



# Security Council

Seventy-sixth year

**8799**<sup>th</sup> meeting  
Thursday, 17 June 2021, 3 p.m.  
New York

*Provisional*

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*President:* Mr. Auväärt . . . . . (Estonia)

*Members:*

China . . . . .	Mr. Geng Shuang
France . . . . .	Mrs. Broadhurst Estival
India . . . . .	Mr. Raguttahalli
Ireland . . . . .	Mr. Gallagher
Kenya . . . . .	Mr. Kiboino
Mexico . . . . .	Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez
Niger . . . . .	Mr. Maman Sani
Norway . . . . .	Ms. Syed
Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Polyanskiy
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines . . . . .	Ms. King
Tunisia . . . . .	Mr. Ben Lagha
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Ms. Jacobs
United States of America . . . . .	Mr. DeLaurentis
Viet Nam . . . . .	Mr. Dang

## Agenda

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (S/2021/559)

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*The meeting was called to order at 3 05 p.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **The question concerning Haiti**

#### **Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (S/2021/559)**

**The President:** In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Haiti to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Claude Joseph, Acting Prime Minister of Haiti.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Helen La Lime, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti and Head of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti; and Ms. Chantal Hudicourt Ewald, practicing lawyer of the Port-au-Prince Bar Association and former member of the 1986-1987 Haitian Constitutional Assembly.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2021/559, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti.

I now give the floor to Ms. La Lime.

**Ms. La Lime:** I am honoured to once again have the opportunity to address the Security Council in person and to provide an update on the situation in Haiti, where conditions have deteriorated in the lead-up to the electoral events slated for the fall.

In recent weeks, the country has experienced a resurgence in coronavirus disease cases, which has prompted the authorities to declare a new state of health emergency and consequently led the Provisional Electoral Council to postpone the proposed constitutional referendum scheduled to take place at the end of this month. A resurgence in inter-gang violence has caused the displacement of hundreds of families in several poor neighbourhoods of Port-au-Prince and has deepened the sentiment of insecurity that pervades

Haitian society. Finally, in spite of several Haitian-led mediation efforts, the deep-rooted political crisis that has gripped the country for the better part of the past four years shows no sign of abating. A political agreement remains elusive, as the rhetoric used by some political leaders grows increasingly acrimonious.

Even though national authorities have sought to widen consultations on the new draft constitution, the process continues to elicit criticism from various stakeholders due to its perceived lack of inclusivity and transparency. Technical preparations for the referendum have also been plagued by critical operational delays. Moreover, the ever-growing polarization of Haitian politics, as evidenced by some actors recently exhorting the population to resort to violence to disrupt the referendum process, is extremely concerning. All stakeholders must refrain from such inflammatory discourse. All forms of violence or incitement to violence are unacceptable and must be strongly condemned.

As Haiti prepares to enter a new electoral cycle, an inclusive and participatory process will be essential to consolidating the path towards good governance and political stability in the country. In this regard, the debate over the constitutional referendum should not detract from the timely organization and holding of the overdue parliamentary and local polls, as well as that of the presidential election. A political consensus remains the best possible means to holding a peaceful process that would allow the Haitian people to fully exercise their right to vote. It is of paramount importance that all political and civil society leaders enter into a good-faith dialogue to constructively devise a way to ensure that elections take place within this calendar year, so that an orderly democratic transfer of power to the duly elected representatives of the Haitian people occurs in February 2022.

These last months have been marked by several worrying incidents and serious human rights abuses perpetrated by gangs against civilian populations. Between 1 February and 31 May, these criminal groups were responsible for 78 homicides and countless assaults and rapes. In addition, repeated episodes of gang violence have resulted in the displacement of over 16,000 people from the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area neighbourhoods of Bas-Delmas, Bel-Air, Martissant, Tabarre Issa and Toussaint Brave since the beginning of the year. It is the duty of the Haitian authorities to end the violence, protect the population, ensure unfettered humanitarian access to those in

need, provide emergency assistance to those who have been displaced and hold the perpetrators of such acts accountable for their crimes.

While the strength of the Haitian National Police is still not commensurate with the size of the country's population, the chronic state of insecurity starkly underscores the limits of a law enforcement-centred approach to the gang issue. A more comprehensive strategy to address its underlying causes is urgently needed. I am pleased to note that the interministerial task force on community violence reduction, established by the Government in early April, completed — with United Nations support — its review of the national strategy, a document that is aimed at informing an integrated response to gang violence and is now ready for approval. Similarly, the executive has made noticeable headway in revising and bolstering weapons and ammunitions management legislation that, when adopted, will help regulate the import, purchase and use of firearms in the country.

Incremental progress has also occurred in the judicial realm, with the instalment on 5 May of the Board of the Legal Aid Council, as well as the opening in early June of legal aid offices in the jurisdictions of Les Cayes and Petit-Goâve. Those encouraging, albeit long overdue, steps will contribute to enhancing access to justice for the least privileged and signal the start of a systemic push to reduce prolonged pretrial detention and overcrowding in Haitian prisons. The new penal code and code of criminal procedure will also be instrumental in that effort. To facilitate their dissemination among judicial actors, and their entry into force in June 2022, strong political commitment, notably through the immediate establishment of a national committee for penal reform, will be critical.

By contrast, efforts to fight impunity remain woefully inadequate, as evidenced by the lack of progress in the Dorval case. A chronic lack of resources dedicated to judicial inquiries and lengthy delays in renewing the mandates of investigative judges also stymie progress in investigating and prosecuting such emblematic cases as the 2018 La Saline massacre and the 2019 Bel-Air killings. It would behove authorities to provide judicial actors with the means they require to accomplish their mission.

In spite of the complexity of the situation, the United Nations team in Haiti continues to work hand in hand to help authorities address immediate challenges,

as well as the structural causes of instability that impede progress, while seeking to enhance the impact of our collective interventions. To that end, a number of joint initiatives are under way to implement the national social protection and promotion policy, reinforce food security and community resilience, catalyse the fight against impunity and corruption, and operationalize the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. I would appeal in that regard to Member States to contribute to the 2021-2022 humanitarian response plan, which still requires some \$198 million to enable humanitarian actors to respond to the needs of 1.5 million people, 1.3 million of whom are severely food insecure.

