

PAHO Director Dr. Carissa F. Etienne Congratulates Haiti on National Plan of Action on Cholera

Message from PAHO Director Dr. Carissa F. Etienne, on February 27, 2013, the day that Haiti presented a national plan of action for eliminating the transmission of cholera in the country.

Message of PAHO's Director Carissa F. Etienne

"It gives me great pleasure as Director of the Pan American Health Organization, to congratulate the Haitian government for an impressive achievement—the presentation of a national plan of action for eliminating the transmission of cholera. I know that great commitment and effort have gone into the development of this plan, which is ambitious yet achievable. When fully implemented, it will bring improvements in water and sanitation infrastructure and health system capacity that will help ensure that neither cholera nor any other waterborne disease will ever again produce a major public health crisis in Haiti.

The Haitian people are resourceful and resilient. In the quake's aftermath, we recognize that it was Haitians themselves who responded first and saved many lives. But I also believe that the overwhelming response of people, organizations and other countries around the world—including your devoted neighbor, the Dominican Republic—was one of the finer displays of international solidarity in recent history.

Today, the Haitian government is giving us the opportunity to do what needs to be done. This plan when implemented can and will finally halt cholera transmission in Haiti and ensure that any future introduction of the disease can be quickly controlled.

But for the plan to be implemented, Haiti's friends in the international community must align their efforts and harmonize around this plan and provide the necessary financial resources.

I applaud the efforts of the Haitian authorities and in the name of PAHO, we pledge half a million dollars to support the installation of water and sanitation connections in a number of primary health care centers in priority zones.

We further reiterate our commitment to support the government and people of Haiti in National health development.

We will work with Coalition partners to implement this plan. And I call on the entire international community to play your part in protecting and promoting the health and well-being of our Haitian brothers and sisters.

Thank you.