

GLOBAL Q&A

'What past wrongs has your country done that need to be reconciled?'

Reconciliations and apologies have eased many painful memories of the past. Among wrongs that still sting are deportations, civil wars, and the building of a temple. This is what Epoch Times reporters from Slovakia to the Brazil discovered when they asked locals: "What past wrongs has your country done that need to be reconciled?"

BZENEC, CZECH REPUBLIC
TOMAS TESARIK, 63, BUSINESSMAN



There was a deportation of Germans after WWII, which was totally uncontrolled, without any rules. Basically, there was a lot of hatred toward all Germans without exception regardless of whether they were fighting for or against us, but many Germans were helping us, participating in the resistance groups, fighting against Hitler. However, they deported them all regardless.

SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL
GUILHERME CAMPANO, 21, MARINE SCIENCE STUDENT



In my opinion, the biggest mistake made in Brazil that would need a big apology was the deprivation of education for their people. In times of elections, people have no interest and no political conscience, and live this way because we never had incentives in education and we were never taught to think for ourselves.

SHEFFIELD, UNITED KINGDOM
HELEN CARTER, 38, PROJECT MANAGER



The question supposes that as a country we are not continuing to wrong other parts of the world. I feel impatient with reconciliation. It's not something in the past that we have the time and resources to indulge in. We don't have that luxury. I feel particularly strongly about inequalities in trade, the exploitation of other nations economically.

HOPE ISLAND, AUSTRALIA
JEANETTE DE BERRY, 61, DIRECTOR



When Paul Keating was in power, he made a terrible statement, which impacted on a lot of Malaysian people. He called the then-prime minister, Mr. Mahathir, a "recalcitrant." It created such an impact. We were expatriates over there, and it made life very difficult for us... I don't think it's ever been apologized for.

BRATISLAVA, SLOVAKIA
LUBICA HUSAROVA, 43, ECONOMIST



I feel that all the bad deeds that Slovakia has ever committed occurred just inside our country and they were Slovak citizens who suffered from them. It was due to the attitude of people who had the power at that time, which caused the suffering of innocent people. I mean the events of 1939—deportation of Jews.

WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND
CHAD STEVENS, 31, RETAIL MANAGER



I think there are certain things that have happened in the past with regards to the land wars when settlers came in. There's certainly some things that need to be addressed. But looking back on things now, they need to try and get factual information about what happened, and what was agreed and wasn't agreed with the Waitangi tribunal and treaty claims.

CANARY ISLANDS, SPAIN
MAY GUASCH, 62, HOUSEWIFE



In relation to ourselves as a country, I think that the civil war between years 1936 and 1939 still need to be reconciled, since every now and then you can see in the press, in magazines, or on television, serious, angry discussions between followers of one or other of the two factions that fought on the civil war.

ALL PHOTOS BY THE EPOCH TIMES

Look for the Global Q&A column every week, when Epoch Times correspondents interview people around the world to learn about their lives and perspective on local and global realities.

Next week's global question: What do you think you can do to contribute to world peace?



SOLIDARITY: Young women attend a therapy session of "Box of Grief" in Haiti. The project encourages women who have experienced violence in the camps to speak about their experiences with each other to help find solutions. GIORDANO COSSU AND BENOIT CASSEGRAIN/ "SOLIDAR'IT IN HAITI"

The Plight of Haiti's Women

HAITI WOMEN CONTINUED FROM A1
"Women are subject of violence and suffer from mental problems. Typhoid fever and malaria are widely spread. The lack of working opportunities makes things even harder for women to survive," said Charles-Pierre by phone from Haiti.

Another organization, KOFAYIV, works with 33 organizations around the world to help women contact police and access medical care. Nearly 300 cases of sexual violence and 60 cases of domestic violence have been registered with KOFAYIV since January when the earthquake hit.

"Women and girls are forced into prostitution in order to obtain basic necessities like food, etc. They are raped on a regular basis by members of the camps committee, who are in charge of distribution of food supplies in the camps. These committees consist of men," said Jocie Philistin, KOFAYIV Project Coordinator in a telephone interview from Haiti.

