

Hervé Ladsous: "Following the emergency phase, we can now focus on our primary task, the stabilization of the country (...), to consolidate the political process and Rule of Law with the authorities and people."

On the occasion of his first visit to Haiti (on January 9th-12th) as United Nation's Under Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, gave an exclusive interview to MINUSTAH FM.

MINUSTAH FM: Mr. Ladsous, what is the purpose of your visit to Haiti today?

Hervé Ladsous: Of the 16 UN peacekeeping operations around the world, MINUSTAH is obviously one of the most important. It is also one of the oldest among our crisis stabilization missions. I absolutely wanted to come here for some time and circumstances finally offered me the opportunity - since we unfortunately remember the terrible tragedy that befell Haiti with the earthquake in 2010. Today is an opportunity to remind ourselves of the terrible suffering experience by the Haitian people, but also to remember our friends and colleagues who died in tragic circumstances while on duty.

MINUSTAH FM: January 12th, 2010, is a tragic date for Haiti, its international partners and the UN, precisely because of the earthquake. Three years after the disaster, what is the message that the UN has for the Haitian people?

Hervé Ladsous: The message is that following the emergency phase - which lasted longer than anticipated in order to resolve the immense problems experienced by the affected population (even though there are *still* hundreds of thousands of displaced persons who require relocation) - we can now focus on our primary task; namely, the stabilization of the country.

MINUSTAH FM: On January 12th, 2010, MINUSTAH's mandate changed. Since that date, what is your 'take' on the path taken by the Mission?

Hervé Ladsous: The path taken is considerably arduous, and not yet completed... There is still much to do on the Haitian side - and on that of the United Nations. But we are working hand-in-hand with Haitians to find solutions to ensure the population's safety, which remains a central preoccupation. This concerns, first-and-foremost, our ongoing

efforts to support the training, organization and strengthening of the Haitian National Police. There are also tasks that fall within the framework of strengthening the Rule of Law, because it is one of the prerequisites for a better future in the country.

MINUSTAH FM: MINUSTAH has just entered its ninth year in Haiti. Stabilization is at the heart of its mandate. Since the Mission's deployment, what has been done in the field?

Hervé Ladsous: I think that such a task is never fully completed, but we can assert that the safety of persons and property is more assured and that progress is undeniable, although much remains to be done.

MINUSTAH FM: MINUSTAH is the seventh UN mission in Haiti. What is being done to make it the last?

Hervé Ladsous: More than ever, I think that we need to work with the [Haitian] authorities... with the local population to consolidate the political process, to strengthen the Rule of Law which is a necessary – even indispensable - condition to inspire confidence among foreign investors. These investors are one of the solutions to create jobs – the lack of which is a major constraint facing the people of Haiti.

MINUSTAH FM: A final word on the cholera epidemic affecting Haiti...

The issue clearly mobilizes the entire United Nations' system. In general, what efforts are underway?

Hervé Ladsous: At the beginning of the epidemic, the entire international community was mobilized and, for its part, the United Nations has spent almost \$120 million on immediate actions to assist affected populations - rehydrating victims etc. Through a series of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), the UN also helps create proper sanitation facilities and water treatment amenities. It's all part of our emergency response. The Secretary-General of the United Nations launched a major initiative to secure funds last December to support the joint efforts between the Dominican Republic and Haiti to eradicate cholera from the island of Hispaniola. The goal pursued by Ban Ki-moon is to mobilize \$2.2 billion over the next decade to support all actions aimed not only against the disease but also at eradicating its causes in the field of water management. Networks are needed to ensure that the population has access to clean water - water that does not create situations such as those we have known. Initially, efforts will focus

on a vaccination campaign aimed at the groups most at risk. All such plans are now being implemented.

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