

**Written Testimony of T. Christopher Milligan  
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United States Senate  
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Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, I am honored to join you here today. I would like to thank you personally for your support of the relief and reconstruction efforts in Haiti and for your commitment to the Haitian people.

Last Wednesday marked the four month anniversary of the devastating earthquake in Haiti. It is hard to overstate the scale of the destruction caused on January 12<sup>th</sup>. Hundreds of thousands of people lost their lives. Millions of Haitians were left without shelter, water, food, or electricity. Traditional first-responders, the Government of Haiti, United Nations and NGOs working in-country were left devastated. Dozens of U.S. government employees, including our dedicated Foreign Service Nationals in Haiti, suffered their own losses. It's a tragedy and a grieving process that continues to this day.

That said, moments of crisis can unite people around a common goal and a sense of shared purpose – and we've seen that this is the case in Haiti. We saw how Haitians came together to pull people out of the rubble in ways that bridged economic and cultural divides. Neighborhoods emptied into the streets, and all Haitians shared the same fears and common challenges from the catastrophe that struck their country.

We also have seen the tremendous generosity of the American people in this tragedy. One out of every two families in the United States has contributed to the relief efforts. Many thousands of people have volunteered in Haiti to provide medical relief, distribute commodities, or to manage a settlement of displaced people. The response of the American people demonstrates to the world our true nature and how we seek to improve the lives and well being of others.

The day after the earthquake, President Obama asked USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah to lead a "swift, coordinated, and aggressive" response. In the days and weeks that followed, USAID leveraged talents and resources throughout the Federal Government in a synchronized effort – bringing our development experience to bear – to support the efforts of the Government of Haiti, the UN, and the international community.

Together the international community launched an impressive response that not only saved lives and alleviated suffering, but also helped create renewed international

cohesion and momentum upon which to rebuild Haiti. While significant challenges still remain, we have seen some tremendous successes thus far.

- Search and Rescue teams from throughout the United States took part in the most successful international rescue effort in history, with over 40 teams from around the world saving 132 people trapped in the rubble.
- Through the World Food Program, we participated in the largest urban food distribution operation ever, feeding more than 3.5 million people.
- U.S. Disaster Medical Assistance Teams, deployed internationally for the first time, saw more than 30,000 patients and performed hundreds of surgeries. Medical teams aboard the USNS Comfort provided life-saving treatment for hundreds of the most critically injured trauma victims.
- We've supported the delivery of emergency shelter to earthquake victims at an unprecedented rate, and, together with the international community, achieved the goal of providing 1.5 million people with some form of basic shelter assistance by May 1, 2010, prior to the start of hurricane season.
- We've helped vaccinate close to 900,000 adults and children against common diseases in an effort to prevent major outbreaks of illness. A second round of immunizations among IDP will begin in June.
- Our community development programs are on average employing more than 24,000 workers every day – not only getting money directly into the pockets of those Haitians who need it most, but most importantly jumpstarting the economic recovery through rubble removal, initial reconstruction work, and mitigating against potential weather-related disasters.
- Together with the Joint Task Force-Haiti and Navy Seabees who took the lead on ensuring drainage canals were cleared, and life-saving measures were in place before the rains, we've helped to protect 40,000 Haitians who were in imminent danger of losing their lives.
- The U.S. private sector, as reported by the Indiana University Center on Philanthropy (as of May 12), raised over \$1.3 billion for the U.S. non-profits surveyed to respond to the earthquake in Haiti. This includes funding that resulted from President Obama's request to Presidents Clinton and Bush to lead a private-sector fund-raising effort.

These results are impressive, and they reflect the work of thousands of individuals from across the Federal Government and around the globe. In the area of health, for

example, our efforts in providing access to water and sanitation, national disease surveillance, post-quake access to health care, pre-positioning of essential medicines, vaccination campaigns, and malaria and dengue control efforts contributed to the prevention of significant outbreaks. By providing chlorine tablets to purify drinking water, we have been able to give more people access to clean water than before the earthquake hit. That effort has led to real impacts on the ground – already we’ve seen a 12% reduction in diarrheal illness in Port-au-Prince. That’s a 12% reduction from pre-earthquake levels.

That said, let me be clear: the challenges before us are formidable. The road ahead will not be easy, and many of the hardships Haiti faces – endemic poverty, difficulty getting lifesaving medicines when needed, lack of meaningful economic opportunities, gaps in the government’s provision of basic services, maneuvering the cities congested streets – existed long before the January 12<sup>th</sup> earthquake and, simply, present even greater challenges now.

USAID’s humanitarian assistance expertise – world-wide and in Haiti – was crucial in coordinating one of the largest and one of the most successful US Government humanitarian responses in history. The Agency’s development expertise is increasingly critical as we move towards longer-term reconstruction activities that address these hardships and advance the priorities set by the Government of Haiti.

We will remain committed to working with the people and Government of Haiti for the long-term. We have closely examined how we can help Haiti build back better and how we can help build internal capacity in Haiti’s Government, civil society, and private sector to allow it to better serve its citizens and break free of the poverty that has limited its potential for so long.

