

Haiti: Report of the mission of social movements

Monday, 01 February 2010

21/23 January, 2010 Introduction From the very moment that the earthquake occurred on January 12 in Haiti, organizations, media and other sectors of the Dominican Republic had access and threw the alarm, even without detailed information, stating that it had been a disaster, some said "a tsunami" of unintended consequences.

On the morning of day 13, while social organizations mission was headed to Port au Prince to contain the situation, producing meetings of social organizations, on the one hand, and NGOs, agencies and civil society, which resulted in the formation Platform Support to Haiti, to respond in emergency humanitarian aid proposing be channeled directly to the population. The reports given by the first who arrived in Port au Prince told us how they met there with "the chaos, the pain of people left without help, thousands of people wandering the streets aimlessly and anguish in the rescue work victims who were not quantifiable, they found the collapse of all authority ... to the point that the only official who had notice was the prime minister was on a small motorcycle trying to verify survivor officials. From 13 to 20 were established partnerships and solidarity among different sectors of the Dominican Republic and Haiti, government levels, civil society and social movements it has to do with health, nutrition, rescue, among others, which is well grateful for the Haitian groups. So 21-23 is the first encounter between post earthquake Dominican and Haitian organizations, supported by international networks. Presentation of the Mission A mission of 15 representatives of social organizations and international networks Dominican visited Port-au-Prince, Haiti, from 21 to 23 January contacting and supporting social organizations, civil society and leaders of Haiti and the initiatives being developed in the situation Post earthquake.

Mission Objectives: Contacting Haitian social organizations and post-earthquake initiatives launched by them, contributing their regrouping and coordination necessary.

Knowing the real situation in Haiti, the effects of the phenomenon and possible causes of magnitude.

Composition of the Mission. Organizations, Dominican dynamics, networks and institutions: Confederation of Rural Women, CONAMUCA, Cooperative Housing (COOPHABITAT) Unitary Workers Confederation (CNUS) Alternative Social Forum (ASF), Independent Workers' Movement (MTI), National Articulation Campesina (ANC), Federation of Coffee Producers (FEDERARE), Bloque de Productores del Bosque Seco, Cooperativa Integral Union, Unidad del Pueblo, Cuba Solidarity Campaign, Committee in Solidarity With Haiti Nuevo Amanecer, Zero Evictions Campaign, Assembly of Caribbean People International Alliance of Inhabitants (IAI), Via Campesina, Jubilee South, Cry of the Excluded and Veterinarians Without Borders, which was formed this mission in Port au Prince developing various activities with social organizations and civil society in Haiti. Activities:

DAY 21:

- Meeting People exchange with post-earthquake Initiative launched by PAPDA and organizations of Port after the earthquake. Labor contribution to the consolidation of assembly of the Center for Interim Operation for the Coordination of emergency activities of organizations in Port au Prince.
- Visit to the areas most devastated by the earthquake in Port au Prince.
- Visits to camps for victims.
- Conversations with people in the population.

DAY 22:

- Meeting Exchange with peasant organizations, neighborhood, women and NGOs.
- Visit to the Dominican Embassy.
- Visit of representatives of institutions.

DAY 23:

- Final meeting for joint assessment by encrypting the prospects ahead.
- Return to Santo Domingo. THE EARTHQUAKE

On 12 January 2010, at 16:53:09 local time did the earthquake that devastated part to several municipalities in the western departments including Puerto Principe, and the Southeast has to Jacmel as the head. The phenomenon was centered between 10 and 15 km from Port au Prince, Haiti's capital. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, the quake would have had a magnitude of 7.3 degrees and would have generated at a depth of 10 km. Since then there have been constant aftershocks ranging from 6.1, 5.9, 5.5, 5.1, etc degrees. The effects caused on the poorest country of America have been devastating. Organizations linked to the UN and others have given various figures on the number of deaths and injuries, ranging from the 50 initial, 75 thousand, 100 thousand and up more than 200 people dead, 250 thousand injured, homeless more than one million people. Still no reliable figures exist for the exact number of victims. This is rated as one of the most devastating humanitarian disasters of all time. Meanwhile people are surviving in camps located mostly covered with sheets and material, in the open, with virtually no basic service, and feeding difficulties. It is estimated that over 35 percent of the survivors have left Puerto Principe to which the government has offered free transportation, while there is news of the difficulties experienced by the survivors of the city of Jacmel, located in a soccer stadium. Valuation of Haitian Organizations: "During the first three days of the earthquake we found that the population was able to organize without resources and in the midst of the most dramatic desolation, assisting the wounded, organizing camps and provision of most basic things like water, medicine and food. Without submission of violence, the people organized over half a million homeless." "We and us as city dwellers, peasants is the first time we see a disaster of this magnitude. There was no provision even though the catastrophe was announced on the country, where there is minimal planning and awareness could prevent many human casualties. The population is traumatized since Tuesday, killing thousands and thousands of people. It is a national disaster as nearly every family has a member living in the capital. It also affected the peasant sector with falling houses for example in South East (Jacmel), Croix des Bouquets, Kenscoff; Arcahaie; la Ferriere (Platau Central); Sarazin (Mirbalais). The population is living in fear of being

