

## Earthquake leaves Haiti 'worse than a war zone'

Written by NBC, msnbc.com and news services  
Wednesday, 13 January 2010 17:44

---

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti - Gravely injured Haitians pleaded for help Wednesday after the strongest earthquake to hit the poor Caribbean nation in more than 200 years crushed thousands of structures, from humble shacks to the National Palace and the headquarters of U.N. peacekeepers.

Destroyed communications made it impossible to tell the extent of destruction from Tuesday afternoon's 7.0-magnitude tremor, or to estimate the number of dead lying among the collapsed buildings in Haiti's capital of about 2 million people. Among the missing was the head of the U.N. peacekeeping mission.

International Red Cross spokesman Paul Conneally said an estimated 3 million people may have been affected by the quake and that it would take a day or two for a clear picture of the damage to emerge. Clouds of dust thrown up by falling buildings choked Port-au-Prince for hours.