

SITUATION REPORT - HAITI

No. 1 – December 2023

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Situation in Haiti

- 5.2 million Haitians are in need of humanitarian assistance, of which 4.3 million are facing acute food insecurity, said the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Haiti, Ulrika Richardson.
- A report was published by the UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR) together with the UN political mission in Haiti urging for the deployment of the MSS and for the UN Security Council to update the list of individuals and entities that are subject to UN sanctions.
- The report outlined that the spread of gangs into rural areas has led to the destruction of agriculture and has forced 22,000 people to flee to urban areas. At least 45% of the population is suffering from acute malnutrition.
- The most prominent gangs are members of a coalition entitled G-Pèp which has taken control of large territories of the country, including the National Highway #1 and crossing points to and from the northern regions, allowing illicit circulation of arms and drugs.
- With the police unable to control and contain the gangs, self-defence groups have emerged to protect civilians living in gang controlled areas. The practices of these groups include lynching of (alleged) gang members.
- The UN has estimated that in 2023 the gang violence in Haiti has led to 3,690 people being killed, 1,432 injured and 2,591 kidnapped.

Situation on the Multinational Security Support (MMS)

- In October, the UN Security Council endorsed the Kenyan Multinational Security Support (MSS) Mission to Haiti, which is set to be deployed in February 2024 at the earliest.
- The mission was requested by the Haitian Prime Minister, Ariel Henry, to address gangs that have been taking control of crucial structures in the country.
- The mission will consist of 1000 police personnel deployed in Haiti and will be funded by the US and Canada.
- The mission will be led by Kenya, but include personnel from other countries, namely Senegal, Burundi, Chile, Jamaica, Ecuador, Barbados and Seychelles.
- The focus of the mission will be on training and equipping the local Haitian police force and guarding important structures, including the principal airport, hospitals and schools.
- 6 Representatives of the Democratic party in the US wrote a letter to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken calling on the administration to withdraw their support of the MSS and instead focus on limiting the gangs' access to guns and ammunition, most of which are imported from the US.
- The UN High Commissioner, Volker Türk, emphasised that the MSS must comply with international human rights norms and standards.

Regional situation

- High officials of Caricom, the Caribbean Community, arrived in Haiti on Wednesday 6 December and held talks with officials from several relevant sectors in the country.

- The proposal introduced by Caricom for getting Haiti out of the current crisis included an 18-month transition period within which Ariel Henry would have presidential powers.
- The proposal has already been rejected by the Montana Accord under the reasoning that it only benefitted one party. The Montana Accord is an opposition group in Haiti.
- The proposal also included the formation of a 7-member transition council, the formation of a government of national unity, the establishment of a body to control government actions, and a reform of the constitution.
- The Association of Haitian Industries (ADIH) has warned that the lack of control on the Haitian side of the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic has led to a decline in production.
- The lack of control has also resulted in smuggling and illegal activities which have led to annual revenue losses of up to 440 million US dollars.
- On 28 November, the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic was opened by a group of people claiming to be traders and investors joined by armed men who took hold of the border point.
- It is speculated that border control authorities of the Dominican Republic were accomplices in the forced opening of the border.
- Similar events took place on the 8th of November, when the border was opened to traders and entrepreneurs to allow recovery of goods that were still blocked at the Dajabón binational market.
- More than 400 Haitians crossed the border into the Dominican Republic illegally on Saturday 9 November through the Sierra de Bahoruco National Park. Most of the Haitians were captured by Authorities from the Dominican Republic.

International situation

- The United States announced sanctions against Haitians fueling instability, all of which are gang leaders. The United Kingdom also sanctioned two former high officials in the administration of Jovenel Moïse.
- One of the leaders of the coup of 2004, Guy Philippe, has returned to Haiti after serving time in prison in the US for money laundering.
- Joseph Vincent, a Haitian-American citizen, pleaded guilty to conspiring to assassinate the Haitian President, Jovenel Moïse, who was killed in 2021. 10 others have also pleaded guilty for conspiring to assassinate Moïse.
- Over 40 people have been arrested related to the assassination of Moïse. Out of the 5 judges that have been appointed for this case, 4 have stepped down for fear of being killed.

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