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**MAWO 24**

newsletter

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mobilization against war & occupation

## MAWO STATEMENT THE EARTHQUAKE IN HAITI & THE NEW ATTACKS ON MUSLIMS

As the world enters a new decade, one thing above all is clear: this will be a decade of war and occupation – the bloodiest decade ever. The last decade opened with a new era of war and occupation launched by the United States. The attacks on the World Trade Centre on September 11, 2001 were used to justify the invasions and ongoing wars and occupations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Haiti, Palestine, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Lebanon, Sudan, Somalia and Pakistan. The new decade has already opened with new attacks on oppressed people and on independent and sovereign nations around the world.

Last year closed with the horrifying United Nations announcement that 2009 was the deadliest year for Afghan civilians, who have been suffering under a brutal US/Canada/NATO occupation since October 2001. The military invasion of Afghanistan has not brought peace, freedom, or security to the Afghan people. The presence of thousands of foreign troops in Afghanistan has in fact only meant tens of thousands of innocent lives lost and the absolute destruction of a country. But this ongoing bloodshed and the popular protests in Afghanistan demanding the withdrawal of all foreign troops from their country has not meant an end to the occupation. Instead, the US/Canada/NATO occupation forces have increased troop deployment and expanded their war from Afghanistan to neighbouring Pakistan. In early December 2009, US President Barack Obama announced that 33,000 more US troops would be deployed to Afghanistan in 2010. Without a doubt, this means even more killing and bloodshed of Afghan people. Ironically, while the US administration and all other imperialist ruling classes trumpet that there is no military solution to the Afghanistan crisis, they have time and again increased their troops and are accelerating the criminal war in Afghanistan.

Not very far from Afghanistan and Pakistan, the people of Yemen were welcomed into 2010 by the opening of a new US war drive against their

country. Under the pretext of stopping terrorism and al-Qaeda in Yemen, the US has begun military operations in the country, bombing and killing many civilians. One must wonder how in a mere 24 hours following an alleged attempted bombing of an American airplane, Yemen suddenly became the centre of al-Qaeda and the main exporter of terrorism to the United States. US Senate Armed Services Committee Chair Carl Levin has called for US drone plane bombings of Yemen, and Saudi Arabia has also been bombing the country with the support of the US and Israel.



Protest against occupation in Afghanistan. December 30, 2009.

With the beginning of the new decade came the announcement from US President Barack Obama of an intensified drive for war and occupation and a renewed campaign against Muslim people around the world. Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Iran, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Syria, Sudan, Somalia, Algeria, Libya, Nigeria and Cuba have all been placed on the US list of potential 'terrorist threats'. Cuba, which continues to face a 50-year-old blockade by the US government, is the only country on the list without a majority Muslim population. These countries are being singled out not only to have limitations placed on the democratic and human rights of their people by new so called US security restrictions, but also in preparation for future US military attack in the coming decade of war and occupation.



Aftermath of the earthquake in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. January 15, 2010.

In the US and Canada, this expanding war drive has meant new 'security measures' are being enacted at airports and other public facilities specifically targeting Muslims for additional scrutiny, intimidation and humiliation. These measures are being enacted not in order to ensure public safety, but as part of a renewed fear campaign against Muslim people and attack on the human and democratic rights of Muslims living in the US, Canada and Europe in an attempt to create division and hatred between Muslims and non-Muslims.

Now, since last Tuesday's earthquake

# HAITI'S LESSON

## Fidel Castro's Reflection on the Earthquake in Haiti

Two days ago, close to 6 in the evening Cuba time, already dark in Haiti due to its geographical location, the TV channels started carrying news that a violent earthquake, --of 7.3 intensity in the Richter scale--had severely shaken Port au Prince. The seismic phenomenon had originated at a tectonic fault in the sea only 9.4 miles from the Haitian capital, a city where 80% of the population lives in fragile houses built with clay and adobe.

The news continued almost uninterrupted for hours. There were no images but it was said that many stouter constructions like public buildings, hospitals, schools and other facilities had also collapsed. I have read that a 7.3 earthquake equals the energy released by the explosion of 400,000 tons of TNT.

The descriptions were dramatic. In the streets, the wounded cried for medical help surrounded by ruins and their families buried under the debris. But, for many hours no one could broadcast any image.

