

National Black Church Initiative

P.O. Box 65177
Washington, DC 20035
202-744-0184
dbc2002@yahoo.com
www.naltblackchurch.com

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Contact:
Rev. Anthony Evans
202-744-0184

The National Black Church Initiative Blames NGOs, WHO, and the Obama Administration For Poor Response to Haitian Cholera Epidemic

We Can No Longer Stand By While Thousands Are Dying

Washington DC – The National Black Church Initiative, a coalition of 34,000 churches spanning 50 denominations and representing 15.7 million African Americans, is morally outraged at the cholera epidemic killing thousands of Haitians so recently devastated by one of the most destructive earthquakes in history. This horrible tragedy is wreaking havoc in Haiti and should have been prevented by the one, if not all, of the many organizations and nations who have pledged to protect this fragile nation.

While natural disasters are an unpreventable aspect of life, our response to them is not. As America has painfully learned through our mismanagement of Hurricane Katrina and her aftermath - decisive, immediate and fully funded support is necessary to minimize casualties, misery and disease. The governing bodies overseeing Haiti's rebirth have been careless by allowing such a deadly outbreak to not only infect, but kill, an already overburdened, impoverished, and weak people. Haitians deserve better.

The Red Cross, UNICEF, and Doctors Without Borders are just a few of the 3,000 NGOs reportedly working to address the cholera epidemic in Haiti and some of them are doing effective, necessary work to combat this highly contagious disease. However, with the ten billion in relief funds that has been given to these organizations insufficient progress has been made. Data collected since Haiti's devastating earthquake three weeks ago show the crisis has inspired Americans to donate more than \$600 million to relief efforts, the largest outpouring of American support to any foreign natural disaster in history. As the United States has been

hit with its own economic crises we deserve for our donations to be used as intended – to enact change in the lives of Haitians who so desperately require attention. These organizations must be held accountable and improve the chaotic care that Haitians are receiving – this epidemic must be curbed before more innocent lives are lost.

The Obama Administration, in addition to the World Health Organization (WHO), have said they will pledge the money necessary to both combat the cholera epidemic and to begin the arduous task of rebuilding homes and reviving a nation ravaged by devastation and destitution. Sadly, reality is a far grimmer picture than the one talked about in press conferences. The United Nations announced it had received less than 10% of the \$164 million in emergency funds it requested to battle the epidemic. "That's clearly insufficient for an adequate response to the epidemic," U.N. spokesman Farhan Haq told reporters Monday in New York.

Rev. Anthony Evans, President of NBCI says, "I am morally outraged that this has happened and that tragedies continue to befall the Haitian people. These experts that we count on to protect the vulnerable citizens of Haiti have failed us and we must take immediate action. Millions of dollars have been donated and little progress has been made. The living conditions for Haitians are deplorable and the state of their government is abysmal. We want to see progress immediately from the Obama Administration, WHO, and the NGOs."

The United States pledged \$1.15 billion and six months after the earthquake left over 200,000 dead, we had paid **nothing**, with the money tied up in the congressional appropriations process. While, logically, the funds could not be freed overnight, NBCI feels that had the Obama Administration expedited our aid response lives could have been saved. Now, in addition to the incalculable amount of lives lost in the initial tragedy - 1,817 Haitians have died of cholera as of December 12, 2010 according to the Center for Disease Control. Casualties will undeniably continue to rise, compounding the catastrophe that has befallen this truly pitiable nation. How can such a curable disease kill so many people in this modern age?

About NBCI

The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI) is a coalition of 34,000 African American and Latino churches working to eradicate racial disparities in healthcare, technology, education, housing, and the environment. NBCI's mission is to provide critical wellness information to all of its members, congregants, churches and the public. The National Black Church Initiative's methodology is utilizing faith and sound health science. The National Black Church Initiative's purpose is to partner with major organizations and officials whose main mission is to reduce racial disparities in the variety of areas cited above. NBCI offers faith-based, out-of-the-box and cutting edge solutions to stubborn economic and social issues. NBCI's programs are governed by credible statistical analysis, science based strategies and techniques, and methods that work. Visit our website at www.naltblackchurch.com.