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**AFRICAN-AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSION COLLABORATION
PLEDGES \$50 MILLION TO HELP REBUILD HAITI**

Five major African-American Baptist organizations pledge
\$50 million in life-sustaining services and facilities to help
Haiti and earthquake survivors

Chicago – (March 2, 2010) The African-American Baptist Mission Collaboration (AABMC) today unveiled plans for a massive \$50 million project to help rebuild Haiti and provide aid to Haitian earthquake survivors. At a press conference held at New Covenant Baptist Church in Chicago, organization leaders said the money will be raised largely through church donations.

The Collaboration includes five of America's largest, historic African-American Baptist organizations, representing more than 40,000 church congregations and 10 million Christians nationwide. They are: Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention; National Baptist Convention, USA; National Missionary Baptist Convention of America; National Baptist Convention of America, and the Progressive National Baptist Convention. This is the first time the organizations have come together for a united effort.

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Invests \$50 Million in Haiti
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The Collaboration will provide assistance that includes plans for:

- Five health care clinics to provide restorative health services and wellness
- 50 schools with enhanced learning environments
- 500 reconstructed churches to serve as center points for community empowerment
- 5,000 homes to house victims left homeless following the earthquake

“The images coming from Haiti are devastating,” said Dr. T. DeWitt Smith, Jr., president of the Progressive National Baptist Convention. “Our vision for Haiti, however, is not limited to the images we’ve seen. We will work with Haitian partners to rebuild strong homes, churches, schools and clinics.”

The AABMC has also begun providing:

- Weekly deployment of medical professionals to provide critical medical services and care
- A daily feeding program that provides 300 meals per day at First Baptist Church in Petionville, located near Port-au-Prince
- A daily feeding program providing 150 meals every day for earthquake survivor patients at Saint-Marc hospitals

Other significant components include providing water, energy supplies, cash grants and groceries to families and individuals in need. In February, 1,000 families who lost homes in Legoane (near the earthquake’s epicenter) and communities to the west of Port-au-Prince received a total of \$30,000 in cash and grocery grants.

“Providing immediate response to immediate needs has been critical,” said Dr. Stephen John Thurston, president of the National Baptist Convention of America and senior pastor of the New Covenant Baptist Church. “Having existing working relationships with established churches in the country enabled us to move swiftly to provide food, water, temporary shelter and pastoral care. This is reminiscent of the immediate support that churches gave to people in our own country in the aftermath of hurricane Katrina in 2005.”

AABMC also is developing a volunteer management program to assist the more than 10 million AABMC church members across America who may want to help

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by donating their personal time. The program will operate via online application, providing volunteer service opportunities that match interests to needs. The volunteer program will include scheduling service assignments in Haiti for the next several months.

“We realize that members of our churches across America are deeply affected by the damage that this earthquake has wreaked on families and individuals in Haiti,” said Dr. Julius R. Scruggs, president of the National Baptist Convention, USA, whose convention launched an online volunteer recruitment platform days after the January 12 earthquake. “This is a way that our members can give of their personal time and resources to help our brothers and sisters recover in Haiti,” he said.

It is estimated that more than one million children in Haiti are now orphans because of the earthquake. AABMC is rising to this challenge by establishing an orphanage partnership program. Under this program, AABMC will connect its member churches and social organizations with orphanages in Haiti to ensure that Haitian orphans are properly cared for and nurtured.

“African-American Baptists know what it means to support one another through devastation,” said Dr. David Emmanuel Goatley, executive secretary-treasurer of Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention and the coordinator for the African American Baptist Mission Collaboration. “We know what it means to care for children through extended families. We are committed to work on behalf of those who are most vulnerable in the aftermath of this tragedy and to labor to help children know safety, security, and nurturing care.”

For additional information on the AABMC Haitian development project, or for more information on how to contribute to AABMC on behalf of Haiti, please contact AABMC at 202.543.3200, or lottcarey@lottcarey.org.

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The African-American Baptist Mission Collaboration was formed in February 2010 and consists of five historic African-American Baptist communities – Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention; National Baptist Convention, USA; National Missionary Baptist Convention of America; National Baptist Convention of America, and the Progressive National Baptist Convention. These five Baptist communities represent more than 40,000 Baptist churches across America, and more than 10 million Christians nationwide. The purpose of the African-American Baptist Mission Collaboration is to help rebuild and revitalize Haiti in the wake of the devastating earthquake that occurred in January, 2010. For more information on the African-American Baptist Mission Collaboration, or to learn how to donate to AABMC to help rebuild Haiti, call 202.543.3200 or email lottcarey@lottcarey.org.