The news took us all by surprise. Rather often we had heard news of hurricanes and large floods in Haiti but we did not know that our neighbor was threatened by a major earthquake. It surfaced now that 200 years ago a major earthquake had hit that city, which at the time was certainly inhabited by a few thousand people.

At midnight there was still no estimate of the number of victims. Senior UN officials and various Heads of Government spoke of the impressive event and announced that they would be sending rescue brigades. Since MINUSTAH -- UN international forces-- are deployed there some Defense ministers spoke of the possibility of casualties among their personnel.

Actually, it was yesterday morning that sad news started flowing in on the high number of human casualties in the population and even such institutions as the United Nations reported that some of their buildings in that country had collapsed; a word that usually does not say much but that could mean a lot under the circumstances.

For hours increasingly dramatic news of the situation in that country continued to flow uninterrupted with reports of different numbers of deadly victims that depending on which version fluctuated between 30 thousand and 100 thousand. The images are appalling. Obviously, the catastrophic event has been widely reported all over the world and many governments, sincerely moved, are making efforts to cooperate to the extent of their capabilities.

A lot of people are sincerely touched by the tragedy, especially natural unassuming people but perhaps few stop to think

on why Haiti is such a poor country and why almost 50 percent of its population depends of family remittances. And in this context, would it not be proper to also analyze the reality leading to the current situation of Haiti and its huge suffering?

It is amazing that no one says a word on the fact that Haiti was the first country where 400 thousand Africans, enslaved and brought to this land by Europeans, rebelled against 30 thousand white owners of sugarcane and coffee plantations and succeeded in making the first great social revolution in our hemisphere. Pages of insurmountable glory were then written there where Napoleon's most outstanding general tasted defeat. Haiti is a complete product of colonialism and imperialism, of more than a century of using its human resources in the hardest labors, of military interventions and the extraction of its wealth.

Such a historic oblivion would not be so grave if it were not because Haiti is an embarrassment in our times, in a world where the exploitation and plundering of the overwhelming majority of people on the planet prevail.

Billions of people in Latin America, Africa and Asia endure similar privation although probably not all of them in such high proportion as Haiti.

No place on earth should be affected by such situations, even though there are tens of thousands of towns and villages in similar and sometimes worse conditions resulting from an unfair economic and political international order imposed worldwide. The world population is not only threatened by natural catastrophes like that of Haiti that is but a pale example of what can happen to the planet with climate change; an issue that was the target of mockery, scorn and deception in Copenhagen.

It is fair to say to every country and institution that have sustained the loss of citizens or members to the natural catastrophe in Haiti that we do not doubt that at this point they will make the greatest effort to save human lives and to alleviate the pain of that long-suffering people. They cannot be blamed for the natural phenomenon that has taken place there even though we disagree with the policy pursued towards Haiti.

But, I must say that I feel it's high time to seek true and real solutions for that fraternal people.

In the area of healthcare and others the Haitian people has received the cooperation of Cuba, even though this is a small and blockaded country. Approximately 400 doctors and healthcare workers are helping the Haitian people free of charge. Our doctors are working every day at 227 of the 337 communes of that



Fidel Castro, 2008



Rally demanding the return of President Aristide. Port-au-Prince, Haiti, July 28, 2009.

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# VENEZUELA AND ALBA A BIG HELP TO HAITI

Excerpt from article published on January 26th 2010 by FOCUS News Agency

Caracas, January 26th 2010 (FOCUS News Agency) – President Hugo Chavez on Monday said that Petrocaribe, Venezuela's cut-rate regional energy alliance, will forgive quake-stricken Haiti's debt, AFP reported.

Haiti's debt with Venezuela is USD 295 million, about one-third of its global foreign debt of USD 1 billion, according to International Monetary Fund figures.

"Haiti has no debt with Venezuela -- on the contrary, it is Venezuela that has a historic debt with Haiti," Chavez said as he made the announcement.

Chavez was referring to the support that Haiti -- which obtained its independence from France in 1804 -- gave Venezuelan independence leader Simon Bolivar in 1815 and 1816 in his quest to free his country from Spanish colonial rule.

