



# Security Council

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## United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution [2692 \(2023\)](#), by which the Council decided to extend until 15 July 2024 the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), in accordance with resolution [2476 \(2019\)](#) establishing BINUH. The report includes significant developments since the previous report, dated 16 October 2023 ([S/2023/768](#)), and provides an update on the implementation of the BINUH mandate.

#### II. Political issues and good governance

2. During the reporting period, the Prime Minister, the High Transitional Council, the signatories of the 21 December Agreement and opposition groups pursued efforts to converge on a common vision for restoring democratic institutions. Discussions focused on formulating a governance framework that would set a course for the holding of elections. However, differences persisted, in particular regarding the power and competencies of a presidential structure, including its authority to replace the Prime Minister, as sought by some opposition parties.

3. The President of the High Transitional Council, Mirlande Manigat, expressed concern over the slow pace in establishing a provisional electoral council, crucial for organizing elections. During an interview on 1 November, she noted that the political stalemate hindered implementation of the 21 December Agreement to elect a President by 7 February 2024. The impasse has, notably, had an impact on the selection and nomination of electoral councillors, a necessary step in the electoral process. These challenges notwithstanding, technical preparations have continued. Of note, the Government contributed \$15 million to the basket fund led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to bolster election efforts.

4. In fostering engagement among stakeholders, Special Representative of the Secretary-General met representatives from across the political and civil society spectrum, including academia, the private sector and religious groups. She emphasized the importance of creating security and political conditions conducive to the restoration of democratic institutions and undertook several initiatives to enhance the political participation of women and young people in decision-making processes. On 16 October, BINUH facilitated further inter-Haitian discussions among political



parties, civil society organizations and private sector representatives in Cap-Haïtien (North Department), on security, governance reform, elections and civic participation. On 27 November and 13 December, with the participation of the Special Representative, two round tables were held in Port-au-Prince to provide a platform for women and young political, civil society and private sector leaders, with attendees advocating for more training opportunities for women and youth leaders and the adoption of gender parity language in legal frameworks. Events were also held on 12 and 17 December that were aimed at creating safe spaces for LGBTIQ+ community members and enhancing their political participation through the sharing of perspectives and formulating proposals for solutions to the political and electoral crisis.

5. The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Eminent Persons Group continued its work to foster a broader political consensus, meeting national stakeholders in Haiti from 8 to 14 November. In a 21 November statement, the Group outlined challenges encountered, including continued demands by some sections of the opposition group for the resignation of the Prime Minister as a precondition for dialogue. In an effort to bridge the gap and prepare a new round of consultations, on 23 November the Group proposed a draft framework for an 18-month transition period, with a Prime Minister at the helm of a national unity Government alongside a seven-member transitional council. The council would be endowed with specific presidential prerogatives, including the power to appoint a new provisional electoral council, co-sign government decrees, designate a constitutional review commission and preside over a newly established national security council.

6. The Eminent Persons Group returned to Haiti from 6 to 14 December, after giving stakeholders a two-week period to study and react to its proposal. The Prime Minister and the 21 December Agreement signatories voiced support for strengthening the High Transitional Council and suggested adding two opposition members to preserve institutional continuity. Representatives of the Montana Group expressed discontent that the proposal did not foresee the resignation of the Prime Minister, suspended their participation in the discussions and criticized a lack of clarity over the choice of civil society participants in the new round of consultations. Other opposition representatives advocated a fully-fledged dual executive with an entirely new transitional council of three or five members with clear presidential powers, including authority to appoint a new Prime Minister. A civil society proposal, reflecting mainly the key provisions of the draft framework, foresaw an executive power-sharing agreement between the Prime Minister and the seven-member transitional council but did not manage to bridge the differences.

7. At the conclusion of its visit, the Eminent Persons Group highlighted the valuable opportunity that negotiations had offered to bridge gaps between stakeholders. The collaborative effort did lead to a consensus on several key aspects of the draft framework, including on the establishment of a national unity Government, the formation of a new provisional electoral council and the initiation of a constitutional reform process. The Group also noted that Haitian stakeholders had agreed to continue their discussions independently and stated that they were ready to return to Haiti once stakeholders demonstrated substantial progress in their talks and showed a clear willingness to embark on the final stage of negotiations.

8. In reaction to the adoption of resolution [2699 \(2023\)](#), in which the Security Council authorized the deployment of the Multinational Security Support Mission to Haiti, most signatories of the 21 December Agreement expressed optimism that its rapid deployment would contribute to restoring security and stabilizing the nation. Various civil society groups, including the *Forum national de la société civile* and the *Conseil national de la société civile*, representing collectively more than 4,000 organizations nationwide, considered the initiative a pivotal opportunity to foster peace and security within Haiti and across the Caribbean region. Some opposition

groups, however, cast doubt on prospects for any successful outcome in the absence of significant governance reforms.

9. At the regional level, the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States (OAS) adopted a resolution on 17 November in which it commended the Security Council's decision to authorize the Multinational Security Support Mission. It also encouraged Haitian political stakeholders to engage in dialogue and mandated the General Secretariat of OAS to align its efforts with those of the CARICOM Eminent Persons Group, notably through a joint OAS-CARICOM electoral and democracy strengthening mission.

### III. Security and the rule of law

10. West and Artibonite Departments continue to be affected by extreme insecurity marked by indiscriminate armed gang violence against civilians and attacks against police units and infrastructure. Within the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince, gang influence expanded at an alarming rate into previously less affected areas, such as Carrefour-Feuilles, Solino, Bon Repos, Mariani and Léogâne.

