



## Security Council

Distr.: General  
23 June 2020

Original: English and French

---

### **Letter dated 23 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council**

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the briefings provided by Ms. Helen La Lime, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti and Head of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti, and Mr. Jacques Létang, President of the Haitian Bars Federation, as well as the statements delivered by the representatives of Belgium, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Indonesia (on behalf of Indonesia and Viet Nam), Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (on behalf of the three African countries that are members of the Security Council — the Niger, South Africa and Tunisia — as well as Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, in connection with the video-teleconference on the question concerning Haiti convened on Friday, 19 June 2020. A statement was also delivered by the representative of Haiti.

In accordance with the procedure set out in the letter from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council dated 7 May 2020 (S/2020/372), which was agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, these briefings and statements will be issued as an official document of the Security Council.

*(Signed)* Nicolas **de Rivière**  
President of the Security Council



**Annex I****Statement by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti and Head of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti, Helen La Lime**

[Original: English and French]

I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for having granted me once again the privilege of briefing the Security Council on the situation in Haiti.

Just like most of the world, Haiti is currently contending with the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. While the confirmed numbers of infected people and deaths pale in comparison with some of the other countries in the Americas, the pandemic is nonetheless stretching that country's already fragile health system and testing its meagre social safety net.

Three months to the day after President Jovenel Moïse declared a health emergency due to the confirmation of the first cases of coronavirus, the authorities continue to struggle to open medical centres dedicated to the treatment of COVID-19 patients. Haiti, a country of more than 11 million inhabitants, currently has the capacity to treat only a few hundred patients at a time, with more beds becoming available every day. This situation is in part due to suboptimal coordination within the State apparatus at both the national and local levels as well as to inadequate funding of the national response plan. It is also the result of the initially staunch opposition by local communities to seeing such centres open in their midst — a manifestation of the lingering climate of denial, stigma and discrimination that exists in the country.

The pandemic, whose spread accelerated in the last month, has to date officially affected more than 4,900 people and led to 84 deaths. Even though its true toll is likely much higher, its effects are only starting to be felt by Haiti's citizens, a majority of whom were already living in bleak socioeconomic conditions. As a result of the multiple, interconnected crises that have affected the country in recent years, Haiti's economy contracted by 1.2 per cent in 2019 and is projected to shrink by a further 4 per cent this year. Factories are operating at reduced capacity because of the need to implement measures to slow the spread of the virus. The spectre of a further increase in unemployment looms large; the gourde continues to lose value against the United States dollar; and inflation consistently exceeds 20 per cent. In the absence of adequate resources to support Haiti's emergence from the recession in which it is plunged, the hard-won security and development gains achieved over the course of the past decade and a half risk coming undone, and a primarily domestic problem could transform into a regional issue should the already alarming humanitarian situation continue to worsen and increasing numbers of Haitians be tempted to seek better fortunes abroad.

Since I last addressed the Council (see S/PV.8729), Haiti has enjoyed a relatively appeased political climate. The exhaustion from the 18 months of popular mobilization against President Moïse and the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic led parts of the opposition to call on Haitians to come together to face the virus, an initiative that allowed newly appointed Prime Minister Joseph Jouthe to govern. Yet early signals of the executive's intention to begin preparations for the long-overdue legislative and local elections have reignited passions and reintroduced acrimony in the public discourse and political debate.

The past weeks have seen a marked increase in the frequency and intensity of clashes between rival armed gangs that are vying to control greater swathes of territory in the most populous neighbourhoods of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan

area in an effort to exert influence on the outcome of elections in those constituencies. A growing number of opposition figures are contesting the length of President Moïse's term in office and calling for a transitional administration to take over, one that would ostensibly launch reforms and organize subsequent polls. The vicious circle of mistrust, recrimination and, ultimately, violence is once again starting to define the dynamics of Haitian politics at a time when the entire society should be unified in its response to the pandemic and striving to lay more virtuous and lasting foundations on which to build its future.

Haiti has for too long resorted to expedient agreements to address political problems, to the detriment of the principles that undergird its Constitution. Yet the ambiguities of the latter, which cannot be authoritatively interpreted in the absence of the Constitutional Council for which it provides, have regularly forced political actors to work around it. It is becoming increasingly evident that a reform of the Constitution is required to break the circle and create the conditions for institutional stability, good governance and the rule of law, three essential characteristics for the country to thrive. Such reform can be successful only as a result of a nationally owned process that combines strong leadership with genuine efforts by all stakeholders to put aside short-term political interests.

Over the course of the past four months, despite the pandemic, the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), working in ever-closer collaboration with the United Nations country team, has not lost sight of the six benchmarks, the priorities it has set through the integrated strategic framework. It has spared no effort to assist Haitian authorities and institutions in considering the key issues that impede the forging of a national consensus as well as the country's progress towards stability and sustainable development. Through the use of good offices, the mission has continued to encourage actors from across the political spectrum to constructively engage with one another. Along with its partners, it has advised the Haitian National Police in the successful resolution of long-standing labour disputes within its ranks and assisted judicial actors in devising a virtual hearings system that will allow courts to continue functioning despite the current impossibility for them to physically convene.

Although seemingly small in scope, those accomplishments will contribute to ensuring that the country's police force remains cohesive as it maintains order and seeks to interdict the actions of armed gangs and that the judicial system remains able to meet the State's obligation to guarantee a victim's right to access justice. Unfortunately, we continue to operate in a context where the upholding of the principle of accountability remains a key challenge, as evidenced by the lack of progress in the investigation and prosecution of the recent emblematic cases of Lilavois, Grand Ravine, La Saline and Bel Air, which involve human rights violations and abuses by gang members, law-enforcement agents and political officials.

