

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, January 27, 2010 8:39 PM
To: H
Cc: Lew, Jacob J; Shah, Rajiv (AID/A)
Subject: FW: France to rebuild Haiti's presidential palace: Preval

This is smart - re-building a key symbol.

We have to think thorough our assistance in a smart way.

cdm

----- Original Message -----

From: membership_services@fma.sosilt.com <membership_services@fma.sosilt.com>
To: southcom_news_alerts_members_list@lists.fma.sosilt.com
<southcom_news_alerts_members_list@lists.fma.sosilt.com>
Sent: Wed Jan 27 19:09:05 2010
Subject: France to rebuild Haiti's presidential palace: Preval

France to rebuild Haiti's presidential palace: Preval

PORT-AU-PRINCE, January 27, 2010 (AFP) - Haitian President Rene Preval said Wednesday France has offered to rebuild the ruined presidential palace, whose collapsed cupola has become a symbol of the devastated quake-hit nation.

The French "ambassador has told me that France is ready to rebuild the national palace as it was," Preval told a press conference at the government's temporary headquarters near the airport.

The imposing white domed building, designed by the Haitian architect Georges Baussan, was constructed in 1918 during the time of the American occupation, and was modeled on the White House, guide books say.

It overlooks the vast Champ de Mars square, now a makeshift tent city for thousands left homeless by the January 12 7.0-magnitude quake.

Preval also rejected the notion that Haiti's infrastructure, such as the ports and airports, had now been placed under foreign, notably American, control.

"We are in a situation which would be a catastrophe for any country, and even when there was an earthquake in Italy I saw that they called for help," Preval said, referring to a quake last April northeast of Rome which killed 299 people and left some 70,000 homeless.

"Haiti was already very weak," even before the quake, he stressed.

The Haitian leader also said his French counterpart Nicolas Sarkozy would visit the Caribbean nation, and "become the first French president to come to Haiti." Preval did not give a date for the visit.

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