

BUILD A WORLD-WIDE HAITIAN DIASPORA UNITED FRONT

To make our contribution, the Diaspora will have to build an independent authority to overcome systematic exclusion by the Haitian Establishment which includes the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of government, the business class and the Civil Society of Haiti (officially- appointed or self-appointed).

WHY DO WE NEED A UNITED FRONT WITH SUCH A MISSION?

The Haitian Diaspora (Diaspora) needs a Worldwide Haitian United Front to exert pressure in the political, social, economic, cultural and other realms to achieve enough parity relative to the forces of the Haitian Establishment (the Establishment) to protect the best interest of Haiti nationally and internationally. While the Diaspora is made up of many organizations and extraordinarily capable individuals who are already doing their best to help Haiti, many more are burning with desire to do more to help lift Haiti out of dire poverty and protect its nationals from abuse and indignity. As it stands, it is unable to exert enough pressure to minimally influence anything in and out of Haiti for Haiti.

Specifically, the Diaspora is not yet able to overcome the narrow policy interests of the Establishment to influence the imposition of long-term economic development policies to lift the Haitian people out of their extreme and dire poverty. The Haitian Establishment resists and, at best, disregard Diaspora's offer and attempts to reintegrate to help to rebuild the nation even at the point of Haiti's greatest need following the Earthquake which devastated the country which was already weak. (One of our members recalls going to Haiti three (3) weeks after the quake as an elected official along with State Senator Marie St. Fleur and other Haitian-American elected officials. Some of the then Haitian authorities refused to meet with us while we were within 20ft from them at the temporary quarters of the Haitian government.) The Diaspora is unable to exercise its Constitutional right to vote as protected by Article 52.1 of the Amended Constitution because the Establishment plainly refuses to allow the Diaspora's exercise of its right to vote. Additionally, the Establishment tramples upon the Ministry of Haitians Living Abroad/Minister des Haitiens Vivant a L'Etranger (MHAVE) which has the potential of serving as a bridge from the government to its Diaspora. However, the Establishment underfunds its budget, excludes the Diaspora from any input in determining the criteria for the minister or input for choosing such minister for this post who barely lasts more than 6 months in office diluting his or her strength for lack of continuity.

Haiti has a tremendous reserve of human resources that have been accumulating over several decades. The Diaspora was born out the turmoil of political dictatorship and economic stagnation and collapse of Haiti. It did not create itself. During reign of Dictators Francois Duvalier and his son Jean-Claude Duvalier from 1957 to 1986, Haiti suffered one of the sharpest losses of population than most other country in the world. Subsequent periods of political repression from 1991 to 1994 and the general decline of Haiti's economy resulted in more flights of population from Haiti.

The various waves of population exodus resulted in the lost of an extraordinary amount of human resources from the country. Just a couple of years ago, the World Bank researchers issued a report in which they concluded that Haiti has lost 86% of its professionals. This group includes the doctors, lawyers, engineers, professors, accountants, pharmacists, tailors, plumbers, carpenters, writers, artists, filmmakers, etc. These professionals are

scattered throughout the world. The population of the Diaspora is approximately 4.5 million Haitians who were born in Haiti living in the Diaspora, many of whom who had become the naturalized citizens of their host nations regained their Haitian citizenship via the Amended Constitution of 1987. The Haitian Diaspora is also made up of approximately 7 million Haitians who were born in the Diaspora outside of Haiti. This group gained Haitian citizenship under Article 11 of the Amended Constitution. So, we can approximate a Haitian Diaspora of more than 10 Million people.

For Haiti, the Diaspora is a golden asset that the Establishment is resisting. Right now, the Establishment has a favorable balance of power. However, that is surmountable. That is why the United Front is essential to shift such balance and to maximize the use of such golden asset for Haiti's development. It's inevitable. But proper organization is the key link. Without an organized and relentlessly sustained campaign for the Diaspora to fully reintegrate to play a greater role in of the life of Haiti, the country will continue to be impoverished while the Establishment is enriched. Under the leadership of its leadership, Haiti will continue to keep a monopoly on the category of "the poorest nation" whether it's the "poorest" in the hemisphere or the "poorest" in the world.

