



Konbit Neg Lakay

December 6, 2017

Dear Representative Lowey,

We write to you as organizations serving the Haitian-American community in District 17 to urge you to support the reallocation of UN credits to the United States to the UN's cholera response in Haiti during the ongoing Appropriations Bill negotiations. As you may know, the Senate Appropriations Committee unanimously approved the authorization of \$11.7 million for this purpose in the 2018 Department of State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill, and we appeal to you to champion this provision during the ongoing conference negotiations to ensure that it is included in the final appropriations bill.

Cholera was introduced to Haiti in 2010 because of reckless waste disposal on a UN peacekeeping base. By November 2017, close to 10,000 Haitians have died, and over 800,000 have been sickened by cholera, making the death toll comparable to the 2014–2015 West African Ebola outbreak. Cholera has devastated Haiti's poorest communities, leaving families who lost breadwinners destitute and children orphaned. The Haitian diaspora in the United States has carried a heavy burden to care for sick and surviving family members. Haitian-Americans visiting family in Haiti are also among those who have contracted this disease and died. The epidemic still continues to ravage Haiti today and still spikes following large rainfall, such as during Hurricanes Irma and Matthew, posing a particularly urgent threat to the 50,000 Haitians who will be forced to return to Haiti following the Trump Administration's recent rescission of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haiti.

Last December, following persistent engagement by members of Congress on this issue—including bipartisan letters from both the Senate and House—the UN finally acknowledged its responsibility for the cholera outbreak and launched of a “New Approach to Cholera in Haiti.” The New Approach is a \$400-million plan to end cholera transmission and provide material assistance to those most directly affected. This plan has the potential to put an end to the cholera epidemic, allow destitute families to recover from the devastation cholera has caused, and restore the UN's credibility as a rights-promoting organization. To become a reality, however, the New Approach requires funding from UN Member States, and although thirty-one countries have contributed so far, the United States is not among them. As a result, implementation is stalling and the plan threatens to amount to another UN betrayal of the Haitian people.

As Ranking Member of the House Sub-Committee on State & Foreign Operations, you have a concrete, time-sensitive opportunity to ensure that the UN delivers on its commitments under the New Approach. The Senate Appropriations Committee has included in its State & Foreign

Operations Appropriations Bill (S.1780, p.16, 2017) the authority to apply \$11,750,000 in UN credits to support the UN trust fund on cholera. As the House and Senate Sub-Committees on State and Foreign Operations negotiate the way forward on a final bill, we urge you to champion the importance of this authorization and ensure that it is maintained in the final bill. As Senator Patrick Leahy remarked “if we believe in accountability for the UN we should join other nations in providing our share of these funds.”

Securing a U.S. contribution to the UN’s cholera response is an issue of critical importance to us and many of the constituents we work with. We count on you as our Representative to take up this cause.

Respectfully yours,

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