

As you rightly point out, funding to address the many pressing needs of Haiti is far from sufficient. Moreover, as Haiti enters the hurricane season, when cholera infection rates can be expected to rise, I am concerned that the austere fiscal climate affecting Member States could make it difficult to obtain new financial commitments for addressing cholera in Haiti.

I am working closely with Dr. Farmer to raise awareness and engage with donors. I have also asked United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to make fundraising for the elimination of cholera a top priority as they reach out to Member States bilaterally and to other private funders. In addition, at a recent meeting with some of the world's leading philanthropists and supporters of United Nations causes, I made a special appeal for support to underwrite the cost of the oral cholera vaccine in Haiti.

While the work of the United Nations over the past three years has focused on treatment and prevention, a Boston-based non-governmental organization has led an effort to claim compensation on behalf of certain Haitian cholera victims. The claim was considered by my Legal Counsel and, after careful deliberation, claimants were informed that the claim is not receivable pursuant to Section 29 of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations of 1946.

I would like to assure you that the legal decision does not in any way diminish my personal commitment, and that of the United Nations, to do all we can to help the people of Haiti overcome the cholera epidemic. Achieving this goal will not be easy, but it is possible.

In my visits to the country, I have been struck by the promise and potential of the Haitian people. They have endured much difficulty, but I am convinced that by joining forces we can help them build a new and better future for their great country. I look forward to working with friends of Haiti such as yourself to make that happen.

A similar letter has been sent to the other co-signatories.

Yours sincerely,

BANKi-moon