



Joint press release of the Government of Haiti/United Nations

The High-Level Cholera Committee endorses the new National Plan to intensify the battle against the disease

Port-au-Prince, 16 November 2018 —On the occasion of a visit by the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General for Haiti, Josette Sheeran, a special meeting of the High-Level Cholera Committee took place at the official residence of the Prime minister, M. Jean-Henry Céant. Co-chaired by the head of the Government and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, this meeting was an opportunity for the Government to present the new National Plan for the Elimination of Cholera in the long term, which was endorsed by the high-level committee, with an approach that integrates the efforts of the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MSPP) and the National Directorate of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DINEPA). The Haitian authorities did also express their determination to work closely with the international community and its partners for the implementation of this plan in 2019.

The representatives of the Government and the United Nations reaffirmed their determination to make joint efforts to win the battle against the disease. It should be noted that the efforts already made have reduced the number of cholera cases by 99.5% since the peak of the epidemic in 2010. For the third consecutive year, the number of cases and deaths showed a clear downward trend from more than 18,000 new cases per week at the beginning of the epidemic in 2010 to an average of less than 50 cases per week in the last six months, according to the latest data from the MSPP.

This downward trend shows that cholera can be eliminated and represents an opportunity to take a major step towards the zero transmission of the disease in Haiti in the coming years. Nevertheless, Committee members reiterated that the commitment of the international community, donors and partners in support of the national-led rapid response teams remains crucial to seize this opportunity and not to lose the hard-fought gains.

The Government and the United Nations did thus express their commitment to intensify the rapid response to outbreaks and to address also the root causes of the cholera epidemic, and waterborne diseases in general, by improving access to drinking water and sanitation, hygiene measures and health care. The Committee emphasized that these elements are critical to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the strategic goal of Haiti to become an emerging country by 2030.

Prime Minister Jean-Henry Céant also praised the long-term National Plan for the Elimination of Cholera elaborated by experts and supported by the international community and key partners, including USAID, as part of the fight against the disease. He further emphasized that his Government team is committed to continuing the partnership in the battle against cholera. “We will continue to work together against cholera. At my level, at Government level, the programs and projects of this plan are already moving in the right direction. Now it is time for the follow-up by the MSPP and DINEPA.”

For her part, the Special Envoy Josette Sheeran underscored the importance of a united front against cholera: “It is absolutely essential that the Government and the international community stand together in solidarity to end this scourge for the people of Haiti and become a model for defeating cholera elsewhere in the world.”

Finally, the Government and the United Nations agreed on the opportunity to work on innovative approaches for resource mobilization and to attract foreign direct investment in the water, sanitation and health sectors in Haiti.

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