacity to absorb funds, donors' concerns over transparency of government spending, and political instability continue to pose obstacles to the execution of the ICF programs.

## International Donors Conference

The World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations, and the European Union co-sponsored an International Donors Conference on Haiti in Washington, D.C., on July 19- 20, 2004. Representatives from 30 countries and 32 international organizations attended. The sponsors held the conference to garner financial support for the international assistance strategy, known as the Interim Cooperation Framework (ICF), which the interim Haitian government developed in conjunction with the four sponsoring organizations.<sup>1</sup> The ICF, released in July 2004,

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<sup>1</sup> Republic of Haiti, "Interim Cooperation Framework 2004-2006: Summary Report," United Nations, European Commission, World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, July 2004. Available at [<http://worldbank.org/haitidonors2004>].

outlines Haiti's priority needs and programs for 2004-2006. The Interim Cooperation Framework will provide assistance during the interim government, and through September 2006, which will be the end of the fiscal year and eight months into the newly elected government if elections proceed as scheduled. Its short term goal is stabilization, with the intention that ICF programs will lead to a participatory process that will produce a long term strategy for poverty reduction.

The Interim Cooperation Framework estimated Haiti's needs to total \$1.37 billion, and sought \$924 million through the donors conference to meet the two-year funding gap. The sponsors announced on July 20 that international organizations and governments had pledged \$1.085 billion over the next two years to help Haiti rebuild its infrastructure, strengthen institutions, and improve basic services. The United States committed to provide \$230 million for FY2004-FY2005. Donors have held several conferences since July 2004 reaffirming the support of the international community for Haiti's transition process under the Interim Cooperation Framework.

Aristide's government fell apart amidst violent protests and pressure from the United States, France, and others. Aristide went into exile, eventually landing in South Africa, where he remains today. An interim government was established, with Supreme Court Chief Justice Boniface Alexandre assuming the Presidency, as outlined in the Haitian constitution, on February 29, 2004. That same day, the United Nations unanimously authorized an international force to help restore order, which was replaced in June 2004 by a U.N. peacekeeping force. Gerard LaTortue was appointed Prime Minister through a compromise process. The interim government negotiated an agreement with opposition political groups to delay elections until the fall of 2005, with a new president to be sworn in on February 7, 2006. The government has already postponed elections several times this fall, and reportedly has now scheduled presidential and legislative elections for December 27, and runoff elections for January 31, 2006.

A weak political structure combined with ongoing political tensions, violence, and human rights violations make it difficult to pursue the goals of the Interim Cooperation Framework. Some observers express concern that, unless security conditions improve quickly and opposition parties feel free to participate, organizing elections that will be considered free, fair, and safe will be extremely difficult. (For more information on Aristide's terms and the interim government, see CRS Report RL32294, *Haiti: Developments and U.S. Policy Since 1991 and Current Congressional Concerns*, by Maureen Taft-Morales.)

The Interim Cooperation Framework addresses many of the developmental concerns for Haiti that have been expressed by Congress. Congressional concerns about its implementation center around the rate at which funds are being disbursed, and the effectiveness of the assistance provided.

## The Interim Cooperation Framework: Establishing Priorities

The interim government of Haiti developed the Interim Cooperation Framework in conjunction with the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations, and the European Union. In addition to many offices of the interim Haitian government, some 32 foreign governments and international organizations, and eight Haitian associations contributed in some form to the two-year development plan. Over 170 international and Haitian organizations were consulted during the preparation of the Interim Cooperation Framework.

There is an unprecedented amount of coordination for aid to Haiti among donors and with the government for the Interim Cooperation Framework. A Joint Committee for the Implementation and Monitoring of the Interim Cooperation Framework includes members of the Haitian government, Haitian civil society, and the donor community. The Prime Minister, Planning Minister, and Finance Minister represent Haiti; the Inter-American Bank, the U.N. Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, and foreign aid agencies for the United States (USAID), Canada, and the European Union represent the donors; and the Civil Society Initiative, Growth Group, and the Association of Artisans represent Haitian civil society. This committee conducts the oversight of the ICF. Reporting to the Committee through a Secretariat are “sectoral tables.” There are several sectoral tables for each pillar of the ICF. Haitian government and donor counterparts lead small groups in monitoring the implementation of ICF projects for individual sectors, or groups of sectors, such as the Sector Table for Agriculture and Water and Sanitation. The donors have also held meetings to discuss the rate of progress, shortfalls, and shifts of funds to respond to emerging priorities.

The Interim Cooperation Framework establishes priority needs and projects that fall under four broad categories, or “axes”: political governance and national dialogue; economic governance and institutional development; economic recovery; and access to basic services. For each of these four strategic axes, the Framework provides a strategy, priority objectives, and monitoring indicators. Each axis of the Framework, its priorities, and the projects designed to address them are discussed below.

### **Axis 1: Strengthen Political Governance and National Dialogue.**

Politics in Haiti have generally been violent and authoritarian ever since Haiti became an independent republic in 1804. Haiti was headed by some 30 despotic rulers from independence to the collapse of the 30-year Duvalier dictatorship in 1986. In the late 1980s, a strong democratic movement emerged leading to a new constitution that guaranteed personal liberties, distributed power among a president, a Prime Minister, and two legislative chambers, and created an independent judiciary and an electoral council to oversee democratic elections. The first elections that were generally considered free and fair were held in 1990, bringing Aristide to power. Nascent democratic institutions were frail, however, and authoritarian traditions strong. Succumbing to a long tradition in Haiti, President Aristide was ousted by violent means – in this case a military coup – in 1991. After he was restored to office by a U.S.-led military force in 1994, neither he nor his successor, Rene Preval, was able to maintain fully functioning governments or hold fully credible elections.



