

Forum: Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (GA3)

Issue: The situation of human rights in Haiti

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INTRODUCTION

The situation currently faced by Haiti is an extremely pressing matter, as it has been plagued by long-standing political turmoil, gang violence, and inflation, which have all led to the trampling of human rights. It is deeply intertwined with the concept of ethics, as these human rights have been placed in jeopardy and have been infringed upon countless times in the past. Haiti, which is located between the Caribbean Sea and North Atlantic Ocean has been living under the conditions of a prolonged sociopolitical crisis that has in turn led to countless consequences.

The population is forced on a daily basis to bear the brunt of the effects of Haiti's political instability, as welfare and healthcare resources rapidly deteriorate while the education systems and infrastructure are also weakened. Gangs and other small associations are presently taking advantage of this, something that has led to a significant spike in kidnappings, murders, and violence. Ultimately, human rights in Haiti are in critical condition, as they are being infringed upon on a daily basis.

Additionally, due to these conditions which include abysmal welfare and infrastructure, an epidemic of cholera has taken place, with the number of infected people almost reaching 25.000¹.

Furthermore, Haiti has been struck by earthquakes that have killed hundreds of thousands of people and have caused even further damage and destruction. Moreover, due to inflation, poverty is widespread in Haiti, as well as famine, as countless people are unable to get access to absolute living essentials.

This never-ending cycle has naturally led to a wide array of human rights violations. Haitians have previously attempted to immigrate to other countries, including the United States of America (USA). However, they were subjected to cruel, inhumane, discriminatory torture, such as anti-black discrimination and were expelled under the pretense of violating international law.

¹ "Ministère de La Santé Publique et de La Population – Ministère de La Santé Publique et de La Population." *Ministère de La Santé Publique et de La Population – Ministère de La Santé Publique et de La Population*, www.mspp.gouv.ht/.

This torture included the usage of whips, as images surfaced on the internet of a border patrol officer whipping ²Mirard Hoseph, a Haitian seeking asylum.

Sexual violence is also commonly used as a means of intimidation, as gangs have utilized it to threaten Haitians living in gang-controlled neighborhoods, with even 10-year-old children becoming victims of gang rape. All these human rights violations that are taking place every single day coupled with the undoubtedly crippling conditions as famine, cholera and political instability plague Haiti amount to a fundamental issue that must be ameliorated.

These aforementioned conditions lie at the core of all the human rights violations that occur, as once they take place, people stop thinking rationally and panic ensues. They prioritize their own lives and their own protection over respecting other's rights. Although the UN has previously taken action to help de-escalate the situation and combat it accordingly, these human rights violations have not ceased. Ergo, it is absolutely vital that this matter is resolved in order to reduce the humanitarian impact on Haitians.



Figure 1:A map of Haiti's location³

DEFINITION OF KEY-TERMS

Coup d'état

“Coup d'état, also called coup, refers to the sudden, violent overthrow of an existing government by a small group. The chief prerequisite for a coup is control of all or part of the armed forces, the police, and other military elements.”⁴

² “Torture and Ill-Treatment of Haitian Asylum Seekers Is Rooted in Racism.” *Amnesty International*, 20 September 2022, www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/09/usa-torture-haitian-asylum-seekers-anti-black-racism/.

³ “Housing of Haiti.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 30 November 2022, www.britannica.com/place/Haiti/Housing.

⁴ “Coup d'état.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, www.britannica.com/topic/coup-detat.

Epidemic

“An occurrence of disease that is temporarily of high prevalence.”⁵

Famine

“Severe and prolonged hunger in a substantial proportion of the population of a region or country, resulting in widespread and acute malnutrition and death by starvation and disease. Famines usually last for a limited time, ranging from a few months to a few years. They cannot continue indefinitely, if for no other reason than that the affected population would eventually be decimated.”⁶

Gang Violence

“Gang violence means criminal and non political acts of violence committed by a group of people who regularly engage in criminal activity against innocent people. The term may also refer to physical hostile interactions between two or more gangs.”⁷

Humanitarian Assistance

“Humanitarian assistance is generally accepted to mean the aid and action designed to save lives, alleviate suffering, and maintain and protect human dignity during and in the aftermath of man-made crises and natural disasters, as well as to prevent and strengthen preparedness for the occurrence of such situations.”⁸

Humanitarian Crisis⁹

“A humanitarian crisis is defined as any circumstance where humanitarian needs are sufficiently large and complex to require significant external assistance and resources, and where a multi-sectoral response is needed, with the engagement of a wide range of international humanitarian actors (IASC). This may include smaller-scale emergencies; in countries with limited capacities, the threshold will be lower than in countries with strong capacities. An emergency is a situation that threatens the lives and well-being of large numbers of a population and requires extraordinary action to ensure their survival, care and protection.”

⁵ “Epidemic.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9 June 2023, www.britannica.com/science/epidemic.

⁶ “Famine.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 7 June 2023, www.britannica.com/science/famine.

⁷ US Legal, Inc. “Find a Legal Form in Minutes.” Gang Violence Law and Legal Definition | *USLegal, Inc.*, definitions.uslegal.com/g/gang-violence/.