To ensure that the opportunity of a democratic renewal of Haitian institutions is seized; that the right of every Haitian to live in a peaceful and stable environment is upheld; and that each and every citizen of the country has access to justice, social services and the opportunity of a livelihood, it is imperative that local, parliamentary, as well as presidential elections take place, as scheduled, in the fall of this year. To that end, all Haitian stakeholders must urgently set aside their differences, eschew their narrow interests and work together to tackle the protracted political, structural and social issues that hinder the country's progress.

**The President:** I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General La Lime for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Hudicourt Ewald.

**Ms. Hudicourt Ewald** (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the President of the Security Council for inviting me to provide Council members with an overview of the current situation in Haiti in my capacity as a professional, as a member of Haitian civil society and a former member of the Haitian National Assembly from 1986-1987.

With regard to the political context, the steps required for the convening of elections enabling the replacement of the members of the legislative branch and those of the executive boards of the local communities were not undertaken within the legal deadlines. Since January 2020, Haiti has been operating without a chamber of deputies and with a senate that is currently reduced to one-third of its members. The local communities are administered by officials appointed by the executive branch. That situation has polarized society, including the judiciary, which makes any attempt at dialogue extremely difficult, if not impossible.

The already tense relationship between the executive branch and the judiciary has been exacerbated by the dismissal and appointment of members of the judiciary by the executive branch, which has prolonged the strikes by members of the judiciary. Those strikes have made it impossible for citizens to exercise their constitutional right of access to justice and to appear before a regular judge within a reasonable time frame, which has accelerated the overcrowding of prisons.

The judiciary is weakened and entirely dysfunctional. In addition, the executive branch has been exercising legislative power for 17 months, issuing decrees and presidential orders of a legislative nature.

It is in that polarized backdrop that the executive decided, by presidential decree, to undertake constitutional reform and to organize elections.

A Provisional Electoral Council has been appointed with the mission of organizing a referendum for a new constitution, followed by elections at all levels. A five-member Independent Consultative Committee has also been appointed to draft the text of the new constitution. The Committee circulated its text for opinion and comments through some associations at the beginning of March.

I was asked by four of the major business associations to provide a comparative analysis of the text of the 1987 Constitution and the proposed draft. We also attended a debate organized by the Bar Association of Port-au-Prince, in collaboration with the Faculty of Law of Quisqueya University. At the invitation of the Haitian diaspora organization Haitian Studies, we participated in a debate, together with Mr. Georges Michel, a former member of the Constitutional Committee in 1986-1987; Ms. Danielle Magloire, a university professor and women's rights activist; a law professor from the city of Cap-Haïtien and a sociologist university professor in the United States of America.

The general opinion was that constitutional changes are necessary. However, although the Independent Consultative Committee claims to have consulted all the work that has been done on the subject over the past several years, the current process is not legitimate and the full participation of all civil society is required.

In our opinion, the Government, in the absence of a parliament, could have drawn on the procedure used in 1986, described as follows, which allowed for a broad participation of the population. That involved,

first, setting up a committee to draft a constitutional text; secondly, organizing elections and consultations for the formation of the constituent assembly, which was made up of 61 members, 41 of whom were elected and 20 of whom were appointed by the country's social and professional associations; thirdly, broadcasting the work of the constituent assembly live on national radio and television, allowing the public to see that its suggestions had been taken into account and to understand the reasons underlying the proposed constitutional provisions; fourthly, a vote by the constituent assembly on the final version of the text of the constitution, article by article; and, lastly, holding a referendum so that the population could vote on the text adopted by the Constituent Assembly. A similar process to that I have just outlined could have been followed, with the exception of the referendum stage.

With regard to the security environment, the current sociopolitical context is making it very difficult — if not impossible — to motivate the population to participate in any form of electoral process. The primary concern of the people, most of whom are poor, is to meet their needs and those of their families. Their financial and security situations are precarious. Gangs rule. The threat of kidnapping, theft, rape and crime is facing us all. No one is immune.

Those residing in underprivileged and densely populated neighbourhoods are the main victims. Those communities are mostly found along the west coast of Port-au-Prince and the nearby hills. The southern, northern and eastern exit routes of Port-au-Prince are under the control of armed gangs. The Artibonite valley — an important agricultural area of the country — has been under threat by armed gangs for more than two years. A special edition of the *Moniteur*, published on 18 March, declared a state of emergency in the areas of Village-de-Dieu, Grande Ravine, Delmas, Savien and Petite Rivière de l'Artibonite.

Insecurity and violence are disrupting travel to and from the various neighbourhoods within Port-au-Prince and between Port-au-Prince and other cities. Getting to work presents a daily risk for employees. Businesses are sometimes forced to close their doors owing to gang activity. The courthouse in Port-au-Prince — the capital of Haiti — is located in a dangerous area bordering neighbourhoods under the control of heavily armed gangs. Despite repeated requests from the Port-au-Prince Bar Association and judiciary personnel, the

Government has refused to relocate the courthouse and been unable to effectively ensure its security.

In recent months, the gang war in the commune of Cité Soleil and Martissant has resulted in numerous deaths and injuries. Two students in their last year of the same Cité Soleil high school were killed in the space of a week. People have had to flee their homes. The bodies are not counted. Often, when a body is found, it is buried on the spot on the order of the authorities who have been called to write up a report — if they show up or are able to show up.

The National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration was created on 27 February 2019, with the primary mission of coordinating and implementing State policy on disarmament, disbanding illegally armed groups and reintegrating disarmed individuals. To date, there has been no information indicating that any gang has been disarmed or its members reintegrated into society. On the contrary, the main gangs in Port-au-Prince have joined forces. Armed struggles between members and non-members of that confederation are causing numerous casualties among the civilian population, which have not been officially recorded.