Working with civil society, BINUH will pursue its efforts to encourage the authorities to amplify the fight against impunity and the promotion of human rights. Through sound use of the panoply of tools at its disposal, the United Nations system in Haiti will continue to support the expansion of the multiple aspects of the response to COVID-19, accompany the country on the path of crucial institutional and economic reform, and provide assistance to ensure the timely holding of free, fair and transparent elections, in an appeased climate.

To ensure the success of those endeavours and to address the root causes of its instability in a meaningful and sustainable manner, Haiti relies on the full support of the Council as well as on the continued engagement of international partners. Both are greatly appreciated.

**Annex II****Statement by the President of the Haitian Bars Federation,  
Jacques Létang**

[Original: English and French]

It is with pleasure that I am taking the floor to shed light on the situation in Haiti in my dual capacity as President of the Haitian Bars Federation and a member of the Human Rights Office in Haiti.

The coronavirus disease epidemic has had a profound impact on the world. Haiti has not been spared by this wave, with a combination of health risks, a testing of institutional strength and an economic crisis. The public services are virtually failing. The most basic rights are not guaranteed, while the depreciation of the gourde and the hurricane season directly jeopardize the lives of millions of Haitians who are already food-insecure. The rapid spread of the virus is particularly worrisome in prisons, where conditions continue to deteriorate. The contingency and decongestion plans announced by the authorities have so far not been implemented.

The State is losing more and more of its monopoly of legitimate violence. Many working-class neighbourhoods are being transformed into lawless zones, where everyone's life is subject to the goodwill of increasingly well-armed and organized gangs. Most of the public institutions located in downtown Port-au-Prince are deserted. Armed bandits regularly cause the authorities, which are responsible for guaranteeing public order, to flee the courthouse. The State is less and less in control of the territory, including in the provinces, and one sometimes even wonders whether it has not lost control of the police, whose demands have repeatedly expressed themselves with violence.

Massive human rights violations are on the rise. The La Saline case is undoubtedly one of the most serious massacres in our contemporary history; unfortunately, it is not the only one. More than 71 people were killed on the night of 13 November 2018, and dozens and dozens more have been killed since then, not counting the women who were serially raped, the houses set on fire, the hundreds if not thousands of displaced persons, the charred bodies abandoned in the streets. It is a neglected generation that is now being initiated into the harshest of cruelties.

The problem is primarily one of impunity. Despite the precautionary measures ordered by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in December 2019, there is no longer even an investigation, as the case has been blocked for months at the level of the Court of Cassation. This is the clear message that the State sends to those victims who put their lives at risk to file a complaint: at the national and international levels, they will get neither protection nor justice. The question of the involvement of the authorities in the perpetration of these atrocities is raised in many reports, including that of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti and the more recent one by the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) on the Bel Air massacre. Those accusations are extremely serious, yet nothing is happening.

It is that same impunity that hinders the fight against corruption. In spite of citizen mobilization and the edifying reports published by the Court of Auditors on the waste and misappropriation of billions of dollars, it remains unrealistic to hope for the organization of a PetroCaribe trial.

These shortcomings are closely linked to the dysfunction of the justice system. Arbitrary detention is the rule. Access to a judge is not guaranteed to defendants, who spend years in so-called prolonged pretrial detention. Nor is access to a judge

guaranteed to victims, first and foremost those of gender-based violence, who are most often silenced. The Superior Council of the Judiciary has not lived up to its disciplinary role. The certification process has never been carried out, and judges' mandates are renewed at the will of the executive. Far from embodying the renewal of an independent judiciary, that collegial body has become bogged down in political instrumentalization and a corporatism geared towards defending bad practices, first and foremost non-compliance with the judicial tariff. Calling for a new strike that will once again paralyse the system, the magistrates have denounced the ridiculously low percentage granted to the judiciary in the last national budget.

The electoral process has been deeply perverted. Neither the Constitutional Council nor the Permanent Electoral Council has been set up yet, giving rise to countless instances of institutional tinkering. Far from forging democracy, elections lead above all to interference, violence and the instrumentalization of power. They do not establish a bond of trust between the people and their leaders.

Now more than ever, we find ourselves at a political impasse. There is no more parliament, no more local authorities, no more legitimate Government. The President declared that the institutions whose continuity he had a duty to ensure had lapsed. Legislation is now adopted by decree, without any consultation. The absence of any institutional checks and balances is further reinforced by the prolongation of the state of emergency, which jeopardizes respect for individual liberties and suspends public procurement procedures. All eyes are now turning towards the end of the presidential term. As is often the case, the polemic focuses primarily on the fluctuating interpretation of the Constitution. For almost a year, Haitians have been experiencing the confinement that the world has discovered in recent months. Everything seems to be in place for us to be back in a new *peyi lòk* as soon as the epidemic is over.

Clearly, the objectives set for BINUH are not being met. When one considers the resources invested over the past decades, the deterioration of the situation seems almost unintelligible. The fundamental causes of the instability have not been resolved; on the contrary, and one wonders how the friends of Haiti are allowing so much violence and misappropriation to take place. Do they not have the means to hold the State accountable for its commitments, be it only international commitments?