⁸ “Humanitarian Assistance.” *INEE*, inee.org/eie-glossary/humanitarian-assistance.

⁹ “CCC: Scope.” *Humanitarian UNICEF*, www.corecommitments.unicef.org/cc-1-1.

Inflation

“Inflation means an increase in the cost of living as the price of goods and services rise. The rate of inflation measures the annual percentage change in the general price level.”¹⁰

Welfare state

“The concept of government in which the state or a well-established network of social institutions plays a key role in the protection and promotion of the economic and social well-being of citizens. It is based on the principles of equality of opportunity, equitable distribution of wealth, and public responsibility for those unable to avail themselves of the minimal provisions for a good life. The general term may cover a variety of forms of economic and social organization.”¹¹

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Historical Background

2010 Earthquake

Haiti has been struck by various natural disasters. Specifically, in 2010, a large-scale earthquake took place on January 12, 2010. The initial shock of the earthquake was measured at 7.0, while the two that followed registered a magnitude of 5.9 and 5.5 respectively.¹² Furthermore, due to Haiti’s inadequate reinforcement and severe lack of building codes, the earthquake dealt critical damage to buildings and infrastructure which led to their collapse. Thus, Haitians who happened to be inside these buildings ended up losing their lives or being trapped. Some of the buildings that received the most damage include the National Palace, the cathedral in Port-au-Prince as well as the parliament building and national penitentiary. Moreover, the electric power system also collapsed, and communication lines were lost, while many roads were buried in rubble and blocked, all of which significantly hindered the provision of appropriate aid from international organizations. Without foreign humanitarian aid, the crisis in Haiti would continue to spiral out of control and become even harder to salvage.

Additionally, around 1/3¹⁰ of the country’s citizens were affected and more than 1 million¹⁰ people lost their homes. This naturally led to people being displaced and being forced to live in donated tents. Finally, it is estimated by the Haitian government that about 316.000 people died in the earthquake and its immediate aftermath¹⁰. This is

¹⁰“Inflation.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 4 July 2023, www.britannica.com/money/topic/inflation-economics.

¹¹ “Welfare State.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, www.britannica.com/money/topic/welfare-state.

¹² “2010 Haiti Earthquake.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 13 June 2023, www.britannica.com/event/2010-Haiti-earthquake.

largely due to Haiti's inability to properly handle these natural disasters. Due to crippling health conditions and diseases, as well as rapidly deteriorating infrastructure and frameworks, Haiti is unable to deal with such catastrophes. Ergo, the humanitarian crisis already plaguing Haiti gains entirely new dimensions, as it impacts nearly the entire population. The human rights violations that ensue are products of this constantly worsening humanitarian crisis.

2010 Cholera Outbreak

A huge earthquake wasn't the only disaster that harmed Haiti in 2010, considering that on October 20, 2010, an outbreak of cholera occurred. This particular outbreak claimed 10.000 deaths and affected a tremendous 820.000 people¹³. Although the death count was minimized through combined efforts of UNICEF, DINEPA and other organizations, the country wasn't officially declared cholera free until February 4, 2022 following 3 years without a single case¹³.

2016 Hurricane

On October 4, 2016, the massive (Category 4) hurricane Mathew struck Haiti. It caused heavy flooding and led to the destruction of critical infrastructure and institutions, as well as agricultural crops and ecosystems. It cost the lives of 546 people and displaced 175.000 who ended up seeking refuge in shelters. Meanwhile, 1.4 million individuals needed immediate humanitarian assistance. All in all, it affected more than 2 million people, ruined 90% of the crops and livestock in numerous areas, destroyed thousands of structures and roads and led to a spike in suspected cholera cases¹⁴.

2021 Earthquake

However, another earthquake struck Haiti on 14 August 2021, which registered a magnitude of 7.2. Thousands of people were left homeless, as more than 130.000¹⁵ houses were destroyed, and faced difficulty finding shelter due to the ongoing pandemic and the damage inflicted by the earthquake. Additionally, it is estimated that 120.000¹⁵ people urgently needed drinkable water. Furthermore, in accordance with UNICEF's Sud Department, "94 of the 255 schools have either sustained damages or been completely destroyed"¹⁵.

¹³ "Cholera in Haiti." *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, 25 January 2023, www.cdc.gov/cholera/haiti/index.html#:~:text=On%20October%2020%2C%202010%2C%20the,cases%20and%20nearly%2010%2C000%20deaths.

¹⁴ "Rapidly Assessing the Impact of Hurricane Matthew in Haiti." *World Bank*, 29 August 2018, www.worldbank.org/en/results/2017/10/20/rapidly-assessing-the-impact-of-hurricane-matthew-in-haiti.

¹⁵ "2021 Haiti Earthquake and Tropical Storm Grace." *Center for Disaster Philanthropy*, 6 October 2022, disasterphilanthropy.org/disasters/2021-haiti-earthquake-and-tropical-storm-grace/.

