

# Military strength key to aid, PM says

'To do soft power, you need hard power,' Harper says of humanitarian help given to Haiti

BY ANDREW MAYEDA

LEOGANE, Haiti — Humanitarian missions such as the rebuilding of Haiti require the "hard power" of military might, Prime Minister Stephen Harper said Tuesday as he toured Canada's relief efforts in the area around the Haitian capital.

In a speech to troops stationed at this quake-ravaged town, Harper applauded the speed with which Canadian troops deployed to Haiti, saying the rapid response proved to the world that Canada is a "major actor" in providing disaster relief.

In a jab at the former Liberal government, the prime minister said military assets purchased by the Conservatives, such as the C-17 transport plane, are a "big part" of Canada's ability to respond.

"There was a time when that kind of heavy-lift aircraft didn't fit Canada's 'soft-power' policies," Harper said.

"But our government bought them for the hard-power requirements of today's world. Now we're using them for relief work. So what is the moral of the story? To do soft power, you need hard power; you need a full range of capabilities."

After taking power four years ago, the Conservatives scrapped plans by the Liberals to buy a fleet of smaller transport aircraft in favour of the hulking C-17. The government eventually purchased four of the aircraft at a cost of \$1.8 billion.

Harper arrived in Port-au-



ARIEL MARINKOVIC/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Prime Minister Stephen Harper drinks water Tuesday at a water-purification centre set up and run by Canadians in Jacmel, Haiti.

Prince on Monday in a C-17 carrying water filters, medical aid and other supplies.

The prime minister's comments come as the Canadian Forces prepare to withdraw from Afghanistan at the end of next year, ending Canada's most explicit demonstration of "hard power" in decades.

Since the earthquake, Harper has been unequivocal in his support for the recovery effort in Haiti, suggesting the government might be shifting the focus of Canada's military

operations toward humanitarian and development missions.

Former Liberal prime minister Paul Martin was seen as a proponent of "soft power," a term believed to have been coined by Joseph Nye, a defence adviser to former U.S. president Bill Clinton. It refers to a nation's ability to achieve geopolitical goals without the direct use of military force.

Earlier Tuesday, Harper flew by helicopter to the seaside town of Jacmel, where

slightly more than 500 Canadian soldiers are based. The prime minister toured a field clinic set up by the military's Disaster Assistance Response Team that has treated nearly 8,000 Haitians.

As the volume and severity of cases at the clinic has waned, the military has been sending out "mobile medical teams" to outlying areas of Jacmel, said Capt. Mark Peebles, a military spokesman.

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