

NAACP continues historic association with Haiti

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(Port-au Prince, Haiti) - Last week, a NAACP delegation led by Roslyn M. Brock, Chairman of the NAACP National Board of Directors, met with Haitian President Michel Martelly to discuss key civil rights issues including education, health care, and economic sustainability.

The NAACP's delegation which included Dr. David Emmanuel Goatley, Chair NAACP International Affairs Committee; Kamilia Landrum, Youth Representative, NAACP National Board of Directors, NAACP Chief Operating Officer & Chief of Staff Roger C. Vann and leaders from partner organization the Haitian Congress to Fortify Haiti, were also joined in the meeting by Haitian cabinet members, including Paul Altidor, Haitian Ambassador to the United States and Bernice Fidélia, Minister of Haitians Living Abroad (MHAVE). Sophia Martelly, Haiti's first lady also participated in the meeting.

"This visit is an important step toward enhancing and expanding the long-standing relationship between the NAACP and our brothers and sisters in Haiti," stated Brock. "The NAACP has a rich history and association with Haiti. W.E.B. Du Bois, one of the Association's founders was Haitian American. In 1920, the NAACP sent James Weldon Johnson on a fact finding trip to

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Haiti in response to reports of the mistreatment of Haitians and suppression of self rule during the war years. Following his 1920 visit to Haiti, James Weldon Johnson published a series of articles recounting the adverse impact of US occupation of Haiti. The NAACP's efforts contributed to the evacuation of troops from Haiti.

"The work of the NAACP has a beacon of hope for many people in many countries around the world. Haiti is no exception," stated Dr. David Emmanuel Goatley. "During our visit, we heard frequently how the NAACP has offered inspiration and instruction globally for those who are committed to human rights and social justice. By deploying this delegation, the NAACP continues a journey for partnership with our Haitian siblings as they seek a safe, strong, and secure future."

The delegation also met with Simon Dieuseul Desras, President of the Senate.

During their visit, delegation members traveled through Port-au Prince to view the progress of NAACP-funded humanitarian efforts after the 2010 Earthquake that killed an estimated 220,000 people and displaced millions.

The group visited the Santo community – a Habitat for Humanity project that received a \$50,000 grant from the NAACP. The NAACP funded three additional civil society projects, including an orphanage. A criterion for the project grantees was Haitian leadership. Overall, the NAACP donated \$200K to Haitian civil society projects.

"We must continue to work together with our partners in organizations like the Haitian Congress to Fortify Haiti to ensure that the people of Haiti not only survive this tragic natural disaster but begin to thrive" stated Brock.

"Advancing quality public education is a top priority for the NAACP," stated Kamilia Landrum, who sits on the Board's Youth Work Committee. "it is important that we look into how we can advocate for the Haitian students to get the best education possible."

The Association will use the information gleaned from government officials, civil society leaders and partners to discern how to advocate for some of the issues affecting this embattled nation—including our strategic game changers of economic justice, education, health, civic engagement and criminal justice.