

Buddhist leader Thich Quang Do calls on Buddhists to aid earthquake victims in Haiti

PARIS, 16 January 2010 (IBIB) - The Patriarch of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UBCV) **Thich Quang Do** has launched an appeal to Vietnamese Buddhists worldwide to support relief efforts for victims of the devastating earthquake in Haiti. The appeal was sent from the Thanh Minh Zen Monastery in Saigon, where the 81-year old UBCV leader and prominent dissident is under effective house arrest, and received by the International Buddhist Information Bureau today.

“The sufferings of our own people in Vietnam binds us in solidarity with the people of Haiti who face suffering of unbearable proportions today”, he wrote, noting that almost 100,000 people have died and three million been hurt or left homeless in the 7.0-magnitude earthquake that rocked Haiti, one of the world’s poorest nations on 12 January 2010.

“Buddhist sutras teach: all those who join Lord Buddha’s family embrace all sentient beings as brothers and pledge to save them from suffering”. He appealed to Buddhists monks, nuns, lay-followers and sections of the UBCV all over the world amongst the 4 million-strong Vietnamese Diaspora to *“open your compassionate hearts and do your utmost to support the people of Haiti in this terrible tragedy”.*

“Saving people is like extinguishing a raging fire. There is no time to waste. This is the moment for all Buddhists to put into action Lord Buddha’s teachings of compassion and salvation”.

Thich Quang Do urged Buddhists to coordinate their efforts by sending funds to Red Cross Committees in their different countries to ensure the efficient collecting and distribution of aid.