THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

HAITI: ASSESSING POLITICAL AND HUMANITARIAN DEVELOPMENTS

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. FERRIS: (in progress) -- both on the elections panel that was originally scheduled from 2:00 until 3:30 and also for Jocie Philistin from KOFAVIV, a Haitian organization working on issues of sexual violence in the camps who had planned to travel here today but because of the situation in Port-au-Prince has been unable to do so.

In any event, we're glad that we're able to continue. We have three speakers who will be talking to us about different aspects of protection of women and the general situation, at least in terms of a humanitarian perspective, in Haiti right now.

Like many of you we've been following very closely what's been happening in Haiti, asking questions. It's been 11 months, why are women still being raped? Why are people still living under tents and plastic sheeting after so long? And yet as I reminded my colleagues, I read this week--or finished the book called *The Great Deluge* about Hurricane Katrina and the five days that occurred five years ago in that city, a city where the U.S. government certainly had many more resources than were available to the Haitian government, where you saw a similar breakdown of law and order and humanitarian challenges galore.

We have three speakers, we'll begin with Sarah Williamson from the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants who's been working with USCRI for some years, opened the office in Haiti, has a lot of humanitarian experience in different settings. She'll be followed by Vincent Cochetel, the representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees here in Washington, who I think has worked for over 20 years in humanitarian affairs, and actually the idea for this panel came from a discussion we had back in October when he said to me something like, just got back from Haiti, I've been working in humanitarian issues for more than 25 years, and yet the situation for women is as bad as I've ever seen it.

Finally, we'll hear from Holly Mackey from the Special Coordinator's Unit

on Haiti at the U.S. Department of State who will be talking about some of the actions the U.S. government is taking to address the issue of violence against women and other protection issues.

So, we'll start with you, Sarah. Welcome.

MS. WILLIAMSON: Thank you, Beth. I want to thank Brookings for having this important forum and I'm sure many of you who have been working on Haiti a lot this year are aware that the upcoming anniversary of the earthquake is going to be a sober time as we reflect on what has taken place over the course of the past 11 months, and so this is a good opportunity to think about perspectives moving forward. So, thank you, Beth, for hosting us here today.

The U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants is working in partnership with a local NGO in Port-au-Prince and that NGO is called GARR, Groupe d'Appui aux Rapatries et Refugies, the Support Group for Returnees and Refugees, and GARR has a national network that assists Haitians who are repatriated both from the Dominican Republic and from the United States. We began assisting GARR immediately after the earthquake when we got in touch with their leadership in Port-au-Prince and we discovered that their building had sustained considerable damage and that the majority of their staff were homeless on the streets and unable to access the mass distributions, and so I went down to Santo Domingo and procured supplies and did a targeted distribution specifically for them as a sister organization and assisted them in building their capacity to operate.

GARR normally focuses on the border and on port areas of Haiti, but in this instance, due to the unusual mass displacement in the capital, they really needed to have protection teams that could operate in an urban environment which was relatively new for them, and one of our first objectives was to connect GARR and other local Haitian groups to the UN system which many of you know has established its humanitarian response system through the cluster system, which groups agencies

together into various sectors. We are most involved in the protection cluster which is led by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and in part by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, as well.

And I want to share with you a little bit about our program of protection monitoring and how we see the situation, not only in the camps, but also in host communities, but I really want to spend some time addressing some of the myths that I think are becoming commonly shared among humanitarian actors in Haiti and try to debunk some of those myths with what I see as the realities on the ground, and then moving forward, what kind of solutions are available to those who are displaced so that they can move on to a more dignified life in a better area.

Our work is really focused on the protection of people, both in the camps in Port-au-Prince and in host communities, and this means looking at risks, looking at vulnerabilities, looking at the factors that make someone particularly vulnerable, and trying to provide vulnerable people with targeted assistance such as transportation, food, medicine, housing, and support for other fees such as school fees or medical bills This is a little different because in a camp environment you have many people, but certainly those who are handicapped, elderly persons, women who are newly widowed with numerous children, find themselves in a particularly precarious situation and need more targeted help. And we also have put a lot of emphasis in the communities where we work on helping displaced people present themselves and their problems directly to local and national authorities so that they can begin to negotiate some assistance from those who, according to international guidelines and standards, are responsible for making decisions to assist them in finding better places to live.

So, that's a little bit about what we do, but I think what's really important is to talk about some of the myths and realities that we see now over the course of time. When I say myths, often times in humanitarian emergencies, we blame the media for getting the facts wrong, but often times, I see now, even in the donor community and

among humanitarian agencies, that the situation is so overwhelming that we've started to believe certain things that aren't true about the situation.The first myth is that Haitian organizations are not capable of working with the international system. This is certainly not true. Haiti has a large number of local organizations and community-based groups that are fully capable of establishing partnership with international organizations and donors, they're just particularly underutilized in this instance.

A second myth is that initial emergency assistance covered the need, that blanket coverage of assistance was achieved in the first three months of the emergency. I don't believe this to be the case, particularly when you go into a camp or host community and you dissect the needs of the population, you can even meet people who still have not received medical treatment or who haven't located relatives who've been missing since the quake. These kinds of things just are too frequent to say that the community achieved blanket coverage.

A third myth is that those who are vulnerable now were always vulnerable and that there are no longer earthquake-affected people who need assistance in Haiti. This is simply also not true. There are many vulnerable people who are predominantly affected by the earthquake. They may have always lived in poor conditions or in poverty, but many of the most vulnerable people that we meet have lost all their support mechanisms and this has happened predominantly through death of primary relatives and other support systems that they would have relied on, other friends and family members who had earned an income and helped provide for their general support.

Another myth is that there is a functioning government in Haiti that can be held accountable for decision-making. And I think you do start to see this myth debunked in recent events with the results of the election and the ongoing fightingbut it was very frustrating at the onset of the emergency to be in countless meetings with the heads of donor agencies, UN agencies, and with local government officials and see this

emphasis on national authorities and their responsibility to make decisions that never came. I think that for the international community it needs to say there is a functioning state that is predominantly responsible, but I don't feel that this is the case in Haiti and hasn't been the case well before the election.

And then the last myth I want to talk about which leads to the topic of solutions, is there's a myth that engineering surveys of household destruction tell us what durable solutions are available to people and, again, those of you who've been closely involved with the emergency know that the U.S. military has, in the early days, assisted in determining which of the sites were most at risk and most vulnerable, camps and also many engineers were trained--local engineers--to mark houses as red, meaning that they needed to be destroyed and they were uninhabitable, yellow, meaning that they needed repair and then could be utilized, or green meaning that people were ready to move into them. All kinds of surveys and information tools have been used and developed by humanitarian emergency actors as a result of these initial surveys saying who will go home, who won't go home, and who will move on elsewhere, but I believe the data is inadequate to actually show us what people will do.

So, I want to tell you about some realities that we've seen in the field that have made these myths come to light. You know, in the early days of the emergency when a coordination support committee was established between donors, the state, and UN agencies and humanitarian actors, at the end of these meetings there would always be results that had been decided by the government, but in effect, all of the plans and strategies were drafted by international agencies and international actors, and therefore the international community has a special responsibility for some of the decisions that were taken in that timeframe.