left outside and also inside the houses are outside without tents with their families remaining with nothing, waiting for help that is coming without knowing when, although being advertised and promoted internationally The capital is a city made for 250 thousand people, not 2 million ... there is only one university and is also in Port au Prince where everything is concentrated.

There are psychological problems of large magnitude, many people of all age who are in the street with mental problems after losing relatives and property. To this were added after the disaster, how Americans used the opportunity to place their troops to occupy strategic points that we see as an injury to the sovereignty of the country. The transfer of persons to the provinces is increasing poverty that already existed. Now a peasant family that had 10 people is increasing at 15, 20, 25 to 30 people. So this year there will be a shortage of seeds for peasant farmers and will eat everything they had saved, likely to occur with a major food crisis, in view of past experience, how the occupation forces have not helped to develop any of these areas during the years they wear. Hospitals in the provinces are getting injured, serious, fractured operations but have no materials and medicines to care for those infected and affected who are arriving in the capital. Not all provinces are sure to greet the people, for example Gonaïves with the problems you get is not safe for people. There is a severe shortage of medical materials and medicines in all hospitals. The urgency and the distribution of aid is heavily concentrated in the capital, despite the population, yet receives almost nothing so far, and in the operating logic forget the provinces.

Working in the emergency, the national dimension, and define a strategic plan for reconstruction in a participatory process of discussion is very important ... We are currently in the humanitarian emergency phase then we move to the phase of reconstruction and consolidation. It may face two visions, the government and many international institutions for reconstruction for real estate speculation, and a popular alternative vision of participatory reconstruction without debt. He greatly appreciates the help from the first moment has arrived from the Dominican Republic, through both the State and civil society and social movements, to help "people to people" who inhabit the same island. They note that: "We could do the following reflection. The U.S. is using 20 thousand soldiers and many military supplies to provide assistance that could not quantify or specify where it is and as specifically favors the Haitian people, however, from the Dominican Republic to Haiti has reached more than 30 times what EU has provided part of civil society organizations and the government itself and only the Dominican state has had to use about 200 soldiers and not for offensive military activity. "

Finally, Haitian organizations stress that the earthquake has revealed that U.S. military occupations and MINUSTAH are absolutely unnecessary, but rather they become an obstacle to the flow of humanitarian aid and to rebuild the country. Assessment of the Situation by the Mission: The earthquake, but only occurred in the Western Department which has as its capital Port au Prince, and that is Jacmel Southeast, is a national catastrophe that some say affects more than 90% of Haitian families. Initially, the government and MINUSTAH as well as the buildings collapsed, looked without any initiative. Social organizations contacted indicated how people spontaneously began to rescue victims, and then to bury their dead. But the bodies of a large number of victims crushed by large buildings have not yet been removed, extending the risk of disease. Further concerned about the constraints operating Haitian social organizations are developing emergency work from the outset, how the "international aid" is mostly being coordinated with them, but, while states that "occupy" to Haiti ignore much of the volunteer groups and organizations that reach work without greater knowledge of concrete reality in Haiti. But it highlights the role played by these institutions and individuals who are connected with churches and a few other institutions enabling in that way has been expressing humanitarian relief in the emergency in Haiti today. It was found the high military presence which many see as "foreign occupation", limitations or poor perception of food aid and medicines, machinery carried by the few developed countries to remove the collapses and the victims get mass following in those places. As described the mission of great concern the fact how the government and other sectors, promoted his first reaction that people are not affected and injured to leave Port au Prince to municipalities and rural areas, providing free transportation, which could leave the city "empty" a reconstruction for real estate speculation, which is indicated as one possible cause of the magnitude of the disaster, to build for the "business" without taking into account the parameters of building housing. This exodus has exceeded the capacity of local hospitals to provide care to people. It has also aggravated the situation of hunger and nutrition of families in these areas. The mission noted the absence of situations of lawlessness and assaults as opposed to some international media have said. The mass population is in the streets, many are reluctant to stay inside the houses that withstood the earthquake. Shops destroyed were observed with the goods without such goods have been removed, which does not mean there are not some elements and situations of insecurity.

