



New duty-free industrial zone approved



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An \$8m project to create a new duty-free industrial zone in Haiti for the production of clothing and textiles was officially signed at the end of last week. The plan, which has been proposed by the Société Zone Franche des Palmiers SA, is likely to create 3,000 direct jobs and up to 9,000 indirect jobs. It is backed by the government as part of a pledge to generate jobs to help the country recover from the devastating earthquake that hit two years ago.

The project was approved in December, and will occupy around 4.4 hectares of land. According to official documents it will include two modular buildings covering more than 14,000 square metres with integrated service areas, as well as administrative offices, machine rooms, offices of the General Administration of Customs, a canteen and sports centre.

Production is also due to begin in the first quarter of this year at the 246-hectare Caracol Industrial Park, a joint development between the Haitian government, the US government and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

The biggest investor in this scheme is South Korean garment maker Sae-A Trading, which has pledged to invest \$70m in new operations that will provide jobs for 20,000 Haitian workers.