Chavez made the announcement at the closing ceremony of a meeting of foreign ministers from leftist countries with the ALBA trade alliance, a Cuba and Venezuela-supported regional common market founded in 2004.

Petrocaribe provides preferential oil pricing for its Caribbean members, with Venezuela picking up 40% of the cost if oil is selling over

USD 50 a barrel.

When oil prices are above USD 50, member states will have up to 25 years to pay the bulk of the debt at a one percent interest rate, with two years grace.

Haiti, struggling to recover from the January 12 devastating 7.0 earthquake, received in the past days 225,000 barrels of Petrocaribe oil sent through the neighboring Dominican Republic.

Both Haiti and the Dominican Republic are Petrocaribe members.

Separately, ALBA foreign ministers approved an aid package for Haiti that includes sanitary, energy, financial and educational assistance.

The ministers also expressed their concern over the "excessive foreign military presence" in the Caribbean nation, with no clear parameters over its "authority, purpose, role and length of stay."

Their presence "threatens to further complicate conditions on the ground and... international cooperation" for Haitian reconstruction, the ministers said.

They called on United Nations to take a central role in coordinating emergency efforts, and emphasized that the Haitians must take the lead in their country's reconstruction.

## Cuba: Always with Haiti

The solidarity of the Cuban people did not arrive at Haiti at the time of the earthquake. Their cooperation with that country has been offered for more than a decade now. At the time the earthquake shook Haiti, around 400 Cuban cooperators were working in that brotherly country selflessly and free-of-charge.

- Cuban doctors started to offer their services right after the earthquake took place. It has been the most important medical assistance received by the Haitian people in the first 72 hours and it is practically the only medical assistance they are receiving now.

- On January 13th, more than 60 health cooperators reinforced the medical brigade in Port-au-Prince, among them there are specialists from the Henry Reeve Contingent for emergency situations with experience in similar disasters.

- This medical brigade carried medicines, provisioning, food, serum and plasma bags with them.

- Until Thursday, January 14, at 20:00 hrs, 1 987 patients had been treated and 111 surgical interventions had been performed at 5 assistance locations in Port-au-Prince.

- The Tent Hospital of the annexed, La Renaissance Hospital, the Ofatma Hospital, the Comprehensive Diagnosis Centers from Grand Goave and the Comprehensive Diagnosis Center of Mirebalais. These last two are located at the outskirts of the capital city.

- Furthermore, Cuban cooperators at other Haitian departments started to work at the 6th location for medical attention, set up at Delmas 33 Hospital.

- Around 400 Haitian youths, who were trained as doctors in Cuba, work today along side the Cuban reinforcements to save lives in this critical situation.

- We can confirm the information that has been published already about Cuba's immediate authorization, upon request, to use the Cuban air space in the Eastern territory of our country by US airplanes.

- Cuba is willing to cooperate with all nations on the ground, including the United

States, in order to assist the Haitian people and save lives, since Cuba has the personal and the necessary infrastructure in that country to do so.

- Right now, Cuba is cooperating with Venezuela, Namibia and Norway to support the Haitian people.

- We are also cooperating with China, Dominican Republic, Mexico and Russia.

- We have addressed the PAHO requesting logistical support, expendable surgical material, hospital support and other necessary materials to guarantee medical assistance in Haiti.

- Since December 1998, Cuba offers medical cooperation to the people of Haiti, through the Health Comprehensive Program.

- Up to date, 6 thousand and 94 cooperators have rendered their services to this sector in Haiti, who have performed more than 14 million medical consultations, more than 225 thousand surgeries, assisted in more than 100 thousand deliveries and saved more than 230 human lives.

- In 2004, after the passing of Tropical Storm Jeanne through the city of Gonaives, Cuba offered its assistance through a brigade made up of 64 doctors and 12 tons of medicaments.

- 5 Comprehensive Diagnosis Centers, built by Cuba and Venezuela, were offering their services before the time of the disaster.

- As from 2004, Operation Miracle is being performed in Haiti. Until December 31, 2009, a total of 47 thousand 273 Haitians had been operated on.

- There are 660 Haitian youths currently studying in Cuba, of which 541 are being trained to become doctors.

- In Cuba, 917 professionals have been trained, of which 570 are doctors.

- Cuba cooperates with Haiti in sectors such as: agriculture, energy, fisheries, communications, health and education.