2022 Cholera Outbreak

Still, disaster struck again when another cholera outbreak was reported in October 2022. The following month, over 600 cases¹³ were confirmed and announced by the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MSPP) as well as over 6500 suspected cases. The number of confirmed cases increased significantly as on February 2023 the MSPP reported 33.185¹⁶ suspected cases, out of which 2.398 were confirmed and 29.288 people were hospitalized. The fatality rate is estimated to be 1.8%¹⁶. This outbreak has yet to be resolved¹⁶. This all actively demonstrates how fast the spread of this disease occurs. In the past, Haitians bore the brunt of the disease as it led to horrendous living conditions, which only managed to enhance the humanitarian crisis.

Political Background

Lasalin Massacre & Protests

Haiti is currently facing intense political turmoil, which first originated with the July 2018 protests. Not only that, but due to the natural disasters that have previously struck Haiti, the infrastructure and welfare have been crippled. This has also led to human rights being placed in jeopardy since without the proper institutions, the Haitians won't have sufficient access to medical care. Meanwhile, it has allowed others to take advantage of these conditions. The protests of July 2018 were the result of significantly increased fuel prices. These protests continued, as Haitians marched all around the country protesting for improved living conditions, including better healthcare, education and accountability from authorities that have been accused of being corrupt. The president's administration is suspected to have led the Lasalin massacre, which took place on November 13, 2018, where a police truck opened fire on unarmed males and slaughtered them. Many surviving victims publicly came out and stated that this action was rooted in political expediency, considering that many of the victims were known protesters against the current president Jovenel Moise. After careful investigation, the UN concluded that the perpetrators of the massacre had connections with the current government, highlighting that the political scene is responsible for the protests and the later deterioration of the humanitarian situation.

Many of the protests were demanding his resignation, and Moise was even accused of embezzling money produced by an oil alliance with Venezuela. During the June 10 2019 protests, 5 people were injured and 2 lost their lives. The human right to protest, as well as the right to freedom of speech and the right to live, was undoubtedly trampled upon. The protesters were clearly within their rights to publicly express their own

¹⁶"Epidemiological Update - Cholera - 28 February 2023 - Haiti." *ReliefWeb*, 1 March 2023, reliefweb.int/report/haiti/epidemiological-update-cholera-28-february-2023.

opinions, and did so in a non-violent manner with no intention to inflict physical harm on anyone. Yet, they were treated inhumanely and lost their lives. Additionally, the death of the protesters infringes on the right to participation in a civil society as well as the right of assembly, both rights that each of the protesters was equally entitled. Not only did these protests due to the pre-existing political instability worsen the humanitarian crisis in Haiti, the people's rights to protest, freedom of speech, and right of assembly were trampled upon.

Assassination of President Moise

In July 7, 2021, Haiti's president, who was widely considered authoritarian, was assassinated, thus plunging the country, which was already battered continuously by epidemics, famine, poverty, and natural disasters, into even further despair. And so, the nation was once again in uproar. Even though he extended his tenure, his death marked the end of all elected officials in Haiti and thus, instigated the rapid rise of gangs and criminal organizations. Naturally, the country fell even deeper into its humanitarian crisis.

Imposed Government

Prior to his death, the former president elected Ariel Henry to be the next prime minister. Following his death, Ariel declared himself the rightful prime minister. He was sworn in on July 20, 2021. As he was not elected by the people, a large number of citizens believe him to be corrupt. Additionally, he is suspected to have been strongly supported by the USA, and that he is a tool utilized to serve its interests and to permit them to intervene in Haiti's internal affairs, something that has led to even more protests regarding Ariel's government. However, the protests began getting violent, and some people were even injured, something that contributes to the worsening of the humanitarian situation.

To add to that, there is no functioning parliament, no constitutional representation, and no democratic institutions still working as the local authorities' terms ended in 2020. Timely legislative elections have not been held in Haiti since October 2019. This clearly infringes upon the citizens' right to vote, as well as the right to participate. Other than that, this political instability provided opportunities for gangs to engage in violence, something that once again tramples upon the Haitian's human rights. All these result in misrepresentation and even cultural damage, as citizens are not getting opportunities to voice their opinions through elections.

Gang Activity

Moreover, gangs have been taking advantage of the present political turmoil and current situation in Haiti and attempting to seize control of Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince. Such gangs have targeted storages of grain and other critical infrastructure and

institutions such as hospitals. This clearly jeopardizes the citizens' right to access to healthcare as well as the right to nutrition, due to the fact that grain is one of the primary food sources in Haiti. Additionally, these gangs began targeting women and children, considering that between 2020 and 2021, 31 children have been kidnapped¹⁷. Even orphanages aren't safe from such carnage, as a formation of armed men broke into an orphanage, where they raped 2 young girls of 13 and 14 years old as well as a woman of 27 years¹⁹. This activity tramples upon the right to live, the right to liberty and the right to security of person. They impose themselves through violence, including sexual violence, weapons, intimidation, and threats of harm. These gangs continue to plague Haiti to this day, as they essentially have impunity, due to the police force being severely weakened and unable to stop them.

Social Background

Inflation

Another critical issue faced by Haitians is the rapidly rising rates of inflation. When it comes to 2022, an astonishing inflation rate of 34%¹⁸ was calculated. For 2023, a rate of 48%¹⁹ was calculated. These sky-high inflation rates lead to spikes in the prices of food and goods, leading to further deterioration of the financial situation in Haiti. Thus, citizens are unable to afford and access healthcare or appropriate sanitation. Famine is also a direct consequence of this inflation, as Haitians are unable to gain access to food and drinkable water. Less than half of the population (43%)²⁰ have access to clean drinkable water.