In terms of vulnerability we see particularly women who are forced to engage in very negative coping mechanisms in order to receive assistance, so we see women who were previously married and had numerous children who lost their spouses

start to take multiple partners who will give them various kinds of food items in exchange for their friendship. We see women getting pregnant so that they can be eligible for World Food Program food assistance. In one community we even see men infecting themselves with HIV/AIDS so that they can get medical treatment at local health clinics which also give benefit packages to those who are HIV positive and we see older people who no longer have any other surviving relatives committing suicide. And so these kinds of protection problems show that the widespread reports of humanitarian assistance to those who are affected, having been achieved, is not really addressing these protection realities.

I also want to share the reality that local organizations are much better at knowing what's going on in a community than many of the international actors who are engaging in operations. They know better because of language, they can discern the truth beyond the stereotypes as many of you who've engaged in relief know that beneficiaries become very good at telling all kinds of stories that will get them more assistance, and oftentimes local actors can tell the difference between perceived need, real need, and something that's simply not true.

And local actors can also break down distributions into smaller packages so that it's virtually impossible to see what is being given to who, and this is very important in the current security context in which large convoys and mass supplies can't get through riots and crowds and other public disturbances. Local actors and some people on our team will carry supplies in something as small as a backpack that will assist a widow or an elderly person for up to a month.

So, these kinds of things, local actors are much better at than we are.

And another thing that happened for at risk sites is that new locations were established for relocating people who were thought to be at risk of landslides and all the rains and hurricanes and so many of these people were brought to Tabarre Issa, or Corail, and relocation to a new settlement is really not a durable solution without telling

people whether they have a right to use the land or residency.

One of the most pressing needs that we see now is the effort to get people out of this camp environment and transition into a new place where they can become more stable. Many of the people who are displaced do not have land or houses to return to, and those people who are particularly unemployed or without a means to earn a livelihood are not able to pay the rent to find another place, and they're particularly disadvantaged. This is a big problem.

There are also push and pull factors in terms of where people go from here. People's movement in large scale emergencies is often based on changing conditions and not on fixed data like the surveys I mentioned that the engineers have done. Many people have started leaving the camps out of fear that they would catch cholera, out of the hurricanes and storms, and some data now shows that nearly half a million people have left camps. However, new data also shows that certain camps have enlarged and that families are separating and leaving an anchor relative in one of the large camps that is still receiving assistance just in case free stuff is given out that they can bring back to their home town.

So, some of these factors are a bit disturbing when it comes to how do we achieve solutions from here, but I would say the most important thing to remember is that people need to be given a choice and that the international community needs to ask those who are displaced what their intentions are for their future, and try to work together with local communities to address the barriers that keep them from moving on and develop programs that are specifically focused around the transition to life outside of the camp context. This is something that USCRI is committed to doing with all of our programs in 2011, will be based on helping households leave camps so that they can be in a more normalized environment.

And I would say that this is critical to making the transition from the relief effort to the development effort and that there really can't be development in Haiti when

you have the population in this kind of flux, which means that donors also will need to focus their attention on having a strategy to address this mass displacement problem.

Thank you.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you very much. Vincent?

MR. COCHETEL: Thank you. Thank you very much, good afternoon, and thank you very much to Brookings for the invitation to share some concerns, some observation about the situation in Haiti, and thank you, Sarah, you've helped me reducing a bit what I wanted to say today.

I won't talk about the election and I won't talk about the cholera, the cholera is certainly bad news for the Haitian people. Unfortunately the progression of cholera in that sort of situation is likely to lead to more people affected by the cholera in the next six months. There's little that can be done about it. I think the international community is now mobilizing efforts to fight the cholera. In a number of days hopefully we will stabilize but it's going--it has to be worse before it gets better, unfortunately.

That's bad news in many respects, bad news because it's distracting donor attention, it's bad news because it shadows all the other problems that are, as a result, not addressed. Funding is limited. Cholera is a priority. I'm not questioning that, but at a time when fighting cholera, the other issues are not addressed. So, we'll be talking about the other issues.

I'm not a specialist of Haiti. I'm covering Haiti out of Washington for the United Nation High Commission for Refugee's office here. I've been a couple of time in Haiti. We have a small team there doing some very limited operational activities there, but what I do every time I go to Haiti, I spend a lot of time talking to people. I go to the camps and I sit and I observe and I read, and I wish sometime my colleagues in the UN team would spend more time with the people because what you will hear makes sense and people have solutions. People are not without intellectual resources to find some of those solutions.

But rather than exposing the complexity of the humanitarian problems as they stand today, 11 months after the earthquake, I decided I'll just pick up some of the news items over the last couple of days and share with you my observation on how they relate to those protection concerns on humanitarian concerns.

You may ask, is there some good news coming from Haiti? Yes or no? There is some good news, as I said, on the mobilization against cholera, efforts have been made. There are also some good news that came on the 9th of December when IOM reported that the number of IDPs had decreased by 31 percent, so bringing the number of people in IDP camps to something like one million people, and that the number of IDP sites has decreased from 1,356 to 1,199.

Now, when you look at the report and the analysis of the report, because that's an estimate, it's not a household by household registration--when you look at the rationale for the estimated decrease of the IDP population, four are stated in the report. Some of the camps were dismantled because of their vulnerability, you know, some of the camps that were set up in (inaudible) are not making it through the year. I mean, today it's very cold in Haiti. There's torrential rain there and I don't know if you have been to Haiti when it rains, it rains. And those tents, they are not able to hold the weight of the water for long, they collapse. Some of the tents that have been distributed there were not meant to last more than a couple of months, but certainly not for a year.

So, some of the tents have disappeared because of the rain. Second cause of the decrease, there has been some return incentive provided to people and some resettlement schemes have been put in place. Well, resettlement schemes, we have not seen any relocation of any type over the last couple of months in Haiti. That has not happened, but incentive to leave camps, we've seen that. You have people coming with money. Sometimes we are not able to identify who are those individuals, probably middle men acting on behalf of some of the land owners where the IDP camps are located. Those people give $100, $150 to each family to move on, so, the IDP camp

disappears, so the number reduces.

Third consideration of IOM, there's been a decrease of services in camp and those services are available elsewhere. I think it's certainly true in the area of health services. I think most of the actors involved in the health services have made an effort to try to connect to public institutions and provide services in the neighborhoods rather than in the camps. I think that's a welcome development. At the same time, I have not seen much decreases of services in the camps. There is very little happening in the camps except provision of water, a bit of sanitary material since the breakout of the cholera, but otherwise most of the basic services have disappeared a couple of months ago.

The fourth reason for the decrease of the number of IDP camps and the number of IDPs in camps, in general, is an increased level of eviction. So, people are forcibly evicted. The lucky one gets a bit of pocket money to move on, the others are evicted through the use of violence or threats of violence.

As we speak today, there are 56 camps that are--where we face this problem of eviction, so we try to set up a dialogue with land owners when we are able to identify them, but in many instances we don't find them. You have gangs that are paid to push the people away, so people move because it's no longer a camp, it's not an IDP camp, they are off the statistics. The question is where those people move. Assuming they move back to their place of former residence would need to be seriously verified. I have strong doubts about it.

When I go to Port-au-Prince and around Port-au-Prince, I see settlements, spontaneous settlements mushroom--mushrooming everywhere. These are not IDP camps. The government of Haiti said, don't touch that, don't touch those settlements, so we don't want to call them camps, so they're no longer on the radar screen of the humanitarian actors, they are off limits. We take them off the statistics.

If we want the IDPs to become invisible, let's continue like that. They'll be invisible. We will have slum towns, sites, all over Haiti. We won't have camps

anymore. That's one way to look at it. But what will be the cost of ignoring the situation in those spontaneous settlements remains to be seen.

