

Haitian Workers' Solidarity Fund

Joint statement from Miami Autonomy and Solidarity and the Batay Ouvriye Haiti Solidarity Network

A natural disaster has descended upon Haiti on a scope we only are seeing the surface of at this time. The Haitian people will be struggling to rebuild their lives and their home possibly for decades in light of unprecedented collapse, both physical and social. Yet despite the unpredictability of earthquakes, this disaster is unnatural, a monstrosity of our time. The extent of the damage of the earthquake is part of the cost of unrestrained exploitation which at every step put profit above the health, safety, and well being of the Haitian people.

While the world watches on ready to help, power is being dealt an opportunity. The Haitian workers and peasants have been fighting for their rights to even the most basic level of existence for decades, while the UN-occupying force, the state, and the ruling elites maintain the social misery without relenting. Now as Port-Au-Prince lies in rubble, new opportunities arise for rulers to rebuild Haiti in their own interests, and likewise for the Haitian workers and peasants to assert their right to their own Haiti, one where they will be not be forced to live in dangerous buildings, and work merely to fill the pockets of elites, foreign or domestic.

As we move from watching in horror to taking decisive action, progressives can offer an alternative. There is a strong and beautiful desire to do something, to help others in this time of need. Our actions are strongest when we organize ourselves, and make a concerted effort in unity. Right now we can have the deepest impact by committing ourselves to act in solidarity with the autonomous social movements of Haiti directly. They present the best possible option for the Haitian people, and are in the greatest need. At the same time, we are in the best position to help them out our



A free trade area factory in Haiti Photo: Piet den Blanken

common interest as people engaged in struggling against a system that works to exploit us all.

We are calling for people-to-people solidarity engaged in a common struggle. It is not only a question of money for AID but also an autonomous and independent act of international solidarity that illuminates the bankruptcy of the occupying forces, multinational corporations, and Haitian elites that are primarily responsible for the decayed state of Haiti.

There will be aid flowing and money given as a form of charity until the next disaster. Our act of solidarity should, in no shape or form, be solely an act of humanitarian aid. It should not be an apolitical act, and we shouldn't give the green light to those that wish to capitalize on the suffering of others. It should be an act of solidarity to the struggling people of Haiti and their organizations while at the same time rejecting the totally inept Haitian elites and their state apparatus for bankrupting Haiti.

The earthquake is a natural disaster, but the state of Haiti, the abject poverty of the masses and the vile injustice of the social order, are unnatural.

We have a relationship with one organization, Batay Ouvriye (Workers Struggle), and are putting our resources and time into helping Batay Ouvriye to help rebuild from the catastrophe and maintain the struggle for a better Haiti and a better world. Batay Ouvriye is a combative grassroots worker and peasant organization in Haiti with workers organized all over Haiti, especially in the industrial sweatshops and Free Trade Zones.

We have set up a means to send money to Batay Ourviye. **If you wish to send money to Batay Ouvriye, please DONATE NOW!**

Pay on paypal.com with a credit card. Send funds to: miamiautonomyandsolidarity@yahoo.com

Mail checks written to Miami Workers Center with a note "for: MAS/BO"

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