Poverty

Due to gang activity, political instability, and inflation, one of the biggest problems plaguing Haiti is poverty. In fact, 59%²¹ of Haitians live under the national poverty line which is 2.41 USD per day, while a staggering 24% live below the national extreme poverty line. At the same time, there is a significant wealth disparity, as the top 20% of the

¹⁷ "Rising Gang Violence in Haiti Is Now Targeting Children, UNICEF Warns." *UNICEF*, www.unicef.org/lac/en/press-releases/rising-gang-violence-haiti-now-is-targeting-children-unicef-warns.

¹⁸ "Inflation Rates in Haiti." *Worlddata.Info*, www.worlddata.info/america/haiti/inflation-rates.php#:~:text=The%20inflation%20rate%20for%20consumer,the%20price%20increase%20was%2045%2C452.31%25.

¹⁹ "Haiti Inflation Rate 2023: Consumer Price Index." *Take, take-profit.org/en/statistics/inflation-rate/haiti/*.

²⁰ "In Haiti, Access to Water and Sanitation Is Vital, and the World Bank Is Making This Possible", *World Bank*, 23 March 2023, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2023/03/22/in-haiti-access-to-water-and-sanitation-is-vital-and-the-world-bank-is-making-this-possible>.

²¹ *Opportunity International Canada | Haiti*, www.opportunityinternational.ca/what-we-do/where-we-work/haiti.

households represent 64%²² of the country's total wealth. This extreme poverty has led to widespread famine, with 30% of Haitians being considered food insecure and around 100.000²⁴ children aged below 5 years old also being malnourished. This influenced the access of Haitians to energy, worsening the already existing energy issues.

This poverty also leads to another extremely vital issue, the matter of sanitation, as Haiti's poor living conditions coupled with limited access to clean, drinkable water leads to countless illnesses and even cholera as mentioned above. Not only does a massive 31%²² of the population practice open defecation, but people with disabilities are usually unable to gain access to water points and even public restroom facilities.

Energy

Haiti is highly dependent on charcoal as a fossil fuel. Almost all households in Haiti are spending 25-30%²³ of their available income to purchase charcoal. This has a variety of negative effects, as chronic exposure to smoke produced by fossil fuels can cause countless respiratory illnesses. Furthermore, since most people of a lower economic class rely on charcoal and charcoal impacts their health due to the smoke produced, health problems are more likely to appear. Taking into consideration the limited access to healthcare, this leads to a never-ending cycle of poverty for low-income households. This is even highly dangerous for children, as stoves in Haiti possess limited abilities to preserve heat or control the air.

Healthcare

The quality of healthcare provided in Haiti also is inadequate, with limited access to primary and preventative healthcare when it comes to the poorer Haitians. Moreover, vaccines and immunizations are presently under minimum standards, with Haiti struggling to meet the UN's Sustainable Development Goals as far as health is concerned. It is estimated that 60%²⁴ of Haiti's population has access to basic health care services. Ergo, the right to healthcare and access to medical attention is commonly infringed on. The inaccessibility to healthcare is one of the primary causes behind the quick spread of diseases like cholera, and why disease outbreaks and epidemics are common in Haiti.

²²Project, Borgen. "The Top 10 Most Important Facts about Poverty in Haiti." *The Borgen Project, Borgen Project*, 21 August 2019, borgenproject.org/facts-about-poverty-in-haiti-2/.

²³ Adair, Kevin. "Charcoal Kills, Especially in Haiti." *Medium*, 10 February 2017, medium.com/@kevinadair/charcoal-kills-especially-in-haiti-4030b5fb9a62.

²⁴Guly, Christopher. "Haiti Emerging from Chaos to Face Health Care Crisis." *Canadian Medical Association Journal (CMAJ)*, U.S. National Library of Medicine, 27 April 2004, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC395802/.

Education

Much like the quality of welfare in Haiti, the quality of education provided also has proved insufficient. While education is officially mandatory for children aged between 6 and 12 years old, the severe inadequacy of relevant facilities and staff has led to around 40%⁴ of the adult population being illiterate. Most of the children who actually attend school are educated in private or church-administered institutions, with 80%²⁵ of primary schools being unavailable to the public. Thus, the right to education is commonly jeopardized in Haiti.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

United States of America (USA)

The USA's contributions to the salvation of the Haitian crisis are vital, as America is widely considered to be the largest provider of humanitarian aid to Haiti. This humanitarian aid has been provided through UN and NGO partners. For example, the US has provided \$312²⁶ million to strengthen law enforcement as well as to enhance the capacity of the Haitian National Police when it comes to the sustenance of peace and stability, and they aided in the investigation after the attack on the president.

However, between September 2021 and May 2022, more than 25.000 Haitian citizens were expelled by America, as the US elected to extensively utilize Title 42. This is an order which permits authorities to expel refugees, migrants, and even asylum seekers to their home country, due to their violation of national and international law. Not only were Haitians expelled and detained, but many also faced racial discrimination. They didn't have access to enough food, healthcare services, lawyers, and information. The Haitians were even returned in handcuffs, shackles, and manacles, something that entirely violates human rights law.