It should be noted that BINUH has inherited several sensitive files. The cholera tragedy has fuelled a great deal of mistrust towards the United Nations, which has had such difficulty in acknowledging its responsibility, if not its guilt. What about reparations for the thousands of victims? Although the Secretary-General has finally announced that he wants to assume responsibility for the failure of zero tolerance for sexual abuse, there is no mention of criminal or even disciplinary condemnation, as actions to establish paternity and enforce alimony payments remain theoretical until now. I myself am assisting the bereaved family of a young high school student who was hit by a United Nations car and who had been assured years of compensation that never arrived.

Ensuring respect for human rights and supporting a weak State are conflicting mandates. By supporting a State, a mission links its fate to that of the State and risks losing objectivity, even if only in the interpretation of indicators. And what happens when the State violates fundamental freedoms? That question arose in January 2010, when police officers from the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti failed to intervene to prevent officers of the Haitian National Police from firing on defenceless detainees at point-blank range in the civilian prison in Les Cayes.

The strategy of continued international support must be revisited when there is a lack of national will. That is true for the national dialogue saga. It is also true

for support offered to the Superior Council of the Judiciary or institutions that are supposed to combat corruption, but instead — far from independent — have demonstrated their willingness to take no action for change. The establishment of the National Council on Legal Aid is another such example. Donors have welcomed the rapid installation of an ad interim directorate dependent on the executive, thus bypassing the establishment of the board of directors provided for by the new law. BINUH's latest press release has drawn widespread criticism. Against the backdrop of this institutional vacuum, how can one support a contested Government's efforts to carry out constitutional reform?

The international community is locked in a one-on-one dialogue with the Government in power. Its support seems to depend more on strategic interests than concrete actions to promote human rights. The need for stabilization silences popular protest, thus preventing an essential counterbalance to the excesses of power and paving the way for veritable social time bombs.

Haitian civil society cannot be overlooked. Unfortunately, the United Nations too often considers militant organizations as mere project operators, subcontractors or the upholders of bureaucratic logic. Yet they play an indispensable role as watchdogs of democracy in a situation where we are losing new points of reference every day. Civil society actors must be listened to and supported.

I am grateful for having been given the opportunity to address the Security Council today.

## Annex III

### Statement by the Permanent Mission of Belgium to the United Nations

I thank Mr. Jacques Létang, President of the Haitian Bars Federation, and Special Representative La Lime for their briefings.

Belgium fully supports the work of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti to facilitate political dialogue in Haiti. All parties need to commit to an inclusive dialogue to respond to the country's political, social, economic and humanitarian crisis.

Since our last briefing, only four months ago (see S/PV.8729), the world seems to have changed several times over. Just as the cholera epidemic seemed eradicated, Haiti was hit hard by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), which compounded the country's many vulnerabilities. We support the role of the United Nations in assisting the country to respond to this pandemic. With the European Union (EU), we are also working hard to refocus and prioritize our support to fight this pandemic. We are concerned about reports of stigmatization and discrimination of people who allegedly have COVID-19, including through lynching and destruction of property.

We encourage political actors to seize the momentum of the COVID-19 response to build trust and work together to address the root causes of Haiti's instability. We welcome President Moïse's announcement on the holding of elections and his call for clarity on the electoral calendar. Constitutional reform is needed if Haiti is to address the extreme levels of political instability and polarization.

The widespread sentiment of impunity and lack of safety remains one of the main sources of frustration among the Haitian population. We call for renewed efforts to reform the justice sector, fight corruption and strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights. The high level of abductions and killings by gangs are particularly worrisome. In that regard, the finalization of the national strategy on disarmament, dismantlement, reintegration and community-violence reduction is encouraging, as is the reactivation of the Haitian National Police's (HNP) round table with civil society. To address those challenges, it is clear that the HNP needs a credible budget.

With regard to human rights, we urgently call for progress in ensuring accountability for the violence in Grand Ravine, La Saline, Bel Air and, more recently, Village de Dieu. Perpetrators continue to escape justice. The progress demonstrated by the national human rights institution and the inspectorate general of the HNP is encouraging. We call for the national action plan for human rights to be endorsed and implemented. We are also concerned about the right to food for the most vulnerable.

Haiti cannot face its challenges alone. Together with our EU partners, we are providing financial, technical and political support, and we call on all international partners to follow suit.

**Annex IV****Statement by the Special Envoy to the Security Council of the Dominican Republic, José Singer Weisinger**

I would like to thank Special Representative La Lime and Mr. Jacques Létang for their briefings. Their detailed information is helpful in identifying the core issues affecting Haiti and paving the way for the upcoming renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH).

We welcome the measures undertaken by the Haitian Government to assist the population and prevent the spread of the pandemic. Likewise, we commend all Haitian political actors and civil society for joining efforts to combat this scourge.

In that regard, the Haitian and Dominican Heads of State met virtually on 19 May to discuss synergies in their response to the pandemic. Likewise, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of our two countries have held periodic video-teleconferences to discuss that issue and others of common interest.

We hope that this pause in the political process caused by the pandemic offers some opportunities for reflection and generates momentum for the country's leadership to pursue open and inclusive dialogue that breaks the political deadlock, thus allowing for the creation of a road map and timeline for the pending and future political processes.

In addition to the challenges posed by the pandemic, the Dominican Republic also remains concerned about the persisting insecurity resulting from gang-related activities and the proliferation of illicit weapons and ammunition. The broad circulation of over 270,000 illicit firearms in civilian hands and the illicit traffic of small arms and light weapons are contributing to the outbreak of new civil unrest. We therefore reiterate that it is essential that the flow of small arms and their ammunition be urgently addressed.

