

## FACTS

1. Haiti has a population of 9 million persons, 80% live in poverty, over 50% live on less than one dollar a day, over 50% are children under 15 years of age. But Haiti's poverty is not Haiti's fault.

2. France used Haiti as its own slave colony until the people rebelled in 1791 motivated by the same struggle for freedom as in the U.S. revolution.

3. France is the original source of Haiti's "debtsaster." Following Haiti's war of liberation from France, France demanded that Haiti pay reparation for the loss of France's slave labor. Freed slaves literally had to buy their freedom on credit -- with interest.

Haiti paid France from 1825 to 1947 the rough equivalent of \$20 billion in today's dollars. By 1900, Haiti was spending about 80% of its entire budget paying off France. In 1947, Haiti was able to pay off that debt using money borrowed from other sources.

**But The Damage Was Done!** As of 2008, Haiti was \$1.8 billion in debt with just about nothing to show for it.

4. The U.S. military occupied Haiti from 1915-34. The U.S. supported the vicious "Papa Doc" Duvalier dictatorship from 1956 until his death in 1971 and the "Baby Doc" Duvalier dictatorship from 1971 until his overthrow by a popular uprising in 1986.

The U.S. was also complicit in the enforced exile in 1994 of the democratically elected leader of Haiti, Jean Bertrand Aristide.

Aristide was reelected in 2004 only to be overthrown in 2004, again with U.S. assistance. This is part of a long tradition.. No government lasts in Haiti, the poorest country in the hemisphere, without U.S. approval.

5. In the last decade alone, the U.S. slashed humanitarian assistance to Haiti, blocked international loans, forced the government of Haiti to downsize, ruined tens of thousands of small farmers, and replaced the government with private non-governmental organizations.

6. The result? Small farmers were starved out of the countryside and migrated by the tens of thousands to the cities where they built cheap shelters on hills. International funds for roads and education and healthcare were halted by the U.S. The money that does come into the country goes not to the government but to private corporations. Thus the government of Haiti is nearly powerless to provide assistance to its own people on regular days - much less in the face of a real disaster like this one.

7. When the earthquake struck a few weeks ago, there was no reserves, no soup kitchens, no pantries, nothing for most. Extreme hunger and extreme thirst started immediately.

While the earthquake would harm any country, actions by France and the United States have absolutely magnified the harm from the earthquake in Haiti.

**We can see Haitians pitching in. We can see them trying. They are courageous and generous and innovative, but they are laboring under an unspeakable burden.**

## SOME AMAZING RESULTS OF GLOBAL ACTIVISM

1. The Obama administration granted Temporary Protective Status to Haitian immigrants living in the United States.

2. The IMF Managing Director stated that the IMF intends to work to cancel all of Haiti's debts to the institution, including the \$100 million loan proposed last week.

3. The World Bank announced that it will work toward cancellation of \$39 million of Haiti's remaining debt. Officials from the Inter American Development Bank, which holds the largest amount of Haiti's debt, have said they will consider canceling Haiti's debt.

4. France, would you believe, has called for all of Haiti's creditors to cancel Haiti's debts

**T**his is tremendous progress, but we must keep up the pressure to ensure that these promises for debt cancellation and grants - **not loans** - for Haiti become reality in the coming days.

Already, a spokesperson from the IMF has backtracked from the Managing Director's promise, saying that canceling Haiti's debt - including the new \$100 million loan - is a "medium range" goal.

## PLEASE TAKE ACTION!!

### 1. Send donations to

\* Partners In Health: Donate online at [www.pih.org](http://www.pih.org) or mail your check to Partners In Health, PO Box 845578, Boston, MA 02284-5578

\* Doctors Without Borders: Donate online at [www.doctorswithoutborders.org](http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org) Call toll-free 888-392-0392. or mail your check to: Doctors Without Borders, 333 7th Avenue Fl 2, New York, NY 10001-5004

\* Haiti Action: Donate online at [www.haitiaction.net/About/HERE/HEREF.html](http://www.haitiaction.net/About/HERE/HEREF.html) or mail your check to East Bay Sanctuary Covenant, 2362 Bancroft Way, Berkeley CA 94704

### 2. Call the White House Today

202-456-1111 and ask President Obama to take these steps:

- a. Provide massive assistance for relief and reconstruction in the form of grants, not loans
- b. Cancel the rest of Haiti's debt and pressure Haiti's other creditors to do so as well.

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For more info on debt relief, visit [www.jubileeusa.org/index.php](http://www.jubileeusa.org/index.php)

For more info on Haiti, visit [www.8thdaycenter.org/resources/bulletins.html](http://www.8thdaycenter.org/resources/bulletins.html)

SO FAR, WE'VE RAISED \$26,500 OF OUR GOAL OF \$35,000 DURING THIS 35TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR. PLEASE MAKE A DONATION TO SUPPORT OUR WORK FOR JUSTICE.

You can make a donation at [www.8thdaycenter.org/joinus/event/35th2.html](http://www.8thdaycenter.org/joinus/event/35th2.html) or you can send us a check. No donation is too small

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# HAITI



**Treat all  
Haitians as we  
ourselves  
would want to  
be treated.**