Additionally, the US-backed Ariel instead of the true prime minister following Moïse's death. This led to Joseph stepping down, and him even admitting that he received calls from the US Embassy in Haiti's capital telling him to "stand down"²⁷.

France

In 1814, France's King Louis XVIII decided to send 3 commissioners to Haiti to estimate how likely Haiti's rulers would surrender. Following that, he decided to declare Haiti's independence only after Haiti paid a large sum of money, which would technically compensate

²⁵ *Opportunity International Canada | Haiti*, www.opportunityinternational.ca/what-we-do/where-we-work/haiti.

²⁶ "Fact Sheet: U.S. Assistance to Haiti." *The White House, The United States Government*, 13 July 2021, www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/07/13/fact-sheet-u-s-assistance-to-haiti/.

²⁷ "Washington Forces Reshuffling of Haitian Regime." *World Socialist Web Site*, www.wsws.org/en/articles/2021/07/21/hait-j21.html.

for the revenue loss due to slavery. Haiti paid this sum which was reduced to 90 million francs²⁸. However, many people now claim it's high time France paid its debt to Haiti, both financially and morally. France's public apology and cancellation of Haiti's \$77 million debt did not suffice for many, as people claimed the moral debt owed for enslaving the black population of Haiti is too great to ever be compensated. Haiti itself does not seek repayment, as it believes that it is a "stain on the civilized world". Today, France recognizes the emergency in Haiti and condemns the gang violence taking place, stating that criminal groups must be stopped, as they undermine the state's authority. Finally, it wishes to reaffirm its solidarity with the Haitians. Ergo, France aims to aid Haiti to conquer its humanitarian crisis.

Canada

Much like the US, Canada has also taken measures and made efforts to better the lives of Haitians. It is in fact the second-largest donor of assistance to Haiti, with its annual budget dedicated to Haitian development and assistance estimating \$89 million²⁹. Canada has even made contributions to every UN peacekeeping mission to Haiti in terms of reconstructing and stabilizing the country. Ever since the first catastrophic earthquake in 2010, Canada has donated \$1.8 billion in funding to Haiti. In accordance with Mélanie Joly, the prime minister of foreign affairs, "Haiti is facing critical, multi-faceted challenges, but Haitians are not facing them alone. Canada and the international community will work together to support Haiti in its work to find and implement sustainable solutions."³⁴. Finally, Canada is also set to deploy naval vessels to Haiti for information gathering due to the rapidly deteriorating conditions and violence. However, it is worth noting that some critics claim that Canada is not attempting to aid Haiti but is aiming at creating dependencies and instead, benefiting from Haiti's corrupt political state and internal turmoil.

Dominican Republic

Relations between Haiti and the Dominican Republic have been hostile. The Dominican Republic has begun increasing the rate at which Haitians get deported, with there being concerns regarding the Haiti citizens' rights and how they are treated. In fact, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights stepped in and ordered the Dominican Republic to cease the deportations on the grounds of Haiti's chronic gang violence. Following that, comments were made in the Dominican broadcast describing the High Commissioners' remarks as "unacceptable and

²⁸ Tharoor, Ishaan. "Is It Time for France to Pay Its Real Debt to Haiti?" *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 1 December 2021, www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/05/13/does-france-owe-haiti-reparations/.

²⁹ Canada, Global Affairs. "Canada Announces \$50.4 Million in Support for Haiti." *Canada.ca*, Government of Canada, 21 January 2022, www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2022/01/canada-announces-504-million-in-support-for-haiti.html.

irresponsible”³⁰. Overall, in 2022, it is estimated that over 170.000 Haitians were deported³¹. In fact, 32-year-old Manoucheka Saint-Fleur who fled Haiti in 2022 spoke out and stated that while going to work one day, she was forced into a bus and driven to the border. Additionally, authorities harmed, beat, and tasered the migrants while also firing tear gas, all of which are clear violations of human rights.

Amnesty International

Due to the countless human rights violations taking place in Haiti on a daily basis, Amnesty International has become deeply involved in Haiti’s situation. Specifically, 4 campaigns have been organized: the first campaign in June 2019 called on the president to investigate the human rights abuses, and the second one in May 2021 demanded the protection of a famous human rights defender in Haiti. The third campaign of August 2021 sought justice for activists and protection for their relatives, and the most recent one, in September 2021, urged the US to cease abusing Haitians. Through these campaigns, Amnesty International is attempting to aid Haiti, however, the efficiency of them when it comes to truly changing the lives of Haitians is questionable, since Haiti is mostly in dire need of aid and resources. Other than that, it is worthy to note that Amnesty International called on Haiti’s president to ensure the human rights of all Haiti citizens who elected to protest against him and his government.