That was my reading of the news on the 9th of December, on the 10th of December there was the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. What happened that day in Haiti? First we got in the morning news that a young journalist, quite courageous talking--writing in the Haiti press network had been stabbed in Santo, he is still between life and death in an hospital. At the same time a rap singer was stoned almost to death in Saint-Marc, so these were two targeted--politically targeted incidents on that day of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Let's not forget, when the earthquake struck in Haiti, in front of the presidential palace you had a demonstration of about 3,000 people protesting the assassination of a professor at university.

So, earthquake was there, cholera was there, Hurricane Tomas came, political assassinations, human rights violations continue in Haiti, every day. This morning it's 23 people killed by machete accused of having spread the virus of cholera in one of the communities. Every day you get those news if we want to read those news. So, we have a situation that is very problematic in terms of human rights violation, and that's not only affecting IDPs, it's affecting other people who try to bring some changes to the situation.

What happened on the 10th of December also, another news item that caught my attention was 127 Haitians were rescued and returned by a U.S. Coast Guard cutter and they were rescued and sent to (inaudible), nobody knows who were those people, what were their needs, where they came, you have not read this news in your newspaper, you have not heard from my mouth the word interception, but at some stage we will have to look into those policies.

At the same time that this happened, another boat capsized, some people died near the Bermuda, Virgin Islands. Some of the Haitians were rescued, some

of them have been returned. We were not able to prevent the return of the Haitians and when we talked to the authorities, they told us, you know, we do like the U.S. does. So, how do you want us to convince Bahamas? How do you want us to convince Jamaica? How do you want us to convince Turks and Caicos that, you know, we should look into the individual needs of those people--are they migrants, do they have protection problems?--if others behave a different way.

There is not a unique solution. We need differentiated approaches for migrants, for people who may have some protection needs, but we will have to go back to discussion on those issues.

I won't talk about 11, 12 December. We have lots of news from Haiti but they were all around the election, very interesting blogs, all sorts of things on these elections, on what went wrong, and what could have been prevented, what was predictable in terms of what went wrong.

Then Monday, Monday the 13th, so we got from the Secretariat of the Interim IT Reconstruction Commission, that's the body that oversees the major reconstruction effort in the country. We got a beautiful document which is called *The Strategic Plan for the Remainder of the IHRC Mandate*. We had one hour to provide comments on that document. That's the third document coming from the Interim IT Reconstruction Commission. It's interesting the title says, the remainder of the mandate of that commission, it's not sure it will survive the new government when we have a new government. But anyway, look through the document very quickly, provided some comments, not very high quality comments, we had one hour, and I'll just go over three issues. One is housing, Sarah talked about that. The document talks about registering everybody to find out--a complete registration of full earthquake affected households and identify a housing solution for each. So, we all applaud that. The problem is that nobody's planning for that registration. You have UN Habitat with the Ministry of Reconstruction, that has been proposing what is called participatory enumeration at the

neighborhood level to find out who was living there, but with no real outreach communication with the people in the camps. So, nobody knows how it's going to work. IOM has no plan to re-register people in the camp, it's more profiling activities to consolidate existing data. So, it's not really clear how the interim commission approached this exercise, but one interesting comment, in one of the tables it is said that the people have moved and stayed in the camps in order to be eligible for expected assistance. And there, that worries me.

If this is what the Interim IT Reconstruction thinks, we're going to have a lot of work to do to make them understand who are the people in the camps. I'm not disclaiming that some of the people in the camps maybe should not be in the camps. I met some people who said, we still have a house and a place to go in Port-au-Prince. We don't want to go there because we're scared. We go during the day, but we sleep in the camp at night. They are traumatized people. With a bit of (inaudible), bit of assistance, they'll be able to make it back. But the vast majority of people, they have nowhere to go.

When Hurricane Tomas came we tried to evacuate with some other agencies, people to other--to some churches, to the grounds of some of the schools, people refused to go and people refused to go because they were scared that they would not be able to go back to their camp after, that the landowner would repossess the land and they would not be able to make it back.

If people had other alternatives to go somewhere else with relatives in the country or go back to a place where they could safely leave, I mean, people would have done it over the last 10, 11 months, but if the interim commission believed that people stayed in camps in order to be eligible for expected assistance, I think there is a need for dialogue on those issues.

Land ownership, again, that document from the interim commission says the government should abundance appropriation processes for land declared of public

utility. Nice jargon. What does that mean? It means the government should stop using one of the articles in their law that dates back to the beginning of the 20th Century that enables the government, in exceptional circumstances, to nationalize the land. We have a problem, in order to bring solutions to people, we will need more land, we need access to land. There is plenty of empty land in Haiti, but it belongs to individuals, it does not belong to the state, it does not belong to the community. So, if the government does not want to use its legislation to declare some land of public use on public interest, and compensate the land owner for the purchase of the land, then there is no solution of relocation, people are going to stay where they are.

I'm very concerned to see that in the strategic plan of the interim commission.

Third point, education. The strategy of the interim commission is the same that the strategy of the Haitian government, that was explained at the March donor's conference in New York, promotion of education for whole, so there is consistency with the Millennium Development Goal. Again, we all applaud to that. But what is foreseen in terms of activity, provision of financial assistance, $125 to 500,000 children so they can get access to private school. What happens after one year? Will those schools keep those kids?

The whole purpose of some of this strategic thinking was to build back better, not to build back the same. If the reconstruction effort is to support a private school system that has not been including or inclusive of--for the poor Haitian kids, then we're not going to promote access to affordable education for kids. And there, there's a total disconnect, again, with stated objective on what's happening at the activity level. I find that very problematic.

Last piece of news, yesterday was this report from another organization like COFAVIV, like KFAN another Haitian organization, so far, (inaudible), were reporting on their activities regarding sexual--with victims of sexual gender-based violence. They

do a bit of trauma relief activities and they also have a legal assistance project. They've been assisting 718 cases in five districts between January and June 2010. Their report is only coming out now. Less than 1 percent of the perpetrators of those acts of sexual violence have been arrested. A high proportion of the victims are girls below 16 and most of them, more than 50 percent of them, have not only been subject to rape or other sexual assault, but also to acts of torture like humiliation, burning or something that we've seen with some of those victims, they're raped and they cut the tongue after.

Now, there is no way we can, at this stage, bring effective protection to some of these women. Some of them, where we should make a better effort through, you know, safe houses, get them out of the camp with their relatives, plug into that some livelihood activity so that people get back on their feet and assist them if they want to stop proceedings against the perpetrators when they have been identified, but some of those people are terrorized. They don't want to stay in the country, they don't want to stay in the camp, and I'm not sure what we're going to do with that, but we are engaging a discussion with some of the partners here in the U.S., but also in Canada and in some other countries to see whether there could be some sort of protected entry channel for some of those victims--not a large number, but some of them, because we are not able to protect them in Haiti.

Solutions on some of those humanitarian challenges in the country. I think one message is the relief efforts are not over. For many of the IDPs those relief efforts have not started. You go to some of the camps along the Dominican Republic border, they are inside Haiti, there's no more NGOs, there's no international assistance there, there is nothing happening, nothing. There is no camp management, there is no humanitarian organization except one in Fonds Parisiens, but the three other camps that I am familiar with along the border, there's no one there.

