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Enterprise**



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CIPE OPENS FIELD OFFICE IN HAITI

WASHINGTON, DC -- The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) has officially opened a field office in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The field office represents a significant commitment by CIPE to strengthen the Haitian private sector's role in building democracy and develop more effective business associations throughout the country.

At the launch ceremony held on December 19, Haitian Minister of Trade and Industry Ms. Maguy Durce welcomed CIPE's presence in Haiti. "On behalf of the government of Haiti," she stated, "I applaud CIPE's willingness to build stronger business associations and contribute to the economic development of Haiti." U.S. Ambassador to Haiti Ms. Janet Anderson also attended the event.

CIPE Haiti will focus on two major projects. The first, funded by the National Endowment for Democracy, will provide association managers and board members with training to bolster services, increase membership, and elevate the role that business associations play in supporting Haitian democracy and market reforms.

A second project, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), will provide Haiti's business associations with direct technical assistance to improve their operations and membership development. The USAID project will also include a competitive small grants program, providing seed capital to assist associations in implementing new programs.

To accomplish this, CIPE will work directly with the country's foremost business associations, including the Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Association of Industries, and the Haitian-American Chamber of Commerce. CIPE also expects to work with trade associations representing developing sectors such as banking, communications, and insurance.

CIPE Chief of Party for Haiti Roy Badaro will head the office, which is CIPE's first in Latin America and the Caribbean. He brings considerable experience from working with business associations and the private sector to rebuild democratic and economic institutions in Iraq and Lebanon. A Lebanese national, Mr. Badaro is a co-founder of the Lebanese Businessmen's Association. He also served as chairman of the Trade Commission of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce in Lebanon and represented the Lebanese private sector in the working groups leading to Lebanon's accession to the World Trade Organization.

Asked about the impact the new field office will have in the country, Badaro observed, "Our presence will be an important component in strengthening democratic governance and facilitating market reform in Haiti."

The Center for International Private Enterprise is a non-profit affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and one of the four core institutes of the National Endowment for Democracy. CIPE has supported more than 1000 local initiatives in over 100 developing countries, involving the private sector in policy advocacy and institutional reform, improving governance and building understanding of market-based democratic systems. CIPE provides management assistance, practical experience and financial support to local organizations to strengthen their capacity to implement democratic and economic reforms. CIPE programs are also supported through the United States Agency for International Development.

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