

Africa Mulls Resettling Haitians

By [Global Research](#)

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The African Union has agreed to consider a proposal to resettle thousands of Haitians left homeless by a 7.0 magnitude earthquake, and possibly create a state for them in Africa.

The idea was suggested by Abdoulaye Wade, the Senegalese president, who said that the history of Haitians as descendants of African slaves gave them the right to a new life on the continent.

Jean Ping, the African Union (AU) chairman, told African leaders at the body's annual summit that it would discuss the proposal during the three-day event in Addis Ababa, in Ethiopia.

"It is out of a sense of duty and memory and solidarity that we can further the proposal to create in Africa the conditions for the return of Haitians who wish to return after the effect of the disaster that ravaged Haiti," Ping said.

"What happened to Haiti is a tragedy that transcends borders. We have attachment and links to that country.

"The first black republic in 1804, that carried high the flame of liberation and freedom for the black people and has paid a heavy price for so doing".

'Naturalisation' proposed

Wade said Senegal and other African states should naturalise any Haitians who sought new nationality following the quake, which is thought to have killed about 170,000 people and left one million homeless.

He also called for a mass adoption programme across the continent for children who had been made orphans in the wake of the January 12 disaster.

The idea for a new state is reminiscent of the 19th century creation of the West African state of Liberia for freed US slaves.

The AU commission has already opened a special account for Haiti at the African Development Bank.

Attending the summit in Addis Ababa, Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations secretary-general, thanked the regional body "for reaching out to Haiti in this time of need".

“The nation of Haiti is an ocean away, yet I know it is close to every African heart,” he said.

“Today the Haitian people are enduring one of the greatest humanitarian challenges in recent years and loss of life on an unimaginable scale.”

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