So, Sarah was pointing to the fact that there are some people even in need of food assistance and it's not very popular in some circles to start about, you know,

resuming some targeted food assistance, not necessarily food, but food coupon where people could buy food from local food suppliers or local grocery to encourage the Haitian economy. I'm not talking about blanket food distribution, but there are some people that are in need of this food assistance.

All the nutritional surveys will tell you no one is starving. This is true, people are not starving. The question is, how to survive. How many girls, 14 years old, you see with lipstick in the camp, and you know what they are doing in the night? We can choose to ignore the situation, that's one way to go about it, they are not starving, and I've heard many times in Haiti, ah, yeah, but those problems existed back in the neighborhood before the earthquake, and this is true. Survival sex has been something happening in Haiti for many, many years in poor areas, but we're talking here about building back better. So, if we're talking about building back better, it's time to look into those issues and to have the sort of community mobilization with the right actors that is needed to offer alternative solutions to these girls and women.

Walter Kalin, the representative of the Secretary General for IDPs came for the second time to Haiti in October, in this report he talks about differentiating displacement on general humanitarian needs and I think he is right. So many of these humanitarian needs, they're where they are before the earthquake, they're still there today, amplified in some areas, but at the same time there are some specific needs that are related to displacement that need to be addressed and I think what he has proposed is still valid.

I think we need to be realistic about returns. You know, Sarah said there was this beautiful engineering survey about red houses, yellow houses, red houses, well, those green houses, people returned there. They are there. Those who could afford returning there, they returned there. Those with yellow houses, damaged houses but could be repaired, people have moved back already. They have not waited for any of us. They have not waited for any strategic plan. People move back.

The question is, some of the people could not move back to those houses because they cannot afford the rent. It's three times what it was before the earthquake, three times. So, for a two room, let's say, flat, it's now $120 approximately, it used to be $40 for someone. People just can't afford it. So, unless we have a strong government intervention saying, we return to the rental price of pre-earthquake level, people are not going to make it back.

In any case, given the number of houses destroyed, you know, we should be reasonable about expectation in returns. It's going to happen, but for very few people, the majority of them have no return solution. So, what are the solutions? Well, the solutions are going to be with relocation, but as I explained it before, to relocate you need space, you need land, so you need political buying and push for that.

One word of warning, I think there is no quick fix. I think we all understood it, there is no quick fix, but, you know, I see sometimes donors trying to provide assistance in a way that stabilizes the situation, for instance, there was lots of money spent on cash for work. I'm not opposed philosophically to cash for work program, you know, that helps people gaining a bit--earning a bit their money, feeling useful for their community and all that, but it doesn't solve the situation. People are so much in debt. You know, the earthquake took place in January. They had to pay up front six months of rent. They lost that. They are so much in debt over the last couple of months, so the little money they get from cash for work--and the most vulnerable don't get cash for work, I mean, I've talked to many women with their kids, where do they leave their kids to go and work? I mean, it's a non-starter for many of these people. So, cash for work is not bad as a stabilization measure, but it does not bring early recovery for the people for a majority of them. I certainly would prefer more an approach based on micro-credit, on provision of assistance through micro-credit in the neighborhood.

Sarah talked about the problem of partnering with Haitian NGOs, the UN or international actors in general, international NGOs too have not been very good at

partnering with Haitian NGOs. There are some good examples of cooperation here and there, but in general there is a big of mistrust. We have seen, working for UN agencies, so as I'm working for a UN agency, we are seen as a part of MINUSTAH, the stabilization force, so we are the occupier. That's the way we're called now. Down with the occupation by the UN forces.

Many NGOs see us like that. They don't want to see what we can bring in terms of (inaudible) to help them to get back on their feet. At the same time we have to have a more inclusive approach with the Haitian NGOs, regardless whether they are politically motivated, many of them have a political orientation, they were there before the earthquake, they have the experience, they have the connections and we have to work through them. There is no other way around it.

So, but there is a bit of restoration of a more healthy dialogue between NGOs and international actors that need to take place.

And the last thing, I think, and I'll conclude with that, I think for the donors, when we have an Haitian government we should not wait and see. Right from the start with whatever government will come out from this political mess, we will have to demand to the government a certain number of things. One is clear commitment on free access to education, clear commitment on returning to affordable rental prices, clear commitment to repossess some of the land or buy some of the land that is needed for relocation, and acknowledging that the problem of IDPs is not going to disappear in one day.

I have seen three, four plans over the last three months returned by different international consultants on how to sort out the problem of IDPs, they all think about 75,000 people can find solution every month. No, no, it's not happening like that. It's going to take more time. Even if we were going to close one IDP camp per day, it would take three years of continuous effort to have no more IDP camps in Haiti, so let's not dream. There is no quick fix, it's going to take time, and it requires a sustained

commitment.

Thank you.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you very much, Vincent.

I'll turn now to Holly Mackey from the State Department.

MS. MACKEY: I'd just like to start by thanking both Vincent and Sarah for their remarks. I think they have made many of the points that I was actually going to make, so that makes my job easier.

I want to focus today a little bit more on the problem of sexual and gender-based violence -- on protection in general but specifically on the problem of SGBV, which I am sure you have all heard is a very serious problem, particularly in the camps and in the surrounding communities. And Vincent gave you some sort of anecdotal evidence of the kinds of things that we're looking at with respect to that.

I should tell you that protection of human rights in vulnerable populations is a top priority for U.S. government assistance to Haiti. It is written in the draft USG Strategy, and it is something that officials in the U.S. government at the highest levels have communicated as something that we need to be focusing on, not just in the near term but in the long term, as Vincent pointed out.

To that end, I want to talk today about focusing not only on meeting immediate needs of vulnerable communities through protection and response but at the same time focus on making sure that we all realize that it's essential to work toward building sustainable solutions for countering these problems in the long term. And we can't start with one and then move to the other; we have to be thinking about both protection and response and long-term empowerment at the same time going forward.

So, as we, the U.S. government and we, the international community, craft our plans for addressing gender-based violence, we need to take this sort of multifaceted approach. And I just want to talk about sort of five different areas along that continuum that I think we can address. Some of this we're already doing; much of it we're not, and we

need to be thinking about going forward.

So, the first is immediately improving security to deter attacks and to respond quickly and effectively when we hear about reports of attacks. This is something that MINUSTAH is engaged in. This is something that the Haitian National Police are engaged in. And we need to make sure that we're bolstering both the capacity of MINUSTAH and the HNP to do this.

Secondly, we need to work to better provide victim services to mitigate the lasting -- what we know are lasting physical and psychological injuries that are often associated with these kinds of crimes.

Third, and importantly, we need to get a better understanding of the scope of the problem in order to divide targeted and appropriate responses.

Fourth, and this is more toward the durable solutions, and we need to build institutional capacity in Haiti to address this problem, not only in the government, whatever government emerges from this process, but also throughout civil society in Haiti.

And, finally, we need to think about empowerment. We need to think about empowering vulnerable populations, specifically women and girls.

So, I'll just move on and touch specifically on each of these areas really quickly.

In terms of improving security, there are many things that we're doing, and I'll just give you a few examples. You know, we're working on lighting and layout issues in some of the IDP camps. We've purchased lots of flashlights and headlamps to facilitate nighttime patrols by security forces. We've installed security kiosks in many of the camps so that we can have a 24-hour security presence in the camps. And, you know, we're working to approve female police officers as well as officers with Special Victims Unit backgrounds to serve in UNPOL to sort of boost the capacity there. And we're working simply to build a more robust Haitian National Police, because we know that SGBV is not a problem just in the camps but it's a problem throughout Haiti.

