

# World Bank Vice President Visits Haiti

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**PORT-AU-PRINCE**, March 8, 2005 — World Bank Vice President for the Latin America and Caribbean Region, Pamela Cox, traveled to Haiti this week to meet with Government officials and open a new World Bank office in Port au Prince.

*"The Bank is committed to supporting the transition to social and economic stability and to laying the groundwork to promote inclusive growth and poverty reduction over the long term,"* said Pamela Cox at a joint press conference with Prime Minister Gerard Latortue. *"We are working to support the government's efforts to deliver hope to the population and restore credibility in public institutions while also paving the way for working with the new government that will emerge from the elections at the end of the year."*

During her visit, the Vice President met with Haitian President Boniface Alexander and Prime Minister Gerard Latortue and his cabinet to discuss the Bank's programs and exchange views on the country's economic development challenges.

*"We very much welcome the first visit of a Vice President of the World Bank to Haiti in ten years, the resumed cooperation and the opening of their new office in Port-au-Prince,"* said Prime Minister Gérard Latortue. *« It reflects the institution's shared objectives with the Transitional Government of restoring social and economic stability and working toward a smooth transition with the government that will be democratically elected."*

On Monday, March 7, the Vice President inaugurated the new Bank office with government officials, donors and civil society representatives, sealing the Bank's reengagement in the country. The Bank had reduced its presence in Haiti in 2001 and maintained a liaison office until now.

The Bank's Board approved a two-year Transitional Support Strategy for Haiti on January 6, 2005, along with two operations for US\$73 million to support economic governance reforms and emergency recovery efforts in flood-affected areas. The two operations, financed by the International Development Association (IDA), are the first approved by the Bank for the Government of Haiti since 1996.

The Bank is providing a total of US\$75 million in financing from IDA this fiscal year, of which US\$38 million will be provided in the form of grants. The Bank has disbursed US\$50 million from IDA and from the Low-Income Countries Under Stress (LICUS) Trust Fund. In addition, the Bank expects to be able to provide 100 percent of its IDA assistance on grant terms for investment projects in World Bank fiscal year 2006.

The Bank's Transitional Support Strategy is built on two pillars: one is to help the government deliver hope to the population through quick wins—in the provision of basic services and job creation; and the second is to restore credibility in public institutions by helping the government launch reforms that promote sound economic governance and institutional development.

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*For more information about the World Bank's program in Haiti, please visit:*

<http://www.worldbank.org/ht>