



Media Note
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Under Secretary Sheeran Shiner to Travel to Haiti to Support Economic Development Efforts

Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs Josette Sheeran Shiner will travel to Haiti from 24-25 March to meet with President-elect Rene Prével, international development organizations, and business leaders to promote economic growth and opportunity, as Haiti works to build a viable democracy. As part of her work on the United Nations High-Level Panel focusing on humanitarian and development assistance reform, Under Secretary Sheeran Shiner will also tour a UN project promoting democratic institution-building and economic empowerment.

"Haitians should be proud of their recent successful presidential elections. Not only does the United States stand ready to support Haitian democracy, we also want to help Haiti develop its economy, so as to provide hope and opportunity to the Haitian people," said Under Secretary Sheeran Shiner. "I look forward to listening and learning from Haitians about their plans to build a better future for themselves and their children."

The United States is Haiti's largest bilateral donor and largest trading partner. U.S. assistance to Haiti during the last three years, including fiscal year 2006, totals over \$500 million and is aimed to strengthen governance, improve security, foster broad-based economic recovery and growth, and address critical humanitarian needs. Haitian expatriate remittances (estimated at over \$800 million and mostly stemming from the U.S.) have also kept the economy afloat. Key components of the U.S. assistance program include:

- **Health:** The United States provides healthcare services to 40% of the Haitian population. The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS relief allocated over \$40 million in 2005.
- **Education:** U.S. programs are improving primary education at 450 primary schools; 150,000 children and youth have benefited thus far.
- **Economic growth:** U.S. programs have distributed more than 200,000 loans to small and micro enterprises; provided \$24 million to support electricity generation; and created over 200,000 short-term jobs.
- **Food Aid and Disaster Relief:** The food assistance program has distributed 34,000 metric tons of emergency food relief, equivalent to 850,000 food rations. Responding to the devastation of Tropical Storm Jeanne in 2004, a \$34 million program is repairing homes, schools and other public buildings.

The United Nations has a robust program in Haiti, led by the 9,000-strong United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). Its mandate is to provide security and the rule of law, consolidate democratic progress, assist with elections, reform the Haitian National Police and support the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of soldiers. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) also has a strong presence in the country. It supports MINUSTAH objectives and is implementing a post-electoral stabilization program to help the country transition from conflict to peace.

For more information on U.S. economic and democracy assistance programs in Haiti, please go to www.usaid.gov/ht. For information on the UNDP program in Haiti, please visit www.ht.undp.org.
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