Organization of American States (OAS)

Haiti is a member of the OAS, and other OAS members decided to recommit to aiding Haiti to overcome gang violence. Specifically, this was conducted through the passing of a resolution to support Haiti to manage and deal with widespread gang violence. This resolution³², titled “RENEWED SUPPORT FOR SECURITY AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, INCLUSIVE, FREE, FAIR, AND CREDIBLE ELECTIONS, AND DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION IN THE REPUBLIC OF HAITI”, proposed the creation of a working group of member states whose aim was to address grave matters like gun trafficking as well as a proposed multinational force to aid local police install order.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

³⁰ “Dominican Republic Steps up Haitian Deportations, Raising Tensions.” *Reuters, Thomson Reuters, 16 November 2022*, www.reuters.com/world/americas/dominican-republic-steps-up-haitian-deportations-raising-tensions-2022-11-16/.

³¹ “Dominican Republic Sending Children, Pregnant Migrants Back to Haiti.” *The Washington Post, WP Company, 31 March 2023*, www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/03/16/haiti-dominican-republic-migrant-crackdown/.

³² *RENEWED SUPPORT FOR SECURITY AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, INCLUSIVE, FREE, FAIR, AND CREDIBLE ELECTIONS, AND DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION IN THE REPUBLIC OF HAITI //*, *Organization of American States*, www.scm.oas.org/doc_public/ENGLISH/HIST_23/CP47612E03.docx.

DATE	DESCRIPTION OF EVENT
23 September 1993	Establishment of United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH).
1994	UNMIH goals are updated
31 March 1995	UNMIH assumes full functions
30 June 1996	UNMIH mandate expires
12 January 2010	A massive earthquake (M7) struck Haiti, causing countless injuries, deaths, and led to people being displaced
20 October 2010	First cholera outbreak in Haiti, led to thousands of people losing their lives
4 October 2016	Hurricane Matthew occurred, led to huge damages
July 2018	Protests begin due to rising fuel prices
13 November 2018	Lasalin massacre took place, president Moïse suspected to be behind it
10 June 2019	Protests and roadblocks which led to people being injured and dying
June 2019	Amnesty International 1 st campaign to aid Haiti
25 June 2019	Establishment of United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH)
October 2019	Last timely legislative elections of president
May 2021	Amnesty International 2 nd campaign to aid Haiti
7 July 2021	Assassination of president Jovenel Moïse
20 July 2021	Prime minister Ariel Henry was sworn in

14 August 2021	A huge earthquake hit Haiti (M7.2) and destroyed critical infrastructure and killed and displaced thousands of people
August 2021	Amnesty International 3 rd campaign to aid Haiti
September 2021	Amnesty International 4 th campaign to aid Haiti
4 February 2022	Haiti is declared cholera free (3 years without a single case)
October 2022	Second cholera outbreak in Haiti, still ongoing today
21 October 2022	Approved sanctions targeting gang leaders

RELEVANT UN RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Briefing on Haiti

On the 10th of February 2023, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights delivered his speech to Haiti in Port au Prince. He underlined the urgency of the situation and emphasized that it is not receiving the attention it deserves, noting that many people view the situation in Haiti as “insurmountable and hopeless”³³. Additionally, he issued a report highlighting the huge impact of gang violence in countless parts of the country and focused on the welfare conditions including sanitation services. Moreover, he emphasized the importance of bolstering the criminal justice system, enhancing the penitentiary system, and establishing security through continuous international support. Finally, the High Commissioner stressed that Haiti is in dire need of a deep transformation, with the protection of human rights lying at the core of this restructuring. This speech was quite effective, due to the position of the person delivering it. As the UN High Commissioner for human rights, his words carry more weight and are more effective at convincing individuals, which leads to the urgency of the situation being understood by a larger amount of people.

³³ “UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk concludes his official visit in Haiti”, *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner*, 10 February 2023, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2023/02/un-high-commissioner-human-rights-volker-turk-concludes-his-official-visit-haiti>.

Resolution of the Security Council S/RES/867 (1993)

This resolution³⁴ introduces the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH), which was established on 23 September 1993. Primarily, it authorized the establishment of UNMIH, which was recommended by the Secretary-General. It described some of its main traits, including the amount of police monitors it will be comprised of. Aiding in modernizing the armed Haiti forces and contributing to the creation and implementation of a new police force constituted UNMIH's initial primary goals. However, after the Haiti military authorities refused to cooperate, UNMIH was not able to be entirely deployed and achieve said goals. UNMIH's goals were revised and updated through SC resolutions 940 (1994)³⁵ and 975 (1995)³⁶ on October 1994, following the restoration of the Haitian Constitutional Government, which was accomplished with aid in the form of a multinational force led by the USA. This revision was successful and managed to set a deadline by which UNMIH's mission should be complete. On 31 March 1995, UNMIH was able to assume its functions in full. Finally, the president of Haiti requested officially that UNMIH's mandate was extended. Therefore, the SC extended the mandate through resolution 1048³⁷ until 30 June 1996. UNMIH was very successful, as not only did it restore infrastructure and aid Haiti's government assume its responsibilities, but it also aided in the creation of an atmosphere conducive to free elections. Thus, the human right to vote, to live, and right to access healthcare were all promoted and safeguarded.

