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MAYOR BLOOMBERG OUTLINES RESPONSE TO DISASTER IN HAITI

Mayor Bloomberg's Remarks as Delivered at Holy Cross Roman Catholic Church Follow:

"Number one, Father Donaldson, thank you very much for hosting us. I am joined, as you know, by Governor Paterson and a number of elected officials, and I think the outpouring - the number here - says exactly how tragic this is and how much all New Yorkers feel for the people of Haiti.

"We obviously will do everything we can to help but just the number of people behind me, I'll try to mention everybody's name just so that people know that they were here and I apologize - on behalf of the Governor and I - if we miss anybody. Controller John Liu is here, and the Public Advocate Bill de Blasio and Speaker Quinn, Councilmember Eugene and Jumaane Williams, Borough Presidents Markowitz and Marshall, DA Hynes, Joe Bruno, Ray Kelly, Sal Cassano and Khari Edwards, Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson is here, Assemblyman Karim Camara and Councilman Al Vann and Ingrid Lewis-Martin, chief of staff to Eric Adams is here. If I left anybody out, I apologize. We'll try to catch up later on.

"What we're here to do is to say to New York 's grieving Haitian community that the prayers of every New Yorker in every part of our city are with you today and we are with you. Nous à vous, which means 'we are with you' and bon courage, 'have courage.' Those are just words. In the end, with every news account, it appears to be an even greater tragedy than we had feared before. And we'll eventually find out just how bad it is, but this is one of the great tragedies that's befallen any country. And the fact that it is a country close to the United States and close in particular to New York City because of the large Haitian community that we have here - we have not only a lot of Haitians who have moved here but there's an enormous number of Haitians who've come to serve the people of New York. If you go into hospitals, the number of Haitian doctors that are saving our lives is quite significant. I've been to Haiti . Our Police Commissioner was in Haiti just last week. Anything that we in the past could have done to help, we were doing, and now it's incumbent on us to pull together and see what we can do.

"The magnitude of the tragedy is such that in the end it will be the United States government and the United Nations that will lead and we'll try to talk about what individuals can

do, but this is not something where you can send a can of food to help or a bottle of water. There isn't an infrastructure and the magnitude of the problem just dwarfs anything that any one individual or even just our city can do.

"It truly is a heart-wrenching tragedy in a nation that, as we all know, has more than its share of hardship. New Yorkers know first-hand how much the help of people from around the world can mean in rebuilding from a disaster. We saw the world come to our aid back on 9/11 and we want to make sure that the world comes to the aid of the Haitian people. And as a city, we are more than ready to extend our help to the people of Haiti to the extent that we possibly can because in the inspiring words of Haiti 's national motto, emblazoned on its flag, it says 'L'Union fait la force,' or, in unity there is strength.

"Now, news about family members in Haiti is naturally uppermost in the minds of many, so let me repeat what President Obama said today. The State Department has set up a hotline for people trying to reach family members in Haiti . That number is 1-888-407-4747. That's 1-888-407-4747. And while Senators Schumer and Gillibrand are in other parts of the state today, I want to tell you that they are on the phones with the Obama Administration and earthquake relief is their top priority.

"I do want you to know that I have talked with Ambassador Leo Merore. He is Haiti 's ambassador to the United Nations and somebody that I've gotten to know quite well. And I've conveyed to him our prayers and support. **I also talked to Roy Hastick**, who many of you know he's president of the Caribbean American Chamber of Commerce, otherwise known as CACCI and he has always been a great advocate for the country and of Haiti and its people. He had a stroke awhile ago but fortunately is recovering and I thought it important to take his call and to express our condolences. And I also talked to his wife who is also is somebody that really cares about this country.

"As members of my staff, including Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott and our Office of Immigrant Affairs Commissioner Fatima Shama, you should know are in regular contact with Haitian community and religious leaders. Our Administration has had for a variety of reasons close ties with Haiti . We've aided in humanitarian relief there in the past. I've traveled to Haiti , and really was deeply affected with what I saw. I had never seen the kind of needs that the people there had, and if you remember the people of New York donated an ambulance and medical help to a hospital right there. Many of you may know also that our Police Commissioner worked in Haiti on behalf of the Clinton Administration and certainly has retained strong ties with people in that nation. And it's really just a coincidence but he was in Haiti just this last weekend seeing if New York can help, and we do that for anybody around the world if we can give them advice and sometimes even more than that. But fortunately Ray was there and can give some firsthand information on what's going on before the tragedy.

"At City Hall, we are following the news from Haiti very closely, and we've already taken steps to assist in relief and recovery from this devastating tragedy which it now appears has at least spared Haiti 's neighbors on the island of Hispaniola , the people of the Dominican Republic . It would appear that all of the damage is much further to the west, on the southwest

coast of Haiti and did not yet do any damage over on the eastern end of the island which is where the D.R. is located.

"Of course many New Yorkers want to know what they can do as individuals to help and in such a catastrophic situation making donations of money really is the best response. Money going directly to relief organizations on the scene allows them to buy the supplies and equipment that address the most urgent needs. On the other hand, under circumstances as relief workers directly on the ground tell us, getting donated equipment and supplies for Haiti is just too difficult and time consuming to be helpful. The bottom line is there is not an infrastructure there to take anything physical and deliver it where it is needed. The magnitude of the problem is just much too great and too complex.

"So I urge New Yorkers to contribute generously to relief efforts to the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York. You can call 311. As of 11:00 AM we'd already received more than 12,000 such calls and the Mayor's Fund will direct contributions to well-established reputable organizations such as the American Red Cross that are working on the scene.

"You can ensure that your donations go where they will do the most good right away, and let me add that both our Office of Emergency Management and the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs have excellent contacts with non-governmental organizations working in Haiti today.

"We have spoken to the Department of Homeland Security and offered our assistance. We also have an urban search and rescue, or as we call it - U-S-A-R - USAR Team that is part of the federal emergency management agency's response network. It has 220 highly trained members of the FDNY and NYPD. A number of them, if you remember, were deployed most recently in our own Gulf Coast in 2008 to assist in recovery from Hurricanes Ike and Gustav. There's a rotation system for deploying these teams and as the President said today you saw teams from Florida, California and Virginia have been deployed to Haiti and we're waiting to hear if our team will be deployed, and we're ready to go when they give us and if they give the word.

"A number of engineers and building inspectors from our Department of Buildings have also indicated a willingness to go to the scene, however bear in mind that the immense scale of destruction in Haiti may delay slightly the dispatch of such volunteers. For them to work productively and safely there first has to be a structure in place to support them and it's likely to take some time to create such a structure. But rest assured that we are maintaining a list of those with the skills and willingness that the people of Haiti will need in the days and weeks to come. And we'll do everything we can as soon as we can to help the people of Haiti recover."