

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Muscatine, Lissa <MuscatineL@state.gov>
Sent: Friday, January 15, 2010 12:28 PM
To: Mills, Cheryl D; H
Subject: FW: Haiti - child trafficking

This is a good suggestion from Jillian Burns in S/P....to make sure that children (and wonen) don't become targets of traffickers, as happened in Pakistan.

From: Burns, Jillian L
Sent: Friday, January 15, 2010 12:01 PM
To: Gonzalez, Francisco J; Muscatine, Lissa
Subject: Haiti - child trafficking

<http://www.cbsatlanta.com/news/22239047/detail.html>

Child Trafficking Major Concern After Quake

Thousands Of Children Left Without Parents

By Mike Paluska, CBS Atlanta Reporter

POSTED: 4:58 pm EST January 14, 2010

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ATLANTA -- UNICEF and international adoption agencies said getting children into safe zones is a top priority after the devastating earthquake in Haiti.

The massive magnitude 7.0 earthquake that hit the island of Hispaniola has left thousands of children without parents.

Before the quake even hit UNICEF statistics from 2007 show there were 380,000 orphans already in Haiti.

"There are so many children that are in desperate need of help that's what we are here to do to keep them alive and get them the nutrients they need and clean water. It becomes the one place of stability for the kids where they have people UNICEF workers they can relate to they have educational material so they can start back with school," said Alissa Silverman, deputy director for UNICEF in the southeast region. "UNICEF is tracing family members and caring for children orphaned by the disaster to protect them from harm or exploitation."

The number of children on the island is staggering. Forty-six percent of Haiti's population (nearly 10 million) is under the age of 18, more than half of the population is under 21. Prior to the earthquake, four of every 10 children lived in homes with mud floors or severely overcrowded conditions.

"My first concern is who is with the kids how many of our nannies our ok and who is watching the kids and then all the kids on the streets," said Chareyl Moyes, the program manager for Wasatch International Adoption. Moyes works with a number of different agencies and orphanages in Haiti. She said early reports about how much damage they suffered are good.

"But, there is going to be a concern about child trafficking so both Haitian and the United States governments are going to be careful about forging ahead with new adoptions. The need is going to be great," Moyes said.

A lot of families in the U.S. according to a number of international adoption agencies across the country said some people were at the very end of the process to adopt a child from Haiti. "Now, it will set everyone back," Moyes said.

Even though child trafficking is a major concern for Moyes she worries about the immediate help children need trapped in the rubble from a country in ruins. "How long will that child survive without somebody rescuing them," Moyes said.

<http://www.westportnow.com/index.php?v2/26294/>

Save the Children Emergency Team Reaches Haiti

An emergency response team from Westport's Save the Children successfully reached Haiti today and worked quickly with staff already on the ground to organize the distribution of tents, medicine, and toiletries to children and families in desperate need, the charity said.

"Save the Children is extremely concerned about the well-being of children in Haiti at this critical moment and we are doing everything we can to quickly get relief supplies to those who need it most," said Charles MacCormack, president and CEO of Save the Children, in a news release.

"Our staff on the ground is pulling out all the stops to overcome hurdles like blocked roads and unreliable access to the airport."

"This is just the beginning of what will be a comprehensive five-year effort to build back better in Haiti. We are dedicated to not only addressing the immediate needs of children and families, but to making sure they have a brighter future ahead."

<http://children.foreignpolicyblogs.com/2010/01/13/haitis-disastrous-earthquake-hits-children-hardest/>

As someone in the anti-trafficking news of the disaster in Haiti has my mind rushing to worrying thoughts on how the disaster will increase human trafficking in the country. Such a large scale disaster will undoubtedly leave thousands and thousands of children, and their families, at an increased to be victimized by modern slavery.

Haiti's Restavek system still has a tight grip on the community, leaving some 300,000 children in the country enslaved as domestic workers according to the UN. It is these children who will continue to anguish and suffer the most in the shadows of the earthquake.