11. Gang-related homicide and kidnapping rates intensified, forcing hundreds of thousands of people to abandon their homes. Between 1 October and 31 December, officials recorded 1,432 intentional homicides, including of 157 women, 24 girls and 31 boys, compared with 673 victims during the same period last year, while the number of victims kidnapped rose to 698, including 258 women, 14 girls and 17 boys, compared with 391 victims recorded over the same period in 2022. The number of reported homicides for 2023 increased by 119.4 per cent compared with 2022, with 4,789 victims reported during 2023 (including 465 women, 93 boys and 48 girls), equating to a ratio of 40.9 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, against 2,183 in 2022 when a ratio of 18.1 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants was estimated. In the same vein, the number of victims of kidnapping rose from 1,359 reported in 2022 to 2,490 in 2023, representing an 83 per cent increase.

12. A new series of gang turf wars broke out following the death of a gang leader on 12 November in Cité Soleil. Between 13 and 22 November, frequent clashes between rival gang coalitions left 87 residents dead and 46 injured. A hospital in the area was forced to cease operations and, with the support of the national police, relocated patients, including infants and newborns, to safer facilities. In Mariani (West Department), on the main road to the south of the country, gangs took control of Port-au-Prince's largest aquifer, which provides water to more than 1.5 million people, and are levying illegal charges on private and commercial vehicles transiting in and out of the capital. On 23 November, Haiti's electricity authority, *Électricité d'Haïti*, was forced to relocate personnel from its headquarters near the international airport to other facilities.

13. Business owners, government officials and everyday commuters travelling on public transportation are at the highest risk of abduction for ransom by armed gangs. The Secretary-General of the High Transitional Council was held captive for 12 days in October.

14. Armed gang strategy and tactics have further evolved. Gangs in Village de Dieu (West Department) have used Molotov cocktails, laid sophisticated traps and built defensive concrete pillboxes in their strongholds to repel police operations. A similar modus operandi has been observed in the area of Mariani. Gang members are increasingly resorting to wearing fake police uniforms to carry out kidnappings. Sequential attacks against police stations, with many rendered inoperable and burned to the ground, are aimed at removing police presence from these areas. In 2023, these

attacks have disrupted more than 45 police stations of the 412 in the country, as well as the newly constructed women's prison in Cabaret (West Department). The areas most affected by heavily armed gang attacks included Fort-Jacques, Onaville, Pernier, Savane Pistache and Thomazeau (West Department), Liancourt (Artibonite Department), Saut-d'Eau (Centre Department) and Gaillard (South-East Department). The sub-commissariats of Cité Soleil, La Saline, Village de Dieu and Martissant in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince had been deserted for two years following repeated attacks by gangs.

### *Police*

15. Police numbers continued to decline at an alarming rate. In 2023, 1,663 officers, including 152 women, left the service. In the same period, 48 police officers were killed and 75 injured. As at 31 December, the national police force stood at 13,196 officers, including 1,588 women. A four-month, fast-track basic training programme for the thirty-third class began on 5 November for 796 cadets, including 116 women. With support from international partners, the national police school was refurbished and equipped for the purpose, while 14 police investigators trained by BINUH oversaw the vetting of candidates. The capacity of the vetting unit of the General Inspectorate was strengthened through the provision of office equipment and vehicles; as at 20 December, the unit had 742 police officers and administrative employees. Although the mobility of the Haitian National Police increased in October with the delivery of 20 soft-skin patrol vehicles and 250 motorcycles purchased through the joint programme of support to the Haitian National Police to advance its professionalization, its capacity to launch anti-gang operations remains limited. Only 21 of the 47 armoured vehicles were operational as at 15 November, with 19 of them severely damaged during anti-gang operations or broken down, necessitating extensive maintenance. The remaining seven are permanently disabled.

16. The national police remains overwhelmed by rampant gang violence. The temporary anti-gang unit is still underresourced and understaffed in large part, with tangible shortcomings in operational planning and in the management of available resources. Efforts were made to increase the annual budget of the Haitian National Police for 2023/24 by 13 per cent, to 27.41 billion Haitian gourdes (\$204.58 million); however the appropriation falls short of needs. Vehicles, personal protective equipment, furniture and investigation-related material were provided through donor funding, together with training on gender-sensitive crime scene management, evidence recovery, weapons and ammunition management, vetting, intervention techniques and countering transnational organized crime.

17. The Haitian National Police has stepped up anti-gang operations on multiple fronts while improving coordination and incident management among its services. Assisted and advised by BINUH police in the planning and conduct of operations, specialized criminal investigation units have arrested numerous suspects and seized dozens of weapons. Efforts are under way for the launch of a general inspection tour of all police units to improve performance and internal structural organization. BINUH and UNDP have redoubled efforts to coordinate international aid and assisted the Haitian National Police in organizing multi-donor partner meetings in addition to weekly technical meetings to facilitate progress.

18. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean organized two virtual workshops, in October and December, on tracing and restoring firearms serial numbers, as well as on physical security, safety management and procedures for destroying seized weapons and ammunition. The training coincides with the signature on 16 November by Haiti and the United States of America of a memorandum of understanding on firearms tracing. Against a backdrop of growing international funding, the Haitian National Police

interim Director-General issued a directive to enhance record-keeping and accountability in the management of internationally donated equipment and supplies. In response to high rates of kidnapping, the police have stepped up anti-kidnapping operations and, in mid-October, launched a new online kidnapping alert page for the public to share information with the police anonymously.

