

REMARKS OF AMBASSADOR LUIGI R. EINAUDI
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TO THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
ON THE SITUATION IN HAITI
OAS PERMANENT COUNCIL
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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I wish first to accept with pride your congratulations on the peaceful transfer of power that took place in the United States yesterday. I will transmit it to my colleagues.

I wanted also to mention apropos of transitions and change that as many of you had the happy coincidence of finding that yesterday's Blair House luncheon was hosted by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, that you met one of its directors there, about whom the intention to nominate as my successor has been announced, Harriet Babbit. I have asked that her biography be circulated among you, and I wish to state that I think that she will consolidate and indeed expand the support that the United States has given to this Organization of American States during my tenure here. Presumably, once the Senate gives its advice and consent, my successor will be here sometime in the spring. Until that happens, of course, I remain the spokesman of the United States in this forum, and I have been instructed to make a few points with regard to the issue that we have before us today.

Let me start by saying that I have also asked be distributed today a statement by then still President-elect Clinton, made the day after our consideration of Haitian matters in this Council on January 13. The President-elect spoke on January 14 and made a couple of basic points that I do want to draw to your attention. I read textually:

"I first want to express my support for a political settlement that provides for the reinstatement of the legitimate, democratically-elected government of President Aristide, and protects the human rights of all Haitians . . . I have spoken (the President-elect continued) with the UN/OAS negotiator, Dante Caputo, to let him know personally of my support."

I wish to note in this context that some of you raised questions with me over the last few days about a CNN report that some kind of mission was going from the United States Department of Justice and Department of State to Haiti. My understanding is that that news report reflects very simply the implementation of the point in the now-President's statement where he said "I will direct the Immigration and Naturalization Service" -- which reports to the Department of Justice -- "and the State Department to deploy additional asylum officers to expedite refugee processing that is conducted inside of Haiti."

Let me now turn quickly to today's discussion here. Let me start by applauding our Secretary General, Ambassador Baena-Soares, and Ambassador Boutros-Ghali, Secretary General of the United Nations, for their wisdom in joining together to appoint as their Special Envoy Dante Caputo, whose excellent report we have just heard.

I wish to make a few comments quickly, divided essentially into two parts. First, on the expanded civilian mission, and second, on relations between the United Nations and the Organization of American States in dealing with this tragic crisis affecting Haiti.

With regard to the mission, let me go back to the original resolution, Resolution 2 of the Ministers, original in the sense that it is the resolution that was adopted on the 8th October, 1991, when it first became clear that we were dealing with a serious crisis that was not going to be resolved simply by a brief visit of ministers, which had already at that point taken place. RM 2/91 set forth the terms, the basic objectives, of a civilian mission, to be constituted "to reestablish and strengthen constitutional democracy in Haiti."

To continue reading from operative paragraph one, roman numeral section two:

". . . which should go to that country in order to facilitate the reestablishment and strengthening of democratic institutions, the full force and effect of the Constitution, respect for the human rights of all Haitians, and to support the administration of justice and the adequate functioning of all the institutions that will make it possible to achieve these objectives."

It seems to me that we must be very clear in our own minds that this mission should have as its mandate -- and it is already set out in the mandate of the ministers -- something more than a prolonged stay or a focus exclusively on what has been so far identified as a primary purpose, of dealing with human rights. We must look at this mission as a means of doing a little bit of across-the-board support, practical engagement in support of the Haitian people, Constitution, and institutions. I repeat the quote: "the adequate functioning of all the institutions that will make it possible to achieve those objectives."

It seems to me that, very simply, and very informally, among the functions of this kind of a mission should be such items as addressing the humanitarian assistance needs of the Haitian people; assessing the impact of economic measures that have been taken or recommended against Haiti; helping to rebuild the economy of Haiti; helping to address questions of the professionalism of the armed forces and their separation from police forces; and helping, as the resolution in fact says, to reform the administration of the justice system in Haiti.

Now I am not implying by focusing on the breadth of the functions that should ultimately be undertaken by this mission attempting to imply that this is something that can be done either easily or immediately. What I am saying is that timing questions aside, it seems to me that unless we are willing to face the need for practical engagement, we could very well find ourselves in a wind tunnel of words that does not contribute to the solution we seek.

My second point about the mission is speed. We have achieved, thanks precisely to the people I have applauded, and most particularly to the recent efforts of Special Envoy Caputo, some momentum in a negotiation, and a situation that has been for the most part, been characterized by inertia. I believe, my Government believes, that it is essential that we capitalize on that momentum by moving fast to get the mission in place -- to quote Special Envoy Caputo, "as fast as possible."

