



United Nations

PRESS RELEASE

UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed says latest crisis an opportunity for Haitians to start anew

PORT-AU-PRINCE, 20 AUGUST 2021 – UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed, on a two-day mission to Haiti, said the response to the country’s quake-related crisis presents an opportunity to forge greater national cohesion and chart a new way forward.

The number of affected people continues to climb in the aftermath of the 7.2 magnitude earthquake that hit Haiti’s southern peninsula on 14 August. More than 2,100 people have been reported killed, and 10,000 others injured so far.

The quake was followed by Tropical Storm Grace, which caused flooding in the quake-affected areas. According to authorities, an estimated 600,000 people need humanitarian assistance.

During her mission, Ms. Mohammed met with affected communities in the earthquake-damaged city of Les Cayes. “I saw once again the incredible resilience of the Haitian people who have suffered so much and are now mobilized to support their neighbours and communities in the aftermath of the earthquake.” she said.

On 19 August, Ms. Mohammed met with Haitian Prime Minister Ariel Henry and representatives of civil society. She lauded the authorities for their efforts: “I was particularly impressed by the work of the COUN – the Haiti Civil Protection Agency, which must be empowered to lead a coordinated response.”

At a press briefing today, Ms. Mohammed assured Haitians that the UN remains committed to working under the leadership of national and local authorities to assist not only in providing lifesaving support for the immediate response to the earthquake, but also during the reconstruction phase.

Ms. Mohammed said there were lessons to be learnt from the 2010 earthquake to do things differently so that Haiti can recover better. This, she underlined, “will require investing in long-term development and supporting Government leadership”.

UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner said, "What I have seen on this visit is devastating – so much destruction and suffering. And yet, at the same time I have seen the solidarity and hope of the Haitian people in the face of such a tragedy. I was moved by the mobilization of Haitians to support their neighbours and community as well as the commitment of the country's Civil Protection first responders and volunteers in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake Haiti needs our support in this critical moment. The UN Development Programme will do its utmost to support the people of Haiti in this hour of need as well as in the ongoing recovery and reconstruction."

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