19. The High Command of the Haitian National Police is preparing for the arrival of the Multinational Security Support Mission. During a one-day visit on 5 December, officials from the national police and the Ministry of Justice and Public Security received a delegation of Kenyan officials, accompanied by officials from the United States. From 13 to 15 December, the interim Director-General of the Haitian National Police and officials of the Government of Haiti visited Nairobi to finalize preparations. Jamaica, on behalf of CARICOM, participated virtually in the consultations.

#### *Corrections*

20. As at 4 January, Haitian prisons held 11,778 inmates, including 369 women, 236 boys and 44 girls, in facilities designed for 3,900 inmates. Haitian authorities have increased the 2023/24 budget for prisons by 87 per cent, including a 41 per cent increase for food. Notwithstanding operational supply challenges due to control of main access roads by gangs, this should lead to a visible increase in the assistance provided to inmates. The women's prison in Cabaret (West Department) remains non-operational owing to repeated gang attacks but remains under the control of national authorities.

21. BINUH is advising the Government on planning for measures to address the potential impact of the Multinational Security Support Mission on the volume of work expected to be absorbed by the judiciary and correctional systems. Through a series of on-site capacity-building sessions for prison administration personnel focusing on the treatment and classification of prisoners, BINUH offered guidance on related procedures, including a standard operating procedure to manage high-risk prisoners, and introduced a prison management training manual.

#### *Justice*

22. On 2 October, the President of the Court of Cassation and the Superior Council of the Judiciary presided over the inauguration ceremony of the 2023/24 judicial year. In a renewed effort to strengthen professionalism and good conduct within the judiciary, the Superior Council published the *Guide de déontologie du magistrat*, setting out ethical standards for Haitian magistrates. On the basis of a report of the Technical Certification Commission, the Superior Council announced the successful certification of 16 magistrates, while 4 candidates failed and 3 were referred for further scrutiny. Previous sessions held in January and June certified 59 magistrates and dismissed 32.

23. The Minister of Justice and Public Security, in collaboration with the High Judicial Council, launched an emergency three-month programme, the *Programme humanitaire de réduction de la détention préventive prolongée*, to reduce prison overcrowding. Haitian prosecutors and judges are urged to work collaboratively to establish a long-term plan for correctional and criminal hearings. To date, the files of 361 inmates have been reviewed, leading to the release of 258 prisoners, including 13 women and 11 minors, and the conviction of 18 men and 2 women. A strike by public prosecutors suspended hearings from 20 November to 11 December. However, the court clerks have been on strike since 12 December to seek improved working conditions.

24. On 15 November, the Haitian Anti-Corruption Unit of the Ministry of Finance and Economy submitted 11 investigation reports to the Office of the Public Prosecutor

in Port-au-Prince on a former member of Parliament and high-ranking officials suspected of corruption. On 22 November, the Public Prosecutor issued summons for questioning and imposed travel bans on the higher risk suspects. The *École de la magistrature*, in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and Public Security and UNDP, held training sessions for magistrates and legal professionals in Port-au-Prince from 14 to 17 November on financial crimes investigations and corruption.

25. The investigation into the assassination of the President, Jovenel Moïse, has recently progressed, with several political and business figures, including a former Haitian senator, questioned by the investigating judge. On 19 October, a person of interest who had been on the run since the assassination, was arrested in metropolitan Port-au-Prince and placed in detention.

26. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) assessed capabilities of the Border Police Unit of the Haitian National Police and the customs officials in Belladère (Centre Department) and Ouanaminthe (North-East Department). The evaluations will contribute to the establishment of the joint control units to integrate specialized police capacities with customs officers at land border crossings with the Dominican Republic that are focused on curtailing the illicit trafficking in both legal and illegal goods, including weapons and ammunition.

27. In October 2023, UNODC submitted its first report through the Secretary-General in accordance with resolution [2692 \(2023\)](#). The report detailed the routes and sources of illicit arms and ammunition. The next report is scheduled for January 2024, concurrent with the present report. In November, UNODC conducted a briefing for the Kenyan Police Service in Nairobi.

28. In collaboration with OAS, UNODC organized a mission to Paris to support the establishment of relations between the Office of Financial and Economic Affairs of the Haitian National Police and other Haitian financial investigation authorities and their French counterparts and identify opportunities for capacity-building and international cooperation in anti-corruption and financial investigation initiatives.

29. UNODC, in partnership with the Anti-Corruption Unit, initiated a standard process for evaluating the policies and internal procedures of anti-corruption investigative bodies. The evaluation is intended to establish a strong procedural framework for investigating corruption and identifying key needs and vulnerabilities to enhance the capacity of Haitian stakeholders in effectively investigating, prosecuting and adjudicating corruption cases. Concurrently, UNODC, UNDP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights are promoting anti-corruption awareness through projects financed by the Peacebuilding Fund.

## **IV. Human rights**

30. Human rights abuses perpetrated by armed gangs and criminal groups continue to intensify in West and Artibonite Departments. These included killings, rape, kidnapping, extortion and destruction of property as gangs continued to employ violent tactics to expand their territorial control.

31. Between October and December, Cité Soleil and Port-au-Prince were the communes worst affected by gang violence, registering more than 40 per cent of all victims of killings and injuries reported nationwide. Residents, including children as young as five years old, were killed in their homes or in the streets by stray bullets and during random and indiscriminate mass shootings meant to kill as many people as possible. In these same neighbourhoods, gangs continue to recruit children and vulnerable young people into their ranks.

