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HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

Statement by the President

9/PRST... Situation of human rights in Haiti

At the ... session, held on ... September 2008, the President of the Council issued a statement reading as follows:

- “1. The Human Rights Council welcomes recent political developments in Haiti, marked by the formation and installation of a new Government.
2. The Council commends the reaffirmation by the Haitian authorities of their commitments and their determination to improve living conditions for Haitians, with a special emphasis on respect for human rights.
3. The Council notes with satisfaction the cooperation between the Haitian National Police and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) in curbing violence, crime and banditry.

4. The Council welcomes the adoption of the Regulations on the judiciary and the new Act on the High Council of the Judiciary, as well as the reopening of the Judicial Training College. It encourages the authorities to continue their efforts, in particular as regards reinforcing inspection units within the police and justice systems, eliminating prolonged pretrial detention, introducing a legal aid scheme and strengthening the Office of Citizen Protection.

5. The Council thanks the outgoing independent expert for his important contribution to consolidating the rule of law in Haiti through his judicious recommendations, in particular with regard to judicial reform.

6. The Council is deeply concerned at the deterioration of Haitians' standard of living and quality of life in recent months, partly as a result of the serious economic crisis and acute food shortage. It deplores the heavy loss of life and material damage caused by the consecutive passage of hurricanes Fay, Gustav, Hanna and Ike.

7. The Council is aware of the many obstacles to development in Haiti and the difficulties encountered by its leaders in daily governance. It recognizes that full enjoyment of human rights - civil and political, economic, social and cultural - is a factor of peace, stability and progress in Haiti.

8. The Council strongly encourages the international community as a whole, and in particular international donors, friendly countries and United Nations specialized agencies, to step up their cooperation with the constituted authorities of Haiti for the full realization of human rights.

9. The Council welcomes the Haitian authorities' request to extend the mission of the independent expert on the situation of human rights in Haiti to September 2010 and decides to support the request.

10. The Council also welcomes the appointment of Mr. Michel Forst as independent expert on the situation of human rights in Haiti.

11. The Council invites the new expert to continue the work undertaken and to carry out his mission by bringing his experience and expertise to bear and contributing to the cause of human rights in Haiti, with a particular emphasis on economic, social and cultural rights.

12. The Council also invites the new expert to undertake a mission to Haiti in the near future and report to it each year in accordance with its programme of work. It encourages the Haitian authorities to cooperate with the new independent expert.”
