CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF HAITI: SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS

The Most Reverend Richard Smith, President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB), and its Vice President Archbishop Paul-André Durocher participated in a solidarity mission to Haiti, in collaboration with the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP), from 14-21 December 2011. They were accompanied on their solidarity visit by Development and Peace Executive Director Mr. Michael Casey, its Latin America and Caribbean Programs Officer Mr. Normand Comte, and its communications officer Mr. François Gloutnay, together with CCCB Assistant General Secretary Mr. Bede Hubbard. Daily CCCB reports as well as background information on the visit are available on the CCCB website in English (http://www.cccb.ca/site/eng/media-room/media-releases/solidarity-mission-to-haiti) and French (http://www.cccb.ca/site/frc/salle-de-presse/communiques/mission-de-solidarite-en-haiti). Development and Peace also has a daily blog on the visit with photos and other related information on its website (http://www.devp.org/), including a two-year progress report on its work in Haiti.

The solidarity mission was intended to 1) celebrate the long-standing relationship between the Church in Haiti and the Church in Canada; 2) deepen the relationship of the Bishops of Canada with the Bishops of Haiti; 3) see firsthand the reconstruction and emergency aid projects that are being assisted by CCODP because of the generous donations of Canadian Catholics; 4) recognize and encourage the dedicated work of Canadian religious and other Canadian volunteers in Haiti. A fifth objective became more evident during the visit: To celebrate the solidarity and achievements of Caritas Internationalis, the worldwide Catholic network which is involved in a $217 million reconstruction program including housing, health care, food security and disaster emergency preparations.[1] Development and Peace is the Canadian member of Caritas Internationalis; its two U.S. members are Catholic Relief Services and Catholic Charities USA. An extensive report and a photo gallery on Caritas projects in Haiti are available:

- in English, "Haiti two years after the earthquake"
http://caritas.org/activities/emergencies/HaitiTwoYearsIntro.html
Photo gallery: http://caritas.org/activities/emergencies/GalleryHaitiTwoYears.html

- in French, "Haïti, deux ans après le séisme"
http://caritas.org/activities/emergencies/HaitiTwoYearsIntro.html
Photo gallery: http://caritas.org/fractivities/emergencies/GalleryHaitiTwoYears.html

- in Spanish, "Haití, dos años después del terremoto"
http://caritas.org/esactivities/emergencias/HaitiTwoYearsIntro.html
Photo gallery: http://caritas.org/esactivities/emergencias/GalleryHaitiTwoYears.html

An underlying preoccupation for the observer mission was to help provide the Bishops and faithful of Canada with a clearer idea of reconstruction efforts in Haiti following the 12 January

[1] "Haïti : un an après le séisme : Que fait le réseau Caritas ?" {http://www.caritas-int.be/fr/aide-a-letranger/projets-par-pays-region/amerique-du-sud/haiti/2011-haiti-1-jaar-overzicht-van-ons-werk/haiti-1-jaar-caritas-netwerk.html}.

2010 earthquake, and greater insight into why reconstruction projects appear to be advancing so slowly. The visit demonstrated how imperative it also is to provide Canadians with a more comprehensive view of conditions in Haiti, before and after the earthquake, in order to appreciate the challenges and opportunities that face its people and the efforts needed for reconstructing the county and repairing its social fabric.

The solidarity visit to Haiti, as well as an earlier consultation during 2010 in Montreal organized by the Canadian Religious Conference with religious from Haiti, South America, United States and Canada,[2] underscored the following elements.[3] These are provided to encourage discussion and reflection among Canadian Catholics.