32. Mass kidnappings of people travelling in public transport vehicles between the metropolitan zone and the southern departments have begun to be reported in the communes of Carrefour and Gressier (West Department), after a gang set up a new base of operations in the area early in November. As of mid-2023, such attacks were already commonplace north of the capital, on main roads passing through the Croix-des-Bouquets commune and in Artibonite Department, with 407 people kidnapped between October and December, a 6 per cent decrease compared with the period July to September, but a 73 per cent increase compared with the same period last year (October to December 2022).

33. Persistent gang violence and the inability of State authorities to contain it has fuelled the vigilante movement. Between October and 2 December, at least 59 people accused of common crimes or supporting criminal gangs across 7 of Haiti's 10 departments (Artibonite, Centre, Grand-Anse, North, North-West, West and South) were brutally killed by neighbourhood vigilante groups.

34. Violence continues to grow in the lower Artibonite communes of Montrouis, Marchand-Dessalines, Gros Morne, l'Estère, Liancourt, Petite Rivière de l'Artibonite, Verettes and Saint Marc. A joint BINUH/Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights report, entitled "Criminal violence extends beyond Port-au-Prince" and published in November, documented support from gangs based in the metropolitan area of the capital and an inconsistent and inadequate response by the authorities, which has allowed for a rapid proliferation of violence in those rural areas. Between January 2022 and December 2023, almost 2,000 people, including at least 23 minors, were killed, kidnapped or injured by gangs in lower Artibonite. Gangs often erect and hide behind barricades on the sides of roads, opening fire on vehicles to stop them, then kidnap the survivors. During these attacks, women are often raped in broad daylight. In one incident on 3 October, a gang kidnapped 17 merchant women on their way to the village market; 6 were brutally raped in front of the others, before all were forced to walk barefoot to a place of captivity. Gangs in the lower Artibonite communes have also continued to attack towns and urban centres, killing, injuring and kidnapping people in the streets and in their homes. Women and young girls were also raped during those attacks. On 12 October, gang members raped two girls, aged 14 and 15, in their homes, after a tirade of sporadic shooting throughout the town of Liancourt, during which they killed two adults and kidnapped a third.

35. Gangs continue to systematically use sexual violence to consolidate control over populations. In gang-controlled areas, women and girls as young as 12 years old are at risk of being ambushed and collectively raped by armed gang members in broad daylight. Some are forced into exploitative sexual relations with gang members and face a brutal death if they refuse. The rape of hostages also continues to be used as a tactic to coerce families into paying higher ransoms. Sexual violence remains severely underreported owing to community stigma, limited police resources and the threat of retaliation by perpetrators. Even when such incidents are reported, prosecution rarely follows. BINUH supported a three-day training session for 50 magistrates in Les Cayes (South Department) to reinforce their skills in handling cases of sexual violence. BINUH has also monitored and referred incidents to health-care and psychosocial service providers, but funds and programmes remain insufficient in large part. Between 1 October and 31 December, 810 women, boy and girl survivors of violence from the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince received support and assistance from humanitarian actors, including psychosocial support and medical care, almost 1,000 survivors in need were referred to partners who provided them with temporary safe shelter or relocated, and 451 others were relocated with the support of service provider partners.

36. As gangs tighten their control over key transport routes and economic activity, they have constrained freedom of movement in communities, leading to loss of

livelihoods and personal property. In Thomazeau (West Department), since 1 October BINUH has documented the looting or destruction of at least 191 homes and businesses, as well as the destruction of the police station. In a practice that is becoming more common, gangs in Artibonite Department have also stolen hundreds of livestock – assets that often represent farmers’ life savings. Along the coastal road between Arcahaie and Léogâne, one gang continues to use motorboats to gain access to communities to steal from residents and loot local businesses and humanitarian non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Throughout the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince, people travelling on main roads are systematically forced to pay illegal tariffs at informal checkpoints manned by gunmen, while trucks of merchandise are regularly hijacked and their drivers kidnapped. To pay the ransoms demanded by gangs for the freeing of kidnapped family members, many have been forced to sell their homes and take out loans. Others have lost all their possessions while fleeing imminent gang attacks. As a result, countless people are destitute and highly vulnerable to food insecurity and further violence.

37. Violence, displacement and loss of livelihood have contributed to the dissolution of the protective family and school environment and to the extreme vulnerability of thousands of children. With parents unable to care for and protect them, and with limited opportunities for furthering their social development through school or other activities, minors in many areas are at risk of gang recruitment, falling into delinquency, or of being exploited. Girls are as vulnerable as boys of being exploited and recruited by gangs. On 16 October, four minors, all girls, were reportedly coerced into participating in sexual acts as part of a birthday celebration for a gang member.

38. Another worrying dynamic is the intensification of land disputes, which can become violent. Though prevalent for decades amid weakened police capacity and widespread impunity, these violent disputes appear to have intensified over the past year. On 15 November, in a particularly gruesome incident, 50 people were killed with machetes and shot when residents from one locality of Arcahaie commune (West Department) attacked residents in a nearby locality, accusing the latter of stealing their land. After the executions, the attackers set fire to more than 60 houses, destroyed farmers’ crops and killed more than 200 livestock. Such forms of community violence erode the social fabric and can escalate into extreme violence and destruction, in particular as gang elements have been involved in the incidents.