And after the therapy ... everybody starts to sing and laugh joyfully.

According to Diana Duarte, Media Coordinator of the New York-based women rights organization MADRE, rape is a constant threat to Haitian women in the camps.

"We have heard stories of women attacked in their tents or attacked as they walk to the bathrooms at night. Women who face these violations often do not have access to necessary medical services and are treated dismissively by the police," says Duarte.

Now MADRE is appealing to the United Nations, the Haitian government, and major aid agencies to exert pressure to ensure that immediate measures are taken to improve security in the camps, such as through installing lighting.

STEPS TOWARD SOLUTIONS

Solving the problems faced by women in Haiti requires close collaboration between state agencies and aid organizations. Melanie Megevand, Protection Coordinator of the American Refugee Committee (ARC), is optimistic about the role of the government and believes it is prepared to deal with the problems.

Megevand says that the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Justice,

Ministry of Public Health, and the national police are all prepared to deal with home violence, sexual abuse, or other forms of exploitation.

"The scale of the issue is huge and the coordination and collaboration need to be continuously dealt with. The question now is how to respond to the abuses on a wider scale and more effectively," said Megevand by phone from Haiti.

So far ARC has provided shelter assistance to three camps with a total of 30,000 inhabitants.

ARC also works with men, offering training and education. "If men are not seen as essential actors in the community to keep women safe, the prevention of violence against women will be unsuccessful," says Megevand. She reports that there has been a "small but steadily increasing number of men" seeking help at the women's centers.

Giordano Cossu, an investigative journalist from Italy who focuses on problems typically forgotten by the international media, sees a more complicated picture.

"The action of service is too slow and stays at the level of ideas. What Haitians see is that with all the money that has been donated, basic problems are not tackled, and the international aid organizations spend weeks discussing, most of the times with no Haitians present, what should be more appropriate to do, rather than implementing solutions quickly and on a large scale in all camps," says Cossu.

Cossu runs the Solidar'IT project that aims to give voice to locals in Haiti as well as to show the reality of Haiti's reconstruction. From his observations, the problem would not go away even if by magic all tents turned into wooden huts. There are many other causes beyond basic housing that need to be addressed—the lack of lighting, families that have been separated, the lack of information about whom to contact for justice and help, the total lack of interest by the police to investigate the crimes, and of course, the male culture.

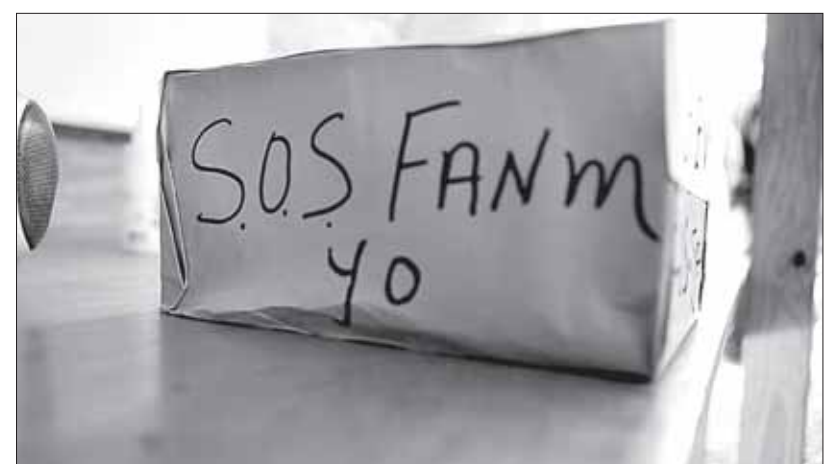
LIFTING THE LID OF SILENCE: TESTIMONIES OF VICTIMS

Cossu and his team of collaborators are watching the situation in Haiti filming every step of the process. He has found two groups in Haiti that are helping women speak from the heart about the hidden violence.

