

NEWS RELEASE

International Charity Responds to Devastation in Haiti

Hope Force International mobilizes as Port-au-Prince digs out after Tuesday's Quake

Brentwood, TN January 15, 2010 – As the capital city of Port-au-Prince remains in shock following the January 12 earthquake, a distinctive international aid organization is gearing up to send key personnel and join response forces coming from around the world. Within a few short hours of the magnitude 7 temblor, Hope Force International (HFI) was in contact with partners working in Haiti. The organization is sending key personnel to this impoverished nation to assess the most expedient and effective means of utilizing available resources for rapid response.

Although initial reports coming out of Haiti were difficult to assess, it quickly became apparent that HFI's experience with disaster response would be a vital part of the efforts aimed at this Caribbean nation. According to the organization's founder, Jack Minton, "We have established ongoing communication links with various partners in Haiti as well as domestic groups desiring to engage the situation. Hope Force International – committed to response, relief and recovery – is currently mobilizing to address both medical and non-medical needs. Our 700 trained volunteers have been informed of our activities as we prepare for an appropriate response."

The level of need is acute and the chaos in Port-au-Prince is overwhelming but the organization's planners are confident that their efforts will play a key role in responding to the tragedy. Smith & Nephew, a leading orthopedic manufacturer in Memphis, is prepared to send supplies through Hope Force. In addition, HFI will recruit and mobilize qualified surgeons. World Relief, Cure International, the Firm Foundation, Youth With A Mission and several large congregations across the country are in direct communication with HFI to map out a collaborative response effort.

Hope Force is sending an assessment team to Haiti to determine the best means of responding to the disaster. This team will immediately join partners on the ground to establish the connections necessary to facilitate the sending and receiving of supplies and personnel.

The situation in Port-au-Prince is a scene of disorder and confusion as tens of thousands of residents flee the destruction. Response teams from around the world face a daunting logistical challenge with communication and transportation. On Thursday alone, there were more than 120 incoming flights as nations from around the world endeavoring to bring aid. Minton points out, "Despite the courageous efforts of first-responders, most regions of the city have been without water for more than 48 hours. Hospitals and make-shift clinics are full of men, women and children but empty of medications, food and water."

Haiti's position in the day's before this tragedy marked them as the Western Hemisphere's poorest nation. With tens of thousands of its residents feared dead, millions displaced and the

capital city in ruins, the needs to care for her population will take on a significant magnitude in the weeks and months ahead.

The mission of Hope Force is to equip willing responders and mobilize them onto pathways of service. HFI trains volunteers in advance so they are prepared and allowed to respond, often in restricted areas, when disaster strikes. Not only does the organization seek out doctors, nurses, or even first responders such as firemen and paramedics, but anyone with willing hands, character and determination is welcome to participate in training, and be available for disaster response.

In early 2005, HFI signed a memorandum of understanding with The Salvation Army, the largest faith-based disaster relief organization in the U.S. The primary purpose of the collaborative agreement is for training and deployment of disaster volunteers. The two organizations have partnered on numerous training seminars and disaster response initiatives. Through this partnership, Hope Force is rapidly approaching its goal of 1,000 active HFI Reservists ready to respond to crisis points around the country. HFI kept teams on the Gulf Coast for several years following Hurricane Katrina; long-term rebuilding efforts are the hallmark of the charity.

Founded by Jack and Cherie Minton in 2003, HFI has trained hundreds of Reservists who have responded to floods in the Midwest, tornados in the South, wildfires in the West and storms on the Gulf Coast, such as Hurricane Katrina. HFI Teams also responded to the horrific Tsunami in Southeast Asia in 2004. Hope Force endeavors to become a leading volunteer response force, bringing hope to those affected by crisis or disaster.

Contributions to the Hope Force International response in Haiti can be made at the website.

www.hopeforce.org

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