39. The situation at the border with the Dominican Republic is increasingly being affected by the volatile situation inside Haiti. Since July 2023, 118,228 Haitians have been forcibly returned by the Dominican authorities (65 per cent men, 22 per cent women, 7 per cent boys and 6 per cent girls). The forced return of 406 Haitians from the United States, 596 from the Bahamas and 1,649 from the Turks and Caicos Islands since July 2023 has raised urgent humanitarian concerns, given that individuals are uprooted abruptly, facing uncertain futures and potential challenges to their well-being. Similarly, the return of 505 Haitian nationals from Cuba, Jamaica and Türkiye underscores the critical need for comprehensive support systems to address the immediate humanitarian needs of these vulnerable people. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has observed an increase in the numbers of Haitian nationals seeking guidance on how to apply for asylum and/or to request essential services, such as humanitarian assistance. The number of Haitians entering Honduras heading for the United States and Canada from July to October 2023 increased 23-fold (from 1,550 people in July to 35,500 people in October, according to UNHCR). The sharp increase is related mainly to direct flights from Haiti to Nicaragua, halted by the Government of Haiti on 30 October, where human trafficking was also suspected. In the Americas region overall, UNHCR reported asylum claims made by Haitians in the Americas as amounting to 194,774 as of mid-2023.



*Impunity*

40. The Port-au-Prince and Croix-des-Bouquets first instance courthouses remain non-operational owing to gang attacks and occupation of their premises since June 2022. Early in October, the Thomazeau commune administrative complex, which houses the local court and town hall, was overrun by gangs. Eventually, a small space was lent to the Port-au-Prince court and public prosecutor's office to allow them to continue their work. However, magistrates can visit the court only three days a week, which is far from sufficient to handle their workload. Magistrates in Croix-des-Bouquets continue to work in a limited space in the Tabarre town hall. These limitations notwithstanding, some progress has been made in investigating corruption among public officials.

41. The lack of accountability for past serious human rights violations and abuses committed by State agents and gangs continues to be a major concern. The emblematic cases of the 2017 Grande Ravine, the 2018 La Saline and the 2019 Bel Air massacres remained stalled. The investigation into the assassination of Monferrier Dorval (2020) also reached a new impasse following the withdrawal on 3 December of the third investigating judge on the case.

*Police oversight*

42. On 2 and 4 October, BINUH supported anti-corruption workshops held by the General Inspectorate of the Haitian National Police for officers in South and Grand-Anse Departments, following similar workshops held in Port-au-Prince in late September. Between 1 October and 31 December, BINUH referred to the General Inspectorate six new cases relating to human rights violations involving police officers. During that period, the General Inspectorate opened four investigations into human rights violations involving 22 police officers. No investigations into that type of case were concluded during the period.

*Support for peace and sustainable development*

43. On 2 October, the Special Representative, in the company of the Minister of Youth, Sports and Civic Action, the delegate of South Department and the Mayor of the town of Les Cayes, launched the departmental youth forums for peace and sustainable development in Haiti. They were held in 20 towns across all 10 departments from 2 to 17 October, mobilizing young people from 144 communes. The forums, organized by the BINUH Human Rights Service in close collaboration with the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Civic Action, the Ministry of Culture and Communication and UNDP, create spaces for young people and local authorities to explore together youth aspirations and engagement in local decision-making and civic space.

44. On 7 December, the Ministry of Culture and Communication and the BINUH Human Rights Service, in collaboration with UNDP, launched a Peacebuilding Fund initiative to support more than 40 cultural associations to strengthen narratives against gang violence and in favour of cohesion, peace and the promotion of human rights. Capacity-building sessions were held for 41 organizations on 7 and 8 December. The project will last until April 2024.

**V. Violence reduction**

45. The interministerial and interinstitutional task force, dedicated to implementing the national strategy for disarmament, disengagement and reintegration and community violence reduction, is working alongside international partners to increase the capacity of national authorities. The task force convened two significant plenary sessions. The first, on 19 October, held under the auspices of the Office of the Prime

Minister, was marked by robust participation from 57 delegates spanning various government sectors, civil society and international partners. On 14 December, the task force held its twenty-seventh meeting, drawing 47 representatives, including 13 women, from 34 institutions. On both occasions, a key focus was the need for national authorities to devise methods that would address the impact of Multinational Security Support Mission deployment, in particular through initiatives aimed at promoting the disarmament and the dismantling of gangs.

46. On 18 October, BINUH and several United Nations agencies supported the *Observatoire national du sport haïtien* in the graduation of 50 young people, including 13 young women, 4 persons with disabilities and 33 young men from violence-prone neighbourhoods. The graduates completed a two-month training programme in physical education and community violence reduction through sports, conducted by the Haitian National Observatory of Sports, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Office for the Protection of Citizens. From 1 to 3 December, BINUH, in collaboration with UNDP, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the Peacebuilding Fund, supported a three-day training session for 100 young people, 56 of whom were women. The training, co-organized by the Juvenat Rotary Club and two local youth organizations, enhanced leadership and community engagement skills. Those initiatives provided a platform for young people and civil society organizations to share their insights with national authorities, contributing to the development of a national action plan for disarmament, dismantlement and reintegration and community violence reduction.

47. In support of national authorities' efforts to combat the illicit proliferation of weapons and ammunition, BINUH facilitated the visit of two delegates from the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean from 11 to 15 December to assess the assistance that disarmament, disengagement and reintegration, community violence reduction and the interministerial and interinstitutional task force could continue to provide in strengthening arms control efforts and implementing the National Action Plan under the Caribbean Firearms Road Map. The visit laid the groundwork for the implementation of a \$2.5 million project in support of Haiti's efforts and included an on-site assessment of two Haitian National Police armouries.