The gangs are well supplied with heavy weapons and ammunition in a country that is, in principle, under a weapons embargo. The police seem totally powerless. Images of the clashes and the victory cries of the gangs are trending on social media. The resurgence in late April of the coronavirus disease in the form of a much more virulent variant has compounded the general insecurity landscape. Access to hospitals and medical oxygen supplies is limited. To date, no vaccines are officially available in Haiti.

With regard to the financial situation, the exchange rate of the Haitian currency against the United States dollar is artificially maintained at a low level by the Haitian State, to the detriment of the Haitian people, who live on remittances received from abroad. A Haitian who receives \$100 a month has lost the equivalent of three days' worth of food for his family. The formal business sector has not been spared. Businesses have difficulty accessing the currency needed to pay their international suppliers. They face long delays as investment agreements are not respected.

Let us now talk about the situation of women. Approximately 52 per cent of the Haitian population is made up of women. They are most often the heads

of their families. Haitian fathers, for the most part, abandon their children to their mothers and do not contribute anything. For Haitian women, no sacrifice is too great to ensure the subsistence and education of their children.

Women are the pillars of the Haitian economy. In the countryside, they tend to their gardens. In appalling conditions, they sell what they grow to the public in the cities, where they invade the sidewalks and streets and squeeze into public markets. The markets are littered with garbage and rarely have restrooms. The women are the best clients of microcredit organizations. For example, they represent 94 per cent of the clients of microcredit organization Sèvis Finansye Fonkoze, S.A. throughout the country and 75 per cent of the clients of FINCA S.A. Despite the difficult economic situation that Haiti has experienced over the past few years, particularly the past 12 months, the loan repayment rate for Sèvis Finansye Fonkoze, S.A. is around 97 per cent.

Haitian women are found in large numbers in public and private management positions. However, owing to the culture, they rarely reach the highest levels and avoid getting too involved in politics. They continue to suffer from their marginalized status in Haitian society. Despite the key roles they play in the social and economic dynamics of the country, their work remains undervalued.

Moreover, the political marginalization of women and their exclusion from all positions of responsibility in public administration continue to perpetuate their lack of participation in the country's governance system. For example, the 35 per cent quota for women provided for in the 2011 constitutional amendment has not been upheld by successive Governments. Concerned with meeting their basic needs, women often perceive involvement in any political issue as a threat to their families' well-being.

In conclusion, there is no trust in the State or political class. The people do not believe in the will or the ability of those in power to combat insecurity. The current concern of Haitians is to ensure the survival and protection of their families. People are afraid. Despite the difficult context, solidarity exists in Haiti. In their awareness of the State's chronic weakness, members of civil society and everyone else within their power is supporting care centres and displaced populations. The country is in dire straits.



**The President:** I thank Ms. Hudicourt Ewald for her briefing.

I would like to draw the attention of speakers to paragraph 22 of presidential note S/2017/507, which encourages all participants in Council meetings to deliver their statements in five minutes or less, in line with the Security Council's commitment to making more effective use of open meetings.

I now give the floor to those Council members who wish to make statements.

**Mr. DeLaurentis** (United States of America): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General La Lime for her comprehensive briefing on the situation in Haiti. The United States is highly appreciative of the work that she and her team have done and continue to do. I thank Ms. Hudicourt Ewald for her insights and sharing her expertise on the challenges that Haiti is facing. We welcome the presence of acting Prime Minister Joseph in the Chamber today.

In the four months since the Security Council last met to discuss the work of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (see S/2021/174), we believe that the Government of Haiti has not sufficiently focused on addressing the country's most urgent priority — organizing parliamentary elections that would end the current period of rule by decree by President Moïse. We note with appreciation the efforts of the Government to undertake voter registration, but more must be done.

The United States has repeatedly urged both the Government of Haiti and political stakeholders to create the conditions for free and fair parliamentary and presidential elections this fall. Most recently, the United States was part of an Organization of American States (OAS) delegation that visited Haiti from 8 to 10 June to discuss the ongoing stalemate with the Government and meet with political and civil society stakeholders. We look forward to the report of the OAS and will continue to engage closely with the United Nations, the OAS and the international community.

As we have said repeatedly, the people of Haiti deserve the opportunity to elect their leaders and restore Haiti's democratic institutions. The only way out of presidential rule by decree is the conduct of free and fair legislative elections, so that Haiti's legislature can resume its constitutional role and an elected president

can succeed President Moïse when his term ends on 7 February 2022.

We welcome the indefinite postponement of the referendum to amend the Constitution, given our concerns that the Government of Haiti's preparations to hold a referendum have not been sufficiently inclusive, participatory or transparent. We have emphasized to the Government of Haiti that the focus must be on holding free and fair legislative and presidential elections in 2021.

To assist in that effort, the United States Government is providing over \$3 million to the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening, which includes the National Democratic Institute, the International Republican Institute and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems. Their activities include focusing on improving electoral administration, strengthening the competitiveness of political parties, educating voters on electoral processes, promoting electoral transparency and ensuring inclusive voter participation.

On the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), the United States remains fully committed to ending the global pandemic as soon as possible. The United States will share at least three-quarters of its donated doses through the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility, prioritizing Latin America and the Caribbean, South-East Asia and Africa. Approximately 6 million doses from the first tranche will go to South and Central America, including Haiti. In addition, the United States has invested more than \$16 million to meet the immediate COVID-19-related health needs of Haitians while focusing on reducing widespread transmission.

Despite the Haitian Government's commendable decision in September 2020 to increase the budget of the Haitian National Police, we remain concerned by the lack of resources devoted to law enforcement, given the increase in gang violence, a 36 per cent increase in kidnappings in the first four months of 2021 and a 17 per cent increase in homicides.

The United States is providing \$21 million in equipment, training and technical advice to build the capacity of the Haitian National Police as an effective and accountable law enforcement agency. We call on other donors to increase their support as well. We are also encouraging Haiti to take a holistic approach to countering gangs and are providing \$5 million to

strengthen the Haitian National Police's capacity to work with communities to resist gangs.

