

## U.S. Denies Economic Aid to Haiti.

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The U.S. government denied economic assistance to Haiti on the basis that Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide has not done enough to solve the country's political crisis, said reports from Nassau, capital of the Bahamas.

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, who was visiting the Bahamas to attend a meeting with foreign ministers of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said Thursday that he is not certain whether or not the Haitian government would use such funds to re-establish the political panorama in the Caribbean country.

"We must urge President Aristide to a high performance level, before sending funds to that country," the U.S. diplomatic chief told a local radio station, adding that U.S. authorities "are very

worried" about some of the Haitian government's actions.

Haiti has entered a political deadlock since the local and legislative elections in May 2000. The Lavalas Family Party of President Aristide claimed a final victory in the elections, which was labeled as "fraudulent" by the opposition and some international observers.

The government canceled negotiations with opposition parties on July 15, since both sides failed to reach a consensus on the date of new elections. The talks are expected to resume soon with the participation of representatives from the CARICOM and the Organization of American States (OAS).

It is believed the political standoff in the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere has created a blockade of foreign aid worth some 500 million U.S. dollars.

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