48. BINUH facilitated the participation of the interministerial and interinstitutional task force in the third annual Caribbean Firearms Road Map meeting, which was held in Saint Lucia from 14 to 16 November. The gathering offered a platform for national authorities to inform Member States and international partners of Haiti's progress in executing a regional road map, including the revision of the draft law on weapon and ammunitions. The Road Map included the revised Arms and Ammunition Act, e-learning and improved physical security and stockpile management for the Haitian National Police, as well as customs border management, with implications for customs revenue. Challenges remain in addressing the key priorities for 2024 as set out in the CARICOM road map agreed by the Government of Haiti, including strengthening the legal framework with practical standard operating procedures, and strengthening firearms control, physical security and storage management, training and stockpile management, and border control with X-ray identification in Cap-Haïtien and Port-au-Prince.

## **VI. Women and peace and security**

49. UN-Women established the "Alliance of Women in Politics", a network of 500 women across 14 communes in the Artibonite, Centre and West Departments. This diverse network brings together former presidential candidates, political figures,

aspiring electoral candidates, and active members of feminist and women's organizations. Its primary goal is to increase women's involvement in peace initiatives, political processes and decision-making roles at all levels of society.

50. On 30 and 31 October, UN-Women and the women's inter-dialogue monitoring committee held a two-day workshop. Participants, including 30 civil society organizations, primarily women's rights organizations, the Ministry of Gender, the Ministry of Youth, the Office of the Protection of Citizens, a mayor and 11 departmental delegates, examined the Haitian security situation and the challenges in implementing the four pillars of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Opportunities were considered for collaboration and the establishment of women's mediator networks throughout the country, with an emphasis on the importance of women's participation in elections and appointments to important governance and peacebuilding roles.

51. A national network of women in politics registered as an alliance in 2022 brought together 11 platforms comprising former presidential candidates, political figures, aspiring electoral candidates, and active members of feminist and women's organizations. UN Women assisted the alliance in organizing a national conference, held on 8 and 9 December. Some 200 influential individuals involved in elections attended the conference, including electoral representatives, women-led political organizations, political parties and media. Issues relating to gender-based violence during elections were discussed, focusing on the effectiveness of protection mechanisms, violence reporting systems, election conflict resolution, capacity and independence in dealing with gender-based violence, support for female candidates, and legal assistance for electoral observers who are victims of violence.

52. BINUH, UN-Women and UNDP have been supporting personnel of the provisional electoral council in organizing a comprehensive dialogue aimed at curtailing election-related violence, including violence against women during elections. The initiative engaged, throughout the reporting period, 50 delegates from all 10 departments of the country, driven by the efforts of both local and national NGOs and community-based organizations.

## **VII. Unemployment and young people and other vulnerable groups**

### *Socioeconomic situation*

53. The socioeconomic outlook for Haiti continues to be affected by internal political instability and uncertainty. Real gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to contract by 2.5 per cent in the 2022/23 fiscal year compared with 1.7 per cent in the 2021/22 fiscal year, marking the fifth consecutive year of economic contraction. According to the World Bank, GDP is nevertheless expected to firm up into positive territory, with a rebound of 1.3 per cent in 2023/24, assuming a stabilization of the political context and improvements in security.

54. The dire economic situation was further exacerbated by a 6.6 per cent decline in remittances in the first nine months of the 2022/23 fiscal year (October 2022 to June 2023) compared with the same period last year. This is significant, given that remittances are estimated to represent some 25 per cent of GDP. According to the note on monetary policy for the third quarter of 2023 issued by the Central Bank of Haiti, the decrease in transfers is linked to inflation and the lack of dynamism of economic activity in some sending countries, as well as migratory movements resulting from the deterioration in security conditions in Haiti.

55. Year-on-year inflation reached 22.8 per cent in October 2023, its lowest annual growth since October 2021. The Haitian gourde appreciated against the dollar from a peak of 155 gourdes to the dollar in April 2023, the highest in the past decade, to 133 gourdes to the dollar in December 2023. However, owing to the persistent high level of inflation and the strong depreciation of the currency in an economy highly dependent on imported products, the population continues to experience high levels of food insecurity.

56. The Council of Ministers approved the 2023/24 national budget, effective 1 October 2023. The overall budget is 320.64 billion Haitian gourdes. On the basis of 2024 projections, the budget is dedicated primarily to addressing security issues. The 2023/24 budget assumes a reduction of inflation to 15.8 per cent and GDP growth of 0.7 per cent.

57. The Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Communications receives the largest sum, 41,814,997,790 Haitian gourdes, or 13 per cent of the budget, followed by the Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training with an allocation of 10.3 per cent. The Ministry of Justice and Public Security benefits from the third-largest allocation (10.1 per cent).

58. By comparing the 2023/24 budget with the 2022/23 budget, the Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Communications was granted a 6.2 per cent increase – the highest increase in budgetary allocation, followed by the Ministry of Public Health, which received a 1.8 per cent increase. The ministry that lost the most in terms of budget allocation was the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, which had its budget allocation reduced by 3.6 per cent, which may affect the strengthening of the social protection system.

#### *Social protection and food security*

59. The food security situation in Haiti remains dire, with the country's food crisis ranking among the worst in the world in terms of affected population. More than 4.35 million Haitians, or some 40 per cent of the population, are suffering from acute food insecurity (phases 3 and 4). Children are especially vulnerable, with a 30 per cent increase in cases of severe acute malnutrition this year compared with 2022.