The United States is also working to strengthen the Haitian National Police's capacity to provide election security and to protect protesters' human rights, which have been under grave threat in the past several months. The United States and Haiti are working together to vet officers in Haitian National Police crowd-control units, as well as retraining, restructuring and equipping them so that they can quickly respond and protect Haitians from civil unrest and election-related violence.

We remain deeply concerned by the ongoing scourge of corruption, which continues to fuel discord and instability. We are still awaiting effective action by the Haitian Government to ensure accountability for human rights abuses, particularly in the emblematic cases the Council has repeatedly highlighted, including those of Grande Ravine, La Saline and Bel-Air, as well as the murder of Monferrier Dorval in August 2020. The United States will continue to use all appropriate tools to promote accountability for all corrupt and malign actors in Haiti.

Haiti faces a variety of serious and complex challenges, none of which can be fully addressed without political stability in the country. That stability can be achieved only through free and fair elections that deliver a democratic and fully representative Government. The time for action by President Moïse and all key stakeholders is now. The people of Haiti cannot afford any further delays and the United States will continue to stand with them.

**Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I appreciate the briefings delivered by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Ms. Helen La Lime, and Ms. Chantal Hudicourt Ewald. Their reflections are most useful to the Council. I also welcome the presence of the Acting Prime Minister of Haiti at this meeting.

Stability and prosperity in Haiti constitute a major and unresolved issue for Latin America and the Caribbean. As we have heard, the political, security and human rights situation in the country has not improved since our last meeting in February (S/2021/174). We therefore stress the urgent need to hold parliamentary, presidential and municipal elections in Haiti before the end of the year.

We call on all political actors to ensure the holding of free, inclusive, transparent and credible elections in 2021 that reflect the democratic will of the Haitian people. Given the fragility of the electoral processes ahead, we join the Secretary-General in his appeal to the Haitian authorities, political parties and civil society to put the future of the country before their personal interests. Violence and incitement to violence are unacceptable. It is only through dialogue and democratic renewal that Haiti will be able to embark on the path towards sustainable development.

We acknowledge the efforts of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) and other groups to bring about a much-needed dialogue between political parties, authorities, civil society and members of the diaspora. We regret that those endeavours have not been successful and we call on all actors to renew efforts to engage in dialogue, without preconditions, in order to reach a minimum consensus that will promote the prosperity and well-being of the Haitian people.

More than 1.5 million Haitians are in need of humanitarian assistance. The national authorities and the international community must work more closely together to address the current situation. We take note of the state of emergency declared in Haiti due to the coronavirus disease pandemic, while expressing our concern about the minimal progress made in terms of the vaccination process. Nevertheless, we welcome the support that Haiti will soon be receiving in that regard, as we have just heard from the representative of the United States. We reiterate our call for vaccines, as a global public good, to be made available to the poorest countries and distributed to all social groups.

Challenges pertaining to human rights and the rule of law remain a source of concern in Haiti. Greater efforts are needed to combat corruption and impunity, particularly in cases of gender-based violence. Furthermore, we express our concern regarding the deterioration of the security situation, in particular the activities of criminal gangs and the increase in kidnappings.

We acknowledge the efforts of the United Nations country team aimed at creating jobs for young people, women and other vulnerable groups. We urge continued efficient and coherent collaboration and interaction between BINUH and the United Nations country team to enhance the resilience of the people in order to ensure peacebuilding and sustainable peace in the country.

We particularly welcome the weapons and ammunition management programme launched by BINUH and various United Nations entities, including the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The role of the various United Nations organs and agencies to promote development in Haiti is critical, but it is necessary to generate synergies between the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission.

In March, the Security Council made a clear statement on the need for political actors in Haiti to resolve their differences. The international community and the United Nations system, including the Council, must stand firm and united to support Haiti in achieving this goal.

**Ms. King** (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): I have the distinct honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Kenya, the Niger, Tunisia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (A3+1).

We thank Ms. Helen La Lime, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, and Ms. Chantal Hudicourt Ewald for their briefings. We also welcome the presence of the Acting Prime Minister of Haiti, His Excellency Mr. Claude Joseph, in today's deliberations.

The ever-deteriorating state of affairs in Haiti, as evident by the very grim report of the Secretary-General (S/2021/559), is extremely troubling. The political stalemate persists and the recent upsurge in coronavirus disease (COVID-19) cases risks further exacerbating the already dire socioeconomic and humanitarian situation, while the temerity and power of gangs compound the security situation.

The prevailing conditions therefore require urgent attention and specific and sustained support from the international community. Political inertia cannot continue if Haiti is to achieve its aspirations of peace, stability and prosperity. Consistent with their responsibilities, the United Nations, the Caribbean Community and the Organization of American States (OAS) have been urging Haitian leaders and relevant stakeholders to decisively tackle its multifaceted crises.

In that context, the A3+1 commends the efforts of the Permanent Council of the OAS in undertaking a good offices mission to Haiti last week, in which Saint Vincent and the Grenadines participated. We hope that

the mission was successful in establishing a framework for dialogue among the various Haitian stakeholders, with the aim of reaching a palatable solution. We look forward to the mission's forthcoming report.

In order to peacefully overcome the current crises through a Haitian-led and -owned inclusive national political dialogue, all Haitian stakeholders need to soften their deeply entrenched positions so that trust can be built and dialogue facilitated. Further, the A3+1 takes this opportunity to remind the Haitian leaders of their international law obligations and the regional commitments to which they have pledged, particularly those enshrined in the Inter-American Democratic Charter and the Charter of Civil Society for the Caribbean Community.

The A3+1 is deeply disturbed about the security and human rights situation. The lack of progress in the efforts of the Haitian National Police to provide the necessary security and protection in the areas under assault, such as Martissant, La Saline, Bel-Air, Ravine and Cité Soleil, is extremely worrying. The high incidence of kidnappings continues apace, with ongoing robbery, cruel detention and human rights violations, including sexual and gender-based violence. Additionally, reports continue to emerge with respect to rogue police officers. The recent request by President Moïse for additional support from the United Nations attests to the gravity of insecurity in Haiti.