- As a result of Cuba's cooperation in the field of education, 160 thousand 30 Haitians have learned how to read and write.



Cuban doctor in Haiti.

## HAITI'S LESSON continued from front page

country. On the other hand, no less than 400 young Haitians have been graduated as medical doctors in our country. They will now work alongside the reinforcement that traveled there yesterday to save lives in that critical situation. Thus, up to one thousand doctors and healthcare personnel can be mobilized without any special effort; and most are already there willing to cooperate with any other State that wishes to save Haitian lives and rehabilitate the injured.

Another high number of Haitian youths are studying medicine in Cuba.

We also cooperate with the Haitian people in other areas within our capabilities. However, there is no other form of cooperation worthy of the definition but that of struggling in the field of ideas and political action to put an end to the endless tragedy endured by a great number of nations like Haiti.

The head of our medical brigade has

informed that "the situation is difficult but we are already saving lives." He said this in a brief message sent a few hours after arriving in Port au Prince yesterday with an additional group of doctors.

Late at night he said that the Cuban doctors and the Haitian doctors graduated at the ELAM (Latin American Medical School) were being deployed in the country. At Port au Prince they had cared for over one thousand patients while urgently commissioning a hospital that had not collapsed and using tents where necessary. They were also preparing to rapidly set up other first-aid centers.

We take wholesome pride in the cooperation that at this tragic hour the Cuban doctors and the young Haitian doctors trained in Cuba are giving their brothers and sisters in Haiti!

Fidel Castro Ruz  
January 14, 2010

## MAWO STATEMENT ON NEW ATTACKS ON MUSLIMS AND THE EARTHQUAKE IN HAITI continued from the front page...

in Haiti, the US and Canada are taking advantage of the massive humanitarian crisis to reinforce and consolidate their occupation of the country. The illegal military occupation of Haiti which ousted elected President Jean Bertrand Aristide in 2004 has only kept the country in absolute poverty and social dysfunction. Today Haiti is the poorest country in the Western hemisphere. The UN occupation troops as well as US/Canada/France soldiers and advisors have killed and injured thousands of civilians in the name of bringing freedom and democracy to the country. In the wake of the terrible earthquake, Canada is sending 800 troops and the US is sending 10,000 troops to Haiti not for humanitarian assistance, but to control the country and suppress any potential opposition to the occupation and to the lack of basic good medical care especially after the tragic earthquake. This will not help the Haitian people recover from this disaster. What is needed urgently right now is doctors and humanitarian aid, not occupation troops.

The onslaught of new attacks on oppressed people around the world must be met with a campaign against this new era of war and occupation and for peace, justice and self-determination. From the Middle East to Africa to Asia, from Latin America and the Caribbean to North America and Europe, we must unite in the demands:

**ALL FOREIGN TROOPS OUT OF HAITI NOW!  
SEND DOCTORS, NOT TROOPS TO HAITI NOW!  
RETURN PRESIDENT ARISTIDE TO HAITI!  
END THE OCCUPATIONS OF IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN,  
PALESTINE, AND HAITI!  
SELF-DETERMINATION FOR INDIGENOUS NATIONS, TAMILS  
AND ALL OPPRESSED NATIONS!  
US HANDS OFF PAKISTAN, IRAN AND YEMEN!  
STOP ATTACKS ON MUSLIMS!**

## PUBLIC FORUM HAITI AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE: WHY ARE THERE MORE FOREIGN TROOPS THAN DOCTORS?



**Wednesday February 10th  
6:30PM**

**Britannia Community Center  
1661 Napier Street (at Commercial Drive)**



**MOBILIZATION AGAINST WAR AND OCCUPATION - MAWO  
WWW.MAWOVANCOUVER.ORG**

## PUBLIC FORUM FREE THE CUBAN 5 POLITICAL PRISONERS IN US JAILS:

A Task of the Antiwar Movement in Light of 50 Years of the US War on Cuba

**WEDNESDAY  
FEBRUARY 24TH  
6:30PM**

**Britannia  
Community  
Center**

1661 Napier Street  
(at Commercial Drive)



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**Get involved**  
**with MAWO!**

**Meetings**  
**Wednesdays - 6:30PM**  
For location, please visit our website:  
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