

Haiti quake toll could reach 300 000

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The death toll from Haiti's January 12 earthquake could reach 300 000, Haitian President Rene Preval said in an appeal for international aid at a summit of Caribbean leaders.

Haitian officials had previously put the death toll at 217 000, but Preval advanced the higher 300 000 estimate on Sunday in a speech to leaders of Mexico and the 15-member Caribbean Community.

"I am calling for a great coalition of forces to assist us," he said late on Sunday. "Please, help the more than one million Haitians who every day sleep in the streets," he said.

Preval said the onset of the rainy season has "begun to make dignified human life impossible" for those who lost their homes in the 7, 0-magnitude, which left much of the capital, Port-au-Prince, in ruins. -- AFP

Source: Mail & Guardian Online