Although the 1987 constitution remains in force, many of its provisions are not respected in practice. No parliament has been regarded by the international community or the opposition as fully legitimate since 1997. The Department of State Human Rights Report for 2004 calls Haiti's judicial system "largely moribund," and "subject to significant influence by the executive and legislative branches." Political parties are mostly vehicles for individual ambitions. Haitian society has become increasingly polarized. Some observers have criticized successive Haitian governments for tolerating, and in some cases facilitating, violence against members of the opposition. At the same time, observers criticize the opposition for also employing violent means, and for limiting themselves to a strategy of rejection rather than negotiation.<sup>2</sup>

The priorities under this axis include programs directed at:

- **Security, police and demobilization, disarmament and reintegration.** Priorities include enhancing security by professionalizing the Haitian National Police and disarming the numerous illegal armed groups in the country. The police force became politicized under Aristide. Armed groups include Aristide supporters and rebels who contributed to Aristide's ouster. Violence increased during the months preceding that ouster, and part of MINUSTAH's mission is to help the government demobilize and disarm these groups and try to reintegrate them into Haitian society.
- **Justice, penitentiary institutions and human rights.** Priorities include taking measures against impunity, and promoting judicial independence and capacity through training of judicial and penitentiary personnel, and rehabilitation of physical infrastructure; promoting respect for human rights and basic freedoms by strengthening government institutions responsible for protecting citizens from abuse by the government; and promoting cooperation between the government and non-governmental organizations that promote and protect human rights.
- **Electoral process.** Priorities include holding free, credible elections, with the U.N. mission (MINUSTAH) and the Organization of American States (OAS) supporting Haiti's Provisional Electoral Council in organizing the elections and ensuring security for them. Presidential and legislative elections are scheduled for fall of 2005, with the transfer of power to take place on February 7, 2006, but the dates have been changed several times and may be postponed yet again.
- **Promotion of national dialogue.** Priorities include encouraging political dialogue among all sectors of Haitian society to promote national reconciliation, and solutions to local and national problems

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<sup>2</sup> See, for example, International Crisis Group, "Spoiling Security in Haiti," *Latin America/Caribbean Report No. 13*, May 31, 2005.

based on consensus. The Interim Cooperation Framework is considered part of this process. By involving many sectors of society in creating national plans of development such as the ICF, a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, and Millennium Development Goals, the interim government and the international community hope to establish a framework for national dialogue revolving around development priorities.

**Axis 2: Strengthen Economic Governance and Institutional Development.** Use of public coffers for personal wealth has gone on for much of Haiti's history. It became so rampant under the Duvalier regime (1957-1986) that it became known as a "kleptocracy." According to the ICF (p.18), "Weaknesses in economic governance have been one of the most serious impediments to economic growth and poverty reduction in Haiti," and "[T]he current state of economic governance is dismal."

The priorities under this axis include programs directed at:

- **Economic governance.** Priorities include making the budget process transparent and efficient by implementing a state accounting system, strengthening control mechanisms for use of public funds and procurement, and other reforms. The ICF also calls for better management of public finances by expanding the tax base and improving the allocation and management of public funds by attacking corruption.
- **Strengthening of institutional capacities.** Priorities include improving human resources in public administration by recruiting qualified young officials, from the Haitian diaspora as well as from within Haiti, providing "massive" training, and significantly improving compensation.
- **Regional, urban and local development and decentralization.** Priorities include implementing structures at the local level which will prepare strategies for development based on needs as identified by the community. The ICF also calls for the interim government to prepare policies for decentralization, and regional, urban, and local development to submit to the next government.

**Axis 3: Promote Economic Recovery.** Haiti is the poorest country in the western hemisphere, and one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 150th among 175 countries in the U.N.'s Human Development Index. In 1997 the U.N. described Haiti as having an "economy in regress," meaning that "the living standards and conditions of the majority, or a large part, of the population have fallen substantially,"<sup>3</sup> and its economy has mostly continued to decline since then. The tasks that must be undertaken to promote economic recovery and create jobs are

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<sup>3</sup> U.N. Conference on Trade and Development, "The Least Developed Countries 1997 Report," U.N., NY and Geneva, 1997, pp.127-128.

enormous. Haiti must establish macro-economic stability, rehabilitate infrastructures such as electricity and roads, and develop the private sector. In addition, agricultural production must be improved, while protecting the environment, which has greatly deteriorated.

The priorities under this axis include programs directed at:

- **Macroeconomic stability.** In conjunction with the International Monetary Fund, the interim government designed a macroeconomic program whose purpose is to contain inflation at 14%, rehabilitate key public facilities, and provide essential services. According to the ICF, this will be difficult to achieve without budgetary discipline on the part of the government.
- **Electricity.** Priorities include improving the production and distribution of electricity by attacking corruption and mismanagement of the independent public corporation, Electricity of Haiti, which has the monopoly on electricity. According to the ICF, about 90 percent of Haitians have no access to electricity.
- **Development of private sector and small- and medium-size enterprises/industries.** Priorities include helping to revive the private sector by making various funds available to small businesses, combating corruption, developing a commercial code and encouraging integration of Haiti into regional and international markets.
- **Rapid job creation and micro-finance.** Priorities include creating jobs through labor intensive work programs, especially in public programs to improve infrastructure. According to the ICF (p. 25), “Almost 1 out of every 2 Haitians between the ages of 20 and 45 does not have a lucrative occupation.” The framework calls for creating about 687,000 jobs from 2004-2006, and increasing access to micro-credit, especially for women.
- **Agriculture.** Priorities include improving the capacity of agricultural workers to meet their needs in the short term by supplying vaccinations, conducting disease control, repairing farm equipment, and distributing tools and seed. Various sorts of technical assistance in agricultural techniques are called for in the medium term. The report recommends rehabilitation of part of the Ministry of Agriculture “to restore its minimal intervention capability,” and training of Ministry of Agriculture staff, farmers organizations, and others to maximize the effectiveness of such interventions. Although 45% to 50% of Haiti’s working population is engaged in agriculture, 80% of farmers cannot meet the basic food needs of their families (ICF, p. 26).
- **Roads and transportation.** Transportation infrastructure, which includes roads, airports, airstrips, and harbors, are in great need of

investment and maintenance, as they are in “a state of very advanced dilapidation,” according to the ICF (p. 27). Priorities include making roads that are necessary for development usable at all times, by quickly conducting road rehabilitation work, and then setting up financial and institutional mechanisms for managing and maintaining them. Currently, only 5% of 3,400 kilometers of roads are in good condition. The strategy also calls for identifying and quickly investing in whatever is necessary to maintain continuity of port and aviation activity, and improving port management.