1. Pre-existing conditions

   a) Even before the earthquake, Haitian Bishops were urging their government to have a national plan for the development of the country.[4]
   b) Social scientists consider Haiti a "failed state". For political, economic and social reasons, it has been listed as such in the "alert" category of the U.S. think-tank Fund for Peace since it first began its rankings in 2005. Common indicators of a failed state are its "central government is so weak or ineffective that it has little practical control over much of its territory; non-provision of public services; widespread corruption and criminality; refugees and involuntary movement of populations; sharp economic decline."[5]
   c) Haiti is ranked as the most impoverished nation in the Western hemisphere. Its gross national income per capita is US$660, about half the total for Nicaragua, the second poorest country in the Americas. Seventy-eight percent of Haitians are considered "poor" (less than US$2 a day), and more than half (54%) live in extreme poverty (less than US$1 a day). Poverty and extreme poverty rates are estimated in rural areas to be 84% and 69%, respectively. Over two-thirds of the Haitian labor force do not have formal jobs.[6]
   d) The country has almost never had an effective democratic government. U.S. occupation from 1915 to 1934 was followed by several coups, and then almost 30 years of the Duvalier family dictatorship (1957-1986) which assailed human rights with impunity, imposed a form of arbitrary authoritarian order, and was unaccountable to the country's own laws. In its 200-year history, Haiti has seen 32 coups[7] and the ouster of its first democratically elected President, Mr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide. According to Haitians interviewed during the visit, only two Presidents since 1986 briefly succeeded in maintaining basic stability and order while also respecting human rights.

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[2] The CCCB, which was represented at this June 2010 meeting, subsequently confirmed it will work closely with the CRC and CCODP in sharing information and plans about reconstruction projects in Haiti.
[3] Sources of supplemental information identified after the solidarity visit are referenced throughout this document; other information not footnoted originates in interviews with Haitians as well as Church officials and NGO agencies in Haiti during the solidarity visit. The variety of sources consulted indicates a broad consensus on underlying issues, at the same as the often variant statistics indicate the limitations of statistical data available from Haiti.
[4] For example, see 4 January 2010 report, "Haïti – Développement – L'évêque des Cayes réclame un plan " {http://newsgroups.derkeiler.com/Archive/Soc/soc.culture.haiti/2010-01/msg00004.html}.
[5] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_Failed_States_Index#2006.
[6] http://www.haitipartners.org/stories-news/haiti-statistics/ .
[7] Michele Kelemen, "Haiti Starts Over, Once Again" {http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1741707&ps=rs}.

e) The weaknesses of Haiti's central and municipal governments are evident in their inability to collect taxes, operate a system of schooling accessible to all children, maintain adequate roads, provide public transportation, or even collect garbage. The limitations in infrastructure include major weakness in communications; for example, the country's national radio network is accessible principally in the Port-au-Prince region.
f) The Haitian government relies on formal international economic assistance for fiscal sustainability, with over half of its annual budget coming from outside sources.[8]
g) The City of Port-au-Prince was designed to meet the needs of around 300,000 people. When the earthquake struck on 12 January 2010, this metropolitan region was estimated to be home to nearly a quarter of the Haitian population, where two-thirds of the city's labor force had no formal jobs and overcrowding was considered a major contributor to the number of people killed in the earthquake.[9]
h) Port-au-Prince is not only the country's capital but its main seaport and its only international airport. The city is popularly referred to as the "Republic of Port-au-Prince". An estimated 80% of the national economy is centralized in its urban sprawl. Before and during the solidarity visit, a number of comments were made about the need for the country to decentralize. Since 1987 Haiti's Constitution has called for decentralization,[10] and Haiti's new President describes it as "a critical cornerstone supporting my vision for a new Haiti."[11]
i) Two-thirds of all Haitians depend on the agricultural sector, especially small-scale subsistence farming.[12]
j) Half of Haiti's children under five are malnourished. Over 7% of its children die at birth. For every 100,000 births, 523 women die in Haiti, compared to eight maternal deaths for every 100,000 births in Europe. Eighty out of 1,000 Haitian children never see their first birthday.[13]
k) Half the primary school-age children in Haiti are not enrolled in school. One-third of all Haitian girls over six never go to school. Approximately 30% of Haitian children in primary school will not make it to third grade, with 60% abandoning school before sixth grade.[14]
l) An estimated 80% of the most highly educated Haitians live outside Haiti.
m) The United Nations has had a peacekeeping operation in Haiti since 2004. MINUSTAH (Mission des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en Haïti / the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti) was established by the UN Security Council. It succeeds the Multinational Interim Force (MIF) which the Security Council had authorized earlier

