



Press Release
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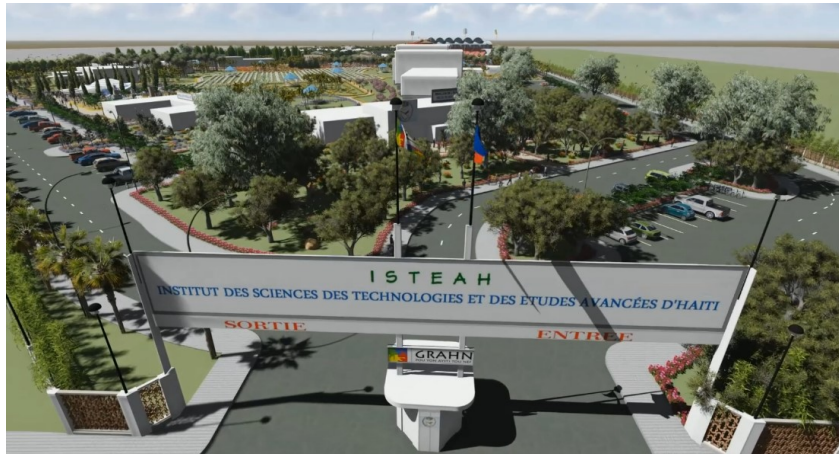
Nearly one thousand people gathered at the Ceremony of laying the foundational stone of the 'PIGrAN - City of Knowledge' project, Haïti

Génipailler, Milot - January 21, 2016 - Nearly one thousand people, mostly young, gathered on a now historic site in Génipailler (*Carrefour des Pères*) to participate, on Wednesday, January 13, 2016 - the day following the sixth anniversary of the devastating January 12, 2010 earthquake - in the ceremony of laying the foundational stone of the City of Knowledge. Initiated by GRAHN-World in the wake of the Institute of Science, Technology and Advanced Studies of Haiti (ISTEAH), which was launched on January 13, 2013, the *Innovation Pole of the Greater North (PIGrAN) - City of Knowledge* is one of the most ambitious collective projects ever designed for Haiti by Haitians living outside of Haiti united with those living inside the country, to create wealth and fight against poverty.



Indeed, the mission of PIGraN is to reduce poverty in the country by enabling the implementation of income-generating activities through the promotion of productive and synergistic interactions between, on the one hand, a network of independent enterprises (small, medium or large) and, on the other hand, higher-education and research institutions. PIGraN aims to create fifty small- and medium-sized enterprises, approximately, ranging from agriculture to high-technology domains, including value-added services. With a 28-hectare plot (21.7 *carreaux*) provided by the Haitian State in the area of Génipailler, which is a district of the Milot Commune, near the city of Cap-Haïtien, the City of Knowledge will comprise four sectors: University (ISTEAH), Services, School (Early Childhood center, Fundamental or primary school, Secondary school, Vocational and Technical Training school), and Agriculture. Twenty buildings and structures, approximately, will be built on that site over a period of 10 years at most. Based on a citizenly approach, fundraising campaigns are underway in several countries (Haiti, Canada, USA, France) to finance the construction of these buildings and structures.

Presentation of the 3D model of the City of Knowledge



Laying of the foundational stone



That ceremony of laying the foundational stone was an opportunity for Haitians to reaffirm their determination to rebuild their country for the long term and on more solid bases, with the possible collaboration of Haiti's true friends. The event brought together participants from 6 countries, besides Haiti (Brazil, Canada, USA, France, Martinique, Dominican Republic), from 7 of the country's ten geographical departments (Artibonite, Centre, North, Northeast, Northwest, West, and South), and from 23 communes (urban districts) in Haiti. Several dignitaries attended the ceremony, among them: Mrs. Marie-Claude Bayard, who replaced her mother, Mrs. Odette Roy Fombrun, honorary president of the event; the minister of Haitians Living Abroad, Mr. Robert Labrousse; the ambassador of Canada in Haiti, HE Mrs. Paula Caldwell St-Onge; the governor of the Bank of the Republic of Haiti, Mr. Jean Baden Dubois; former prime minister and former rector of Quisqueya University, Mr. Jacques Edouard Alexis; the director for the North of the ministry of Public Health and Population, Dr. Ernst Robert Jasmin. Also present were several representatives from academia, notably: Professor Jean-Robert Charles, rector of the Autonomous University of Port-au-Prince; Professor Pierre Énocque François, rector of the Public University of the South in Les Cayes; Professor Fénold Métellus, rector of the Public University of the North in Cap-Haïtien; the coordinator of the public universities in the regions, Mr. Narcisse Fièvre; the president of the managing board of the Henry Christophe Campus of Limonade (State University of Haiti – UEH), Mr. Audalbert Bien-Aimé; Mr. Jean-Marie Raymond Noël, advisor at the rectorate of UEH; the director of the diocesan unit for teaching, research and services (UDERS, Cap-Haïtien) at Notre-Dame University of Haiti, Msgr. François Moïse; the executive director of the Civil Society Initiative (ISC), Mr. Rosny Desroches; senior representatives from various religions in the country. Several delegations of students and of GRAHN-World chapters, of which chapters from GRAHN-Haiti, also made the trip to attend that event that bears a promising future for the country, at a time in our history when the outlook is bleak, especially for the youth.



GRAHN-World thanks all the individuals and institutions who participated in one way or another in such a feat, which consisted in gathering so many people on an almost unreachable farmland. A special thank you to the mayor of Milot, Mr. Fritz Prophète, who has always been there to solve problems; to the CASEC of Génipailler, Mr. Rodney Chéry, who behaved like a true leader to help the project move forward; to the ministry of Public Works, Transportation and Communications (MTPTC), for leveling the field as well as the road that leads to it; to MINUSTAH, for graciously providing and installing the tents, the chairs and the sound equipment; to the management of School Transport's company DIGNITÉ and that of the Henry Christophe Campus of Limonade, for providing us with buses for transportation to the event's site; to the Sisters of Regina Assumpta College of Cap-Haïtien, who provided a vehicle for our travels in the North area; to the youth of the Limbé Fanfare, for their most appreciated artistic performance; to the journalists and the media, for their highly professional coverage of the event; to the National Police of Haiti (PNH) and the Touristic Police (POLITOUR), for their very discreet but efficient security assistance; to Maison (Firm) Henri Deschamps and the Rhum Barbancourt Company, for their financial contributions, which made it possible to install advertising signs on the road leading to the City of Knowledge. Thank you to all participants, including the population of Génipailler, who were present at this great *konbit* inaugurating an era of collective construction of a new Haiti by Haitians from all walks.

About GRAHN

GRAHN-Monde (or GRAHN-World) is a worldwide citizen-watch organization that wants to contribute, through well thought-out actions, to solving the problems of Haiti. It aims to be a nonpartisan civil society movement, focused on the construction of a new Haiti that is founded on the rule of law, on sharing, solidarity, education, respect for the environment, and a strong commitment for the common good.

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Source : GRAHN-Monde, <http://www.grahn-monde.org>

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