- **Environmental protection and rehabilitation.** Priorities include promoting sustainable use of natural resources through reduced reliance on wood fuel; planning and carrying out of activities aimed at halting degradation of land and natural resources; and supporting the development and implementation of disaster management plans. Haiti is caught in a vicious cycle that makes the land unable to sustain the needs of its inhabitants and vulnerable to natural disasters. Because farmers lack the means to invest in more efficient technology, they employ unsustainable methods, such as cutting down trees for wood fuel, which contributes to deforestation, which leads to soil erosion, which leads to inadequate agricultural production, and continued poverty. The program focuses on supporting local initiatives and the development of national plans to manage natural resources effectively.

**Axis 4: Improve Access to Basic Services.** Much of Haiti’s population lacks access to basic services. According to the World Health Organization, only 28% of Haitians have access to sanitation, and 46% have access to improved water sources. There are only 25 doctors per 100,000 people. These conditions leave the majority of the population vulnerable to disease and malnutrition, without educational resources or social safety nets.

The priorities under this axis include programs directed at:

- **Emergency humanitarian aid and post-disaster relief.** Priorities include responding to the various crises in 2004 with emergency humanitarian aid. Haiti experienced a socio-economic crisis surrounding the collapse of the Aristide government in February 2004, followed by the disastrous floods of May 2004. Armed violence, including looting of stockpiles of humanitarian assistance. For much of the population, already limited access to basic social services and food, and the absence of many public services or further deterioration of what few services existed, made conditions worse. All of these factors, according to the ICF (p. 30), make “the needs for humanitarian aid and protection extremely urgent.”
- Furthermore, Haiti has become increasingly vulnerable to natural disasters. Haiti is described by the UNDP as being one of the most vulnerable countries in the world for natural catastrophes due to

cyclones and floods.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, another element of this component of the ICF takes a longer view of post-disaster relief, calling for strengthening governmental authorities' ability to identify vulnerable groups and provide them assistance, and identifying humanitarian needs not met by current initiatives, such as long-term reconstruction and restoration of areas most affected by the 2004 floods.

- The ICF also notes that while some humanitarian assistance is provided for in the plan, it is essential for the government and the international community to develop a means of periodically assessing humanitarian needs. It also calls on the government to develop a “rehabilitation and reconstruction program with a preventative approach” for flood-affected areas.
- **Water and sanitation.** Priorities include increasing the production and delivery of potable water by strengthening institutional capacity and conducting studies for further improvement in the long-term. More than half (54%) of all Haitians lack access to improved water sources. According to the ICF (p. 31), almost 60% of rural households, and almost 40% of urban households outside major metropolitan areas do not have a lavatory inside or outside of their homes. About 9% of homes in metropolitan areas have no lavatory.

On a positive note, the ICF states that where beneficiary communities have been actively involved in water projects, there has been some improvement in access to potable water.

- **Health and nutrition.** Priorities include extending minimal health services by restarting the operation of the principal hospitals; and strengthening the ability of the Public Health and Population Ministry to manage and coordinate health care and coordinate its activities with international and non-governmental health organizations. The ICF also calls for the renewal of priority programs, such as systematic vaccinations, and for improved access to health care for both the general population and vulnerable groups. The latter includes children, pregnant women, handicapped and HIV/AIDS-infected people, and indigents. The ICF's strategy for improving access and restarting priority programs entails regulating and lowering prices for generic drugs and for essential supplies and services, and establishing a national system for their purchase and distribution.
- **Education, youth, and sports.** This component of the ICF addresses three levels of education: basic; professional training; and university. The programs are aimed at improving access to and conditions of basic primary and secondary education by rehabilitating schools, improving school environments, and reducing

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<sup>4</sup> UNDP, *Reducing Disaster Risk: A Challenge for Development*, 2004, pp. 36-40.

the costs of school for vulnerable groups. Other programs aim to raise the level of instruction by restoring and improving teacher training, “remobilizing” educational personnel, and revising and distributing literacy and other programs designed to improve the quality of education. Currently, about half a million children lack access to basic education, and a mere 35% of children complete the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The ICF also calls on the government to improve communication with the private sector, which currently provides about 80% of the primary education available.

- For professional training, the programs are aimed at increasing access to, and the relevance and quality of, training. The programs will strive to accomplish these goals by strengthening the capacity of the government institution for professional training, and identifying the training needs of the workforce and then recruiting the personnel to meet those needs. Currently, “only 6 out of every 1,000 workers in the workforce have a diploma or certificate in a technical or professional field.” (ICF, p. 34)
- For higher education, the initiatives are aimed at reducing the dropout rate by providing services such as scholarships and food services; initiating reform to improve access and quality of educational programs; and, in the short term, repairing damage done to universities during the political violence of 2004. The number of students in higher education almost doubled from 1986 to 1996, but the dropout rate is extremely high. Some observers believe that because the government saw university students as part of an opposition movement, university facilities were targeted during the political upheaval and damaged. Universities also have inadequate educational and physical materials (ICF, p.34).
- Because Haitian youth “constitute a key factor in the process of creating a democratic system and promoting economic development and social progress,” the ICF calls on the Haitian institution responsible for Youth, Sports and Civics to focus on vulnerable sectors of the youth, such as disadvantaged youth or those with substance abuse problems, and to emphasize sports as an activity that stimulates social cohesion (ICF, p.34).
- **Culture, media, and communications.** Priorities include reinforcing “the role of culture and media in the promotion of a pluralist and democratic society” by strengthening Haitian broadcast capacities, especially to be able to support the 2005 election process; and integrating women and other excluded or disadvantaged groups. Other projects include preparing a public policy for the protection and diffusion of Haitian cultural heritage, and funding and supporting Haitian arts-and-crafts artisans.
- **Food security.** Priorities include reinforcing and creating institutions that are capable of collecting information on and

implementing plans for addressing food insecurity. According to the World Food Program, 40% of Haiti's population is "food insecure," and 16% is "precariously food secure."