That said, while these things are necessary, they are in no way sufficient, and we recognize that as well. As you've undoubtedly heard, there are numerous stories of victims, particularly in the camps, who approach a police officer, tell them about the crime, and are either brushed off, not taken seriously, or just sort of treated as a very low priority. Clearly, we need to focus on officer training and subsidization. We need to recruit and assign female police officers, and we, as an international community, need to push for security sector leadership to treat sexual and gender-based violence as a priority, because if it is not treated as a priority at the top, it will not be treated as a priority at the action level.

Secondly, to speak to victim's services, over the last year USAID programs have assisted various NGOs in the government of Haiti to increase the quality and scope of services available to victims of violence. We're talking about assistance to organizations that provide psycho-social/medical referrals, care, and treatment. We're talking about assistance to hospitals that have established specialized medical units to attend to victims of SGBV. And we're talking about support to NGOs to provide shelter services and legal assistance.

But as with respect to security, there is so much more to be done. Most importantly, we need to think about this legal assistance part. Victims are rarely successful at finding redress, and I believe that Vincent touched on that. Successful prosecution is key to illustrating that these types of crimes are taken seriously and will not be tolerated, and when you do not have successful prosecutions, that sends the message that well, this is just okay so we'll continue to do it.

This sort of lack of legal redress is really symptomatic of extreme weakness across the board in the Haitian judicial system and along the penal chain. This is not something that is just with respect to this particular issue. This is a much broader challenge and may be the topic of another panel, but this is something that the U.S. government is trying to -- we're trying to wrap our heads around.

We need to continue to support community-based response initiatives.

Just like Vincent said, these efforts are more effective because they're locally grown. And we need to address, particularly with respect to SGBV, what is probably significant underreporting due to several factors, one of which is the clear social stigma attached to being a victim.

I want to talk quickly also about understanding the problem. We do have a lack of hard data and analytical capability in Haiti needed to sort of understand where these crimes are occurring and to what degree, when, so that we as responders or whereas the international community providing assistance to responders can help devise the best strategies. There are a lot of folks out there who say you know what, that's not true, there's lots of data; and there is a lot of data. But it's not compiled in a comprehensive way, and that's something that we need to be thinking about.

Now, there are several organizations that are working to do that. I think UNISOM is one of them. We need to continue to support these efforts and ensure that they're coordinated and complementary.

We have to work with law enforcement to institute or improve data collection in the Haitian communities. I recently spent some time at the commissariat, just sort of across the street from Cite Soleil, and they're only now just there in Cite Soleil with lots and lots of efforts tied into compile data with respect to these kinds of problems. So, we want to continue that going forward.

As I've alluded to, it's going to be impossible to create sustainable solutions without building the capacity of key Haitian institutions. Haitian National Police is obviously one. We're talking specifically about an emphasis on assistance to the brigade for protection of minors, which is a subset that we need to target, and we need to help HMP target recruitment of female officers.

Judicial strengthening, key. I already talked about that.

On the governance and administrative side we need to continue to support the Ministry of Women's Affairs, the Office of Citizen Protection, and the Office of National

Ombudsmen, because we need to try to facilitate a national level engagement on these topics.

Finally, again we need to support local civil society organizations like KOFAVIV and some of these others that Vincent mentioned, because they are essential for mobilizing communities, support, and action in creating locally owned and relevant responses. Sarah talked about it as well. You absolutely have to work through indigenous organizations in order to accomplish many of the goals that we're talking about today.

Finally, I want to talk just a little bit about empowerment. I'm constantly asking the folks -- we have a women's issues office in the State Department. I'm constantly saying well, what does this mean? You know, you tell me let's empower women to be agents of change. Like, I don't really know what that means. Tell me what that means. And they tell me that this women's empowerment has five components:

One is a women's sense of self-worth. Two is their right to have and determine their own choices; three, their right to have access to opportunities and resources; four, their right to have power to control their own lives both within and outside of their home; and, five, their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order.

This is all according to TUNFPA, and it covers a lot, and these are lofty goals. I think in the Haitian context, there are only a few -- there are a number of things that we can do to sort of move toward this goal. Some of these include supporting key legislation against trafficking and domestic violence, which does not exist currently. The good news is that it is in the draft penal code that is still in draft form; it has yet to be passed. But those things are just in the draft penal code.

Another thing that we need to do, and both Vincent and Sarah talked about, is work to improve the overall economic position of women in Haiti and other vulnerable populations. Among women, there's 33 percent higher unemployment in the formal sector, and when employed they earn 2½ times less on average.

We also need to address gender imbalances related to access of key services and opportunities, like Vincent spoke to you -- education, health, political participation.

And, finally, we need to raise awareness of GBV's destructive effects through community-based messaging, all (inaudible) messaging at the national level, and with targeted campaigns for men and boys. It's very important.

So, before I close I just want to sort of wrap it up and say there are obviously a number of challenges we have to addressing protecting and empowerment in Haiti. First and foremost is the overall context that over a million people living in IDP camps -- this is going to be a huge challenge for a long time, as Vincent also pointed out. We've got a cholera outbreak that's already affected more than 90,000 people nationwide and will continue to affect more. We have extreme political uncertainty, particularly right now, and a very tense security environment.

Addressing women's empowerment and sexual and gender-based violence is going to be -- would be challenging in any reconstruction environment. Obviously, Haiti is no exception.

Secondly, and this is something that I keep harping on, but to effectively address crime you need a functioning justice system. That's just the way it goes. Low levels of capacity along the entirety of the penal chain in Haiti are going to impede our progress, so this is -- rule of law in Haiti is something we absolutely must understand is a top priority.

Finally, and Vincent touched on this as well, the timeline for building sustainable solutions is a long one. In fact, we're talking generations. True empowerment is going to take many years, and we as the international community, we as the U.S. government, will have to remain engaged over that time period, because as soon as we start to move our attention toward the next disaster or the next place, that is when -- and our attention starts to wane, that's when we lose some of this momentum.

On the upside, we have a number of opportunities, and I just alluded to this. I think we're at a moment in time when we have almost unprecedented attention in Haiti in terms of the media, in terms of the engagement on the part of the international community, and with specific respect to protection, the importance that most donors are placing on protection. It's a top priority for the U.S. government; I can name several other donors for whom it also a top priority, so let's leverage that.

Secondly, and this is specifically with respect to women and girls, but women make up the backbone of Haitian society in a global economy. Nearly half of all Haitian households are women-headed. Women are key players in community activities. They're the lead economic actors in the informal sector, which of course is huge. They are the majority of the sort of petty commerce vendors that you see on the streets. And they're the majority of the micro-loan recipients that Vincent was talking about. We have an opportunity to harness real power here, and we shouldn't lose that opportunity.

So, clearly it's not only our goals with respect specifically to protection and empowerment of women that rely on our continued engagement and our ability to sort of harness this power, but it's really our overall goals for reconstruction and for the sort of sense of building back better in general.

Okay, and with that --

MS. FERRIS: Thank you very much, Holly, and thanks to all of our panelists for a somewhat depressing overview of the situation in the country.

We have time now for questions, but maybe I'll start and ask a question about the comment you made about the occupying forces or what NGOs or the U.N. are seeing as occupiers. Given what we know about humanitarian emergencies everywhere, the importance of working with local organizations from the beginning is stressed across the board. Why didn't that happen? What went wrong in terms of working with Haitian organizations from the beginning? Sarah?