The only thing the Establishment has allowed the Diaspora to do is to send Billion plus dollars into the country. The Haitian Diaspora sends a remittance in excess of \$2billion per year and such sum is more than all of the foreign donations that our country receives and depends on to do it annual national budget. The Diaspora's remittance is one of the most significant sources of the sustainable revenue for the Establishment. The Diaspora sends in the money to its family members who constitute a significant sector of the masses. The masses of our people consume the food, clothing, shelter, communications, and transportation and purchase other services with the Remittances the Diaspora sends home. The Establishment is enriched as this group serves as the middle men and women who sell to the masses whatever they consume. It imports these goods from the DR, the United States and elsewhere to sell to our people who buy their stuff. DR and other nations generate revenue and use the money to reinvest in DR's economy to produce goods to service the Haitian market. The DR's economy flourishes as a result. **Poor Haitians flee Haiti to go work in the DR where there are jobs producing stuff to sell to their own people and to poor Haitians who buy these goods with Remittance money the Diaspora sends home. It's a vicious cycle.** The two (2) billion plus dollars are not reinvested in Haiti. The money is invested in the pockets of the Establishment, the DR and elsewhere. In the final analysis, the remittances may be doing more harm than good for the country as Haiti achieves no net gain from this tremendous sum money. Perhaps, the Establishment will invest the tremendous profit it reaps from the remittance into economic development in Haiti instead of the DR and elsewhere **if the Diaspora intensifies its demands that the Establishment does so or else face possible interruption of the flow of that remittance money,**

Other than sending in our remittances, the Diaspora is dying to help its country. Currently, the Diaspora does so individually or by organizations that are focused primarily on humanitarian assistance. The problem is that we are not engaged in the politically and strategic fight to guide the development of Haiti to lift our people out of poverty. We cannot overcome the tremendous obstacles blocking Haiti's development as we are presently constituted. That is why we need a worldwide United Front. We must build this United Front to pursue the following through various means (the list is not exclusive):

TEN POINTS OF UNITY TO GUIDE OUR WORK

- 1) Remove all discriminatory constitutional and legislative restrictions on the basis of place of residence so that all Haitians, including those living overseas, can exercise all of their rights and duties as citizens including the **Right to Vote and the right to serve Haiti in any and all official capacities**;
- 2) Achieve measurable **repatriation, reintegration/integration of our Haitian citizens** scattered throughout the world **to participate fully in all aspects of the life** of the country whether on the civic, political, social, cultural, athletic, economic, business, diplomatic levels, etc through empowerment of MHAVE politically and financially, perhaps through taxation of the Diaspora's remittance;
- 3) Promote and achieve the establishment of the **rule of law** at all levels of Haitian society including business, land transfer, criminal justice system, civil contract disputes, etc.;
- 4) Organize and advocate for the government of Haiti to provide clear accounting about the utilization of the taxes and fees taken from the \$2b remittance to spend on social programs such as education and for the legislature to enact legislation to authorize the education tax and other needed taxation instead of simply proceeding by presidential decree;
- 5) Organize and advocate for financial sovereignty for Haiti so that our country can stop being dependent on the international community to finance most of its annual national budget, its elections, its crisis resolution by encouraging private sector economic development, self-reliant budgeting through sustainable sources of its own revenue such as taxes and other means, local municipal budgeting, etc;
- 6) **Advocate for and Influence that the expenditure of the \$2billions of annual remittances which is approximately \$5.5 million coming into Haiti daily from the Diaspora be used to consume goods and services grown and generated in Haiti instead of the DR or the U.S. or elsewhere to help to achieve rapid economic development, to create jobs and end extreme poverty and dependency**;
- 7) **Protect the human rights of Haitians and people of Haitian descent from persecution in the Dominican Republic, the Bahamas, Haiti and elsewhere in the world**;
- 8) Promote full empowerment of Haitians living in the Diaspora into the civic, political, social, cultural, athletic, social, economic, business, diplomatic life of our host nations (US, Canada, France, Dominican Republic, etc) to empower ourselves to help protect the best interest of Haiti as other Diasporas do for their respective motherlands;
- 9) Transfer Haitian culture, custom, languages to our children living in the Diaspora by celebrating all of Haiti's significant national events, setting up Haitian schools to teach Creole, French, culture, history; to set up trips and exchange programs to bring our children to Haiti to work with the people, and to join national teams to compete in international events, etc;
- 10) Establish a viable fund to support a budget to pay for strong administrative support for the United Front to be able to conduct sustainable professional work through self-reliance.