

Haiti receives advice from UN economists on attracting foreign investment



*Reposted from UN news center
16 March 2012*

United Nations economists have provided the Haitian Government with advice on a new investment strategy to help the country attract financing to rebuild infrastructure and boost economic development.

The experts from the UN Conference on Trade and Development ([UNCTAD](#)) were among the participants at this week's meeting in the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince, which focused on boosting investment and growth in the country – the poorest in the Western Hemisphere and recovering from a devastating earthquake in January 2010.

They advised the Government to carefully reform regulations and institutions dealing with investment, focusing on, among other actions, attracting financing to rebuild and improve national infrastructure such as roads and ports.

The Government requested UNCTAD to provide technical assistance to Haiti, including carrying out an Investment Policy Review – a comprehensive study of national rules and practices that has already been done for 30 developing nations.

“Governments implementing the recommendations of previous investment policy reviews have often managed to attract higher levels of foreign direct investment,” the agency pointed out in a news release.

Chantal Dupasquier, Chief of Investment Policy Reviews at UNCTAD, encouraged the Government to adopt a phased and selective approach to regulatory and institutional reform, infrastructure development and investment promotion, so as to avoid a dispersion of efforts and resources.

The priority should be for government measures that have a high impact on attracting investment that can fund improved infrastructure and create jobs, stressed Ms. Dupasquier, who was among the UNCTAD experts participating in the 12 to 14 March meeting.

A number of Haitian Government officials participated in the meeting, including President Joseph Martelly, who said the country must tackle constraints to investment and growth.

“It is time to stop looking for excuses and start working,” Mr. Martelly told the meeting.