60. Persistent food insecurity is attributable not only to the local production deficit caused in part by a historic dismantling of investment incentives regarding the country's food system, but also to dysfunction in the market supply chain, a direct consequence of insecurity. This not only restricts the flow of goods, but also increases transaction costs owing to increasingly heavy illegal passage fees imposed by gangs on the main roads. Gangs remain heavily involved in the local economy through illegal activities such as extortion, the creation of black markets and limiting freedom of movement to the workplace and access to services such as health care and education.

61. In such a context, past gains in poverty reduction have been undone. While recent poverty data are unavailable, the most recent World Bank high-frequency phone survey, fielded in March 2023 and published in October 2023, indicated that two thirds of households had experienced a reduction in their income, explained in part by a deterioration in labour market conditions and a drop in remittances from abroad. Only 38 per cent of survey respondents reported working in the preceding week, compared with 46 per cent at the end of 2021.

62. Moreover, 40 per cent of households reported a reduction in remittances from relatives compared with February 2023, and more than half reported a decrease in help from family and friends. In line with these results, World Bank estimates show that, in 2023, poverty likely increased to 34 per cent (\$2.15/day international poverty line) and 63 per cent of households (\$3.65/day).

63. Adverse weather conditions from 17 to 19 November affected the acute food insecurity crisis. The bad weather caused flooding across various regions of the country, in particular in Grand-Anse, Nippes, South and the North-West Departments. The adverse weather conditions have had a substantial impact on current crops, such as beans, sorghum, Congo peas and bananas, and will accentuate the deficits in local agricultural production.

64. In the current context, a workshop on Early Warnings for All was held in Port-au-Prince, on 29 and 30 November, under the leadership of the resident coordinator's office, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the World Meteorological Organization, in collaboration with national counterparts. The workshop was able to: (a) refocus the attention of national counterparts on a multi-risk approach resulting from the inefficiencies of the current early warning system and plan; (b) evaluate the elements of the national early warning system; and (c) identify flaws and opportunities to strengthen the establishment of national early warning systems to improve their reach, implementation and strength. It was agreed at the end of the workshop that a list of disaster risk reduction deficiencies would be compiled.

## VIII. Basic social service delivery and resilience

### *Humanitarian needs and access to basic services*

65. The need for basic social services has increased owing to internal displacement caused by violent incidents by armed gangs. Meanwhile, the delivery of basic social services has become increasingly challenging owing to ongoing insecurity.

66. The cholera outbreak continues, with an estimated 73,000 confirmed and suspected cases across all 10 departments during the reporting period. Women and children under the age of five account for 80 per cent of all cases. Although vaccination, mass communication and treatment are critical components of the response, multisectoral interventions, such as ensuring access to water and hygiene services, must also be prioritized. Access to drinking water and basic hygiene and sanitation services, as well as improved latrines, is limited, with only 55 per cent of households having access to basic drinking water and 39 per cent having access to improved latrines.

67. The persistent violence hinders the provision of humanitarian assistance. However, humanitarian actors have been able to provide assistance by implementing a humanitarian access plan and making use of the "access working group". Thirteen missions were completed successfully, and five convoys carrying humanitarian aid were dispatched to hard-to-reach areas. In October, at least 100 children were saved from fighting between factional armed gangs in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area through humanitarian engagement.

68. Numerous barriers continued to prevent communities from gaining access to basic essential services. According to a collaborative access analysis conducted in November 2023, both women and men, as well as girls and boys, face significant barriers to gaining access to four critical services: justice, security, shelter and community latrines. These services are deemed unavailable, non-existent or inaccessible at all hours of the day and night owing to insecurity. All age groups, with the exception of men, face significant barriers to using the complaint and feedback systems. Insecurity makes access to recreational areas particularly difficult for girls and women.

69. As at 1 December, the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan had received 33 per cent of the required \$714.8 million. Notwithstanding a lack of adequate funding, humanitarian organizations have successfully carried out a variety of water, sanitation

and hygiene operations. These operations have focused on treating and preventing cholera in Port-au-Prince and surrounding areas, reuniting families with children, providing psychological support to women and girls who have experienced violence and abuse, distributing food (including in school canteens across the country) and assisting migrants, in particular those deported or returned from the Dominican Republic.

70. Population displacement continued unabated, triggered not only by a wave of gang-related violence, but also by localized community disputes over land. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) released four emergency tracking tools focusing on: (a) attacks that occurred on 13 October 2023, in the St. Jean Bosco–Portail St. Joseph neighbourhood of Port-au-Prince, resulting in the displacement of 4,500 people (1,077 households) who sought refuge in sites (80 per cent) and host families (20 per cent); (b) the violence that erupted in the neighbourhood of Mariani, resulting in the loss of life and the displacement of 2,487 individuals (507 households) who took refuge with host families; (c) violence in Cité Soleil following the death of a gang leader (15 and 16 November), displacing approximately 248 households (more than 1,000 people); and (d) clashes due to a land dispute in the commune of Arcahaie (West Department) around 15 November 2023, displacing at least 2,008 households (more than 10,000 people) who sought refuge in sites (3,000) and host families (7,000). According to IOM, of the 146,584 internally displaced people in West Department, 139,853 reside in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, a 7 per cent increase between round 4 of displacement data (130,884, June 2023) and round 5 (139,853, November 2023).