Accordingly, we call for strict adherence to the presidential statement (S/PRST/2021/7) adopted in March, which emphasized the need for an immediate and coordinated response by Haitian authorities to demonstrate their commitment to addressing the deteriorating security situation in Haiti, including gang-related criminal activities, increases in kidnappings, homicides and rape.

The A3+1 also echoes its support for the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration in its efforts to reduce community violence, and urges the Government to undertake measures to adopt the draft national strategy on community violence reduction. The strategy should bolster the State's security apparatus to combat criminal activities and dismantle gangs. Similarly, adopting the national action plan on human rights endorsed in December 2019 by the Haitian Interministerial Committee on Human Rights will be instrumental in bringing justice to the victims.



The dire conditions prevalent throughout the Haitian prison system and the judicial deficiencies cannot be divorced from the security challenges. The A3+1 therefore urges the authorities to address bottlenecks within the penitentiary and judiciary systems.

We welcome the establishment of the Board of the Legal Aid Council and its role in expediting legal cases. We also echo the Secretary-General's call on the Ministry of Justice and Public Security to establish a committee on the implementation of the penal reform codes without delay in order to ensure their enactment, with a view to tackling the detention rate and serious overcrowding in prisons.

Resolving the political stalemate appears to be a priority for the scheduling of inclusive, free, fair, transparent and credible elections. However, the interconnected nature of Haiti's multifaceted challenges demands durable parallel solutions. Good governance has become a policy condition for loans, technical assistance and debt relief. It is therefore incumbent for Haitian political leaders to resolve the current impasse in order to enjoy this benefit.

Likewise, we encourage the international community to continue supporting Haiti's 2021 national humanitarian response plan, which requires \$235.6 million to respond to the needs of 1.5 million people, including 1.3 million who are severely food insecure. At the same time, we urge the scaling up of the COVID-19 vaccines supply in order for our sister nation to respond appropriately to the pandemic and ensure its sustainable recovery. We welcome the announcement made moments ago by the United States to assist in that regard.

Finally, we tell our Haitian brothers and sisters that history has shown us that no matter how difficult their challenges are, they rise. We therefore call on them once more to collectively find sustenance from the tried and tested values of their forebears and to unite, reconcile and advance on the path to peace, development and stability.

The A3+1 celebrates their rich and diverse culture, as displayed during their heritage month in May, recognizing that Haiti symbolizes the first black nation to gain independence by overcoming colonialism and slavery. To that end, it would be remiss of us not to repeat our call for reparations from former colonial Powers to assist in repairing the malignant legacy of slavery. We believe that, within this decade focused

on the upliftment of persons of African descent, proper attention must be given to this just cause.

**Ms. Syed (Norway):** I would like to thank Special Representative La Lime for the report (S/2021/559) and for the concrete recommendations therein, which we support. I would also like to thank Ms. Hudicourt-Ewald for her briefing and Prime Minister Joseph for his participation.

Ten days from now Haitians were scheduled to vote in a constitutional referendum. We note the recent decision to postpone this referendum, and we encourage all parties to engage in a substantive dialogue and prepare for the critical elections later this year. We hope these parliamentary and presidential elections can be implemented in an orderly and peaceful manner as scheduled. For this, a genuine commitment to democratic principles is a prerequisite and will entail ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of all eligible voters, including women.

Norway is increasingly concerned about the lack of public safety. The shocking events of community violence, especially gang-related violence, must be addressed. For the period between 1 February and 31 May alone, the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) attributed 295 alleged human rights abuses to gang members and unidentified armed men, including 78 killings, as well as cases of kidnappings, arson, armed robberies and displacement. We condemn these crimes and urge the authorities to ensure that the perpetrators are held to account.

As a significant donor to the Central Emergency Response Fund, Norway welcomes yesterday's announcement by Mark Lowcock that \$1 million be allocated as part of an urgent response to gang violence and displacement in Haiti. We are particularly troubled by the potential impact of violence on women and children, who make up around 70 per cent of the recently displaced. We are worried about their protection needs, especially with regard to sexual and gender-based violence. The increase in harassment of and reprisals against human rights defenders and the consequent shrinking of civic space is also troubling. This cannot be tolerated.

Norway is also deeply concerned that the number of persons in pre-trial detention has further increased. We call for the necessary judicial reform to remedy this situation and end unacceptable overcrowding. In the light of all the foregoing challenges, we welcome

be the thorough reporting of BINUH and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on human rights violations and abuses, and we call on Haitian authorities to facilitate the establishment of an OHCHR office in Haiti as soon as possible.

Norway notes the recent increase in coronavirus disease infections in Haiti. We encourage the implementation of an efficient response to the pandemic and welcome the decision to accept vaccines through the COVAX facility. We will continue to follow the situation closely.

In addition to the grave issues underscored already, Norway would also like to emphasize the need to consider the impact of climate change as one of several systemic challenges that Haiti is facing. Haiti is especially vulnerable to natural disasters exacerbated by climate change and environmental degradation. Furthermore, the region is currently entering a new hurricane season predicted to reach levels that are above normal. Lack of resilience affects livelihoods and leads to internal displacement, which in turn fuels crime and unrest, all contributing to a deteriorating humanitarian situation.

In the light of that, we especially welcome and encourage the ongoing United Nations work on climate-change mitigation through community-based efforts. Given the links between climate change and security, we encourage BINUH to include more information about the impact of climate change and gaps in resilience in Haiti in its next briefing to us. We believe such information falls neatly under benchmark 6 of BINUH's mandate, namely, building resilience.

Before closing, I would like to again reiterate that Norway fully supports BINUH and its ongoing work.