My third point about the mission is funding. Quite clearly, if we are to think for example, with the boldness that our Secretary General thought in his report to our meeting of the 13th, when he talked about an ideal number of 400, and a permanence in Haiti not of days, weeks, or months, but years, then we are talking about massive resource needs, a point that has already been mentioned here.

I hope to be in a position by this coming Monday to provide the Secretary General with a specific, concrete notice of intent to contribute a million dollars, which we probably will be able to provide rather quickly after the notice of intent is given, when the current Congressional waiting period on a reprogramming notification expires, so that in fact, he may be able to have some ability to move as early as Monday, as early, that is, as the 72-hour time period, which Special Envoy Caputo mentioned as a possible moment to start augmenting the mission, and which we would certainly heartily support.

A million dollars, of course, is trivial. It is simply not a significant sum from the standpoint of the long term. It is clear that financing is an issue which we will all need to address very seriously.

Let me quickly turn to the question of relationships between the United Nations and the OAS. It seems to me that our distinguished colleague from Canada has already put it better than I possibly could, when he noted that Canada's support for greater United Nations participation in the resolution of the Haitian crisis was not to be seen as an expression of no confidence in the OAS. That is certainly the position of the United States.

We see the crisis in Haiti as one with many and profound international implications for the region and subregion, and in very important ways, for the United States. We believe that the United Nations must be involved from the standpoint of U.S. national interests, in helping to identify a solution and then support it.

But we also believe very strongly -- and here it has been stated very clearly by Special Envoy Caputo -- that this in no way detracts from the role played by the Organization of American States in responding immediately to the crisis, in preventing the consolidation of the coup d'etat, or of the government issuing from it, and in fact, keeping high the aspiration of collective support in defense of democracy in Haiti and in this hemisphere. Without the OAS, the current opportunity for Haiti would not be there.

There is a second point to make. This opportunity is not just for Haiti. It is an opportunity for this body -- indeed, for this Organization, and for the member states of this Organization, to strengthen it, and increase its effectiveness. Let me very quickly try to end by mentioning for a moment, since we have been informed that the negotiations between the OAS and UN are going on in this house at this time on terms of reference for cooperation in the mission, some thoughts that I and my colleagues have about that cooperation and those terms of reference.

I think the first one is implicit in the way I have approached this problem, namely that both entities, both the OAS and the UN, have things to contribute, have special perspectives to bring to the problem, in a separate and independent way. In particular, the most important of these regional perspectives lies precisely in the area where the OAS has most advanced, the unique principle of regional solidarity in defense of democracy, where over the last two years we have been making history in international jurisprudence. Clearly, in any division of functions and labor, the OAS should have a significant role in such questions as precisely the one I have stressed in reading the ministerial resolution, working on support for the administration of justice, and "the adequate functioning of all the institutions that will make it possible to achieve these objectives."

This an area in which we feel the OAS has important comparative advantage because of its basis as a regional organization sensitive to regional perspectives and needs. At the same time, it is perfectly clear that the OAS, as a regional organization, with more of a political history and background rather than one in the economic sphere, is considerably less well-equipped operationally to help to provide economic support and development than is the United Nations and the United Nations system, which encompasses not only such entities as the UNDP, but also the World Bank, which has historically had a major role with regard to the mobilization of resources for Haiti.

Which brings me to my last point here. It seems to me that this question of resources, which has been addressed here today, is in itself a major opportunity to strengthen the OAS. Though I, as the representative of the United States -- which is, it is true, far and away the major donor country for the OAS/CIAV in Nicaragua -- and I genuinely thank the Ambassador of Nicaragua for having noted that Nicaraguans had a favorable experience with precisely the kind of mission that we are discussing with regard to Haiti, and had it over time, as I would note that we are now, I believe, in approximately the third year of OAS/CIAV, that in fact, not very many contributions have come for CIAV, other than from the United States.

There are some notable exceptions: the European Community, in particular, has provided funding that has enabled the building of some low cost housing, that was outside the U.S. mandate. There have been contributions, I understand, from Italy, and in this hemisphere, from Venezuela, from far away, interestingly and symbolically, Cyprus, and let it not be lost, that even the smallest contribution is welcome. We need more than that for our efforts in Haiti, if indeed they are to help avoid a continuation of what the Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda called "this saddest of many sad days" and periods.

Let me conclude with one last thought. I think that the momentum that has been developed, the cooperation between the UN and the OAS, gives Haitians a new chance. It is also clear that, as has been said often in these halls, our search for democracy will ultimately be crowned with long term success only if it is reconciled with non-intervention, the other great tradition of the inter-American system.

The meaning is clear: It is ultimately up to Haitians to solve these problems. Very simply, our sense in the United States, in Washington, is that this chance, the current chance, should not be lost.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.