

International Donors' Conference
New York, 31 March 2010

Address by Mr Clément DUHAIME
Director of the OIF

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The Honourable President of the Republic of Haiti,
The Honourable Secretary of State of the United States of America,
The Honourable Secretary General of the United Nation,
The Honourable Prime Minister of Haiti,
Honourable Ministers,
Respected representatives of international organisations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The terrible earthquake that devastated Haiti in January this year is still present in our minds. Some of us in this room today lost a friend, a family member or an acquaintance. Because of the extreme violence and horror of this disaster, their memories will remain forever engraved in our thoughts.

Haiti has known a unique destiny. In 1804, Haiti, this small African territory transplanted to the Caribbean, became the first independent republic set up by a black population. Courage and tenacity have never deserted the Haitian people at any moment – whether happy or unhappy – of its history.

La Francophonie wishes to believe, like the Haitian writer and painter Franketienne, in the energy and resilience of the Haitian people. They must, through this disaster, be able to find the strength required for a collective reawakening, with the same energy and the same conviction to triumph over tribulations. The genuine and long-awaited leap forward will be achieved through the mobilisation of the people of Haiti as a whole.

As the Secretary General of the United Nations has affirmed, this reconstruction must necessarily aim to "build something better". And I would add that this requires a genuine reform and reorganisation, that is to say, a reform and reorganisation supported and implemented by the Haitians themselves. This reform and reorganisation desired by the Republic of Haiti is not an empty phrase: it reflects the Haitian government's determination to rebuild the country on the foundations of Haitian culture and identity.

It reiterates the choices always made by the Republic of Haiti, which, without denying its African roots or its own cultural values, remains a special representative of La Francophonie in the Caribbean.

As our Secretary General, President Abdou Diouf, has strongly affirmed, La Francophonie is and always will be at the side of the Haitian people. Honourable President and Prime Minister, this is something of which you can be fully assured.

Haïti kampé bò koté nou, dépi òganizasyon nou an te fèt. Li te édé avansé nan réyonman lang fransé a, pa pozisyon estratéjik li yo. Jodi a, la francofoni ap rété bò koté li, pou édél, nan respè reyinyon plizyè idantitel yo, pou li leve, é pran desten li an chaj.

[Haiti has been at our side since the birth of our Organisation. It has contributed to furthering the influence of the French language through its strategic positioning. Today, La Francophonie will be at Haiti's side to help it, while respecting its plural identities, arise and take responsibility for its destiny.]

Our Organisation does not intend to replace the major financial backers – it has neither the desire nor the means to do this. It wants, rather, to act with the constant concern to provide added value, by relying on its specific know-how and mobilising the diverse and varied expertise that it can contribute thanks to the particular place that it occupies in the world.

This is why we are contributing to the *Action Plan for the Reconstruction and Development of Haiti* presented by the Government of the Republic of Haiti, with the assistance of the international community.

As is its custom, La Francophonie intends to act in a concerted and coordinated way with the actions implemented by other multilateral organisations, on the basis of targeted projects deployed on the ground in the framework of partnerships, both with the Haitian authorities and with other multilateral and bilateral organisations.

La Francophonie has prepared an action plan addressing the two priority fields of intervention chosen by the Haitian authorities:

- **social reform and reorganisation:** La Francophonie proposes to work towards the reform and reorganisation of the education system, from nursery to higher education
- **institutional reform and reorganisation:** the proposed actions will focus on reforming the justice system and re-establishing the rule of law.

Our plan to support the justice system, already implemented for several years with the help of European and Canadian funding, will be reorganised taking into account the new requirements the Haitian judiciary must now satisfy and the guidelines proposed by the authorities.

The reorganisation and modernisation of the education system presents a genuine opportunity to establish quality public education and higher education capable of guaranteeing an education to all of Haiti's children.

Our active solidarity with the Haitian people can be gauged from the network represented by La Francophonie: one third of our members are also members of the United Nations; we can rely on a network of 728 universities that are members of the University Agency of La Francophonie (AUF), 203 towns that are members of the International Association of Francophone Mayors, and a French-language television channel, TV5Monde, which is broadcast throughout the world.

The financial contribution of francophone countries and organisations to Haiti is substantial. The bilateral contribution of francophone States and governments is estimated at around 500 million dollars, coming from all five continents in which the French language is spoken. This contribution is supplemented by the Action Plan prepared by the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF), which is available to you, with the assistance of the Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie (APF) and the different specialised operators of La Francophonie (AUF, AIMF and TV5Monde).

It calls for an additional contribution of almost 70 millions dollars to implement the actions identified.

La Francophonie is ready and willing, if you give it the resources to do so, to play a very active part in this work of such fundamental importance for the future of Haiti. We intend to put all our energy and all our emotion to work to express our whole-hearted solidarity with the people of Haiti.

Thank you.