**Mr. Raguttahalli** (India): At the outset, I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Head of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), Ms. Helen La Lime, for her detailed briefing on the implementation of the mission's mandate and the related developments in Haiti. I would also thank Ms. Hudicourt-Ewald for her insight into the current situation in the country. I welcome the presence of the Acting Prime Minister of Haiti in today's meeting.

I will focus my statement mainly on key issues concerning the mission's mandate. The political

situation in Haiti has seen no major changes since our last meeting, in February 2021 (see S/2021/174). The stalemate has continued, with the opposition parties remaining steadfast in their positions on the formation of a transitional Government. Meanwhile, a new prime minister, the sixth under the current president, has been appointed and given the task of forming a new Government.

The Independent Consultative Committee has also reviewed the draft text of the new Constitution. The Provisional Electoral Council has begun preparations for elections, and a revised election calendar has been announced. The constitutional referendum has been postponed sine die, and uncertainty over its happening remains. All these developments raise pertinent questions about the holding of elections. We believe the Government and the opposition must engage constructively on the way forward to ensure that the election process is completed in 2021 as scheduled. Haiti has seen enough brinkmanship, and it is now time for all stakeholders to work towards democratic renewal. The efforts of BINUH and the Special Representative need the Security Council's support. We also welcome the visit by the delegation of the Organization of American States to Port-au-Prince last week and its engagement with all stakeholders. Holding free and fair elections is important for Haiti.

The security situation has unfortunately further deteriorated. The failed police operation in Village-de-Dieu, the prison breakout and the recent deadly clashes between the rival gangs in Port-au-Prince reflect the serious security challenges. We have taken note of the ongoing efforts to address these challenges, including police recruitment, review of the draft law on firearms and ammunition and the draft national strategy for community-violence reduction. These efforts should be expedited further. We also hope that the quick implementation of projects funded by the Peacebuilding Commission will help to facilitate greater involvement of communities, thereby positively affecting the security situation. The authorities also need to take immediate action to end impunity and bring to justice those responsible for killing of the President of Port-au-Prince Bar Association and other emblematic cases mentioned repeatedly in the reports of the Secretary-General. The justice and prison systems also need immediate attention.

The sociopolitical situation and the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) disease pandemic have added

to the difficult economic situation, which has, in turn, increased the vulnerability of the population, which the report has highlighted under benchmark 5. The humanitarian situation has also worsened, with 4.4 million people in need of assistance of one form or another. There is therefore a clear need to enhance humanitarian assistance. In this regard, we hope that the funding shortages faced by humanitarian agencies, including the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, will improve in the coming months.

As rightly mentioned by the Secretary-General, Haiti has numerous strengths that can propel its socioeconomic recovery, provided there is improvement in the political and security situation. We have no doubt that the people of Haiti have the strength and resilience to overcome the current challenges. We hope that the upcoming elections will pave the way for Haiti's revival and usher in progress and prosperity. To this end, we encourage continued close collaboration and coordination between BINUH and the United Nations country team in Haiti and the Government of Haiti.

India has had a long association with Haiti and its people. India was a major troop-contributing country to the United Nations peacekeeping operation in Haiti and contributed three formed police units to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti. India has also been extending assistance to Haiti in times of need, including during the 2010 earthquake and the COVID-19 pandemic. India remains committed to supporting the people of Haiti in these challenging times.

**Mr. Geng Shuang** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Since the Security Council deliberations in February, Haiti has not yet emerged from the crisis and the country is still in chaos. The Secretary-General's report (S/2021/559) and the briefings by Special Representative La Lime and the non-governmental organization representative just now described to us a Haiti with political divisiveness, economic difficulties, social unrest, rampant gangs, an unchecked pandemic and deprivation of livelihoods. Allow me to cite just two examples.

First, according to the data, nearly 40 per cent of the Haitian population, or approximately 4.6 million people, cannot get basic food each day and urgently need humanitarian assistance.

Secondly, on 14 June UNICEF pointed out that, in the past two weeks alone, about 8,500 women and children in Port-au-Prince had been displaced

by gangster violence. The hardship and misfortune experienced by the Haitian people are both difficult to believe and unacceptable. The Haitian Government and Haitian leaders bear the primary responsibility for that unfortunate and even desperate situation.

The Security Council and the Secretary-General repeatedly have called on the Haitian Government to abandon self-interest and meet the aspirations of the people by undertaking their due obligations and strengthening national governance. Unfortunately, that has not become a reality. The proposed constitutional referendum has repeatedly been postponed. The parliamentary, presidential and local elections, which are expected to be held in September, are also plagued with uncertainty.

China once again urges the Haitian authorities and the leaders of all parties to put an end to meaningless political strife, crack down on corruption and the abuse of power and move the relevant political agenda forward in order to create favourable conditions for and work towards the swift restoration of the country's stability and social order and the achievement of economic development. They cannot afford to repeatedly let the Haitian people down or fail the expectation and help of the international community.

Over the past 30 years, the United Nations has invested huge resources in a tremendous effort to help Haiti. However, to date such efforts and resources have not achieved the expected results. The Haitian people are still suffering tremendously and the future of Haiti is still very bleak.

The United Nations existing blood-transfusion and oxygen-supply assistance model is going nowhere and appears to be unsustainable. China commends Special Representative of the Secretary-General La Lime and her colleagues for their work and for their input. However, I wish to reiterate that there is no external solution to the question of Haiti. The country must be able to solve its own problems and achieve development on its own. Now is the time to seriously seek new ideas and new ways to help the Haitian people. The United Nations, donors, countries of the region and the Organization of American States should jointly explore ways to help Haiti emerge from the crisis and get back on track. The Security Council should learn from its past experience and lessons and carefully consider the future presence of the United Nations in Haiti in the light of the situation in the country. In that regard, the

Secretariat should propose feasible recommendations in conjunction with the expiration of the new mandate in October of this year.