MS. WILLIAMS: Yeah, I can address that. I think that some of it is as

simple as space in the sense that in the aftermath of the earthquake all the international organizations and donors really concentrated at the airport, and in order to do that, that space was really blocked off to the local population. And even if you were going to go in and out of that space, it could take you one to two hours to enter and to exit. And a lot of people were living in tents on the airfield because there was no safe shelter even for relief workers. So, getting local people into those meetings was very difficult.

The first meeting that we organized between the U.N. clusters and the local NGOs did occur in the local community in the Delmas area of Port-au-Prince, and I would have to say that according to some people it was a success, because we had over 40 local NGOs represented, and we had all the different U.N. agencies represented. But in another way it was a failure, because the local people were concerned about their families. They were concerned about their communities. They were dealing with just picking themselves back up. And the U.N. people were saying well, you should come to our meetings; you should come to our log base; you should come to our office; you should join us for our process; and you should fill out our papers and give data to our database. And these were people who, you know, had lost everything, and they didn't have their computers and they didn't have their cell phones and they didn't have their cars and they didn't have their jobs. And here there was just this complete disconnect between, you know, the local people who could offer immediate on-the-ground assistance to a wide range of people and the U.N. and international actors who could offer the money, the technology, the meeting space, the information. But there was no bridge between the two.

MS. FERRIS: Question. We have a microphone if you'll please identify yourself and either direct your -- please, yes? Here's your microphone, yeah.

MR. APPLETON: Oh, okay. I can usually speak loud enough that I don't need to use the microphone. Is that going to help? Everybody hear me?

My name is Peter Appleton. I'm the director of the North Carolina Agribusiness project in Haiti. We're actually in there in the Burrell area, which is north of

St.-Marc in the Artabonite Valley, and we actually have people in there and we're trying to produce some food. And obviously I came here -- I drove five hours from North Carolina today to hear some hope from you. And I'm very discouraged.

In the '90s I spent time in Rwanda during the genocide, and I heard the rumor going around that we would never let that happen again. Well, I'm sorry we're letting it happen again. We have a small compound. We have 2,000 people living in it right now. We have a hospital in Pierre Payen. It's full – people are in the aisles. They're in the emergency ward; they're in the courtyard. We're letting it happen again. And I'm hearing -- it bothers me a lot. We've got to figure out what the problem is.

Ladies and gentlemen, we know what the problem is. We're just trying to find reasons not to act. That bothers me a lot. And I don't know whether other people here -- I came here to make friends, and I'm afraid what I'm saying is not making a friend. But to sit here quietly and hear we need more statistics; we need to understand what the real problem is. We've known what the real problem is all along.

The Artibonite River was polluted 10 years ago. It may have not been cholera bacteria, but it's been polluted and children have been swimming in it; people have been drinking in it, cleaning their food in it for the last 10 to 15 years. We, the international community just go on and say well, we've got to figure out what the problem is.

So, I ask -- Vincent, you made some very good points, but you depressed me, and, you know, I don't like being depressed. It's terrible. When can we get our act together -- I'm talking about people in this room; I'm talking about myself -- and start doing this right? This is a depressing a situation a year later, and Haiti is in as bad or in worse shape than it was a year ago. Please give me some hope if you would please. Or anybody on the panel. Or anybody in the room. Please give me some hope, because we're working hard. A lot of people in this room are working hard. But you can't get up every morning when you're depressed about what you're trying to achieve. Please give me some hope.

MS. FERRIS: Vincent, over here.

MR. COCHETEL: I have to confess I was extremely moved when I went there. I was not prepared for that. I've seen wars. I've seen post-conflict situation. I was not prepared for that in the sense that I thought that the international community as a whole had learned something, that we knew better how to work together.

Now, it's not easy. It's not easy because it's under a bad environment. We're not used to operating under a bad environment. There were all sorts of coordination problems because the surge of solidarity on the collateral emotion after the U.S. quite broke all sorts of people in 1912 with all sorts of good intention but not necessarily strong on coordination mechanism.

Now, some of those partners have left. Some of them are still there. I think there's room and space for everybody to work there. I don't believe in macro-reform in the short term in Haiti. I think some people have to think about it, and I'm pleased to hear the government is focused also on some of the long-term strategy for the country. I think as humanitarian actors, let's think small. Let's think at the level of the community. Some of our project outside of Port-au-Prince are working much better than in Port-au-Prince.

Now, on the AIC reasons for hope. When we work with some of the worst families that have been sheltering displaced person for, now, 11 months without much support but they are ready to continue to provide that solidarity to those who have been displaced. Sometime they are not relatives. So, you see those solidarity mechanism are not broken down at the provincial level. I see a lot of hope in some of the plans -- of the initial plans of the government in terms of decentralization, the original economic polls. Let's hope the new government pushes hard on that, because, you know, there is a problem also in terms of absorption capacity. I mean, the -- you know, Sarah was mentioning, yeah, the connection with the NGO is not acting also because, I mean, I see my colleagues also every time. I said let's go there, let's have a meeting there. Yeah, but we're going to lose four hours in the car. You know, getting out of the base, going to most

of the IDP camps, and the traffic is awful and all that. But we have to go to the people. They're not coming to us. So, we have to spend more time out there.

But I believe in solutions at the regional level, and IT is Port-au-Prince is going to be more challenging unless the international community and all the donors are talking the same language when it gets to housing, when it gets to relocation. I've not seen that yet.

MS. FERRIS: Other words of hope?

MS. WILLIAMS: Yes. I would just say that, you know, when you've worked in places like Afghanistan and Pakistan and, you know, all over, Africa, Asia, Tsunami, things like this, I mean, you do have to take the long view of things, and you have to realize that without the state and good governance there are limits in what independent, humanitarian action can do, and I was pleased in your earlier comment, Vincent, to hear you talk about the political violence and political targeting, killings, because I think we have to step back and remember that, you know, there are is a lot of problems that go beyond what the humanitarian community can fix with our systems. So, perspective as well, the long view.

MR. APPLETON: -- what you're saying. Nine people died in our compound today. When I go back next week, patience is not going to do the job.

I guess that's the concern I have is that we in this room are satisfied to tell the Haitian people to be patient. Time is of the essence, and when I hear politicians or political bureaucrats say to me we've got to be patient, we've got to give it time, and we can't do anything -- I have trouble accepting that. I'm sorry, but I really do. There's 9 million people in Haiti. Same population as North Carolina. If we wanted to do something, we could do something.

MS. FERRIS: Okay.

Let's have these two people here in front. And maybe we'll take several at a time and then give you a chance to respond.

Could you stand up, Melanie?

MS. TEFF: I'm Melanie Teff from Refugees International. I want to thank you for the focus that you put on protection of the most vulnerable in your presentations today, and I was in Haiti a couple of months ago and I found what you said extremely accurate. One question I'd like to ask is what about the protection cluster and the gender-based violence sub-cluster in Haiti and the great difficulties that they faced. Some of the issues that have been raised today, I would argue, could have been perhaps some of them averted to some extent if we'd had a stronger protection cluster arguing about, for example, when the food assistance is stopped even to the most vulnerable. And so I'd like to ask what could be done at this time? Refugees International has expressed our concern that the Office of the High Commission for Human Rights plays a very important role in Haiti but has not had experience in operational humanitarian protection and the need for stronger law for UNHCR in the protection class there. Rules are concerned that the gender-based violence sub-cluster has one person from UNFPA in charge of it. She has other duties, too, and it's not humanly possible for her to be able to do more than even work with the other clusters and work with the women's ministry. Her ability to work the local camp-based NGOs, the women's groups is extremely limited. What could be done to bolster the work of the protection cluster and the GBV sub-cluster at this time? Thanks.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you.