[8] U.S. Central Intelligence Agency {https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ha.html}.
[9] "Haiti", *The New York Times*, 7 January 2012 {http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/haiti/index.html}.
[10] See Véronique Dorner, "La décentralisation en Haïti", *Bulletin de l'Association Euro-Africaine pour l'anthropologie du changement social et du développement*, 15, 1998 {http://apad.revues.org/565}.
[11] "A Quake-Scarred Nation Tries a Rural Road to Recovery", *The New York Times*, 24 December 2011 {http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/25/world/americas/in-countryside-stricken-haiti-seeks-both-food-and-rebirth.html?ref=haiti}.
[12] U.S. Central Intelligence Agency {https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ha.html}.
[13] http://www.haitipartners.org/stories-news/haiti-statistics/.
[14] http://www.haitipartners.org/stories-news/haiti-statistics/.

that year after former Haitian President Mr. Bertrand Aristide left the country in exile following an armed conflict that had spread to several cities.[15]

2. Impact of 12 January 2010 earthquake

   a) The earthquake that struck Haiti on 12 January 2010 reduced much of Port-au-Prince to rubble. The Inter-American Development Bank has estimated that the total cost of the disaster was between $8 billion and $14 billion, based on a death toll from 200,000 to 250,000. That number was revised in 2011 by Haiti's government to 316,000; the government has never explained how it arrived at its death toll figures.[16] In addition, other areas were also severely affected, including the city of Jacmel.
   b) An estimated 1.1 million people were displaced and left homeless. More than 600,000 still live in displacement camps.[17]
   c) The immediate challenges for survivors were to secure emergency shelter, blankets, tents, clothing, food, lamps and batteries, as well as counseling, and to avoid the spread of disease from unburied corpses.[18] International assistance had to focus first on reopening the airport and ocean port in Port-au-Prince in order to bring in clean drinking water, food, emergency shelter and other urgently needed help.
   d) It took one month to make the main streets of Port-au-Prince passable and to re-establish banking and other financial operations.
   e) The number of tons of rubble removed from Port-au-Prince over the past two years is a world record compared to previous efforts following major earthquakes in other countries.
   f) International donors promised Haiti $5.3 billion in aid after the earthquake, although according to the United Nations only 43% of the amount promised has been received and delivered so far.[19]
   g) Two years after the earthquake, the reconstruction of buildings and roads has barely begun.[20]

3. Challenges compounded

   a) The earthquake effectively suspended most government operations. The presidential palace was among the many principal buildings destroyed, including most government offices.
   b) Although much of the rubble has been cleared two years after the earthquake, it took one year to clear the first 5%.[21]

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[15] MINUSTAH / Mission des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en Haïti {http://www.un.org/fr/peacekeeping/missions/minustah/}
[16] "Haiti", *The New York Times*, 7 January 2012.
[17] http://www.spiritains.qc.ca/146/Reconstruction_decevante_deux_ans_apres_le_seisme.htm?id_article=5040.
[18] " Caritas Haïti : < Le pire désastre vécu par le pays > », Zenit, 15 January 2010 {http://www.zenit.org/article-23219?l=french}.
[19] "Haiti", *The New York Times*, 7 January 2012.
[20] *The New York Times*, 4 January 2012. {http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/haiti/index.html}.
[21] "The Big Picture" {http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2011/01/haiti_one_year_later.html}.

