

AAFI AFICS Newsletter

ASSOCIATION DES ANCIENS FONCTIONNAIRES INTERNATIONAUX - Genève
ASSOCIATION OF FORMER INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS - Geneva

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The Haiti Disaster

The earthquake in Haiti earlier this month is a disaster of mammoth proportions; we all seek to support and succor those who are in need and who have lost loved ones in this tragedy.

At the personal level, the AAFI-AFICS Committee was devastated to learn of the loss, in the earthquake, of the daughter of our Vice-President, Samuel Mbele Mbong. Lisa Mbele-Mbong 38, did not survive the collapse of the human-rights section of the building that housed the United Nations Stabilization Mission (MINUSTAH) in Port-au-Prince where she worked as a human rights officer. She reportedly had left a meeting to check on the trembling when a falling concrete slab struck her, killing her instantly.

Lisa's 10 year old son, Nady, was spared. The newspaper, the Washington Post reported that: "Nady was with the driver who had always picked him up from school and was outside the U.N. complex waiting for his mother when the quake struck." He has now joined his grandparents in Europe.

We are sure all members of AAFI-AFICS will join us in expressing to Sam and his wife Helena our most profound grief at their loss and our heartfelt support to them at this most painful time.

This tragedy is the more heart-wrenching in the context of the enormous losses of UN system staff, so many of whom are known to so many of us. On 20th January, the UN Secretary General reported that: "70 staff had perished; 146 were as yet unaccounted for... we must expect that the death toll will continue to rise...."

We can but reflect that "in the midst of life, we are in death...." and pray that we may bring help and succor to all those who are in desperate need at this tumultuous time.

Friends and colleagues can find more details on a number of websites including :

<http://www.postnewsline.com/2010/01/in-memoriam-lisa-mbelembong-.html>