- **Slum upgrading.** Priorities include improving slums by strengthening national institutions and community councils responsible for urban planning and various public works, and by carrying out physical improvements. The ICF notes that although Haiti is still predominantly rural, the urban population grew at almost 5% annually, compared to general population growth of about 2% from 1982 to 2003 (ICF, p.37). The head of MINUSTAH has said that allowing conditions in the slums to continue as they are is "intolerable," and that improving the quality of life in the slums would do much to reduce violence and bolster confidence in both the international community and the Haitian government.<sup>5</sup>
- **Solid waste management.** Priorities include ensuring effective collection and removal of solid waste by actively including the private sector and private citizens in waste management efforts; and providing waste treatment and disposal sites that protect the environment. The ICF also calls for existing institutions to be strengthened and new ones to be created that can create and support solid waste management plans at the national and local level. The ICF estimates that under 30% of solid waste is removed in metropolitan Port-au-Prince, that in other cities most waste is dumped in rivers, and that many neighborhoods have no waste removal services at all (ICF, p. 37).
- **Safety nets and social protection.** Priorities include laying the foundation for the respect of fundamental human rights by conducting large-scale awareness campaigns and issuing identity documents; reducing malnutrition by providing food and services, especially to vulnerable groups; increasing access to health care through micro-insurance; encouraging communities to identify their development needs and providing international and private sector funding; offering social assistance services to the most vulnerable sectors of society; and improving the capacity of the ministry responsible for social services. According to the ICF, any assistance provided by the Haitian government is "very fragmented, scattered, and without significant impact." While most of the social protection services available are provided by non-governmental organizations, these groups only have resources sufficient to meet a small percentage of the population's needs.

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<sup>5</sup> Ambassador Juan Gabriel Valdes, Head of MINUSTAH, Congressional Staff Discussion hosted by Inter-American Dialogue, March 24, 2005.

## Strengths and Weaknesses of the Interim Cooperation Framework

Authors of the Interim Cooperation Framework cite as one of the strategy's strengths its inclusive and participatory nature; they consulted members of Haitian civil society, the private sector, and political parties in drawing up the plan. In addition, the ICF is designed to be a link between short-, medium-, and long-term Haitian development efforts. Some of its programs are meant to provide immediate results, such as emergency humanitarian aid, the creation of jobs, and the provision of some basic services. The entire strategy was designed to continue for six months beyond the interim government, so that the newly elected government, scheduled to be inaugurated in February 2006, would have financial resources at its disposal and programs already underway. Other programs lay the foundation for more long-term results. The interim government is using the ICF as a basis for a Poverty Reduction Strategy for 2006 to 2009, which it is supposed to have ready in time for the next government. Generations of corrupt Haitian rulers have used the government as a means of personal enrichment, neglecting the development of state institutions. In addition, observers have criticized past interventions for failing to build institutions or train Haitians to perform government functions after international actors have departed. A priority of the ICF is to strengthen the capacity of national institutions so that the Haitian government can design and provide public services, and manage its resources more effectively and transparently.

Haitian institutions have limited capacity. The Haitian government is small, and has few physical resources and skilled personnel to design and implement development programs. The ICF authors themselves warn that absorptive capacity "can only be improved in a gradual manner, [and] must be taken into consideration; otherwise, the system will collapse" (ICF, p. 6). The plan therefore emphasizes strengthening Haitian government structures, building up fragile institutions, and in some cases, creating entirely new ones. Some observers argue that, until those institutions are made more capable, however, international actors should take a stronger role in implementing the Interim Cooperation Framework and other development plans. In light of Haiti's chronic political instability, some have suggested making Haiti an international protectorate. Others suggest that a multilateral donor commission should be formed to oversee and ensure accountability of international financial assistance. Still others propose that the donor community assume greater responsibility for planning and implementing development projects so that donor funds could be better absorbed.<sup>6</sup>

Some observers express concern that the elections system being established by MINUSTAH, the OAS, and the interim government under the ICF relies too heavily on sophisticated technology not suitable for a country where electricity is unreliable

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<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Don Bohning, "Nation in Chaos: An International Protectorate Could Bring Stability to Haiti," *Miami Herald*, Nov. 22, 2004, on protectorate; Stephen Johnson, "Where to in Haiti: New Principles of Engagement," *Heritage Foundation Web Memo*, March 10, 2004, on donor commission; and The International Crisis Group, "Haiti's Transition: Hanging in the Balance," *Latin America/Caribbean Briefing No. 7*, Port-au-Prince/Brussels, Feb. 8, 2005, on donor planning and implementation of projects.



or not available in much of the country, and where half the population is illiterate. Some observers argue that current conditions are not conducive to free, fair and safe elections, and the vote should be postponed until there is greater security. They also believe the government must show that all parties are free to participate. Former President Aristide's party, the Lavalas Family, registered to be able to participate in the elections. Nonetheless, some members of the party are urging a boycott until the interim government ends what they say is political persecution. Hundreds of party members, including Aristide's former Prime Minister, have been held in prison for months without being charged.