Marie Sofonie works for Ayiti SMS SOS, a project which allows victims or witnesses of abuse to send an SMS to a free number. Messages are then mapped geographically and classified



DETERMINED: Marie Sofonie is 25 years old and says she is determined to break the silence about sexual abuses in Haiti. After her house was damaged and she was relocated to a camp, she fled the camp for fear of being raped. She was also ousted from her own district as men didn't like her social activism and participation in the distribution of aid. She now works for the project Ayiti SMS SOS. GIORDANO COSSU AND BENOIT CASSEGRAIN/ "SOLIDAR'IT IN HAITI"



BOX OF GRIEF: Every Friday the box is opened and stories are shared aloud. GIORDANO COSSU AND BENOIT CASSEGRAIN/ "SOLIDAR'IT IN HAITI"

based on the type of crime or help request, location, and so on.

Sofonie received an SMS from a 19-year-old girl in a camp who was assaulted and raped while on her way to the toilet. The girl described the situation:

"In the camp, the situation was really terrible; we were exposed to everything: sexual assaults, thefts, rapes, all that. After a week, people there began to take the habit, as there was no reply, they were not afraid anymore and they began to steal, rape, I was afraid it could happen to me, and I said to myself, I am going to stay in my house, whatever happens, die or live, I give up but I will not accept to be raped by some crooks. I was afraid to become BAD, because I don't think I would have let anybody do what he wanted to me."

Charles-Pierre from OFAVA started a program called "Women: The Box of Grief" which consists of workshops that encourage women

to share their experiences and find solutions to their problems. Since many women are afraid to speak up, Charles-Pierre created what she called a "box of grief," a box that she puts in the middle of the workshop room as a place where women can deposit their stories after writing them down. Every Friday she opens the box and reads out the stories to the group.

"The atmosphere gets rather tense, and face expressions reveal the concealed anguish. Small weeps and moans are heard during the reading of these terrible stories. In the audio portfolio that follows, everybody can listen to the stories and share in this hard but necessary moment of revelation," writes Giordano Cossu on the website of Solidar'IT.

And after the therapy is finished, according to Haitian custom, everybody starts to sing and laugh joyfully, venting away and leaving behind everything bad.

Hidden Christchurch Fault Had Been Dormant 16,000 Years

By **NICHOLAS MCLAUGHLIN**
Epoch Times Staff

The fault responsible for the 7.1 magnitude earthquake that shook Christchurch, New Zealand, on Saturday, Sept. 4, appears to have been previously dormant for 16,000 years, say scientists from GNS Science.

Saturday's earthquake produced the strongest ground shaking ever recorded in an earthquake in New Zealand. The highest ground-shaking measurement—1.25 times the strength of gravity—was recorded

at Greendale near the epicenter, said GNS in a press release.

The ruptured fault had been accumulating stress for thousands of years. Faults fail catastrophically when stresses exceed a certain threshold.

"Before Saturday, there was nothing in the landscape that would have suggested there was an active fault beneath the Darfield and Rolleston areas," said Kelvin Berryman, manager of the Natural Hazards Platform at GNS Science.

"All we can say at this stage is that this newly revealed fault has not

ruptured since the gravels were deposited about 16,000 years ago."

The earthquake produced a 14-mile-long surface rupture and up to about 4 yards of horizontal displacement in alluvial terraces that are thought to have been deposited around 16,000 years ago at the end of the last glaciation.

Dr. Berryman said there could be other hidden faults around New Zealand and there was a high probability that they could also produce very strong earthquakes.

Saturday's quake was a low probability event in context of New

Zealand's overall seismic activity, he added.

"We've known earthquakes are possible on the Canterbury Plains, but they are infrequent."

Seismologists believe the major earthquake risk to Christchurch still comes from known faults in North Canterbury, in the Canterbury foothills, and from the Alpine Fault that extends up the spine of the South Island.

There have been 150 aftershocks since the initial quake battered the beleaguered city last Saturday, reported www.stuff.co.nz.