In that context, we value the leadership role of the Haitian National Commission for Disarmament, Dismantlement and Reintegration in its quest to help reduce community violence. We also commend the efforts made by BINUH and the United Nations Development Programme in the areas of peacebuilding, arms control and conducting a baseline assessment on the life cycle of weapons and ammunition in Haiti.

In February, even before the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) crisis, more than 40 per cent of Haiti's population required humanitarian assistance. The acute levels of malnutrition among the population make the country one of the most food insecure in the world. That already dire situation could deteriorate further during the hurricane season.

In that context, we believe it is necessary to work hand in hand with the Haitian Government in order to put in place risk-assessment mechanisms and design more concrete plans and strategies to strengthen core sectors and institutions. Information and collaboration channels with local communities should also be improved to expand early-warning mechanisms in order to prepare for the impact of climate-related shocks.

We commend the international community and other partners for their pledge to mitigate the humanitarian situation in the country. The 2019-2020 Haiti humanitarian response plan amounts to \$253 million. As of 8 June, Haiti has received only \$29.9 million. In addition to the humanitarian challenges, the Haitian economy is facing multiple hardships that will exacerbate the socioeconomic situation and slow the recovery process post-COVID-19.

In that context, the Dominican Republic calls for an urgent and coordinated regional and global response to the pandemic. We echo the Secretary-General in his appeal for additional financial support to help Haiti overcome its development and health challenges.

In conclusion, we commend BINUH and the country team for their integrated response and continued work to assist Haiti under these extraordinary circumstances, which further hamper the fulfilment of the mission's mandate.

We concur with the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti of the Economic and Social Council in urging the United Nations system, the international community and international financial institutions to take joint action to prevent the spread of COVID-19, mitigate its humanitarian and socioeconomic effects and promote sustainable development and resilience to future shocks in Haiti.

## Annex V

### **Statement by the Permanent Mission of Estonia to the United Nations**

I would like to thank Ms. Helen La Lime, Special Representative of the Secretary General for Haiti, and Mr. Jacques Létang for their briefings.

Estonia is concerned about the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Haiti, where the humanitarian situation is already serious. We welcome measures taken by the Government of Haiti to combat the pandemic, especially the formation of the multisectoral commission for the management of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, more action and a coordinated national response to the pandemic are needed. The key elements to control the spread of the virus in Haiti are first, raising public awareness of COVID-19 and, secondly, addressing the dire situation in prisons and detention centres.

It is distressful that gains in the political process have been marginal. More effort and responsibility is required to solve the current political impasse. The people of Haiti deserve better and more stable lives.

We encourage all to take the political process forward. It is important to pursue open and inclusive dialogue and demonstrate the necessary political will to find solutions to the most pressing constitutional reform issues. Furthermore, additional clarity regarding the electoral calendar is needed. Creating conditions conducive to the holding of the upcoming legislative elections is of the utmost importance.

The ongoing political crises and socioeconomic challenges have a worrisome impact on the security situation, as they pave the way for increased criminal activities and violence. Gang-related crime still remains of great concern.

It is encouraging that the Haitian National Police has demonstrated growing professionalism and restraint in enforcing public order.

During the reporting period, the number of human rights violations, abuses and killings increased. Efforts to combat impunity are required, as no progress has been made on any cases since the drawdown of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti, including with regard to the events in La Saline and Bel Air. In addition, 74 per cent of detainees are still waiting for trial due to lengthy and complicated judicial proceedings, which has also led to the overcrowding of prisons. We stress the importance of enhancing accountability and ensuring that all cases are properly investigated and the perpetrators are brought to justice.

Finally, I would like to thank Special Representative La Lime and her team for their work. We remain hopeful that their continued efforts will bring a better future for Haiti.

I also request that we be updated about the alarming situation in Haitian prisons. What steps have been taken by the authorities to remove the deficiencies in the judicial system? What are the prospects, in the view of the mission, for improving the Haitian judicial system?

---

## Annex VI

### **Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, Anne Gueguen**

[Original: English and French]

I too thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Ms. Helen La Lime, for her briefing, as well as Mr. Jacques Létang, who has drawn up a clear assessment of the challenges facing Haiti.

First, I wish to express France's support for, and solidarity with, the Haitian people and Government in their efforts to fight the coronavirus disease pandemic and mitigate its socioeconomic and humanitarian consequences. The health crisis in Haiti, more than anywhere else, is compounding existing vulnerabilities, specifically the humanitarian crisis already affecting millions of Haitians. The international community has shown that it is ready to lend its support. In 2020, France will contribute to the work of the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service in Haiti so as to facilitate humanitarian access. The European Union has announced the redirection of €165 million in aid. In return, the Haitian authorities must provide guarantees as to the proper use of those funds.

Unfortunately, this pandemic has not brought an end to the violence or human rights violations, on the contrary. The increase in insecurity and violence due to gang-related activity since the beginning of 2020 is a source of deep concern. The Haitian National Police is committed to tackling this issue, and it must do so responsibly. No human rights violations can be tolerated. If they are to rebuild confidence, the Haitian authorities must tackle impunity, first and foremost in symbolic cases such as the La Saline and Bel Air massacres, which have given rise to damning United Nations reports. Finally, we call on the Haitian authorities to protect human rights defenders, who play a crucial role in that context.

Faced with the multidimensional crisis in which Haiti finds itself, we all know that the only solution lies in ensuring political dialogue among all Haitians. We regret that efforts towards such a dialogue in February, with the support of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), did not lead to the formation of an inclusive Government. France calls on President Jovenel Moïse and all political forces in the country, in particular the opposition, as well as on civil society and the private sector, to resume an inclusive national dialogue in preparation for the elections and the revision of the Constitution, if that is indeed the path that the Haitian people choose.