And right behind you.

SPEAKER: My question is related to a statement that was made about working with local NGOs even when pre-earthquake they had a very clear political affiliation. A lot of these were some of the most well-organized high-potential groups, but that complexity of their political orientation. What are the nuances in navigating that? If I said okay, yes, we'll work more with them, what should I keep in mind before doing so?

MS. FERRIS: Fine, thank you.

And we'll take the one in the back here, (inaudible).

SPEAKER: Hi, I'm a consultant with the American Society of International Law. First I'd like to ask what -- are incentives for individuals going to the countryside outside the capital being considered? And another question: How is the Haitian diaspora being included in these various policy discussions about intervention in Haiti?

And with regard to this gentleman's question about hope, I have a friend who is a senior economist at the World Bank, and immediately after the earthquake they had to convene a meeting with government officials, and one of the government officials was the Minister of Finance, and the Minister of Finance appeared at the meeting after taking the body of his son out of the ruble of his home. And that man had the strength to appear at that meeting to be able to continue to work. And if that's not a sign of hope, I don't know what is. If those people in Haiti can have that strength, whether it's that man showing up to a meeting even though he hasn't buried his son and had to physically take him out of his home, or if it's women who break out into song, into hymns, you know, we just can't afford to lose hope here. And so anyway -- so, those are my two questions, and that's my plea for people not giving up hope, because Haitians haven't given up hope.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you.

So, we have questions on the protection cluster; working with local NGOs, particularly the political affiliation; incentives to go the countryside in the role of the Haitian diaspora. Who would like to start? Vincent?

MR. COCHETEL: Well, just on working with NGOs that have some political orientation, I think the important thing is to encourage them to develop known parties and approach other sort of programs where we want them to get engaged. There are many NGOs in Haiti that have been working on sexual -- on gender-based violence for many years. Different affiliation. Let's work with all of them. Let's not choose only one. Let's not reinforce one against the other. Let's work with all of them, but let's also assess their capacity. Their capacity is limited, so there is a place for everyone to assist in the response. But I think there are ways to get them engaged. For the time being, it's

women's care, because we're not going to be aboard to control them, the objective is not to control them; it's to build on their experience, on their capacity.

I'm not losing hope. I want to say that I feel a bit powerless when I go there, because I see their needs and I see I can't change that, and I hate to be in that situation where, you know, there's legal I can bring. But where some woman telling me, you know, to get out of prostitution what they need is $150 dollar and buy a bit of soap and they will cut the soap in small pieces and set up their kiosk where they sell the soap. And that's what they were doing before the earthquake, and that's what they need now. It's doable. We can help these women to get back on their feet. They may have to stand there for a long period of time, but then we have to work on the shed, allocation of shed to also recognizing the vulnerability of the people. For the timing, the people accessing the temporary shelter that have been built, it's unclear the criteria being used. People are moving from rows, from tented camps to temporary shelter. I think that there should be a way where we prioritize based on vulnerability, because of those women or some of those vulnerable cases, they cannot work on all fronts at the same time. So, we have to give them a push through prioritized access to temporary shelter. And let's not call them temporary shelter anymore. Let's be honest. Let's be honest with ourselves. Let's call them shelter, because they're not going to be temporary.

MS. FERRIS: Sarah, would you like to respond to the protection question?

MS. WILLIAMS: Yeah.

MS. FERRIS: It's an easy non-political question for you.

MS. WILLIAMS: That's a difficult one, but we did bring with us a paper that was done by Interaction and Refugee Council agencies that are focused on the protection needs in Haiti, and it's outside and you can grab it on your way out, and it has many suggestions for strengthening protection coordination. And one of the recommendations in the paper is to have better mainstreaming. And, as you know, the protection cluster is just one of about 12 clusters in the country, and all the different actors

need to work together more closely to think about protection, to think about GBV and water and sanitation and early recovery. And when it comes to gender in particular, we do hear a lot of women complaining that they don't have sufficient access to the cash flow work programs, that shouldn't it just be the GBV sub-cluster? It should be the early recovery cluster. And also in water and sanitation when there are facilities brought into the camps for toilets, for example, and other things -- you know, making sure they're separated and that women have a safe space and girl children have a safe space and things like that. And some of these really basic things that have always been a part of good humanitarian action. You just don't see them happening in Haiti. And so a return to the basics of everyone acting together for the same purpose.

I did want to just quickly say about the local NGOs and their political orientation that it is very tricky, and, you know, there are risks associated with working and acting with people who have a political agenda and that that is something that I think that every agency needs to assess on its own in terms of its standards of cooperation and partnership, but we have seen some complications in some local groups, and it's tricky. There's not one correct answer.

MS. FERRIS: Okay, why don't we take a few more questions and maybe one more round, maybe on the side of the room?

MS. MACKEY: I can respond to --

MS. FERRIS: I'm sorry --

MS. MACKEY: No problem. I would like to just respond about what incentives are there outside of Port-au-Prince? What can there be by economic incentives? And that's something that we're focusing on by addressing this idea of sort of economic growth poles outside of Port-au-Prince. This is not the silver bullet, right? But by developing these industrial -- sort of industrial growth areas, we have to create jobs outside of Port-au-Prince and have those jobs be the incentives.

And also I can respond a little bit to the question about how the diaspora is

included. Haitian diaspora is obviously a great source for the U.S. government in trying to devise our strategy going forward, and my boss, Tom Adams, the special coordinator, the Haiti special coordinator at the State Department, has been engaged in numerous discussion with various diaspora groups since he came on in trying to understand what is it that the diaspora wants to offer; what is out there; and how can we best take advantage of that? And so now the large community sort of in Miami and Boston and Brooklyn and New York have all been engaging with us. Yeah, in many different fora. So, we will continue to do that going forward.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you.

Final questions? Maybe these two right here?

MR. STRINGFELLOW: Hi, I'm Keith Stringfellow with Smartmatic Corporation, and I've spent quite a bit time in Haiti since January. Previously I spent quite a bit of time in New Orleans after Katrina and I can tell you the contrast 11 months later is extreme, enough to diminish the risk of cholera and a lot of the short-term essential medical needs.

I think -- my observation is that there's a huge difference in the recovery because of what I'll call the governance infrastructure. And I noticed in one of the documents that there was some discussion about addressing birth certificates.

Birth certificates, based upon what we've been able to determine, are issued to probably less than 40 percent of the inhabitants from Haiti. And what's a birth certificate? Why is it important?

Well, it establishes a couple of things in terms of custody, not only of children but inheritances of families, landownership, et cetera; access to public education; access to health; access to legal employment; access to voter registration or all of those things. And I think that's one of the issues that has to be addressed. I'll lump it in what I'll an overall governance issue. Our observation is that, yes, there is room for judicial and penal overhaul. That has to happen. You know, things as simple as a fingerprint,

identification of criminals. The use of aliases is just rampant down there. Now, here we're focusing on protection of children and women. Sexual predators that use -- constantly use an alias every time they are arrested. If you don't have a way to sort through that mess, you'll never get them out of the system. So, it has to be addressed.