c) A number of Catholic institutions and agencies experienced major damage, including offices, parish and mission churches, schools, orphanages, and residences for religious. The Port-au-Prince Cathedral and major parts of the archdiocesan offices were devastated. Other major Church offices destroyed include those of the Haitian Conference of Bishops, the Haitian Religious Conference, and Caritas Haiti, as well as the Port-au-Prince major seminary.
d) In addition to the deaths of local community leaders, including the Most Reverend Joseph Serge Miot, the then Archbishop of Port-au-Prince, the surviving community organizers not only had to face the challenges of organizing emergency assistance in the midst of the surrounding chaos but also personal trauma, severe exhaustion and burnout.
e) In October of the same year that the earthquake struck, there was an outbreak of cholera in Haiti, to date infecting 520,000 people and killing 7,000. One of the worst cholera epidemics in modern history, it has been blamed on members of the United Nations peacekeeping operation.[22] Ongoing efforts to assist the ill and end the epidemic mean that national and international agencies have been diverted from reconstruction.
f) In November 2010 the problems were further complicated by the damage from Hurricane Tomas which caused major flooding in parts of Haiti.
g) Even before the emergency efforts needed after the earthquake, cholera outbreak and hurricane damage, Haiti had already become dependent on imported food. Some observers say 80% of food in Haiti is imported (including most of the chicken and rice which come from the United States); the Haitian government says 52% of food is imported, compared with only 20% just a few decades ago.[23]
h) Reconstruction projects require the importation of cement, concrete building blocks and even sand (Haiti's mountains are composed principally of limestone, so large quantities of construction sand must be purchased and shipped into the country).
i) The difficulties are further compounded by the lack of infrastructure and high costs, as well as problems in money supply and exchange rates.
j) In addition to the loss of property records and other documents in the earthquake, reconstruction has been made all the more difficult because of a poor system of land registration and property transfers.
k) Many non-government organizations and development agencies wanting to bring aid following the 2010 earthquake had to wait up to a year for the necessary Haitian authorizations.
l) The presence of so many international peacekeepers and international non-government organizations has meant a rise in living and housing costs for all Haitians; reconstruction has meant a major increase in the costs of construction supplies.

4. <u>Lack of comprehensive planning</u>

a) Following the first anniversary of the earthquake, the U.K. charity Oxfam criticized reconstruction efforts. It said that the 2010 rebuilding period had been a "year of indecision," marred by an immobile Haitian government and a patchwork of non-

[22] "Choléra en Haïti: 7000 morts, 520 000 cas", Agence France Presse, 6 janvier 2012 {http://www.cyberpresse.ca/international/amerique-latine/201201/06/01-4483460-cholera-en-haiti-7000-morts-520-000-cas.php}.
[23] "A Quake-Scarred Nation Tries a Rural Road to Recovery", *The New York Times*, 24 December 2011.

governmental and government aid organizations operating according to their own individual agendas.[24]

b) Although Haitian Church authorities, religious communities and development agencies admit it is vital to move at least some Church offices outside the present urban boundaries of Port-au-Prince, in order to lessen the potential impact of future major emergencies in the metropolitan region, there does not appear to be any consensus or plan on whether or how this should be done.

c) Any decentralization of Church structures, including planning for the reconstruction of parish and mission churches, also depends on regional and urban planning decisions by Haitian government and municipal authorities. Government planning has been required by the Haitian Constitution since 1957, although the department responsible was on "stand-by" after 1986.[25]

d) At least some future reconstruction efforts appear to involve new housing developments that will be adjacent to the present urban boundaries of Port-au-Prince. Similarly, consideration is being given to developing new university facilities on the outskirts of what is presently Port-au-Prince, which could include the new major seminary. These plans and proposals will also be affected by any future national and municipal planning decisions.

e) Whatever the reconstruction plans and projects initiated by Caritas Internationalis, the Apostolic Nuncio to Haiti, or individual Haitian dioceses and religious communities, there is need for a coordinated approach which at some point needs to involve the Haitian Conference of Bishops, the Haitian Religious Conference and Caritas Haiti. This coordination has been hampered by their offices having been destroyed in the earthquake.

f) The Episcopal Council of Latin America (CELAM), the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the CCCB, as well as a number of European Episcopal Conferences and dioceses, are prepared to assist financially in the reconstruction of the Church in Haiti. Following a 2010 meeting in Miami, the Bishops of Haiti announced a reconstruction initiative known as PROCHE (Proximité catholique avec Haïti et son Église / Partnership for Reconstruction of the Church in Haiti).[26] However, it has been hampered by having lost two successive senior managers, nor is it yet clear how the Haitian Conference of Bishops, CELAM, the USCCB and the CCCB will go about implementing this initiative, although the USCCB has indicated its contributions for Haitian reconstruction will be channeled through PROCHE.[27]

g) Any plans for ecclesial reconstruction depend to some degree on the Haitian government's own national reconstruction plan. This has involved delays because the Haitian general election, originally scheduled for 28 February 2010, had to be postponed

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[24] Nathanial Gronewold, "Earthquake-Relief Officials in Haiti Hoping 2011 Brings Better Results," *The New York Times*, 13 January 2011 {http://www.nytimes.com/gwire/2011/01/13/13greenwire-earthquake-relief-officials-in-haiti-hoping-20-65989.html?pagewanted=all}.