Eight months after its establishment, BINUH has been working tirelessly with the United Nations country team to support Haiti in its response to the pandemic. The Council must remain fully vigilant and take appropriate measures, particularly if the situation in Haiti continues to deteriorate.

## Annex VII

### **Statement by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations, Dian Triansyah Djani**

It is my honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Indonesia and Viet Nam, member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

At the outset, we would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Helen La Lime, for her insightful briefing, and all United Nations personnel for their dedication during this challenging time. I would also like to thank Mr. Jacques Létang for sharing information on the latest developments in Haiti.

We are deeply saddened by the lack of progress in Haiti in many areas, as described in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/537). The failure of dialogue to yield a political agreement in February was a huge loss for the people of Haiti. On that note, I would like to bring the following three points to the attention of the Security Council.

First, with regard to political stability, we believe that political uncertainty and polarization are the main causes of the instability and multifaceted difficulties in the country. A comprehensive national dialogue is therefore key. We support United Nations engagement with the Provisional Electoral Council to preserve the integrity of the electoral process and achieve the objective of a 30 per cent quota of women in elected posts. A Government that is not functioning for the people is without meaning. It is therefore important for all stakeholders in Haiti to practice dialogue and compromise in the interest of a better future for all Haitians. Haitian authorities bear a moral obligation to provide their citizens with the right to life in a peaceful and stable environment; it is their duty to make that happen.

Secondly, with respect to security and economic and social challenges, we note that criminality, gang-related activity, violations and abuses of human rights continue to rise. The economic situation has suffered multiple concurrent shocks, with problems being exacerbated by the global economic slowdown. In addition, despite some progress, the Haitian National Police continues to face serious difficulties that can hamper its ability to operate. In this regard, we support the efforts of the United Nations system, including those of the Peacebuilding Fund, to implement a series of socioeconomic interventions in Haiti that promote stability and reduce community and gang violence. Haitian authorities need to take the necessary bold steps to address these problems, which flow from the political deadlock.

Thirdly, with respect to the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), we believe that the pandemic and the measures undertaken to contain it have exacerbated an already acute socioeconomic and humanitarian situation. Basically, all six benchmarks have been severely affected by COVID-19. The disease has added significantly more challenges to the holding of elections in a timely manner, the opening of legal aid offices, the addressing of socioeconomic inequalities and the provision of access to health care. It has also disrupted the export of Haitian commodities.

In this regard, we appreciate the engagement of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) in encouraging constructive relations between the executive and the opposition, and we urge multi-stakeholder efforts aimed at addressing the health emergency. While commending BINUH's work, particularly the inclusion of gender equality in its recruitment and activities, we call on the mission and United Nations country team to identify measures needed to address the urgent issues in the country.

In conclusion, we would like to express our support for the Secretary-General's appeal to the international community, including, first and foremost, partners from the region, to increase technical and political support to Haiti during these challenging times. Indonesia and Viet Nam believe that the regional architecture can play an important role in shaping a new Haiti that comports with local wisdom and characteristics, while addressing the root causes of the various challenges. Regional resilience can be a good catalyst for expediting political and socioeconomic recovery in Haiti.

**Annex VIII****Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations, Halimah DeShong**

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Niger, Tunisia, South Africa and my country, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (A3+1). We thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General La Lime for her detailed briefing. We also thank Mr. Jacques Létang, President of the Haitian Bars Federation, for his briefing. Finally, we welcome the participation of the representative of Haiti in today's meeting.

Today's briefings and the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/537) show that the situation in Haiti is extremely dire. The worrisome security, political, humanitarian and socioeconomic situation has been exacerbated by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and risks being further aggravated by such external shocks as climate change. Against the backdrop of these daunting challenges, and mindful of those ahead, the A3+1 encourages the international community to continue supporting our Caribbean sister nation and reaffirm its support for the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH). Accordingly, we wish to make the following points.

First, the A3+1 remains deeply concerned about the lingering political challenges, in particular issues surrounding elections and the absence of an electoral calendar. We note with concern the failure to convene already overdue legislative elections, and we are cognizant that the constitutional deadline for the next presidential election is imminent. We urge the Haitian authorities to undertake the measures needed to ensure the successful organization of these elections in a timely manner. In this regard, we call on Haitian political leaders to forge ahead with forming a Government in order to attract more bilateral and multilateral support.

The A3+1 also stresses that there can be no externally imposed solution to the political crisis, and call on all Haitian stakeholders to work constructively to find a long-term comprehensive and peaceful solution. In this regard, the A3+1 further urges all Haitian political leaders to convene a national dialogue and refrain from acts that may trigger additional violence and compromise the gains made by the country under the guidance of the United Nations.

Secondly, we welcome the role being played by the National Commission on Disarmament, Dismantlement and Reintegration and commend the Commission's efforts to draft a national community-violence reduction strategy to enhance efforts in combating gang violence. We also welcome the efforts of the Haitian National Police (HNP) to tackle the scourge of gang violence in the country. We are disturbed by the proliferation of illicit weapons and ammunition that continue to enter the country illegally. Like many other small island States of the Caribbean, Haiti is a manufacturer of neither firearms nor ammunition. However, its geographic location between the suppliers and consumers of illegal narcotics in the South and to North makes it a transshipment point for illicit weapons.

