



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

**STATEMENT**

Brussels, 23 September 2014

**Statement by Commissioner Piebalgs in reaction to the report of the Court of Auditors on "EU support for rehabilitation following the earthquake in Haiti"**

Today's report by the [European Court of Auditors](#) confirms that the European Commission delivered sound work under very difficult circumstances to help the people of Haiti after the devastating earthquake of 2010.

This disaster, which killed an estimated 265,000 people and destroyed homes, schools, roads and electricity and water infrastructure, left hundreds of thousands of people in dire need of support. Together with other donors, the EU immediately provided food assistance, shelter and medical support and started rebuilding the lives of Haitians and the economy of their country.

Working with and through the Haitian state is central for us, in order to strengthen its capacities of providing basic services to its population and reduce dependency on international aid. That is why the EU was also among the first donors to provide budget support to the Haitian government soon after the disaster. The Court rightly observes that this was essential for maintaining the basic functioning of the state and we believe it prevented further descent into instability.

I welcome the Court's recommendations and am happy to confirm that we are already well advanced in putting them into practice. The European Commission has put robust procedures in place to assess the risks of our development programmes before we launch them. We also set in motion several measures for linking relief, rehabilitation and development including coordination meetings and information sharing.

The extremely difficult circumstances have at times slowed down our work but most projects examined by the Court (10 out of the 13 projects examined) have achieved their intended results. In a fragile country like Haiti we always face the risk of encountering unforeseen obstacles or delays but the alternative cannot be to withhold our help.

The EU continues to provide support where it is most needed on the ground: reaching one Haitian in every two with its work. Since 2010, the EU has rehabilitated 100 km of roads between Port-au-Prince and the second biggest city, Cap Haitien, significantly improving the security of this section of the highway and opening up isolated areas of the country's central region. Food security has been improved for 750,000 people. 17 schools and educational support centres have been created across Haiti with our support, and more

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than 370 schools in four departments have been rehabilitated, which improved education for 150,000 children.

As we all acknowledge that challenges remain, the EU will continue supporting the country in the next seven years with a package of €420 million.

**For more information:**

Website of EuropeAid Development and Cooperation DG:

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/index_en.htm)

Website of the European Commissioner for Development Andris Piebalgs:

[http://ec.europa.eu/commission\\_2010-2014/piebalgs/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/piebalgs/index_en.htm)

[MEMO/14/3](#): "Four years on from the Haiti earthquake: The EU's response"