



Remarks With Republic of Haiti Prime Minister Jacques-Edouard Alexis After Their Meeting

Secretary Condoleezza Rice

Washington, DC
April 4, 2007

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(2:00 p.m. EST)

SECRETARY RICE: Good afternoon. I am very pleased to welcome my colleague and the Prime Minister of Haiti. We've just had a very productive meeting to discuss the many challenges that the people of Haiti face, but also the new opportunities that they face.

Haiti has made a lot of progress over the last year. When one thinks back on the very difficult circumstances of just a few years ago, it is remarkable. The government is making good progress on behalf of its people, doing so in partnership with the international community; that is, providing security and stability through MINUSTAH. But also in partnership with countries like the United States that are providing opportunities for economic development, through our HOPE program for Haiti, as well as our efforts to help improve security through the training of police and the justice system.



The improved security situation in Port-au-Prince has made it possible for us to begin our new \$20 million stabilization initiative this month and we will make certain that a good deal of that money goes to very dangerous, still dangerous places like the Cité Soleil, which we hope will give to those people a sense of hope, a sense of a future so that they can turn away from dangerous pursuits and toward education, jobs, and a better life.

We've also talked about economic reform in Haiti so that Haiti can have a longer-term prospect of foreign direct investment, which after all, is the way to really have economic job growth that is long-term and stable. The Prime Minister welcomed also our initiative with Brazil on biofuels and we talked about our desire to get on with the planning for that initiative, which we think will benefit the people of Haiti, but it will also benefit economic growth and the environment, really, in the entire region.

We continue also our close cooperation in counter-narcotics and fighting of crime and have talked about initiatives in that area as well. From 2004 to 2006, the United States contributed more than \$600 million to improve Haiti's political stability, enhance security, improve health, and foster private sector growth. We will provide an additional \$200 million to Haiti in fiscal year 2007.

Mr. Prime Minister, I hope you know that this investment of the American people and the people of Haiti says that we believe that the people of Haiti will overcome their historic circumstances, their historic challenges, and that indeed, they will be triumphant. And you should know that you will have a friend as you make that journey toward greater stability and greater prosperity for Haiti's democracy. We appreciate your leadership and that of President Preval.

PRIME MINISTER ALEXIS: (via interpreter) I'd like to take this opportunity before the press to thank the U.S. Government, American people and the American Congress for the attention that it has made in a very continuous way to Haiti. And I think that our main mission here is to show how much ground there is for us cooperate among each other between the two countries in terms of institutions first, police, justice and also the electoral council.

And of course, cooperation in other sectors, too, like fighting against drugs, creating more jobs thanks to the HOPE Initiative and now, this new program that President Bush and President Lula have created so Haiti can make biofuels. We have already obtained some significant results in terms of improving security and improving the macroeconomic conditions in Haiti. We need to go beyond that now. Now, we have to concentrate on efforts on economic growth and job creation and also to capitalize on the results that we have obtained in terms of security and the stabilization of Haiti. What we need to do now is really to increase the revenues of income of the different people and the families in Haiti.

And that's why we're asking our partners in the United States to help Haiti get back in business. And I do not know -- I can't say that for sure. I know that greater and greater efforts will be made in order for American corporations to come and do business in Haiti. And for that we'll create a regulatory and security environment that will be attractive to investment.

And I think that this is a historic moment where we can do things in order to help Haiti, which is really a few miles away from the American coast, to find a better situation. And I think that for that it's important to continue making the efforts that we're making now, and also the two countries have to increase and consolidate the understanding that they have of each other and also to improve the image of that cooperation between the two countries, to improve the image that is shown of cooperation between the two countries.

Thank you, Madame Secretary.

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