

Haiti cops and docs to get \$54M in Canadian aid as Oda tours devastated island

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OTTAWA - Haiti ultimately needs to lead its earthquake reconstruction efforts and must also get help from its far-flung diaspora, Canada said Thursday as it announced tens of millions in new spending projects for the battered country.

"The Haitian government has to take the lead on co-ordination," International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda said from Port-au-Prince, where she was on her third visit. "Fulfilling that plan has to be under the leadership of the Haitian government."

But a Canadian non-governmental group that is focused on Latin American issues questioned how Haiti can actually determine its own fate given it is a poor country with limited resources.

"How are they going to take control? This is a multibillion dollar, multifaceted undertaking . . . The analysis of what the Haitians have as human resources simply does not appear to have been done," said Carlo Dade, executive director of the Canadian Foundation for the Americas.

"So ensuring that the Haitians are running it is a nice idea - one we fully support in theory - but somebody needs to explain in detail what the reality is and how this will be done."

Oda announced Canada will pump an additional \$54.6 million into a Haitian hospital and the national police force, money that will be drawn from Canada's existing aid budget for Haiti - a commitment of \$555 million for 2006-2011.

The Canadian International Development Agency has also announced that \$65.15 million in humanitarian assistance will go to several Red Cross entities, the United Nations and other non-governmental agencies.

That money will come from the \$220 million the government pledged to match private donations by ordinary Canadians following the Jan. 12 earthquake that killed more than 200,000 people.

Canada has already earmarked \$110 million of those matching funds to help pay for \$400

million in spending and debt relief it committed at last week's UN pledging conference for Haiti.

Oda said Haitian Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive welcomed the new spending, saying it was indicative of Canada's strong commitment and special relationship with his country.

Oda also said she saw some positive signs of the Haitian diaspora's efforts to help rebuild their country, and that the government would continue to encourage the Haitian-Canadian community, based mainly in Montreal.

"We're obviously working with them to see how government support could enable that to actually show results here," Oda said.

Canada will contribute \$20 million to support construction of a hospital in Gonaives, outside the capital of Port-au-Prince.

Another \$34.6 million will pay for infrastructure and equipment for a Haitian police academy in nearby Ganthier, as well as training programs for senior police management.