We note that the prevalence of illicit weapons has triggered an upsurge in crime, particularly among gangs, which continues to create insecurity. We are deeply disturbed by reports that a death squad has carried out violent attacks in several impoverished Port-au-Prince neighbourhoods. We call for a thorough investigation and for the perpetrators to be held accountable. The collaboration among BINUH, the Haitian national authorities and other relevant stakeholders in the drafting of arms control legislation consistent with international standards is encouraging in this regard.

In addition, the A3+1 urges that institutions and capacity-building mechanisms be strengthened to address institutional shortcomings. We recognize the marginal advances that have been made in the Haitian National Police and in the justice and correction sectors. We regret, however, that the Haitian State had to reduce its contribution to the national budget for the HNP to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic. Together with the relevant judicial institutions, the HNP has a fundamental role to play in the State's meeting its obligations to protect its citizens and ensure that transparency and the rule of law prevail.

Thirdly, the worsening humanitarian situation, particularly increasing food insecurity, overcrowded prisons and challenges for those people made most vulnerable, remains of grave concern. In the wake of the pandemic and the ensuing socioeconomic crisis, it is crucial that the international community redouble its efforts to assist the Haitian authorities in responding to the crisis. We laud the spirit of unity and solidarity shown by Haitians in their initial response to the pandemic. We also appreciate all efforts aimed at assisting the country in its national humanitarian response, including through the Caribbean Community, the Pan American Health Organization, the World Food Programme, the International Organization for Migration and the United Nations. We acknowledge the efforts of the Government of Haiti in meeting some of the benchmarks and encourage further progress in these important areas.

Furthermore, we welcome reports that some international financial institutions will suspend Haiti's debt so that the country can respond adequately to the COVID-19 pandemic, and we call on Haiti's partners to consider providing debt forgiveness. Not only does Haiti need debt relief, but it also needs grants to face the already bleak economic situation forecasted by the International Monetary Fund, which includes reductions in remittances, textile exports and foreign direct investment. We welcome the continued engagement of the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, which supports the country's long-term development strategy. At this critical moment, we urge greater collaboration between the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council to foster complementarities in the United Nations system's engagement with the country, in order to comprehensively address the root causes of Haiti's insecurity.

Haiti remains a fundamental pillar to our African and Caribbean civilization, with a glorious yet complex history. Its seemingly never-ending battle to create security and stability for its people grieves us, especially given the nation's leadership role in paving the way for the abolition of slavery. As the first black nation to revolt against slavery and oppression in the western hemisphere, Haiti paid an exorbitant price for its freedom. We cannot abandon Haiti. We must stand in solidarity with our Haitian brothers and sisters.

In conclusion, the A3+1 reaffirms that the sustainable development of Haiti will be a mere fleeting illusion to be pursued and never attained if the genesis of Haiti's underdevelopment is not addressed, and this must begin with adequate restitution.

**Annex IX****Statement by the Political Coordinator of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations, David Clay**

I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General La Lime and Mr. Létang for their briefings.

We welcome the Secretary-General's second report on the activities of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) (S/2020/537). The United Kingdom acknowledges the extraordinary difficulties faced by Haiti since the Security Council last met to discuss BINUH (see S/PV.8729). I wish to start by expressing our appreciation for the hard work of the mission leadership and staff amid increasingly challenging circumstances.

I will make three brief points. First, the United Kingdom believes that a coordinated and holistic response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is critical. Secondly, urgent steps should now be taken to bolster human rights and accountability. Thirdly, a road map out of Haiti's interminable political impasse is more essential than ever.

First, with regard to COVID-19, it is clear that the pandemic presents a grave risk to Haiti, in terms of both the impact of the disease itself and its second-order effects. As the health, humanitarian and economic effects of the crisis take hold, a coordinated and holistic response by the Haitian authorities and the international community is critical. The United Kingdom is encouraged by the United Nations system's quick adaptation to the situation on the ground, and we call upon the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in particular, also serving as the Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, to work closely with the Haitian authorities to help guide a coordinated approach.

Secondly, with regard to human rights and accountability, the United Kingdom remains concerned about the lack of progress. That the perpetrators of massacres at La Saline and Bel Air continue to evade justice profoundly undermines efforts to build confidence and trust in the rule of law. We also regret that the Haitian Government has yet to honour the commitment it made to appointing a Minister for Human Rights. This appointment would be a valuable demonstration of Haiti's political will to safeguard human rights.

Finally, with regard to the ongoing political impasse, in meeting after meeting, the Security Council and the United Nations leadership have sought to encourage the parties in Haiti to come up with a road map to overcome political deadlock and institutional paralysis. As the Secretary-General notes in his report, the collapse in February of dialogue efforts to reach an agreement on the road map needed for constitutional, institutional and structural reforms is yet another missed opportunity.

COVID-19 has aggravated the existing risks to stability Haiti. The economy is faltering. Elections loom. Now more than ever, all parties should come together in the national interest. Broad, inclusive dialogue is essential.

---

**Annex X****Statement by the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, Kelly Craft**

I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General La Lime and Mr. Jacques Létang for shedding light on the situation in Haiti.

As we all know, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has placed significant stress on Haiti's already fragile health-care system. Reports of attacks on COVID-19 patients, and on the medical facilities treating them, are deeply concerning, as fear and distrust will only worsen the situation.

In this challenging time, the United States stands with Haiti. To date, we have committed over \$16 million in assistance to support Haitian efforts aimed at fighting COVID-19.

Because the peak for COVID-19 infections in Haiti has yet to come, it is essential that all Haitians work together to limit the spread of the virus. We note with concern the spread of COVID-19 within the country's overcrowded prisons, and call on the Haitian Government to fully follow through on its 27 March decision to release pretrial detainees accused of minor crimes and medically vulnerable prisoners nearing completion of their sentences. This is a time for action, not for talk.

