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Haiti and the United Nations stand together to achieve zero transmission of cholera and to improve access to water, sanitation and health care

Port-au-Prince, 3 November 2017 – On the occasion of a three-day visit to Haiti, of the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General (DSG), Ms. Amina J. Mohammed and the United Nations Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for Haiti, Ms. Josette Sheeran, a High Level Cholera Committee meeting (HLCC) was organized at the Prime Minister Residence, co-presided by the Head of the Haitian Government, HE M. Jack Guy Lafontant and the Deputy Secretary-General.

The Haitian Government and the UN representatives jointly expressed their determination to achieve zero transmission of cholera. They further expressed their commitment to achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including improving access to water, sanitation and healthcare.

The Prime Minister and the Deputy Secretary-General, announced a commitment to work in close partnership to eliminate the transmission of cholera. They noted that achieving this ambitious goal and ensuring its sustainability will require the refinement of the current government plan for the elimination of cholera, linked to actionable steps and detailed costs. While cholera transmission has dropped dramatically from over 18,000 new cases per week at the onset of the epidemic to 250 per week this year, success will require more funding to maintain the highly effective work of emergency response teams, and commitment to the fight against cholera in the medium and long-term. In recognition of the fact that one single cholera death is one too many, the participants committed to updating the National Plan for the Elimination of Cholera to take advantage of the current window of opportunity and avoid a resurgence of cases.

“Regarding the technical support of the national drinking water supply and sanitation system, as mentioned by the President of the Republic in his meetings with the Deputy Secretary-General and the Secretary-General, on the sidelines of the 72nd session of the General Assembly last September, the Haitian government calls for a direct support to the national structures of public health, water and sanitation, to reinforce the State capacities, said the Prime Minister. “The Government and the people of Haiti feel strengthened in their confidence that the UN and the international community can raise the funding needed for the full implementation of the New Approach on cholera proposed by the Secretary General and adopted by the General Assembly, which cannot wait any longer”

The participants discussed the importance for the country to encourage foreign direct investment in sectors of water, sanitation and health, and in doing so, consolidating the progress made so far in the fight against cholera in Haiti.

According to last DINEPA data, 72% of Haitian population does not have access to adequate sanitation and 42% has not yet adequate access to safe water while access to health care services is limited.

Urging Member States and partners to provide comprehensive support, the Deputy Secretary General emphasized during the meeting that “addressing the root causes of cholera in Haiti is critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Additionally, in the immediate term, we urgently require funding to ensure continued operation of the rapid response teams - failure to do so risks losing the gains achieved to date”.

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