Mission Results: The objectives were met, as indicative of the success of the mission. He came into contact with the initiative launched by PAPDA and 6 other organizations in the post earthquake. The Mission: contributed to the bringing together of a large part of the social organizations in Haiti, providing it with power plant and some logistical and operational minimum resources for contributing to the consolidation of post earthquake initiative launched by the Haitian Platform for Development Alternative (PAPDA) and six organizations. Now it has expanded constituting a General Coordination for the emergency and reconstruction participative with the presence of the Peasant Movement of Papay (MPP), TETKOLE and some 20 organizations from different sectors (NGOs, Farmers, unions, women, youth, Human Rights, in neighborhoods, among others), with a central office or operational unit, and two health care to those affected. The mission was able to get an objective opinion on the magnitude of the disaster, the "invisibility" of the so-called "humanitarian aid" and fears that the "reconstruction" will constitute a project driven by the real estate speculation, is made based on more indebted to Haiti, or the end, they remain on paper as it has happened until now with the announced support of Northern governments and the international community, while disregarding their sovereignty and national dignity. They let the ties between organizations in Haiti, the Dominican and international networks to channel the solidarity of "people to people". Agreements and commitments: Dominican organizations agree: Arrange with the

Autonomous University of Santo Domingo and private universities to grant exemptions and facilities available to students who lost family members or significant damage were caused by the earthquake. Request the Dominican government to keep open the border to facilitate emergency humanitarian aid, which in its support of the Haitian Government with tractors, seeds and other incentives for agricultural, discuss that takes into account the participation of peasant organizations in Haiti. Platform to Manage Aid to Haiti, to forge links with the Coordination of Organizations in Haiti, so that part of the aid be channeled directly collected.

By Haitian organizations take the following resolutions: Deepening the coordinated work in the emergency situation in the country, paying special attention to the injured and homeless, for which request the support and international solidarity "people to people "Helping those affected with food, clothing, tents, medicinal materials, soap, facilitate the extraction and purification of drinking water. ... Think a reconstruction with decentralization axis after the humanitarian phase Riding a national production plan.

- Define a participatory strategy designed to rebuild involving victims and the Haitian people.
 - Conduct a mapping of the poor neighborhoods of Port au Prince to allow clearly locate the affected areas where support is channeled. - Define the working committees in the coordination, consolidation and expansion of centers for the affected population. - Conduct a meeting of farmers organizations convened by members of Via Campesina in Haiti, before the next meeting or assembly of Coordination. - Conduct a meeting in 15 days Coordination comprehensive, integrating new sectors such coordination. Mutual commitments: - Establish a means of exchange and constant communication between the organizations. - Perform within a month of a Binational Meeting.
- Conclusions of the Mission: 1. Report to the Coordination of Social Organizations in Haiti the provision of Dominican organizations: send groups of volunteers to work in the current period of emergency along with its members contributing to the organization of the victims for the effectiveness of services currently being provided with their active participation. 2. Request to international networks: - Lobby the international community and countries of the north to take over the reconstruction of Haiti with people, in a participatory manner, without external borrowing or injury to its sovereignty. A reconstruction that serves the people and not property speculation. - Participate in support of decentralized international cooperation for development, channel funds directly to the organizations of the Haitian people (and local authorities who share this approach) for a participatory reconstruction without forced eviction of inhabitants. 3. Request the Dominican Platform "Help Haiti": - Establish a permanent communication channel with the Coordination of Organizations of Haitian and take them into account when distributing the aid obtained. 4. It was agreed to convene a meeting with social movements to socialize the report of the mission. Also a meeting with professionals, students and young Haitians living in the country.

Confederación de Mujeres del Campo (CONAMUCA) Cooperativa de Producción Social de la Vivienda y el Hábitat, COOPHABITAT Confederación Nacional de Unidad Sindical, CNUS Articulación Nacional Campesina, ANC Foro Social Alternativo Campaña Cero Desalojos Campaña de Solidaridad con Cuba Unidad del Pueblo Movimiento de Trabajadores Independientes, MTI Comité de Solidaridad con Haití, Nuevo Amanecer Cooperativa Unión Integral Federación de Productores de Café, FEDECARE Bloque de Productores del Bosque Seco Veterinarios Sin Fronteras Asamblea de los Pueblos del Caribe, APC Alianza Internacional de Habitantes, AIH Vía Campesina – CLOC Jubileo Sur Grito de los Excluidos

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