It is equally important that the Government continue its work on needed political, economic and social reforms. President Moïse's 18 May speech stressing his commitment to holding elections is a positive step, and we encourage the Haitian Government and all political actors to reach a political accord and find a way forward, in the interests, above all, of the Haitian people.

We note the gains made by the Haitian National Police (HNP) as it continues its efforts aimed at addressing community and gang violence and at reducing kidnappings. The HNP's General Inspectorate has acted positively to improve human rights accountability, a welcome step towards increased transparency. However, as we have previously noted, the continuing failure to provide the HNP with required resources places its hard-won gains at risk. Once again, this is a time for action, not just talk.

We must also express our concern regarding the lack of accountability for perpetrators of human rights abuses, including in La Saline and Bel Air. Steps must be taken to avoid reinforcing an environment of impunity.

Finally, as Haiti responds to the pandemic and to the underlying drivers of instability, it is essential to strengthen the rule of law and end the scourge of corruption. We are listening to Mr. Létang and we are reinforcing his concerns and supporting the citizens of Haiti. And I must say to President Moïse and to all of Haiti's political leaders: It is time to set aside their differences and to come together to build the strong institutions that will deliver a more prosperous and secure future for all Haitians.

**Annex XI****Statement by the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of Haiti to the United Nations,  
Patrick Saint Hilaire**

[Original: English and French]

I thank you, Madame President, for this opportunity to state the views and observations of the Government of the Republic of Haiti on document S/2020/537.

I take this opportunity, at the outset of my remarks, to extend our sincere best wishes for the success of the French presidency of the Security Council for the month of June 2020. I also take this opportunity to thank all members of the Council for their relevant commentary on, and in solidarity with my country, Haiti, as it pursues its quest for political stability, social progress and long-term development.

On behalf of the President of the Republic of Haiti, His Excellency Mr. Jovenel Moïse, and the Government led by Prime Minister Joseph Jouthe and on my own behalf, I reiterate the solidarity of the Republic of Haiti with all the States members of the Council that have been severely affected by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The pandemic has undeniably shown how interconnected the countries and people of our world are. The untold suffering that the pandemic has inflicted on humankind has highlighted the need for the Member States and all stakeholders of the United Nations, in this pivotal seventy-fifth anniversary year, to pursue strategies and policies for the renewal of the international system with determination, persistence, solidarity and resolve.

Against that background, I commend the efforts of the Member States, United Nations entities, multilateral donors, foundations and non-governmental organizations to continue collective action to contain the pandemic as soon as possible and mitigate its socioeconomic and other consequences.

Turning to the Secretary-General's second report on the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), let me assure the Council that the Government of Haiti has carefully considered the report. The Secretary-General's observations in paragraphs 49 to 57 will strengthen and advance cooperation between the United Nations team in Haiti and the Haitian authorities. Importantly, BINUH will always be able to count on the collaboration of Haiti to carry out the specific tasks assigned to it under resolution 2476 (2019).

I thank Helen La Lime, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Haiti for her presentation of the Secretary-General's report and her overview of the developments in Haiti in recent weeks. I extend my appreciation to Bruno Lemarquis, Deputy Special Representative, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Affairs Coordinator in Haiti, and all the members of the United Nations team who carry out their tasks with respect for the dignity of the Haitian people and in accordance with the strategic vision and priorities defined by the Government of Haiti. It is critical that BINUH continue to work this way in implementing its mandate in strict compliance with the second preambular paragraph of resolution 2476 (2019), in which the Security Council reaffirms "its firm commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and unity of Haiti".

In the same spirit, I welcome the participation in this Council meeting of lawyer and President of the Federation of Haitian Bar Associations, Jacques Létang. The Government attaches particular importance to working together with all stakeholders in the interest of providing lasting solutions to the country's current and emerging problems. Those problems concern all actors in the nation's political, economic and social life; therefore, the spirit of collaboration must prevail among

them. Civil society organizations are encouraged to play an increased and disciplined role in the efforts necessary to ensure the independence of the Haitian justice system and in the promotion and respect of fundamental human rights and the rule of law.

I have taken due note of the questions raised by Mr. Létang on behalf of the Federation of Haitian Bar Associations and, especially, of the concerns he has expressed.

Regarding justice and security, the country faces multifaceted challenges. The covert movement of small arms and light weapons is indeed a real plague. Such weapons are responsible for numerous acts of violence, blatant abuse and deaths in a number of localities across the country. Armed gangs also remain a major challenge and cause for concern. The perpetration of acts of gang violence, as well as violent clashes between rival armed groups, are an undisputed and unacceptable cause of suffering across the layers of the Haitian population. Countering the security challenges requires the continuous strengthening of the Haitian National Police's capacities. In addition, much more must be done to strengthen the justice system, make the Courts more effective at ensuring impartiality and ensure that those responsible for acts of violence are punished.

In addition, the Government is paying particular interest to improving the situation of prison staff as well as all detainees.

The Government recognizes and fully understands the gravity of the law and order situation in Haiti and will continue to mobilize all actors in the security sector to face and resolve the threat to law and order. We are satisfied that the Secretary-General's Report took note of the progress made in the key reforms designed to enable the Ministry of Justice and Public Security to carry out its critical tasks.

