



The Haiti Support Project and Pan African Unity Dialogue Call for Mediation to End the Crisis in Haiti, Requests Sustained U.S. Support for the Haitian People

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The Haiti Support Project is deeply concerned with the chaotic, deepening and dangerous crisis unfolding in Haiti. This concern is shared by the Pan African Unity Dialogue, a US-based Diaspora umbrella organization comprised of more than 100 Continental African, Caribbean American (including Haitian American), Afro-Latino and African American leaders.

In recent months, there have been widespread credible reports that Haiti's President Jovenel Moise has increasingly adopted authoritarian measures and steered the nation towards one-man rule. Human rights organizations cite President Moise's alliance with violent gangs and use of force to suppress protest marches, rallies and demonstrations as evidence of the deterioration of democracy in Haiti.

In this regard, President Moise is proposing a referendum to make several changes in the Haitian Constitution, which he is touting as essential for effective democratic governance. While the pros and cons of the provisions he is proposing may be debatable, the crucial issue is Moise's authority to initiate a referendum. There is a major dispute over whether his term of office expired on February 7, 2021.

Because of the circumstances under which he was elected, President Moise asserts that his term does not expire until February 7, 2022. Though the U.S. State Department has issued a statement supporting President Moise's claim, virtually all of Haiti's major civil society organizations are united in the conviction that his term of office ended on February 7, 2021. Accordingly, civil society organizations are calling on the international community to support and facilitate open, free and fair elections to transition to a new government.

This demand is critical because the deepening political crisis coupled with the COVID-19 Pandemic and deteriorating economic conditions have created a climate of desperation within Haitian society. As a result of this situation the masses of the people live in fear of being killed or kidnapped while carrying out ordinary tasks such as banking or shopping. With no immediate prospects that things will improve anytime soon, a new wave of Haitians is leaving the country seeking refuge abroad. Therefore, the U.S. and nations in the region have an interest in the peaceful resolution of the crisis in Haiti.

The Haiti Support Project (HSP) and the Pan-African Unity Dialogue (PAUD) emphatically support the Haitian people's demand for the respect of basic human rights and the improvement of social and economic conditions under a legitimately elected government.

We are aware that Congressman Gregory Meeks, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the House of Representatives, the Congressional Black Caucus and CARICOM have called for mediation to break the impasse. The Haiti Support Project with the concurrence of the Pan African Unity Dialogue joins the growing call for a mediated settlement to resolve the crisis in Haiti. Though the U.S. should play a leading role in this process, perhaps, by appointing a Special Envoy, we believe a multilateral approach involving all regional and international interested parties is most likely to succeed.

Finally, we call on the Biden Administration to prioritize providing sustained support to the Haitian Government that emerges from the mediation process in order to enhance the potential for the development of a stable democracy in Haiti that has the capacity to meet the needs of the people.

Dr. Ron Daniels, Founder,
The Haiti Support Project,
Convener, The Pan African Unity Dialogue

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