So, I go to a couple of simple things. Long-term in addition to the judicial penal overhauls. We have to address the education issue. We've got all these children being sold off as restavecs. Well, you know what? That's a learned behavior. We haven't done anything to educate the populace as to what is the proper way to treat your children the way they should be treating them.

I guess I'm getting a little wound up, so I'll just ask the questions. First, what's being done about birth certificates, and is there anything underway to identify legitimate citizens of Haiti, legitimize their existence so that they can be treated equally in terms of benefits and access to all.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you.

And this woman right here?

MS. KAHN: Hi, my name is Karen Kahn. I'm just a concerned citizen, and excuse my naiveté, but I was curious if any of you are called to testify before sustainable economic government agencies, NGOs, international organization, World Bank -- because it seems that the -- if you look at the history of Haiti, the horrible catastrophe perhaps could have been averted if there weren't so many poor people living on the side of the mountain and mud huddled around one city in the entire country to earn a living and that unsustainable economic development led to this catastrophe. And if you're talking about long-term solutions -- and this goes a little bit along with what Holly was saying -- when it comes to an economic draw to get people back out of Port-au-Prince, they weren't always there. They're there now. To me, that seems to be not just in Haiti but with free trade catastrophes happening all over Latin America and places in the world that the world has to be stopped -- has to stop being looked at as if it's the way for United States and other

developing countries to make a living and to push their products while pushing the people that live in these regions to huddle on these mountains that fall into the ground and leave all these displaced persons.

So, I was wondering if in the long term you are involved, in a real way, in sustainable economic development in Haiti.

MS. FERRIS: Okay, maybe one more. Here. This woman.

FRAN: Hi, my name is Fran. I have a question about capacity building. We talked a lot about working alongside NGOs, but I was wondering what efforts are being made to work with the Haitian government in order for them to take up some of these projects when the U.S. government, the U.N., and international NGOs eventually leave.

MS. FERRIS: Okay, questions on capacity building with the Haitian government; long-term economic policies; and birth certificates.

Would you like to jump in?

MR. COCHETEL: Birth certificates and working with the government. Quickly on birth certificates, a couple of NGOs have a minor project about making people aware about ways to get access to ID cards or birth registration, but it was mainly awareness building. A few NGOs were involved in that. Those project have come to an end now. We have also one project in Léogâne with a national NGO where we are providing birth certificates to kids who were displaced or never got birth certificates for the reasons that you stated -- getting access to education at least but also avoiding the risk that those people become stateless, which is a real possibility under Haitian legislation.

So, we'd like to embark on a more ambitious project next year with UNICEF and with the Ministry of Justice that is competent in these matter. For that, we need a Ministry of Justice that is willing to cooperate. We'd like to set up a mobile documentation team like we did in Colombia and some other places, in Guatemala a couple of years ago. That could work.

But beyond that, there is the old civil registration that needs to be fixed,

that needs to be digitalized. You talked about fingerprinting. There's so much work to be done. Canadian Corporation has started some project in 2005 building a big database with the Organization of American State. It was huge multi-million-dollar project or database. Collapsed during the earthquake. There was no backup, so it's starting from scratch.

Now, that brings me to working, so we will start some things subject to availability of funding. We will start something in January. But we are still not sure at this stage what sort of money we will have for birth registration. And we will start probably outside of Port-au-Prince. It's more easy to start there and build some good practice. It's more easy to work with local tribunals in the province than in Port-au-Prince for the time being.

Working with government, yes, we have to start somewhere. We should not postpone the engagement with the authorities, but, I mean, to be frank -- and I'm not politically correct here -- is that it's difficult, you know? Most of the people you talk to in the government -- they don't get their salary paid; they don't know whether they're going to be there in January. So, the label of engagement, of commitment is not just there.

Sense of priority -- I don't get it from many of the government interlocutors I talk to. Let's hope that, you know, when we have a new government at least we can focus on some project, and there we will work with them, but it's going to take time. It's going to take time.

MS. FERRIS: Holley, you --

MS. MACKEY: Just to add to what Vincent was just saying. A lot of times when we talk about working with the Haitian government, really what we're talking about is working with President Préval and Prime Minister Bellerive. I think one important thing that we need to think about going forward is really the idea of a broad, civil service reform. Working with the Haitian government should not mean working with, you know, two interlocutors. It should mean working with various folks all throughout the government --

SPEAKER: Ever different at Port-au-Prince? Was it ever different?

MS. MACKEY: Was what ever -- sorry?

SPEAKER: America working -- the Haitian government functioning. It seems to me it was that way before.

MS. MACKEY: Right, and that's what I'm saying is that we --

SPEAKER: -- that before. We have a nation. Why wasn't this done before? What does the United Nations feel they're doing? Do they have to grade themselves periodically?

MS. MACKEY: Let me just speak -- let me just finish my one thought, and then we can get to that.

In terms of the civil service reform, what we're thinking or what we've been sort of talking about is trying to get a better understanding of -- and I don't think the U.S. government is the best place to do this, so I'll just put that right out there. But let's think about broad civil service reform in terms of hiring standards, in terms of testing, in terms of making sure that salary -- as you mentioned -- that salaries are paid and on time, because the government -- government will change over, and every time the government changes over, which we've seen time and time and time again, you cannot lose all of your institutional knowledge when the civil service sort of goes out with the top level. So, that's just one way that we're thinking about engaging.

And then I can't speak for the United Nations.

MS. FERRIS: But maybe we'll give you a chance first, and then if you'd like to answer the question about how the U.N. evaluates itself, or maybe you should talk after the session. Yes, please do.

MS. WILLIAMS: I can just give a few examples of engagement with local authorities and national actors that kind of might just give you an interesting take on things. I know how I spoke a lot about the Haitian National Police, and one thing that the international community has tried to do is to engage the police more actively in patrolling camps and the sites of displaced people. And in some of the camps where we've worked,

I've engaged specifically with female officers of the HNP and spoken with them about, you know, their special role in being a role model for women and girls and, you know, offering assistance, and they just laughed and they said you know, we're in no better shape than these girls here in this camp; we're in a terrible situation in our lives, in our homes, and, you know, we're not role models and we don't have anything special to offer. And I said well, you know, you have a job and you're dressed in uniform and you're fit and you look healthy and people are looking to you, you know, to fulfill a special role here. And so I think that there is a bit of a demoralization in the ranks of the civil service that makes it more difficult for them to do their job.

But we have had success in terms of engaging with local mayors and at the municipal level asking the authorities to make additional Leander space available for temporary shelter so that we can decongest certain areas where we're working where people are overly concentrated, where even spatial differentiation will improve the protection environment. I'd say that sometimes the goal I think again the national authorities is too much at that top level, and you have to look for opportunities where they exist. And they could be at a much more localized level. And people should be taking advantage of any opportunity they can.

MS. FERRIS: Okay, listen, I want to thank you all. I know there are a few more questions, but perhaps you could come up after the session. But thank you all for coming. And apologies -- we want it more upbeat. It has to do with the nature of the situation in Haiti, and I think the experience --

SPEAKER: -- not enough frustration and anger at this --

MS. FERRIS: I think there's a lot of anger.

SPEAKER: -- really?

MS. FERRIS: I think there's a lot of anger.

SPEAKER: There really should be. Who do we thank for that? We have known this in Haiti for many, many years. I've worked there wholly unsuccessfully for 40

years -- total disaster, worst part of my career, but because I've been unsuccessful. We've known this. This is not new. We've done nothing. We should take responsibility. I do.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you all very much, and see you next time.

MR. COCHETEL: Thank you.

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