[25] Ministère de la planification et de la coopération externe, "Historique" {http://www.mpce.gouv.ht/}.

[26] See: "Haïti - PROCHE : l'AED s'associe" {http://paroissedubonpasteur.over-blog.com/article-haiti-proche-l-aed-s-associe-64912604.html}; "PROCHE – CEH: Rebuilding Haiti" {https://sites.google.com/a/proche-ceh.org/www/}; and "An Update on Church Reconstruction in Haiti" by Father Andrew Small, O.M.I., Church in Latin America, Office of National Collections, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops {http://uspartners.crs.org/haiti-resources/church-reconstruction-in-haiti.pdf}.

[27] "Les évêques américains approuvent des financements en vue de la reconstruction d'Haïti et dans le cadre de 174 projets de solidarité en Amérique latine", Agenzia Fides, 23 novembre 2011 {http://www.fides.org/aree/news/newsdet.php?idnews=31712&lan=fra}.

to 28 November because of the earthquake.[28] Ten senators and all 99 deputies were to be elected; in addition there was a presidential election also in November. The current President, Mr. Michel Martelly, only took office on 14 May 2011, following a run-off election in March. His first two nominees for Prime Minister were subsequently rejected, the first by the chamber of deputies, the second by the senate.

h) At the inauguration of Mr. Martelly as President of the Republic of Haiti, the Most Reverend Louis Kébreau, Archbishop of Cap-Haïtian and then President of the Haitian Conference of Bishops, called for a national dialogue in order to establish a national plan for lasting development, reconciliation, a code of political ethics, and a pact for governing the country.[29]

i) Although Mr. Martelly's presidential election campaigns had very much focused on education, media since then have highlighted two other major policy announcements, both of which are being criticized: to maintain the United Nations peacekeeping operation in Haiti and to re-commission the Haitian army.[30]

j) The *Commission intérimaire pour la reconstruction d'Haïti* (Interim Haiti Recovery Commission), co-chaired by then Haitian Prime Minister Jean Max Bellerive and former US President Bill Clinton, had been established in April 2010 "to seek the coordinated, effective and efficient planning and implementation of priorities, plans and projects in support of Haiti's recovery and development in the wake of the 12 January 2010 earthquake". Although Mr. Martelly had proposed in July 2011that the mandate of the Commission be extended another 12 months, its work has since been suspended.[31]

k) Among the major proposals identified by the Haiti Recovery Commission were the renewal of agriculture, including use of genetically modified seeds; the development of tourism; and the introduction of new manufacturing zones, including new factories and a South Korean-run industrial park, partly financed by the United States. In December 2011, the World Bank approved $50 million for agriculture projects. However, there does not yet appear to be extensive popular support for the proposals by the Recovery Commission. Many Haitians recall that tourism facilities during the Duvalier regimes catered to the very rich, and that industrial zones in the past provided low-paying jobs with few benefits or protections for employees. As well, recent protests in Haiti by its subsistence farmers have seriously challenged President Martelly on any plan to introduce genetically modified seeds.

l) In his first news conference on 6 January 2012 after having been named Prime Minister this past October, Mr. Garry Conille admitted that the major challenge facing his government is to define and implement a common agenda for Haiti.[32]

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[28] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haitian_general_election,_2010%E2%80%932011.

[29] http://www.haitielections2010.com/details.php?id=608.

[30] "Discours de Martelly à l'ONU", *Le Nouvelliste*, 23 septembre 2011 {http://www.lenouvelliste.com/article.php?PubID=1&ArticleID=97551&PubDate=2011-09-23#Suite »; "Martelly célèbre l'indépendance en promettant l'armée", *Le Matin*, 9 janvier 2012 {http://www.lematinhaiti.com/contenu.php?idtexte=28175}.

