

**Joint Statement on Behalf of the A3 (Niger, South Africa and Tunisia) and  
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**

Delivered

by

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United Nations

**Open VTC Meeting on the Situation in Haiti**

**Secretary-General's Report on the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti  
(BINUH)**

Security Council Chamber

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Thank you Madame President,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Niger, Tunisia, South Africa and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (A3+1). We thank SRSB La Lime for her detailed briefing. We also thank Mr. Jacques Létang, President of the Haitian Bars Federation, for his presentation, and welcome the distinguished representative from Haiti.

Today's presentations and the latest Secretary General's report (S/2020/537), illustrate that the situation in Haiti is extremely dire. The worrying security, political, humanitarian and socio-economic situation has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and risks further aggravation by external shocks, such as climate change.

Against the backdrop of daunting challenges, and mindful of those ahead, the A3+1 encourages the international community to continue supporting our Caribbean sister nation and to reaffirm our support for 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 are cognizant that the constitutional deadline for the next presidential election is imminent. We urge the Haitian authorities to undertake the necessary measures 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 to refrain from acts that may trigger further violence and compromise the country's gains under the guidance of the UN.

Secondly, we welcome the role of the National Commission for Disarmament, Dismantlement and Reintegration (CNDDR) and commend their efforts in drafting a national community violence reduction strategy to enhance efforts in combatting gang violence. We also welcome the efforts of the Haitian National Police (HNP) towards tackling the scourge of gang violence in Haiti. We are disturbed by the proliferation of illicit weapons and ammunitions that continue to enter the country illegally. Like many other Small Island States of the Caribbean, Haiti is not a manufacturer of firearms nor ammunitions. However, its geographic location between the suppliers and consumers of illegal narcotics in the south and to north, make 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 continue 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 thorough investigation and for the perpetrators be held accountable. The collaboration between BINUH, the Haitian national authorities and other relevant stakeholders to develop arms control legislation, consistent with international standards, is encouraging in this regard.

Additionally, the A3+1 urges the strengthening of institutions and capacity-building mechanisms to address institutional shortcomings. We recognize the marginal advances within the Haitian National Police (HNP), as well as 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. The HNP, together with the relevant judicial institutions, have a fundamental role to play in the State meeting its obligations to protect its citizens and ensure that transparency and the rule of law prevails.

Thirdly, the worsening humanitarian situation remains of grave concern, particularly, the increasing food insecurity, the overcrowded prisons and challenges for those people made most vulnerable. In the wake of the pandemic and the ensuing socio-economic crisis, it remains crucial that the international community redoubles its efforts to assist the Haitian authorities in responding to the crisis. We laud the spirit of unity and solidarity exhibited by Haitians in their initial response to the pandemic. We also appreciate all efforts to assist Haiti in its national humanitarian response, including through CARICOM, PAHO, WFP, the IOM and the UN. 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. Haiti does not only need debt relief, but also grants to face an already bleak economic situation as forecasted by the IMF, which

includes reductions in remittances, textile exports and foreign direct investment. We welcome the continued engagement of the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti (AHAG) which supports the country's long-term development strategy. At this critical moment, we urge greater collaboration between ECOSOC and the Security Council to foster complementarities across the UN system's engagement with the country, in order to comprehensively address the root causes of Haiti's insecurity.

Excellencies,

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 this 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 and must stand in solidarity with our Haitian brothers and sisters.

In closing, the A3+1 reaffirms that the sustainable development of Haiti will only remain a 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.

I thank you.