**Ms. Jacobs** (United Kingdom): I thank the briefers for their briefings.

As we have said in the Security Council many times before, the people of Haiti deserve an end to the dysfunction that has so long plagued their State institutions and governance. I want to start by joining other speakers in calling for free, fair, credible and transparent elections in order to enable a transfer of power in February 2022. That is critical to putting Haiti on a path to stability and prosperity.

The United Kingdom remains deeply concerned by the lack of accountability for human rights violations. While we recognize the challenges, it is frustrating, to say the least, that, after years of international support, that impunity endures. Only political will from Haiti's leaders can break that cycle.

The fact that decades of international support to Haitian institutions have failed to generate durable peace dividends rightly begs questions about the tools and approaches deployed over the years. The United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti represents the Council's conviction that international engagement with Haiti needed to rest on a new model of cooperation, with Haitians firmly in the lead. Experience has taught us that sustainable peace needs to be built from the ground up. Political processes need to be accompanied by grass-roots engagement to promote social cohesion and defuse tensions. The elections are critical, but the violence and corruption that have long plagued Haiti can be overcome in the long term only by empowering local peacebuilders.

The United Kingdom remains convinced that the integrated United Nations presence in Haiti positions the Organization better to support Haiti's needs on the basis of a more holistic approach. The success of community violence reduction programmes shows what can be achieved. We therefore encourage the United Nations country team in particular to align its strategies firmly in support of peacebuilding approaches.

**Mr. Dang** (Viet Nam): I would like to warmly welcome His Excellency Mr. Claude Joseph, Prime Minister of Haiti, to our meeting today. I also thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Helen La Lime, for her insightful briefing and all

United Nations personnel in Haiti for their hard work on the ground at this very challenging time. I would also like to thank Ms. Chantal Hudicourt Ewald for her information on the latest developments in Haiti.

We are concerned about the multifaceted difficulties and instability in Haiti. The current political impasse and the unscheduled electoral framework agenda have remained the greatest challenges hindering constitutional reform. The continued violence and kidnappings, especially gang-related criminality, over parts of the country have further exacerbated the situation. The recent humanitarian response plan for Haiti reports that this year some 4.4 million people will require emergency humanitarian assistance. That number accounts for more than 40 per cent of Haiti's total population. Against that background, I would like to stress the following points.

First, regarding political progress, the urgent need for Haiti now is to hold free, fair, transparent and credible legislative elections, which have been overdue since October 2019. We therefore urge all the relevant parties to make further efforts in reaching a political agreement on modalities for and timing of the elections that are acceptable to all Haitian stakeholders, including the political representation of women and young people. We call on the United Nations and the international community to urgently prioritize resources in support of the elections.

At the same, we further stress the primary responsibility of the Government of Haiti to address the underlying drivers of instability. The Government, political parties and other stakeholders in Haiti should engage in a comprehensive national dialogue to address the root causes of the current political impasse. It is high time for a compromise and political consensus to be made on constitutional and broader reforms.

Secondly, with regard to the security situation, Haiti continues to face a number of long-standing threats and challenges. Gang-related violence, kidnappings and attacks targeting local communities have had adverse impacts on the livelihoods of Haitians. We condemn those acts and urge the Haitian Government and local authorities to uphold their responsibilities, take decisive measures to improve the country's legal framework and undertake all security measures needed to stop violence and protect civilians, especially women and children. We call upon international and regional partners to maintain their support for the Haitian security



forces through training, provision of equipment and capacity-building.

Thirdly, with regard to socioeconomic development, a number of long-standing threats and challenges, including linkages between sociopolitical, governance and economic challenges, have fuelled instability and undermined Haiti's socioeconomic development.

In that regard, we look forward to the adoption of bold and necessary measures by the Haitian authorities to address poverty and socioeconomic instability. We also call on the international community and countries in the region to continue supporting socioeconomic development in Haiti, especially through viable projects boosting job creation, women's and youth empowerment and capacity-building. We cannot emphasize enough the need to address the deep-rooted economic issues facing Haiti. Only with such assistance can the Government and the people of Haiti overcome long-term challenges and strive for sustained stability and security.

Before concluding, we commend the tireless efforts of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti and the United Nations country team in Haiti. We stress the important role of neighbouring countries and regional organizations and encourage them to continue their active engagement in Haiti.

We would like to reaffirm our support for the Haitian people in the pursuit of peace, security and sustainable development in the country.

**Ms. Broadhurst Estival** (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Helen La Lime and Ms. Chantal Hudicourt Ewald for their comprehensive briefings and I welcome Mr. Claude Joseph, Acting Prime Minister of Haiti, to the meeting.

We are very concerned about the situation in Haiti. In the absence of elections, the Parliament has not been in session since January 2020 and the President continues to govern by decree. Since the resignation of the Prime Minister in April, the Haitian authorities have not been able to form a government. No agreement has been reached to allow the country to overcome the crisis, which the country desperately needs. I recall that it is first and foremost the responsibility of the Haitian executive to put an end to that deadlock.

The priority is therefore to organize legislative and presidential elections, which are scheduled to be held in the fourth quarter of this year. To ensure their credibility,

three conditions are necessary. First, the authorities must guarantee the security of voters. I would like to welcome the establishment of a joint electoral security unit within the Haitian National Police; that is a step in the right direction, even if much remains to be done, especially in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area.

Secondly, the authorities must establish reliable voters' lists and accelerate the distribution of identification cards. A total of 4.4 million Haitians have already been registered and those efforts must continue.

Thirdly, we call on all parties to work in good faith to reach a consensus that will allow for a transparent election to be held in a peaceful climate.

The security situation in Haiti is deteriorating. Gang violence, kidnappings, human rights abuses and attacks against law enforcement are on the rise. The recent events in the southern suburbs of Port-au-Prince attest to the climate of terror that reigns in the country. As we know, the solution lies in allocating more resources to the Haitian National Police, which must be beyond reproach. The recruitment conducted in recent months is positive and must continue.