Others argue that the first step toward stability and security is establishing a legitimate government through fair and credible elections, and that the elections must proceed as planned. U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, during a visit to Haiti on September 27, 2005, said that those with whom she spoke believed that a new President must be inaugurated on the constitutionally-mandated date of February 7 in order to promote stability in Haiti. She also said that the obstacles to meeting that date were mostly technical problems, and that Haitians must accelerate election preparations and make full use of the international assistance that is available to them. She also said that the elections must be "free and fair and inclusive."<sup>7</sup>

Some observers believe that the international community must be prepared to make a long-term commitment to make the changes begun under the ICF sustainable and long-lasting. Since July 2004, donors have held three conferences reaffirming the international community's support for Haiti's transition process under the Interim Cooperation Framework. The most recent was held in October 2005 in Brussels. There, the head of MINUSTAH, Juan Gabriel Valdes, said the donors and Haiti planned to create a post-election stabilization program. Valdes, who is also the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Haiti, said that addressing problems such as insecurity will require a long-term commitment by the international community to development in Haiti.<sup>8</sup>

## Pledges Made to Support the Interim Cooperation Framework

International organizations and governments pledged \$1.085 billion at the International Donors Conference in July 2004 in support of Haiti's Interim Cooperation Framework. The funds are to support Haiti's transition from the Aristide government through the first eight months of a new government (bringing funding to the end of FY2006). **Table 1** lists the total pledges made by foreign donor nations and international organizations for 2004 to 2006. Pledges were made to be distributed over the almost two and a half year time period of the ICF, not all at once. The chart also shows the four major priorities to which the funds will be directed.

In table and graph form, respectively, **Table 2 and Figure 1** show total pledges and disbursements by countries and institutions, by size of pledge, as of March 2005.

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<sup>7</sup> "Secretary Rice Meets with Haitian Prime Minister Gerard Latortue," *US Fed News*, Sept. 27, 2005.

<sup>8</sup> "Commission and International Community Confirm Support for Transition in Haiti," *Europe Information*, Oct. 22, 2005.

When looking at pledges made as a percentage of national gross domestic product (GDP), keep in mind that country pledges made for the ICF may not represent all donor funding related to Haiti. For example, many countries, including the United States, also contribute to funding of the United Nations and the international financial institutions, which in turn have made pledges at the Donors Conference. Some European nations have made bilateral pledges, but contribute to the European Union funds as well.

**Table 1. Haiti-International Donors Conference Pledges as of October 2004**

(Pledges in Current U.S. Million Dollars)

Country/Institution	Political Governance & National Dialogue	Economic Governance & Institutional Development	Economic Recovery	Access to Basic Services	Subtotal	External Arrears Clearance	Total Global
<b>Country</b>							
Canada	\$34.0	\$7.9	\$8.0	\$28.9	\$78.8	\$9.5	\$88.3
France	0.0	6.9	3.3	20.8	31.0	1.2	32.2
Germany	0.0	9.6	3.9	0.0	13.5	0.0	13.5
Japan	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.7	2.7	0.0	2.7
Spain	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.6	6.6
Sweden	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.0	1.8
United States	41.6	12.5	28.8	123.7	206.6	0.0	206.6
<b>Institution</b>							
EC*	\$21.5	\$11.3	\$72.0	35.2	140.0	131.0	271.0
IDB**	0.0	53.0	105.0	105.0	263.0	0.0	263.0
IFAD***	0.0	0.0	12.0	0.0	12.0	0.0	12.0
World Bank	0.0	19.5	46.0	41.5	107.0	48.0	155.0
All Other	0.0	0.0	1.6	5.1	6.7	9.8	16.5
<b>World Total</b>	<b>\$98.9</b>	<b>\$120.7</b>	<b>\$280.6</b>	<b>\$362.9</b>	<b>\$863.1</b>	<b>\$206.1</b>	<b>\$1,069.2</b>

**Source:** Data from World Bank; table prepared by CRS Knowledge Services Group.

**Notes:**

\* EC: European Commission, development agency of the European Union.

\*\* IDB: Inter-American Development Bank.

\*\*\* IFAD: the United Nations' International Fund for Agricultural Development.

**Table 2. Haiti-International Pledges and Disbursements**  
(in Million U.S. Dollars)

Country/ Organization	Total Pledges FY 04-06	Total Disbursements Through March 2005	GDP 2005 Million U.S. \$	Pledge as % of GDP
EU*	\$271.0	\$75.7	\$11,389,000	0.0024%
IDB*	263.0	38.4	—	—
U.S.	206.6	146.9	12,431,000	0.0017
World Bank	155.0	52.1	—	—
Canada	88.3	81.0	1,069,000	0.0083
U.N.***	—	60.4	—	—
France	32.2	8.4	1,899,000	0.0017
Japan	2.7	9.3	4,002,000	0.0001
<b>World Total</b>	<b>1,069.2</b>	<b>472.1</b>	—	—

**Sources:** Data from World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank; GDP from EIU Country Data. Table prepared by CRS Knowledge Services Group, September 2005.

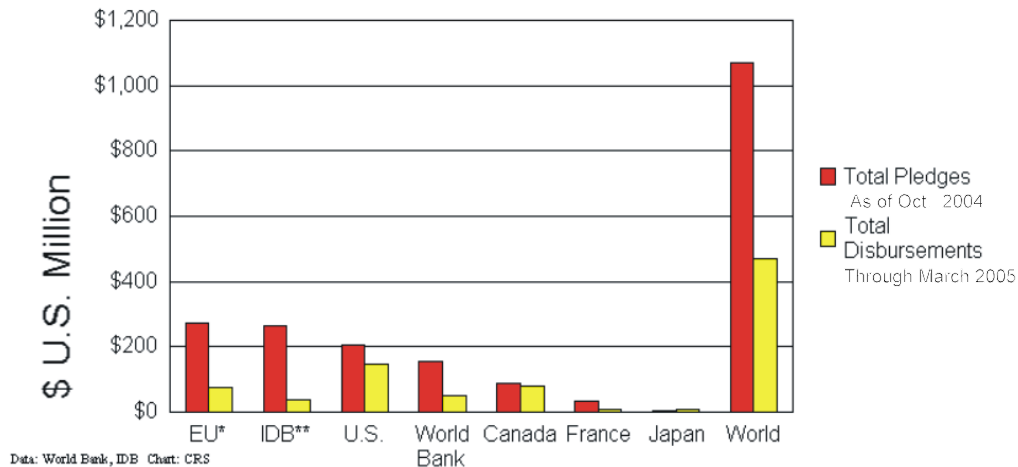
**Notes:**

\* EU is European Union

\*\* IDB is Inter-American Development Bank

\*\*\* U.N. includes United Nations agencies such as UNICEFF, FAO, UNESCO, UNDP and others.

