



January 18, 2010

Please distribute to all members of council

MEMBERS' ADVISORY

FCM CALLS ON MEMBERS TO PREPARE FOR UNPRECEDENTED RECONSTRUCTION EFFORTS IN HAITI

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The 7.0 magnitude earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12, 2010, is the worst natural disaster ever to hit the Americas. This crisis calls for an unparalleled level of solidarity and collaboration from all Canadian municipalities.

This terrible event has rallied the generosity of citizens in cities and communities across Canada who are donating funds to relief agencies dealing with the immediate effects of the earthquake. Municipalities of all sizes in each region of the country are standing in solidarity with the people of Haiti. Nowhere has this been more the case than in Quebec, home to over 90 per cent of Canadians of Haitian origin. The city of Montreal, which has long-established linkages with the city of Port-au-Prince, is already contributing emergency response personnel to the relief efforts and has signaled its intentions to support long-term reconstruction. Other municipalities in the province have also announced commitments of funding and technical assistance.

In view of the extensive destruction and enormous needs for long-term assistance, FCM is encouraging a broad-based national municipal reconstruction effort for Haiti. FCM President Basil Stewart wrote to CIDA Minister Bev Oda last Thursday to offer Canadian municipal assistance for the reconstruction of Haiti once the emergency response phase is over. In order to help restore the basic local services that have been destroyed by the earthquake, expertise will be required in such areas as planning, waste management, water and sanitation, public works, and housing. FCM is prepared to send a special municipal assessment team to Haiti to evaluate needs and propose a municipal response toward the reconstruction efforts.

The city of Montréal, the Union des municipalités du Québec, and FCM have agreed to discuss how best to coordinate the municipal response in support of the people of Haiti. FCM has opened a special section of its recruitment website for municipalities who wish to offer technical assistance toward the rebuilding of Haiti. **Interested municipalities should register at www.fcm.ca/participation** Municipalities in Quebec can express their interest directly with the Union des municipalités du Québec at info@umq.qc.ca

FCM also continues to encourage municipalities across Canada to donate to established relief organizations and to report their contribution to FCM by sending an email to kmurillo@fcm.ca The Government of Canada announced last week that it will match individual contributions to charitable organizations. Municipalities can encourage their citizens to give, for example, by establishing donation boxes in public buildings, participating in fundraising events, and mobilizing through their newsletters and websites.

For more information, contact Sébastien Hamel, Deputy Director, FCM International, at shamel@fcm.ca

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