

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
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From: Warnholz, Jean-Louis
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2011 8:16 AM
To: Mills, Cheryl D; Klevorick, Caitlin B
Subject: House seeks accounting of aid money to Haiti

Fyi – Interesting that Ileana is the one speaking of progress made. Best, JL

House seeks accounting of aid money to Haiti

(AP) – 14 hours ago

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House on Tuesday asked the Obama administration to come up with an accounting of how humanitarian and reconstruction aid is being spent in Haiti, which has been slow to recover from the devastating earthquake of more than a year ago despite an outpouring of U.S. and international assistance.

"The unprecedented relief effort has given way to a sluggish, at best, reconstruction effort," said Rep. Barbara Lee, D-Calif., sponsor of the legislation calling on President Barack Obama to prepare a report within six months of the bill's enactment on the status of the aid campaign in Haiti, including the fight to combat an outbreak of cholera.

Some of the blame for the slow progress in Haiti has been put on the lack of coordination among foreign and Haiti relief groups, a destroyed infrastructure, absence of a viable Haitian government and corruption. But another factor, Lee said, is "the lack of urgency on the international community's part."

She said that at an international donors' conference in March 2010, 58 donors pledged \$5.5 billion to support Haiti's recovery efforts but as of March this year, only 37% of these funds have been disbursed. "This is unacceptable."

The Haitian government says 316,000 people were killed magnitude 7.0 earthquake that struck on Jan. 12, 2010. More than 1 million in a population of less than 10 million were displaced from their homes in the hemisphere's poorest nation.

Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., said 680,000 remain in refugee camps. "We owe it to the Haitian people to find out how much of this money has been delivered to Haiti and where that money went," she said. "We have not always had our act together in Haiti."

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-Fla., chairwoman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said much progress has been achieved in the past year, such as increased access to clean water. She said the Interim Haiti

Reconstruction Commission has approved 86 reconstruction projects accounting for about one-third of the total pledges made by international donors last year.

But she also stressed the need to determine that the aid effort "is not being derailed by waste, duplication or corruption."

The bill, passed by voice, now goes to the Senate.

The bill is H.R. 1016.

Jean-Louis Warnholz
Senior Advisor
Office of the Counselor &
Chief of Staff
U.S. Department of State
Tel: 202-647-9285

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