**Figure 1. Haiti-Pledges & Disbursements**



**U.S. Pledge Made at Donors Conference.** The United States pledged about \$230 million in FY2004-FY2005 aid to Haiti at the 2004 Donors Conference. The aid was to be distributed as follows, according to USAID: \$22 million for job creation; \$45 million for government infrastructure support; \$26 million for improved security through improved administration of justice; \$122 million for humanitarian aid, including health care, nutrition, and education; and \$15 million for elections support. USAID says that the original pledge will be greatly exceeded, however. Assistance for FY2005 was originally to be \$52 million, but was recently increased to a total of about \$177 million. The Bush Administration has requested \$152 million for FY2006. All USAID programs for Haiti come under the Interim Cooperation Framework.

A portion of an additional \$100 million appropriated by Congress in supplemental disaster assistance for the Caribbean region (P.L. 108-324) will go to Haiti as well. The emergency supplemental appropriations act for FY2005 (P.L. 109-13) provides that \$20 million in Economic Support Funds “should be made available” to Haiti, \$2.5 million of which “should be made available for criminal case management, case tracking, and the reduction of pre-trial detention in Haiti.”

Current law related to funding of U.S. assistance to Haiti under the Interim Cooperation Framework includes the following: the U.S. Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003 (P.L. 108-25); the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act for FY2004 (P.L. 108-199); the FY2005 Military Construction Appropriations and Emergency Hurricane Supplemental Appropriations Act (P.L. 108-324); the FY2005 Consolidated Appropriations Act (P.L. 108-447); and the FY2005 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief (P.L. 109-13). Pending legislation related to funding of U.S. assistance to Haiti includes the following: the Haiti Economic and Infrastructure Reconstruction Act (H.R. 611); the New Partnership for Haiti Act of 2005 (H.R. 945); the Jubilee Act of 2005 (H.R. 1130); the Caribbean Basin Trade Enhancement Act of 2005 (H.R. 1213/S. 704); the FY2006 and 2007 Foreign Relations Authorization Act (H.R. 2601); the FY2006 Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act (H.R. 3057); and the FY2006 and 2007 Foreign Affairs Authorization Act (S. 600). For further information, see the CRS Legislative Information System at [<http://www.congress.gov/>], or CRS Report RL32294, *Haiti: Developments and U.S. Policy since 1991 and Current Congressional Concerns*, by Maureen Taft-Morales.

**Other Pledges Made at Donors Conference.**<sup>9</sup> Some donors made pledges at the International Donors Conference, which are not delineated on the World Bank charts. Some of these do not precisely match the categories outlined in the ICF. Not all donors pledged a specific monetary amount. Some noted contributions that had already been made in 2004, such as humanitarian assistance following Haiti’s political crisis and natural disasters, or troops for MINUSTAH. Others expressed a willingness to contribute technical assistance but a need to work out specific details. Chile noted, for example, that although it has advanced to a

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<sup>9</sup> See “Conference Statements and Pledges,” at [<http://worldbank.org/haitidonors2004/>]. Some statements are in Spanish or French; translations are author’s.

level wherein it has “developed technical and human capabilities in diverse areas,” it is nonetheless “a country in development that has budgetary limitations” and therefore needs to work in conjunction with other countries or international organizations in three-way cooperative efforts.

**Argentina.** Argentina is sending 600 members of the Argentine armed forces to participate in MINUSTAH.

Argentina has offered a legal expert to the U.N. for elections support, and the government will analyze the way in which to contribute further to electoral and other MINUSTAH activities.

The *Cascos Blancos*, or White Helmets, a humanitarian aid organization supported by the U.N. and OAS, has provided humanitarian assistance, including the delivery of eight tons of medicine in March 2004 and a technical mission in June 2004 to plan future humanitarian missions. The *Cascos Blancos* will also provide a volunteer force to provide humanitarian help and reconstruction work.

**Bahamas.** The Bahamas said it would review the ICF, and consult the OAS, the Pan-American Health Organization, the Caribbean Community (Caricom) and the government of Haiti to determine what assistance it would provide. The government is also working with non-governmental organizations in the Bahamas and expects greater participation from them in Haiti.

**Belgium.** Belgium is providing 593,000 euros annually in programs regarding higher education, professional development, production of teaching materials, potable water in rural areas, and cultural development.

**Brazil.** Brazil has contributed over 1,200 soldiers to serve as the core of MINUSTAH. Brazil states that it “is not a net donor of financial resources in the area of international cooperation or development aid,” but is able to provide technical assistance. Is sending a multi-disciplinary mission to Haiti to identify with the GOH priorities for the transfer of technical knowledge, in projects such as HIV infection diagnosis, mass vaccination campaigns, and efficient collecting and recycling of urban waste, some of which could be applied immediately to Haiti.

**Chile.** Chile contributed 285 soldiers to the Provisional Multinational Force for Haiti in March 2004, a “logistical and financial effort without precedent in our country, at a cost of nearly \$5 million dollars.” It has contributed 585 military and police personnel and logistical support to MINUSTAH.