Resolution of the Security Council S/RES/24627 (2019)

This resolution³⁸ addresses the Council's concerns about the multiple characteristics of the crisis in Haiti. Furthermore, it introduces the BINUH program mentioning that its task, among others, is to promote a sustainable and peaceful environment and to protect and promote human rights. BINUH provides humanitarian aid and assistance and implements programs in cooperation with the national authorities. The document is of utmost importance, as it presents the successor of the UN peacekeeping mission and the context that the program will operate in. BINUH was established on 25 June 2019; it is a special political mission, which was deployed under the 6th chapter of the UN Charter. It cooperates with numerous State institutions on a daily basis, with its presence being in the capital, in order to provide advisory services as well as good offices. Other than that, its main goals are to bolster political stability and strengthen good governance through the rule of law. Moreover, its mandate includes providing humanitarian assistance and

³⁴ "Resolution 867 (1993) /." *United Nations Security Council, 1993*, digitallibrary.un.org/record/173065?ln=en.

³⁵ "Resolution 940 (1994) /." *United Nations Security Council, 1994*, digitallibrary.un.org/record/191651?ln=en.

³⁶ "Resolution 975 (1995) /." *United Nations Security Council, 1995*, digitallibrary.un.org/record/167718?ln=en.

³⁷ "Resolution 1048 (1996) /." *United Nations Security Council, 1996*, digitallibrary.un.org/record/205733?ln=en.

³⁸ "Resolution 2476 (2019) /." *United Nations Security Council, 2019*, digitallibrary.un.org/record/3810375?ln=en.

aiding Haiti when it comes to the preservation of human rights. Finally, BINUH provides humanitarian aid and assistance and implements programs in cooperation with the national authorities.

International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)

On the 8th of October, 2013³⁹, Haiti ratified the ICESCR. This convention ensures the enjoyment of specific rights including the right to education, the right to adequate living standards, the right to the highest attainable standard of health, the right to social security, the right to fair and just conditions of work and other freedoms. This is a very vital convention; nonetheless, it did not immediately grant everyone access to healthcare and education. Taking into account the socioeconomic state of Haiti, it is obvious that the ratification of a single convention couldn't immediately alter this, but it still benefitted Haitians.

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

On the 26th of January, 1990³⁹, Haiti signed the CRC, and it officially ratified it on the 8th of June 1995. This convention includes the entire range of rights of children. It is based on the best interest of the child, the right to life, survival, and development, the right to be heard, and finally the right to non-discrimination. Naturally, this convention is extremely powerful, which is why the moment it was signed by Haiti was so significant. Although it didn't entirely put an end to the violence that was affecting children in Haiti, it definitely aided Haitians as a whole.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

Imposed Sanctions

On 21 October 2022, following countless reports that gangs were blocking access to fuel supplies, the UN Security Council decided to approve sanctions aimed at decreasing the influence and resources of famed gang leaders. These sanctions targeted individuals considered to be engaging, condoning, or supporting criminal activity and violence. The imposed sanctions included but were not limited to freezing their assets, banning any travel, and even an arms embargo. Through these aforementioned measures, the UN aimed at limiting the violence and anarchy in Haiti. These are very strong sanctions that were implemented, and as they targeted gang leaders, they were even more efficient. This is one of the most important measures taken from the UN, however, there is a possibility that people who don't approve of violence or partake in it are accidentally deemed guilty of engaging in violence, and thus, face these sanctions. Regardless, it is an effective measure, as it sends a message to Haiti gang leaders that the international community will not rest until peace reigns in Haiti.

³⁹ *Tbinternet.Ohchr.Org*, tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/countries.aspx.

Ordered Evacuation

Due to an increase in violence in Haiti, the UN ordered the immediate evacuation of all non-essential personnel and workers located in Haiti. Specifically, the UN claimed that UN personnel are more likely to be targeted or attacked. Although this preventative measure can and will help many UN personnel as their lives are at risk on a daily basis, the evacuation of UN workers from Haiti could signify and indicate that the UN wishes to cease its efforts to help Haiti, This attempt succeeded and was effective when it comes to protecting the lives of countless UN personnel, however, it did not heavily contribute to the defense and safeguarding of human rights in Haiti or the overall resolution to the issue.

Medical Waste Management by PAHO and Haitian Solid Waste Collection Agency

The Haitian Solid Waste Collection Agency cooperated with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in order to collect health care waste, including needles, bandages and equipment like gloves. This led to hospitals receiving additional training as well as information in regard to the proper management of medical waste. This is a vital solution to the issue as medical waste in Haiti is another pressing matter. Used needles and bandages are dangerous if not disposed of properly, so it is important that measures are taken to manage them correctly. This past attempt was quite effective because it significantly aided to the proper disposal of medical waste in Haiti. Taking into consideration the present healthcare conditions in Haiti, as well as noting the previous and even current epidemics and diseases that have spread, it is clear that medical waste has to be properly managed, to reduce the spread of diseases. Ergo, this attempt proved effective.

