

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER MICHAEL J. COPPS
ON HAITI ASSISTANCE EFFORTS
January 20, 2010**

What can we say? Actions are all that are eloquent here, and the wrenching images coming out of Haiti move us all to action. I do want to commend the Chairman for an excellent job in mobilizing our resources—namely, our skilled and dedicated FCC Team—and assigning it to work in collaboration with our federal partners, with the communications industry and with our counterpart in Haiti, Conatel. Our own experience in this country showed us all how critical communications are in responding to and recovering from a disaster—communications to connect emergency responders and relief agencies and to re-connect families. More than four years ago, I saw first-hand the impact that Hurricane Katrina had on the communications infrastructure along the Gulf Coast—and the reports of damage from last Tuesday's earthquake demonstrate that this is an event where the damage is—hard to believe—magnitudes greater. We can't even imagine yet the extent of the work that will need to be done to restore communications to Haiti—indeed, to restore the country of Haiti.

I want to join in publicly thanking our FCC staff for the tireless efforts they are making to respond to the Haiti disaster. The around-the-clock work of Mindel Dellatorre, Admiral Jamie Barnett and all of the bureaus that have been involved here, and the whole intra- and inter-agency effort that is working so hard to bring aid and assistance to Haiti, are making a difference already. And it's inspirational, too.

I want particularly to recognize and thank five very important FCC staff members:

- Allan Manuel—who has been detailed to work with the USAID lead for communications;
- Anthony Burgos—who has been deployed to the U.S. Southern Command in support of USAID; and
- Richard Lee, Juan Silva and Joe Husnay—all of whom are on the ground in Haiti right now, in considerably less than minimal conditions, to do what they can to help.

I thank them and their families for the personal sacrifices they are making to help the good people of Haiti in their hour of maximum need. These FCC Team members do themselves proud and they do us proud, and we wish them success in their dedicated work and a safe return home.