Chile contributes to Haiti through regional Caribbean programs.

Chile will send two agronomists to conduct the first stage of an agricultural rehabilitation program in conjunction with Canada.

Chile is also coordinating and supporting the work of Chilean non-governmental organizations in Haiti.

**Greece.** Greece pledged 100,000 euros.

**Norway.** Norway has organized political dialogue between various political parties and civil society through its Institute for Political and Social Studies; it held discussions in Norway in June and August 2004.

Norway allocated about \$4.3 million to Haiti for the year 2004.

**United Kingdom.** The United Kingdom provided \$3.5 million to support humanitarian efforts following the civil unrest, and another \$0.9 million in immediate humanitarian support to relief operations following flooding in 2004. Its main contribution will be through contributions to the European Commission, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the Caribbean Development Bank (the amounts of those contributions were not detailed in the U.K.'s pledge statement).

**Switzerland.** Switzerland pledged \$6.5 million for 2004-2006, with priority on water and sanitation projects, humanitarian aid, and support to Swiss non-governmental organizations working on water and sanitation, education, and health. It will also provide another \$1.0 - \$1.5 million if able to develop a new project in environmental management.

## Progress to Date<sup>10</sup>

According to the World Bank and other sources, some progress has been made toward the objectives outlined in the Interim Cooperation Framework, although much work remains to be done. A mid-way assessment of the Interim Cooperation Framework is expected to be published by the end of 2005.

**Political Governance and National Dialogue.** Under the "Political Governance and National Dialogue" axis, some progress has been made in registering Haitian citizens to vote, and in other aspects of preparing for the upcoming elections. The dates have been changed several times. Prime Minister LaTortue says presidential and legislative elections are now scheduled for December 11 or 18, 2005, though no official date has been given yet. Runoff presidential and legislative elections and local elections will follow after that, with the inauguration of a new government scheduled for February 7, 2006. Problems cited in organizing elections on time include the following: more voters, especially in remote parts of the country, need the opportunity to register; hundreds of election supervisors and up to 40,000 poll workers must still be hired or recruited and trained; and polling stations must be identified. The electoral council rejected 22 of 54 candidates who applied to run for president. Some of these who were rejected are contesting the decision, and ballots cannot be printed until the Haitian Supreme Court resolves the disputes.

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<sup>10</sup> Sources for this section include: World Bank Group, "Haiti's Progress, Interview with World Bank Director for the Caribbean," July 27, 2005, and "Haiti: New Roads, Jobs and Schools, but Key Challenges Remain," press release no. 2006/018/LAC; "Haiti: Highlights of Galaxie Radio News 1230gmt 09 Mar 05," BBC Monitoring Americas, March 10, 2005; "IMF sees Economic Stability Emerging in Haiti," Reuters, March 17, 2005; "Operation Deep Pockets - Peacekeeping in Haiti," *The Economist*, Dec. 18, 2004. For a detailed list of ICF achievements, see World Bank Group, "First Year of Haiti's Interim Cooperation Framework - Achievements: Highlights as of May, 2005."

In terms of promoting national dialogue, structures have been established to promote civic action in local communities, and local governance structures have been strengthened to increase citizens' participation in decision making processes. Nonetheless, some observers voice concern that the ongoing violence and human rights violations create an intimidating atmosphere that inhibits dialogue at a national and local level.

**Economic Governance and Institutional Development.** Under the “Economic Governance and Institutional Development” axis, anti-corruption units have been created, and improvements in transparency and procurement have been made. The interim government prepared a budget for FY2005, the first one to be prepared before a fiscal year began since 1996-1997. It is also preparing a budget for FY2006. Prior to the interim government, some 60% of Haitian government spending was done outside of a budget, through “discretionary” accounts. The interim government has reduced discretionary spending to less than 10%. It has also improved cooperation between Haiti and the international financial institutions, clearing arrears where necessary with aid from donors [see **Table 1.**].

Previous Haitian administrations were limited in the aid they could receive in part because they lacked a parliament to authorize spending and the incurring of debt. The interim government issued a presidential decree, ratified by the Cabinet, vesting the executive branch with the authority of the legislative branch, including authority to incur debt. All of these agreements must be published in the official government gazette. Much of the donors funds consist of grants, not debt-incurring loans.

**Economic Recovery.** In terms of “Economic Recovery,” donors say that well-designed budgets could also contribute to macroeconomic stability. The International Monetary Fund reportedly said that as of March 2005, “[E]xternal trade has returned to pre-crisis levels, the gourde [Haitian currency] remains stable, monthly inflation is on the decline, and net international reserves ... have increased.” Between the pledging of funds in July 2004 and May 2005, approximately 200,000 person-days of work had been created. According to the IMF, “The Haitian authorities have made progress toward restoring macroeconomic stability and implementing structural reforms ... [since January 2005.] They implemented the 2004/05 budget without net recourse to central bank financing, and tightened monetary policy in the face of the difficult macroeconomic and security situation as well as delays in donor disbursements.”<sup>11</sup> Some of those economic reforms include fiscal discipline, cleaning up the payrolls of state-owned utilities, and reducing corruption.

**Access to Basic Services.** In terms of “Access to Basic Services,” progress includes 300 kilometers of rehabilitated and new roads; access to clean water for 250,000 people, and the establishment of committees to manage five new drinking water systems; access to health services for 400,000 people; provision of over 13,000 scholarships to ensure the return to school of children who attended summer camps addressing the psycho-social rehabilitation needs of children affected by violence in

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<sup>11</sup> “IMF Executive Board Approves US\$14.7 Million in Additional Emergency Post-Conflict Assistance to Haiti,” IMF Press Release no. 05/234, Oct. 19, 2005.



five Haitian cities; the removal of 300,805 cubic meters of solid waste, and the rehabilitation of almost 200 schools.

