

Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Ms. Ursula Mueller Remarks at the opening of the Member States Briefing on Haiti

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As delivered

Good afternoon!

Distinguished delegates, it is a pleasure to be here to open this meeting. I am honored to have the Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of Haiti to the United Nations, his Excellency Ambassador Regis, and Dr. Mamadou Diallo, our Deputy Special Representative and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator joining us here this afternoon.

And thank you so much for your interest. We are here to have a meeting on the humanitarian needs in Haiti and the 2017-2018 multi-year Humanitarian Response Plan which was launched in Port-au-Prince last week, to meet the needs that were identified.

And I take this opportunity to thank the Government of Haiti, to thank humanitarian partners, and, Mr. Mamadou Diallo, for your untiring efforts to alleviate the suffering of the people in Haiti.

While the humanitarian situation in Haiti has improved since it was devastated by Hurricane Matthew in 2016, deep-seated vulnerability and humanitarian need persist across the country.

More than half of the population of Haiti lives in extreme poverty, and 1.3 million people need food assistance to get by.

Cholera cases are decreasing but the risk of outbreaks remains high.

Displacements remain a critical concern.

And climate change is increasing the intensity and frequency of natural disasters, making them a growing threat to people's lives and livelihoods.

Altogether, 2.8 million people across Haiti will require humanitarian assistance, protection and early recovery assistance this year, of whom humanitarian agencies expect to assist the most vulnerable 80 per cent by mobilizing US\$ 252 million through the Humanitarian Response Plan.

UN agencies, NGOs and other partners will turn the response plan into action, complementing the activities of the Government and development agencies to address the underlying root causes of the vulnerability.

OCHA remains firmly committed to continue to support the Government of Haiti and humanitarian and development partners in their efforts to embrace a new way of working to overcome the humanitarian-development divide.

In this transition phase, the Humanitarian Country Team will focus on providing life-saving aid and protection; strengthening the resilience of the people of Haiti to natural disasters; and supporting early recovery and sustainable livelihoods.

Ladies and gentlemen. The Government of Haiti, with the support of partners, has made great progress.

We have learned crucial lessons since Hurricane Matthew.

Drawing on these lessons, we have all made strides to increase the resilience of the Haitian people through better emergency preparedness and a greater focus on early recovery.

As the current chair of CARICOM, Haiti will lead efforts to build a regional partnership to reinforce preparedness and response to natural disasters.

But more needs to be done. By implementing the Humanitarian Response Plan, with the strong backing of donors and partners, we will be able to build a better future for Haiti's most vulnerable people.

I would now like to invite his excellency the Permanent Representative of Haiti to the United Nations, to deliver his remarks.

Je vous en prie.