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- [A Month After the Earthquake: Opportunities Slipping Away](#) by Anita Chandra, 25 Feb 2010 -- "By Agnes Gereben Schaefer and Anita Chandra Previous efforts by the international community to stabilize Haiti have met with little or only short-term success. This time, following the earthquake, the U.S. response could actually leverage the response and recovery opportunities into a broader international plan not only to stabilize Haiti, but to expand Haitian state capacity and ensure greater resilience to future disasters. ..."
- [Alternative Views on Climate Change](#) by Council on Foreign Relations, 24 Feb 2010 -- "Many lawmakers, policymakers, and heads of major corporations worldwide have expressed a willingness to address climate change. They believe the scientific evidence is clear enough to warrant action. ..."
- [Mending Mexico](#) by Ed Corcoran, 19 Feb 2010 -- "Mexico's problems are partly a result of its own policies and partly are a symptom of US problems. A core problem is the concentration of wealth in the hands of the political elite and widespread poverty among the indigenous population. ..."
- [Planning for the Future? Examining the Pentagon's 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review](#) by Mackenzie Eaglen, 17 Feb 2010 --

"The Pentagon's long-awaited Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) is out. By law, the major defense strategy must look forward 20 years and delineate how the U.S. will structure its armed forces. ..."

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## HAITI IN BRIEF

### Help the Victims

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### A Dozen Challenges to "Reconstruction"

1. **Political Instability** Haiti has never developed a civic culture -- widespread acceptance of the rule of law and institutions strong enough to enforce laws and legal decisions -- to replace the exercise of violence as a means to political power.
2. **Haitian National Police Forces** The 8,500 member Haitian National Police (HNP) has sole responsibility for law enforcement and maintenance of order; there are no military forces. The UN estimated that the country needs a force of at least 14,000 police.
3. **Corruption** Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index for 2008 ranked Haiti the fourth most corrupt country in the world.
4. **Drugs** Haiti is among the four most important countries for drug transit to the United States.
5. **Infrastructure** Public and community infrastructures have reached a critical stage of decay. Many of the regions that were previously accessible by road from the capital are now outside the national road system.
6. **Poverty** Most Haitians do not have formal jobs. Unemployment and underemployment are rampant. Some estimates suggest that two-thirds of the country's 3.6 million workers are without consistent work.
7. **Foreign Economic Relations** The World

Economic Forum ranked Haiti last in its 2003 Global Competitiveness Report. Thus, Haiti's role in the global economy often has been confined to receiving foreign aid.

8. **Environment** Haiti faces a severe deforestation problem. For all practical purposes, forest resources have been depleted.
9. **Health** Deficient sanitation systems, poor nutrition, and inadequate health services have pushed Haiti to the bottom of the World Bank's rankings of health indicators. Haiti has the highest incidence of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) outside of Africa.
10. **Language** Nine of every ten Haitians speak only Kreyòl Ayisyen [Haitian Creole]. And only about one in twenty was fluent in both French and Creole. Although the majority of Creole words have French origins, the two languages are not mutually comprehensible.
11. **Voodoo** Recent estimates indicate that half of the population practices Vodou, most along with other religious practices.
12. **Zombies** Ancestral spirits are collectively referred to as zombies. Dead children are especially liable to return to haunt the mother, who will awake some night to find them sitting upon the foot of their bed.

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