There is also concern as to whether some of these improvements can be maintained. For example, electricity service was restored initially, but after U.S. subsidies ended in March 2005, service fell again. The interim government increased tax collection, but donors are uncertain that will be sustained. Many of the reforms, such as implementing fiscal discipline and fighting corruption, require political will to carry them out. Observers note that political will to devise and implement reform has been difficult to maintain in Haiti.

## Congressional Concerns

Many congressional concerns regarding development in Haiti are addressed by the priorities and programs outlined in the Interim Cooperative Framework: promotion of democratic governance and political stability; effective and transparent use of domestic and international funds; and economic development and reduction of poverty. The main congressional concerns expressed regarding the Donors Conference strategy is the rate at which funds are being disbursed and the effectiveness of the aid being provided.

The interim government, non-governmental organizations, and some Members complained of slow initial disbursement. Five months after the Donors Conference was held, interim Haitian President Boniface Alexandre urged the release of funds, complaining of “irritating deadlines and [the] slow procedures,” and saying that Haiti was “virtually on the brink of the abyss.”<sup>12</sup> This initial slowness has been acknowledged by some donors. According to the World Bank, however, the rate of disbursement has improved since then. Near the mid-point of the Donors Conference time-frame, a little less than half of the pledged funding had been disbursed, an estimated \$400 million as of May, and a tentative estimate of \$500 million as of July 2005.<sup>13</sup>

The rate of disbursement is affected by several factors. Pledges were made to be disbursed not all at once, but over a period of just more than two years, from July 2004 through September 2006, the end of Haiti’s fiscal year, and eight months into a new administration, if elections proceed according to schedule. On the part of many of the donors, it took several months to get programs designed and authorized through their own governmental processes. Furthermore, disbursements have been uneven among donors. At the halfway mark, the United States has disbursed about half of its pledged funds, and Canada more than half. Japan has disbursed more than it pledged. Some other donors have been slower to disburse funds, however, so program development is very uneven.

Also, in the case of international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, the intention was to commit to the

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<sup>12</sup> BBC Monitoring Americas, “Haiti’s Interim President calls for Release of International Aid,” Dec. 30, 2004.

<sup>13</sup> World Bank Group, “Haiti’s Progress, Interview...” op. cit.

designated amount of funding during the two year period, with the assumption that disbursing funds and carrying out programs would take longer than that. Because successive Haitian governments have not had transparent accounting of their spending, donors are also wary of transferring funds to the current government. Therefore, much of the funding is still going through non-governmental organizations.

The interim government of Haiti also shares some responsibility for the difficulties in disbursing the pledged funds early in the process. As of December 2004, the interim government had still not developed a plan for spending \$800 million in donors' funds, and had just established a commission to oversee bidding for public contracts. As it was complaining that international funds were not being disbursed, the interim government was apparently unaware that it had funds in its own coffers that were not being spent, until made aware of them by World Bank officials.<sup>14</sup>

The Haitian government's capacity to absorb assistance and execute development plans remains a problem as well. As described above, one of the major goals of the Interim Cooperation Framework is promoting good economic governance and institutional development by building up fragile institutions, and in some cases, creating entirely new ones. The framework's authors hope that as Haitian institutions are strengthened, donor confidence will increase as well.

Currently, observers say one of the greatest obstacles to continued disbursement of Donor Conference funds and execution of ICF programs is political instability. Ongoing violence makes delivery of assistance and services difficult. In recent months, kidnaping has become a frequent and often deadly occurrence, adding to the hostile environment for aid workers. In May 2005, the U.S. State Department ordered nonessential U.S. personnel to leave, warned U.S. citizens against traveling to Haiti, and urged those in Haiti to leave, "due to the volatile security situation." The Peace Corps withdrew its volunteers from Haiti in June. The travel warning remains in effect.<sup>15</sup>

The violence obviously creates a hostile environment for ordinary Haitian citizens, interrupting their ability to work or attend school, and increasing their needs for social and health services. In its travel advisory, the State Department further says that both visitors and residents "must remain vigilant due to the absence of an effective police force in much of Haiti."

Many observers, including some Members of Congress, also express concern that there is an uncertain and intimidating atmosphere that threatens the nation's ability to hold elections that will be considered free, fair, and inclusive. They point to the detention of members of former President Aristide's party, the Lavalas Family, in prison for months without being charged as evidence of political persecution by the interim Haitian government. Some observers argue that Haiti needs a process of

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<sup>14</sup> "Operation Deep Pockets ..." op. cit.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Dept. Of State, "Travel Warning: Haiti," May 26, 2005.

national reconciliation, through national dialogue and elections, so that the country will be able to arrive at a basic policy consensus on governance and development.<sup>16</sup>

There is also congressional concern about how much has been accomplished with donors' funds to date. Some might be cautious about further funding because not much progress has been made in the past despite massive amounts of aid, and more progress needs to be made in terms of government accountability and transparency. Some Members argue that the United States should provide more funds to have a greater impact on reducing poverty, to enable a more sustained development effort, and in turn, to prevent massive migration from the country and help reduce instability.

Some observers believe that the international community must be prepared to make a long-term commitment to make the changes begun under the ICF sustainable and long-lasting. Donors have held several conferences since the first one in July 2004, reaffirming the international community's support for Haiti's transition process under the Interim Cooperation Framework. At the most recent one, held in October 2005, Juan Gabriel Valdes, the head of MINUSTAH, said the donors and Haiti planned to create a post-election stabilization program. Valdes said that in order to tackle problems such as insecurity, the international community must make a long-term commitment to Haitian development.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> See, for example, ICF, p. 17-18, and Henry F. Carey, "Countries at the Crossroads: Country Profile of Haiti," available online at [<http://unpan1.un.org/intrdoc/groups/public/documents/NISPAcee/UNPAN016030.pdf>].

<sup>17</sup> "Commission and International Community Confirm Support for Transition in Haiti," *Europe Information*, Oct. 22, 2005.