In doing so, we will continue to work in close partnership with a number of other U.S. government agencies, especially the Department of State, but also the Department of Defense, Centers for Disease Control, the Department of Agriculture, and others, and we’ll focus on areas and sectors where we can add the greatest value:

- Promoting economic growth by expanding agriculture and infrastructure, including housing
- Improving security and governance
- Investing in infrastructure and energy
- Supporting sustainable healthcare

The magnitude of the challenge requires an international response, so we are working to leverage resources and work with the international community to support the strategic decisions made by the Haitian people and their Government. Reconstruction will be a shared effort, and the U.S. Government will work with the Government of Haiti and the international community to ensure that the activities of each donor are a reflection of their comparative advantage.

We are committed to working with the Government of Haiti, the private sector, and civil society to develop accountable, and transparent systems that allow us to track funding every step of the way, ensure coordination, and maximize the effectiveness of our investments.

The Interim Haiti Recovery Commission or IHRC, which was recently approved by the Haitian legislature, will play a key role in ensuring transparency and accountability of donor funds. The IHRC will allow for Haitian-led planning, sequencing, and prioritization of projects—for example, it will help ensure that a hospital is not built without a road that can reach it. It will also provide greater efficiency in the reconstruction phase as donors coordinate and harmonize their investments with Haiti’s plan, identifying gaps and limiting duplication of effort. The IHRC will manage a publicly available “aid platform” database, which will serve as a central location for information on the allocation and management of resources and funding. This allows for increased transparency and accountability in the utilization of resources.

USAID and the Department of State are committed to engaging the Haitian Diaspora in our reconstruction and development programming. The Diaspora is a tremendous resource, not only in the close to \$2 billion they provide annually in remittances – amounting to approximately 30% of Haiti’s GDP – but also in their language skills, cultural understanding and diverse technical skills. The reconstruction and development of Haiti must ultimately be led and sustained by the people of Haiti if it is to be successful, and that requires nurturing local capacity. The Diaspora can work side-by-side with the Haitian community to develop the skills needed to truly build back better.

We are integrating the lessons we’ve learned from 30 years of work in Haiti and 50 in development internationally to respond quickly and effectively to the most critical needs, while planning for longer-term reconstruction of the country. We are also applying a very critical eye to what’s worked in the past and what hasn’t—and focusing our efforts only on those activities that will have the greatest impact on sustainably improving the lives of Haitians, giving US taxpayers the biggest return on their investments in Haiti.

The overarching principles I’ve laid out before the committee – Haitian-led, inclusive, accountable, transparent and coordinated – are very much in line with the principles set forth in the Haiti Empowerment, Assistance, and Rebuilding Act of 2010. The Government of Haiti has, through its Action Plan for National Recovery and Development of Haiti, made great strides in identifying its needs and priorities. Supporting this plan will require a long-term commitment on the part of the international community, the spirit of which is reflected in the proposed legislation.

We have had several very positive conversations with your Committee staff on the recently introduced legislation, S.3317 Haiti Empowerment, Assistance, and Rebuilding

Act of 2010, and appreciate the consultative process your staff has engaged in as you drafted your legislation.

We applaud the Chairman and Senator Corker for their leadership on this issue. We agree with the broad objectives laid out in the bill and the statement of need in Haiti. The situation on the ground is changing daily, and for that reason, maximum flexibility is needed as we address the ongoing crisis in Haiti. For instance, in a year, Haiti could have a new government in place. Given the uncertainties that lie ahead, it would be our suggestion to provide the Administration and those of us on the ground greater flexibility and to allow us to work closely with you on how to best implement our programs.

As the Coordinator for Disaster Response in Haiti, I want to thank Congress for its support for and involvement in efforts to date. Your support, and the support of your constituents, have enabled my colleagues throughout the federal government and me – in partnership with the non-profit and international communities – to save lives and mitigate the suffering of millions in Haiti. Our Agency is committed to honoring the trust that Congress and the American people have placed in us by making investments in Haiti that are sustainable, scalable, and lead to self-sufficiency. The recent Congressional passage of the bipartisan Haiti Economic Lift Program (HELP) Act will help promote such sustainable development by expanding duty-free access to the U.S. market for Haitian textile and apparel exports and extending existing trade preference programs for Haiti.

I have worked in development for the last 20 years, including in Iraq, Post-Suharto Indonesia, Zimbabwe, Ecuador, and in Vietnamese refugee camps in the Philippines. I know that the scale and scope of the challenges that confront Haiti are immense. Without a doubt, there will be setbacks along the way. But I am confident that with the continued work of the international community and the talent of American public servants participating in this effort, we can overcome these short-term obstacles and substantively tackle bigger ones.

With your support, we will do everything we can to continue this successful humanitarian effort in Haiti while building the foundations for meaningful, measureable, and transformative change for its people. I truly believe that we have a seminal opportunity to help Haiti build back better, and to put it on a path to a much better future.

Thank you.