

## Haiti: Message of Hope and Solidarity

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We thank all the true friends of Haiti, in particular the Government and the people of South Africa for their solidarity with the victims of Haiti.

The concrete action undertaken by Rescue South Africa and Gift of the Givers is a clear expression of ubuntu. Ubuntu ngumuntu ngabantu. As we all know, many people remain buried under tons of rubble and debris waiting to be rescued. When we think of their suffering, we feel deeply and profoundly that we should be there, in Haiti, with them, trying our best to prevent death.

To symbolize this readiness we have decided to meet not just anywhere, but here, in the shadow of the Oliver Tambo International Airport. As far as we are concerned, we are ready to leave today, tomorrow, at any time to join the people of Haiti, to share in their suffering, help rebuild the country, moving from misery to poverty with dignity. Friends from around the world have confirmed their willingness to organize an airplane carrying medical supplies, emergency needs and ourselves.

While we cannot wait to be with our sisters and brothers in Haiti, we share the anguish of all Haitians in the Diaspora who are desperate to reach family and loved ones.

Soufrans youn nan nou se soufrans nou tout.

L'Union fait la force. Kouraj! Kenbe! Kenbe!

Youn soutni lòt nan lespri Mèm Amou an.

Our love to the nation now labeled the poorest of the western hemisphere. However, the spirit of ubuntu that once led Haiti to emerge as the first independent Black nation in 1804; helped Venezuela, Columbia and Ecuador attain liberty; and inspired our forefathers to shed their blood for the United States' independence, cannot die. Today this spirit of solidarity must and will empower all of us to rebuild Haiti.

Ukwanda kwaliwa umthakathi.

Thank you.

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