

My thoughts and prayers are with all those whose lives have been touched by this terrible tragedy—those who have died, those who have been injured, and those who cannot yet get in touch with their loved ones.

I know my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join me in pledging steadfast support for the people of Haiti in this time of crisis.

Haiti is one of the poorest nations on Earth, so this earthquake only compounds the challenges its people continue to face every day.

There are shocking disparities between Haiti and all other nations within the Western Hemisphere, and this tragedy has only widened the gap and exposed these disparities for all to see.

That is why it is especially gratifying that, in the wake of great calamity, America has answered the call again.

I commend President Obama for his focused and timely humanitarian response to this situation, and I applaud the excellent work of the volunteers, rescue workers, and military personnel who have rushed to provide aid.

They continue to save lives and provide care to those in need.

And I will work with my colleagues here in the Senate and with the administration to make sure these people have the tools and resources they need to be a part of the recovery.

Americans have already made a difference in the lives of many Haitians.

But we can and should do more.

The humanitarian crisis in Haiti is growing more desperate by the hour. In spite of the best efforts of relief workers, aid is not arriving fast enough, and thousands of lives hang in the balance.

That is why the American people have already responded in record numbers to requests for help.

They realize that, in many ways, the Haitian people are no different than ourselves.

And while they are not our countrymen, they are our neighbors in the world community, and today they require our assistance.

The American people have shown an extraordinary capacity for generosity. Donations and volunteers continue to stream into the disaster area. Here in Washington, we must do everything we can to encourage people to keep giving, and to make sure we can get supplies and assistance to those who need it most.

We must pledge ourselves to this humanitarian cause—to the belief that, in the aftermath of great tragedy, we can help restore hope to the beleaguered people.

Out of rubble, and chaos, and pain, we can help the people of Haiti begin to rebuild their lives and their country.

We can play a constructive part in the rebirth of this island nation, to help them chart a new course as they emerge from these trials and hopefully relegate the days of poverty to the past.

I ask my colleagues in this great body to join me in this pledge, and to

join the millions of Americans who have already rallied to this cause. Both individually and as a nation, we can make a difference.

In this situation, we must make a difference because some of our brothers and sisters in that country are in dire need of our assistance and help for which we have responded very aggressively and very favorably to help them.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BURRIS. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BURRIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the period of morning business be extended until 3:45, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BURRIS. I ask unanimous consent that time under the quorum call be equally divided.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BURRIS. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MERKLEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

HAITIAN CHILDREN

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to call attention to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Haiti and to the plight of the many Haitian children who have been adopted by American families and are still waiting to be brought from the disaster to loving homes, to families who are waiting to welcome them. Many have been waiting for a year, 2 years. Many of the families in my State have actually gone to Haiti, and they have met these children.

In the days immediately following the earthquake, the United States, the United Nations, other nations, and organizations have moved swiftly to provide food and water, medicine and clothing, as well as international aid workers to assist in these disaster areas. The people of this country, the

people all over the world, have been extraordinarily generous. Currently, thousands of American civilians, as well as members of our Federal agencies and Armed Forces, are in Haiti lending their hands to help the Haitian people.

Unfortunately, though the United States is doing much to save lives in Haiti, lives continue to be lost. And unfortunately, some of the most helpless of Haiti's people—its children—are among those in most need of our help. I am focusing on this issue, this small but important piece of our aid relief, because I have had so many families come to me from my State who are clutching photos of children they are waiting to bring home.

Minnesota has one of the highest rates of international adoptions in the country. Part of that is because we have had a strong tradition of aid, of bringing people from Somalia, the Hmong community, to our State. We have also had a strong tradition of reaching out for decades and adopting children from other countries.

Many of the families I met with over the weekend have been able to confirm that their children are safe, and for that they are so grateful. But they have also heard reports of orphanages that are not in the best shape—not enough food, not enough water. They know these children because so many of them have seen them before. They knew even before this in the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere that these children were not always getting adequate diets.

On January 15, I wrote to Secretaries Clinton and Napolitano, urging them to use their authority under the Immigration and Nationality Act to grant humanitarian parole to all U.S. families applying for entry to the United States on behalf of their prospective children during this period of emergency. I also spoke with Secretary Clinton. She was amazingly generous with her time, and sympathetic and working on this issue.

I am thankful that on Monday, January 18, Secretary Napolitano announced her authorization of the use of humanitarian parole for orphans who are eligible for adoption in the United States. Humanitarian parole is typically used sparingly in cases of compelling emergency. But as I noted in my letter, the magnitude of this disaster clearly warrants broader application of this policy.

There are details, and the details are important. How are these kids going to get to the United States so the paperwork can be processed? There has been talk of a safe haven set up, but we have not seen that happen. Meanwhile, our families in Minnesota are getting more desperate as they hear about the second quake today, as they hear about the problems from the people who are running the orphanages.

This is what I am talking about. Betsy Sathers, a Minnesota resident, was widowed when her husband of 10