The Government remains resolute and resilient in tackling the causes of social inequality, corruption, poverty, food insecurity, economic challenges and lack of access to health care. In the current global environment marked by multifaceted crises, Haiti has identified several elements that are essential to its recovery efforts, namely, political will, ambition, partnership, solidarity and substantial funding. Financial aid and support for Haiti must be consistent with the specific needs of the population, particularly those most vulnerable. It must also be consistent with the critical need to strengthen the main national institutions. At this time, the Government is in urgent need of additional resources, both technical and financial, to address the numerous crises the country is facing all at once.

The Government has noted with interest the concerns expressed by the Secretary-General in paragraph 3 of his report relating to the absence of a functional legislature and the lack of details on the timetable for the next elections and for the necessary constitutional and structural reforms.

While progress has undeniably been made in Haiti since the consideration of the Secretary-General's first report on the execution of BINUH's mandate (see S/PV.8729), much remains to be done to extricate the country from the rut of instability and current crises. It is a fact that the slowness of progress is due to persistent political divisions, the difficulties in establishing an authentic, transparent dialogue focused on the national interest and, now, the spread of COVID-19 in the country.

All sectors of the nation must resolve to make the sacrifices critical to containing the spread of coronavirus disease, to contribute to the establishment of a realistic electoral calendar and to set out together — with determination — on the path towards the great transformations that are needed for the country's stability,

recovery and long-term development. In that regard, there is an urgent need for a far-reaching national dialogue.

A meaningful national dialogue is not simply a political exercise; it is a necessity imposed on the country by the regrettable unbridled polarization of the nation's stakeholders. It is within such a framework that the multiple links necessary for national restoration and recovery must be rebuilt. Without question, that is the spirit of the various initiatives launched by the President since he came to power. Even today, the Government first calls out to all the nation's political forces, then requests reinforced support from the United Nations system and other international partners in order to relaunch, on solid foundations, the essential dialogue on major issues of national interest.

Nothing great and lasting can be accomplished outside the founding values of the Republic of Haiti or the essential principles on which the democratic regime established by the Haitian Constitution is based. There is a real need for constitutional reform that takes into account the facts and reality in the country so as to remove, once and for all, the oft-condemned ambiguities in some of the Constitution's provisions. Constitutional reform and the organization of free and democratic elections for the renewal of the political leadership are critical elements of the proper functioning of national institutions. The Secretary-General's report highlights, in paragraphs 7 and 8, the efforts made by the Haitian authorities, with the support of international partners, to bring about constitutional reform and the organization of the next elections. Unfortunately, it is not easy to move forward at the desired pace during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Government of Haiti welcomes the emphasis of sections VI and VII of the report on the deterioration of Haiti's socioeconomic situation and the new emergencies arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. Today, more than ever, Haiti needs to develop better awareness of the root causes of its people's difficulties and specific needs. Indeed, the country's socioeconomic situation has deteriorated considerably under the combined effect of the prolonged political crisis, the *peyi lòk* strategy and recurrent natural disasters.

We must not lose sight of the fact that Haiti has been hit hard over the last 10 years by the devastating earthquake of 12 January 2010, cyclones, drought, floods, the cholera epidemic — which we will never cease to deplore — and the inconsistency of many national and international actors. It is in this challenging context that the coronavirus disease pandemic broke out in Haiti. Its impact is already being severely felt in terms of livelihoods, especially those of young people, women and other vulnerable groups. The national economy is facing multiple simultaneous shocks, including reduced tax revenues, increased spending to respond to the crisis, reduced foreign direct investment and exports and reduced remittances and multifaceted contribution of the valiant and generous Haitian diaspora. The informal sector is already paying a heavy price.

The health crisis further weakens the country's capacity to respond to the humanitarian crisis and climate shocks, especially during the cyclone season, from June to November, which is already upon us.

The number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 is increasing significantly. As of 16 June, the overall toll stands at 4,688 confirmed cases of infection, including 141 new cases and 82 deaths, and the death rate is 1.7 per cent.

The Government has taken an extensive series of measures to combat the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country. They include the establishment of technical and administrative structures to manage the pandemic, a vast prevention campaign, capacity-building, the acquisition of medical equipment and supplies and

the significant increase in the budget allocated to the Ministry of Public Health and Population. We note with encouragement that the several Member States and United Nations entities cited in paragraphs 35 and 36 of the report, as well as some non-governmental organizations, have expressed support for the new “early warning, early action” approach. The Government has also taken a number of additional measures for young people, the unemployed, professionals, businesses and so on.

The management of the coronavirus disease pandemic has demonstrated the relevance of better preparing countries for shocks and of the recovery-development continuum. It also reveals the essential changes, in both the governance of vulnerable countries and the modalities of international aid. Aid to Haiti is now, more than ever, a subject requiring attention and strategic reflection. We must not get lost in the context of the response to COVID-19 and the humanitarian crisis. Let us bear in mind the main lessons learned from the modalities and level of aid provided to the country after the devastating earthquake of 12 January 2010. Let us not persist in making the same errors all over again. I keep in mind the important maxim that to err is human, but to persist in error is diabolical.

In the current context, Haiti is in urgent need of adequate, predictable resources to overcome many challenges, namely, the health crisis and its consequences, the humanitarian crisis, the living conditions of the population, the holding of democratic elections, corruption and impunity, the spread of firearms and the proliferation of armed gangs.

Finally, I would like to convey here the urgent call for greater solidarity and flexibility made to bilateral and multilateral donors by the President Moïse on the occasion of the recent high-level meeting on financing for development, held by video-teleconference. It is requiring determination, solidarity and flexibility in the funding of emergency responses, recovery efforts and sustainable development initiatives that will allow us to win — together — the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic and its socioeconomic consequences and to take other decisive action to overcome the current challenges in Haiti.