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U.S. troops leaving Haiti

Humanitarian mission assisted impoverished nation

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — They put smiles on the faces of the desperate and hopeless. They built toilets and showers for orphans used to squatting outside and bathing in drains. They helped farmers get produce to market.

Now American troops are packing up to leave Haiti after a humanitarian mission that probably saved hundreds of lives and made those of countless others more livable.

Maj. Marian Nutt, an Air Force clinical nurse from Louisville, Ky., struggles to find words to describe how long-suffering Haitians reacted to being treated like human beings.

"They come to us in their Sunday best, as though to receive something not of this world," Nutt said. "It must feel like a miracle."

Marine Gunnery Sgt. David Marcussen, a 40-year-old military police officer, was so enthusiastic about his work in Haiti that he extended his tour of duty twice.

"Marines are not only to be reckoned with as a destructive force," he said. "We can also help get a country back onto its feet."

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— Gunnery Sgt. David Marcussen
U.S. Marine Corps

"Haiti has great, untapped potential," added Marcussen, from Ada, Minn., who expressed admiration for the courage of ordinary Haitians and said he will remember the smiles of gratitude from the children.

Haiti, however, is far from be-

ing on its own feet. After hundreds of millions of dollars from the United States were spent on the power struggles.

Those struggles have kept it one of the most impoverished nations on Earth, nearly 200 years since the world's first independent black republic.

Thousands of Haitians have been helped by the U.S. military support which has been based here the last American combat left two years ago, re-

the 20,000-soldier force executed over the 1990-94 military regime in 1996. The group's departure, executed over the months will mean the more than five years of U.S. military presence in the troubled Caribbean nation.

The mission has cost \$20 million a year

Greece ends standoff with Turkey

Earthquake forces reconsideration of Turks' place in European Union

SAARISELKA, Finland (AP) — The devastating earthquake in Turkey last month had a surprising, positive effect on regional politics, with Greece showing readiness for a thaw in its relations with Turkey by dropping objections to its closer integration into Europe.

At a weekend meeting of European Union (EU) foreign ministers, Greek Foreign Minister George Papandreou said his country was ready to let Turkey into the 15-nation union.

The earthquake "created a new climate," Papandreou told reporters yesterday at the end of the two-day meeting. "Human warmth came out of this tragedy. A message came out that we must work for peace."

Papandreou said he had spoken with Turkish Foreign Minister Ismail Cem by telephone and told him of Greece's change of heart.

The new stance means that Greece will not block hundreds of millions of dollars in EU grants and loans to help Turkey rebuild from last month's earthquake, Papandreou said. The death toll from the quake now stands at more than 15,000 and is expected to top 20,000.

It also means EU leaders will likely add Turkey to the list of candidates for membership when they meet in

Helsinki for a Dec. 15-16 summit, setting a "more economic and democratic targets the country."

Finnish Foreign Minister Tarja Halonen said had moved closer to EU membership, largely because of the "most helpful" attitude of Greece.

Papandreou, however, told colleagues that Greece and Turkey still have a long way to go to resolve longstanding differences, notably over Cyprus and Sea territory, which have brought the two nations close to war in the past.

"It does not mean that we have solved all the long questions, [but] the climate exists for a breakthrough in these as well," Papandreou said. He said to become an EU member, Turkey needs to embrace "European values such as rule of law, democratic institutions and good neighborly relations."

Turkey also must show respect for minorities, the Kurds.

Turks have long taken the view that the European reluctance to let their country join the EU is based in the fact that it is a Muslim nation. EU governments have always denied this.

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