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International Campaign Launch for Housing in Haiti

400,000 Homeless Still Wait for a Housing Plan

Monday, July 2, 2012, Port-au-Prince – Haitian grassroots organizations and international allies are launching an urgent housing rights campaign today. Called Under Tents, the campaign calls for permanent housing solutions for the nearly 400,000 people who are still living in displacement camps more than two years after an earthquake devastated Haiti's capital.

Brian Concannon, director of the Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti, says, "The Under Tents campaign provides a great opportunity for aid organizations, human rights groups, government officials and citizens worldwide to be part of a fair and sustainable solution to the suffering of Haitian families still displaced by the earthquake."

As part of the Under Tents campaign, Haiti's homeless are demanding that the government immediately halt all forced evictions until public or affordable housing is made available. They request that the Government of Haiti, with the support of its allies and donor governments in the U.S., Canada, and Europe, move quickly to: (1) designate land for housing (2) create one centralized government housing institution to coordinate and implement a social housing plan and (3) solicit and allocate funding to realize this plan.

The campaign will press for U.S. Congressional and European Parliamentary action, raise international awareness about the crisis through news media, mobilize grassroots pressure through a petition, and seek to build support from housing rights organizations around the world.

Under Tents is a joint initiative of dozens of Haitian grassroots groups and international allies who will force a solution for earthquake victims. The hundreds of thousands still living under plastic tarps and tattered tents face high rates of gender-based and other violence, lack access to clean water and toilets, and combat cholera. One in five is also at risk of imminent forced eviction.

The Haitian Government has no comprehensive plan to relocate the hundreds of thousands of people in camps into safe homes.

Jackson Doliscar of the Force for Reflection and Action on Housing (FRAKKA) says,

"The quantity of people who are homeless in Port-au-Prince today is not acceptable. We need the support of other governments, like the U.S., to demand that the Haitian Government create a social housing plan. We are looking for allies to help our advocacy. We are asking simply for quality homes where people can live."

The campaign website is www.undertentshaiti.com and the petition is open for signatures here: <https://www.change.org/petitions/400-000-homeless-still-wait-for-a-plan-support-housing-rights-in-haiti>. The campaign will run through World Habitat Day, October 1.