## **IX. Operating environment**

71. Fundamental shifts in the operating context, prompted by a rapidly deteriorating security situation, have amplified the complexity and scale of BINUH logistics, communications, supply chain and human resources operations. The attrition rate among national staff, standing at 25 per cent, has further exacerbated the limited human resources capacities. An upsurge in political uncertainty and gang-related violence, coupled with a recurrent disruption of critical services and the global supply chain, has rendered the outsourcing of numerous support services impractical.

72. The mission has undertaken proactive measures to bolster resilience and mitigate risks in critical domains such as fuel, power generation and communications. An in-house facility for dispensing diesel fuel was established to counter sudden supply disruptions. BINUH aims to install supplementary broadband satellite Internet services improve communications and Internet services. Critical elements, such as armoured vehicles, are strained by the demands of routine operational activities, further compounded by the need to deploy armoured vehicles in red zones, where meetings with government counterparts frequently occur.

## **X. Sexual exploitation and abuse**

73. BINUH registered no allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, with associated paternity and child support claims involving personnel from a previous mission, during the reporting period.

74. Launched in October and under the leadership of the resident coordinator's office, the national network for protection against sexual exploitation and abuse convened its inaugural meeting, uniting 50 entities from both the United Nations and non-United Nations sectors, including government bodies. The number of participants in the network is anticipated to increase progressively. In November, a workshop on

minimum operating standards to bolster prevention and response efforts by United Nations entities was held. Concurrently, discussions are ongoing to establish an inter-agency complaints and feedback mechanism to enhance reporting.

75. IOM, under the guidance of the Victim's Rights Advocate, continues to assist 35 mothers and their 41 children born of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel. Through collaboration with two Member States, there has been some progress in resolving outstanding paternity and child support claims involving former United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti peacekeeping personnel. However, given the security context in Haiti, several mothers struggled to obtain legal documents that are needed to move claims forward in the jurisdictions in which the presumed fathers reside.

## **XI. Observations**

76. It is difficult to overstate the gravity of the political, security, human rights and humanitarian situation in Haiti today. The magnitude of this multidimensional crisis is eroding the foundations of State institutions and the social fabric. At this critical juncture in Haiti's history, it is paramount that Haitian stakeholders come together to build broad consensus around a lasting, inclusive and Haitian-owned solution providing for credible, participatory and inclusive elections to restore the country's democratic institutions once security conditions permit.

77. I commend the active support of regional organizations during this crucial period, in particular that of CARICOM and OAS, whose efforts have helped to maintain a cohesive and coordinated political dialogue process in Haiti. I reiterate my full support for ongoing regional initiatives to foster constructive dialogue among Haitian stakeholders.

78. Broad political participation in Haiti, including women, young people, marginalized communities, such as the LGBTIQ+ community, and person living with disabilities is vital for social cohesion. BINUH will continue to support an inclusive political process, representative of all societal segments. Acknowledging and considering the diverse voices and needs of the Haitian people is essential to bolstering the legitimacy and sustainability of political outcomes.

79. I am appalled by the staggering and worsening level of gang violence devastating the lives of Haitians, in particular in Port-au-Prince. Gang killings, kidnappings and sexual violence, notably against women and young girls, among other abuses, continue with widespread impunity. The rapid spread of gang violence to rural areas previously considered safe, in particular in the Artibonite Department, is further cause for serious alarm.

80. I note the continued preparations for the deployment of urgently needed security support for the Haitian National Police, through the Multinational Security Support Mission, as authorized by the Security Council in its resolution [2699 \(2023\)](#). I call upon all Member States that can, in particular those from the broader region, to contribute generously to ensure that the Multinational Security Support Mission receives the support required.

81. The United Nations continues to work closely with the lead nation and other interested Member States to maximize combined efforts to support Haitian institutions in improving security conditions. The United Nations trust fund, requested by the Security Council in its resolution [2699 \(2023\)](#) to receive voluntary contributions from donors to the Multinational Security Support Mission, was established in December.

82. I am alarmed by the rapid rate at which the national police workforce continues to shrink. The record number of national police officers who left the institution in 2023 is a grim indicator of the security challenges confronting the country. Solutions to rapidly address police attrition must be forthcoming to ensure a sustained impact of the non-Multinational Security Support Mission authorized by the Security Council. The work of the Support Mission and the bolstered operations of the police must be accompanied by the strengthening of the judicial and correctional systems. With the anticipated increase in arrest and detention of suspected gang members, an effort to strengthen the criminal justice and corrections system to expeditiously process arrested gang members and ensure that charges are brought against them effectively, with full respect for due process and fair trial guarantees, will be critical to the overall success of these operations.

83. Community violence reduction and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes must be sufficiently funded and prepared in advance of the Multinational Security Support Mission deployment, including appropriate and separate paths for minors. The implementation of Haiti's national strategy on disarmament, dismantlement and reintegration and community violence reduction, grounded in justice and the rule of law, is urgent. The efforts of the Government of Haiti to increase national capabilities and regional collaboration to curb the spread of illegal arms, supported by the international community, are key to long-term peace and stability in Haiti.

84. I urgently call upon the international community to increase its support for the humanitarian and development responses in Haiti, focusing on the immediate protection needs of the most vulnerable, while also investing in the structural root causes of instability. This enhanced support is vital for creating a secure, stable Haiti with strong foundations for sustainable development and where the human rights of all are protected.

85. I wish to express my profound gratitude to my Special Representative and to all members of the United Nations personnel for their steadfast dedication and tireless efforts in support of Haiti and its people.



Annex