National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Cholera in Haiti 2013-2022 by Haitian Government

Following the first cholera outbreak, the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Cholera in Haiti 2013-2022 was adopted by the Haitian Government. This action plan included a variety of frameworks established for the improvement of water, sanitation, welfare, education and transportation. Through increased access to potable water and sanitation institutions, the Haitian Government aims to limit the spread of diseases that are water-born. This plan contained countless diverse frameworks which were all relevant to the problems Haiti is facing. Although the plan was very good in theory, when indicators were set relating the percentages of people and the year, they were met very slowly. It is clear that Haiti still faces these challenges to this day. This past attempt proved ineffective, despite its clear intentions. In addition, its progress was very slow, and thus, the national plan failed to ameliorate the situation in Haiti.

Techniciens en Eau Potable et en Assainissement pour les Communes (TEPAC) Workforce by CDC and DINEPA

The Center for Disease Control worked together with the National Directorate of Water Supply and Sanitation (DINEPA) to train specific technicians related to communal water and sanitation. This was done to improve the quality of water infrastructure in rural areas. These technicians proved to play a vital role, as they monitor and assess water systems, track free chlorine levels in water and cooperate with humanitarian assistance and support Haiti's Wash, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) sector. This solution to the issue proved to be quite effective, as Haiti did end up being declared cholera free in 2022. However, later that same year, another cholera outbreak occurred, which casts reasonable doubt upon the long-term efficiency of the solution. Still, it is clear that the TEPAC Workforce contributed to the resolution of the situation, regardless of the epidemic that broke out in 2022.

Program to improve water quality by Ministry of Health, Ministry of Trade, DINEPA

The Ministry of Health, along with the Ministry of Trade, collaborated with DINEPA in 2015 in order to successfully outline a program to improve water quality as well as routinely track it. This agreement was adopted the following year, in 2016, and was signed into law. This solution to the issue is quite simple, yet effective. The water conditions in Haiti are directly connected to the welfare of the entire country, as many disease outbreaks have occurred in the past. Thus, the decision to better the water quality through a carefully constructed program proved to be very efficient and effective.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

National Dialogue

In order for the Haitian's trust in the government to be restored, the citizens of Haiti have to reach a national consensus. For this to be properly achieved, a national dialogue needs to be carried out. However, this could prove difficult to accomplish considering the gang activity taking place in Haiti. Thus, in order for the safeguarding of the citizens' right to security, right to liberty, and right to live, there has to be security in order for people to express their opinions without an infringement of their freedom of speech occurring. The purpose of this national dialogue would be to vote for an interim government, and to achieve constitutional reforms that the public agrees upon. Thus, the order could be reinstated, as a legitimate government would be voted, and timely legislative elections would take place. However, to achieve this, international diplomatic support is necessary, as gangs will fight to hold on to their control over the population, while others might seize the opportunity to gain even more power. Although this cannot be easily accomplished, it has the potential to salvage the crisis in Haiti, restore order and safeguard human rights.

Provisions of Humanitarian Aid

Due to the nature of the crisis in Haiti and the immense humanitarian implications of it, including violations of human rights, it is absolutely vital that humanitarian aid is provided. This international humanitarian aid requires proper coordination between countries, agencies, and relevant stakeholders to achieve cooperation and to ensure its success. Not only is it necessary that the needs of the Haitians are properly assessed, but the provided aid must further strive towards assisting those in need. Humanitarian organizations should share the information they possess, and make their efforts public to draw attention to the cause and crisis. Finally, the crisis needs careful monitoring to guarantee that the humanitarian aid is administered correctly, effectively, and successfully.

Free and Fair Elections

Currently in Haiti, the people have expressed concern that government officials that have not been publicly elected have power, with a prime example being Henry Ariel who was nominated by ex-president Moïse. Thus, it is only natural that free and fair elections have to be held, so that the Haitian public is granted the opportunity to vote and elect officials that they deem competent and fit for the role.

However, this is quite difficult to accomplish, taking into consideration the present Haiti situation, as problematic negotiations between gangs as well as external intervention could definitely ensue, and thus, affect the public opinion. Due to the gang violence that takes place daily, it is imperative that citizens' votes remain private. Also, measures must be taken to ensure that elections are inclusive and no barriers such as financial ones are placed to stop Haitians from participating in the elections.

These measures ought to be taken in order for the safeguarding of the right to vote, and the right to assembly as well as the right to participation in a civil society. Additionally, without these measures, the right to elect and the freedom of choice will be placed in serious jeopardy, as Haitians will be barred from electing officials of their choice and expressing their opinion under threat of harm and intimidation.

End to Austerity Policies and Dependency on Foreign Investment

In order for Haiti to overcome its crisis the present reliance on foreign investment must end. A large contributor to the crisis is the constant influence of foreign powerful countries, such as the USA with their attempts to interfere with the Haitian Government. Although the country's political instability which directly connects to the humanitarian crisis is clear, should foreign countries continue to intervene then the Haitians will bear the brunt of the continuing crisis. Due to the dependency on these foreign countries, they have the power to impose austerity policies.

These policies also must stop, in order to reduce the never-ending strain on the Haitian population, which is always being battered by hunger, disease, and inflation.

All these already limit purchasing power, and this can lead to privatization, meaning that prices increase even more, leading to the middle class being unable to afford common goods. This could influence the quality of life immensely and at the same time, it impacts and jeopardizes the right to access to healthcare, and the right to the highest attainable standard of health.

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