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DFAIT

Minister Bernier Wraps Up Successful Trip to Haiti

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No. 42

The Honourable Maxime Bernier, Minister of Foreign Affairs, today concluded a three-day visit to Haiti during which he took stock of progress made there since Prime Minister Stephen Harper's visit in July 2007.

"I had a very productive first official visit to Haiti, and I can confirm that Canada's contributions are helping Haiti achieve concrete results in the areas of security and development," said Minister Bernier.

The Minister reiterated Canada's long-term commitment to Haiti with the announcement of five projects financed by the Global Peace and Security Fund, totalling \$19.1 million. "These projects, aimed at promoting security, sound border management, and supporting the reform of the Haitian police force, strongly reaffirm the Canadian government's commitment to Haiti, an important partner in our re-engagement in the Americas."

Minister Bernier met with President René Préval, Prime Minister Jacques-Édouard Alexis, and Foreign Affairs Minister Jean-Rénald Clérismé. He also met with the head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Hédi Annabi. During these meetings, Minister Bernier highlighted Canada's steadfast support for MINUSTAH, and its resolve to work with partners from the international community to ensure that progress made in the area of security will result in social and economic benefits for all Haitians.

Mr. Bernier, with Minister Clérismé, also signed the Joint Declaration of Intent on the Establishment of Expanded Consultations Between Canada and the Republic of Haiti, aimed at strengthening cooperation between the two countries.

Minister Bernier visited Belladère for the launch of construction of the border post, and met with government representatives from Haiti and the Dominican Republic there. He emphasized Canada's support

for constructive dialogue and joint security efforts between the two countries aimed at finding solutions to shared challenges as well as improving regional stability. And in Jérémie, he inaugurated construction of the Jérémie-Les Cayes highway, a \$75-million project announced last week in Montreal by the Honourable Beverley Oda, Minister of International Cooperation, and the Honourable Michael M. Fortier, Minister of Public Works and Government Services.

Canada is the second-largest bilateral donor in Haiti, with a \$555-million commitment over five years (2006-2011) to support the country's long-term reconstruction and development. Canada is providing MINUSTAH with up to 100 civilian police officers and four soldiers occupying key positions within the Mission. It has also deployed eight specialists to Haiti who are helping to reform the country's correctional system.

For more information on Canada's role in Haiti, please consult the following websites:

Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade:

http://geo.international.gc.ca/cip-pic/current_discussions/reconstructinghaiti-en.aspx.

Canadian International Development Agency:

<http://www.acdi.gc.ca/haiti-e>.

Correctional Service of Canada:

<http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/text/intforum/pbrm/haiti-eng.shtml>

Royal Canadian Mounted Police:

http://www.rcmp.ca/peace_operations/index_e.htm

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For further information, media representatives may contact:

Foreign Affairs Media Relations Office
Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada
613-995-1874

www.international.gc.ca/index.aspx

Backgrounder

NEW CANADIAN PROJECTS IN HAITI

Haiti is the largest beneficiary of Canada's development assistance in the Americas and the second largest in the world. Canada has pledged \$555 million over five years to support the reconstruction and long-term development of the country.

The five projects totalling \$19.1 million announced in Haiti by Minister Bernier include:

Rebuilding police training schools (\$3.3 million)

The Haitian government has identified reform of the National Police as a key priority, crucial to the consolidation of security and re-establishment of the rule of law. The contribution of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (DFAIT) to the International Organization for Migration will support improvement and expansion of police training facilities. Adequate capacity will allow police to train enough cadets to reach the 2011 target of a 14,000-strong force.

Rebuilding and equipping 21 police stations in the Département du Sud (\$3.5 million)

DFAIT's contribution to the United Nations Development Program will support efforts to strengthen police capacity in Haiti's Département du Sud by rebuilding and equipping 21 police stations. By ensuring that police officers working in the region have adequate equipment and facilities to carry out their functions, this project helps increase security and prevent crime in a region affected by such organized crime issues as illicit trafficking of drugs.

Building a border post at Belladère (\$2.4 million)

Haiti has identified strengthening state presence and delivery of key services along the Haiti–Dominican Republic border as an important area of engagement. DFAIT's contribution to the Pan American Development Foundation will support construction of a border post in Belladère, a major border crossing between the two countries. This project will provide necessary administrative facilities for the Haitian police, immigration, and customs officials.

Strengthening Haitian capacity to manage migration and human trafficking (\$2.9 million)

Implemented by the International Organization for Migration, this initiative is helping build Haiti's capacity to manage migration and address the crime of human trafficking by providing training and legislative technical assistance to the Ministry of Interior, as well as equipping and rebuilding 20 Haitian ports of entry.

Strengthening Coast Guard capacity at Les Cayes (\$7 million)

Combatting transnational crime, including trafficking of illicit drugs, is another priority identified by the Government of Haiti as necessary for stabilization. The Haitian Coast Guard plays a key role in counter-narcotics efforts by securing Haiti's maritime borders. DFAIT's contribution will help strengthen the Coast Guard through the construction of a base and wharf in Les Cayes, on the southern coast of the country.

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