[31] Commission intérimaire pour la reconstruction d'Haïti {http://www.cirh.ht/}.

[32] "2012 : Une année de défis et d'opportunités pour Haïti, escompte le gouvernement Conille", Alter Presse, 9 janvier 2012 {http://www.alterpresse.org/spip.php?article12166}.

5. Reasons for hope

a) Haitians are proud of their resolve and independence. They were the world's first self-declared Black state in 1796, and the Western hemisphere's second independent republic in 1804. The first sovereign state at the time to recognize Haiti was the Holy See.
b) In the 18th century, Haiti produced more than half of all the coffee in the world and 40% of the sugar consumed in France and Britain. At the time Haiti accounted for 40% of France's foreign trade when the latter was the dominant European economy.[33]
c) In the 19th century, Haiti was self-sufficient in food production and economically stable.[34]
d) In the earlier 20th century, Haiti was a popular tourism site, and had a system of education capable of producing many doctors who staffed the U.S. hospitals then segregated for Afro-Americans.
e) The generous work of religious communities from Canada and elsewhere in the world continues to bear fruit in Haiti, not only in terms of the work accomplished at the time, but in the continued acknowledgement of their dedication, teaching and witness.
f) Haiti today is blessed with a number of its own religious communities which are recognized for their dynamic contributions to the life of the Church and society.
g) Despite the chaos and challenges following the January 2010 earthquake and the cholera epidemic which has challenged the country since November of the same year, and notwithstanding a long troubled history of political coups and violence, Haiti had relatively untroubled national elections in November 2010, a successful presidential runoff election in March 2011, and a peaceful transition to a new government.
h) National and international relief efforts succeeded in avoiding any mass starvation following the 2010 earthquake.
i) The earthquake was followed by an outpouring of national coherence, with only a few social clashes, as well as a swell of international solidarity and concern.
j) Although 600,000 people remain in temporary shelters because of the earthquake, half a million Haitians have been relocated in two years.
k) In view of successful pilot housing and community development projects, Caritas partners including Development and Peace, as well as other international aid efforts, are in the process of planning major housing and community projects.
l) Haiti has many small but strong and vibrant community organizations, with members dedicated to a vision of reconstructing not only their local community but the nation itself.
m) The majority of these community organizations have a close relationship with the Church, either directly or indirectly.
n) With assistance and encouragement from outside agencies, there are numerous successful local community projects at work in Haiti, focusing on education, the involvement of women, food autonomy, reforestation, water conservation, emergency disaster planning, health care and hygiene, as well as micro-credit and redeployment of the local workforce.

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[33] San José State University, Department of Economics, "Political and economic history of Haiti" {http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/watkins/haiti.htm}.
[34] Laurent Dubois and Deborah Jenson, "Haiti Can Be Rich Again", *The New York Times*, 8 January 2012 {http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/09/opinion/haiti-can-be-rich-again.html?_r=1&ref=Haiti}.

o) The work of Development and Peace is widely recognized and respected in Haiti not only by Haitian community agencies but also by Haitian Church authorities, the Canadian Embassy, and the Canadian International Development Agency.
p) No Haitian Bishop or representative of a Haitian Church agency during the December 2011 solidarity visit raised any question or doubt about the partners and programs in which Development and Peace is involved.
q) Development and Peace has successfully tested and implemented a threefold development strategy that integrates emergency aid and reconstruction.
r) Development and Peace has earned a reputation in Haiti for its sense of partnership, respect for the capacity of the local community, and insistence on a sustainable, long-term approach to projects.
s) There is growing appreciation among other non-government organizations and development agencies for the Development and Peace option of small projects with local partners and avoiding macro-projects with risks of creating a sense of dependency and entitlement.
t) Rural projects being assisted by Development and Peace demonstrate that food security, land reutilization and recovery, reforestation and the revitalization of small-scale agricultural projects can be viable and successful.

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
12 January 2012