With regard to the fight against impunity and corruption, we have not seen any progress. The investigation into the assassination of Monferrier Dorval has stalled. Haitians are waiting for justice following the massacres in Grand Ravine, La Saline and Bel-Air and the perpetrators of those atrocities are still at large. Corruption is corroding the country's institutions and undermining people's trust. The Haitian justice system must live up to the requirements of the rule of law to which the population aspires.

The new and even deadlier wave of the coronavirus disease has compounded the existing fragility of the country, with nearly 4 million Haitians already living in extreme poverty and suffering from food insecurity. Allow me to express France's solidarity with Haiti's fight against the current health crisis.

I would like to pay tribute to the work of the Special Representative and the entire team of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti in an extremely difficult context. France, both at the national level and through the European Union and the International Organization of la Francophonie, stands more closely than ever with the people and country of Haiti.

**Mr. Polyanskiy** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to Ms. Helen La Lime, Special

Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), for her briefing on the situation in the country and the work of BINUH.

The situation on the island is a source of growing concern. The security situation continues to deteriorate; the socioeconomic situation is deteriorating; there is no unity on the issue of the launch of the constitutional process; and State institutions and the entire system of central and regional governance are weak. The humanitarian situation is also deteriorating, partly owing to the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, for which the country's medical system was unprepared for obvious reasons. There are more and more cases of human rights violations, attempts to put pressure on the judiciary and restrictions on civil liberties. Against that background, widespread public disapproval has been compounded by the increased activity of criminal groups.

We are convinced that this steep downturn is the result of the paralysis of the political system, against the background of the suspension of the work of the Parliament more than one year ago. It is clear that governing the country by decree is not easing tensions but on the contrary is largely provoking them, as evidenced by the public rejection of a number of decisions that under normal circumstances would have been taken in consultation with the Parliament.

We note attempts by President Moïse to establish an inclusive political dialogue to develop unified national approaches to the most important requirements for normalizing the situation, including the completion of constitutional reforms and the holding of presidential and parliamentary elections. We regret to note that to date those steps have not yielded any results.

We were surprised and concerned to learn, following the issuance of the Secretary-General's report (S/2021/559), about the postponement of the vote on the constitutional referendum scheduled for 26 June. The process of drafting changes to the Constitution is itself a subject of public criticism, since it is being conducted in the absence of the Parliament. Such a radical and simultaneous change to the State system should be backed by broad public support, but currently there is, to be frank, no evidence of such support.

Port-au-Prince needs responsible international support and the current situation imposes a particular responsibility on the United Nations presence in the

country. We hope that, while acting strictly within the limits of its mandate, BINUH will continue to contribute in an impartial manner to the search for a national consensus, with the broadest possible involvement of the key political players.

I would also like to stress that we should not disregard the issue of resolving political differences while we focus on the efforts to ensure security of civilian population, as that could undermine the effectiveness of our efforts. Under such difficult circumstances, it is crucial for the Security Council to send a unified message in support of national dialogue.

Russia stands ready to provide Haiti with all necessary support so that the work of the Security Council can result in genuine normalization of the situation in Haiti and the strengthening of its sovereignty and self-sufficiency.

**Mr. Gallagher** (Ireland): Let me also thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Helen La Lime for her briefing today and express my appreciation to Ms. Chantal Hudicourt Ewald for her valuable briefing. I also acknowledge the presence of Acting Prime Minister Claude Joseph at this meeting today.

I want to focus on three points. The first relates to the crossroads in Haiti's future. During our previous meeting, we spoke of the opportunity that 2021 offers to restore and revitalize democracy in Haiti. However, with fewer than 100 days remaining before the proposed first round of legislative elections, preparations must be urgently stepped up so that the people of Haiti can exercise their democratic will at the ballot box. It has never been more important that the Haitian people choose their own legislators and, in time, their next elected President.

We joined the recent calls of the United Nations, the Organization of American States and the European Parliament to ensure that credible, inclusive and transparent elections are held in a safe and timely manner. Elections, of course, are not an end in and of themselves, but they are a vital step on the path towards restored and reinvigorated democratic institutions in Haiti. We reiterate our belief in the power of dialogue to generate understanding and create the space for agreed compromises and a path forward.

Much remains to be discussed, including on constitutional reform. Those with such experience know the impact that a representative citizens' assembly,

with the full and equal participation of women, can have on the deliberation of constitutional questions and generating shared investments in the future.

My second point relates to the multiple structural and systemic challenges that Haiti faces. We are gravely concerned about reports of continuing violence, insecurity and economic depression, compounded by the challenge of responding to the coronavirus disease pandemic.

Gang-related violence, prison overcrowding, lengthy pretrial detentions, impunity for human rights violations and sexual and gender-based violence are issues of serious concern. We also note an alarming rise in the rate of kidnappings and homicides. The Government must address pervasive issues in law enforcement and the justice system and take urgent steps to advance the national strategy for community violence reduction. We welcome the establishment of Board of the Legal Aid Council with the support of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti.

Ireland also remains concerned about the shrinking civil society space, particularly as it affects Haitian women and youth. The combined pressures that I outlined are preventing women from asserting their rights and claiming their place in politics and society. More than half of all households in Haiti are women-led. What affects Haitian women affects the future trajectory of Haiti.

Thirdly, I wish to address the very grave humanitarian situation in Haiti. The scale of the challenge is truly daunting. We are particularly alarmed by the widespread severe food insecurity, including — most regrettably — persistent child malnutrition. As we know, the effects of malnutrition have intergenerational consequences, further undermining Haiti's ability to build its future. The crisis requires a strong collective response from the international community.

However, the safety and security of humanitarian workers, who have suffered direct attacks in the course of their vital work, must be guaranteed. We call on the Haitian Government to ensure the safety of all those who provide vital assistance. Given the security situation, the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service is critical to the functioning of the United Nations country team and its partners. We are concerned about reports that its future activity is under threat owing to underfunding.

As the report of the Secretary-General (S/2021/559) rightly states, despite the many interwoven challenges it faces, Haiti has numerous strengths, not least of which is its resilient people. The international community must match their resilience with continued commitment; support efforts to build faith in the electoral system; and work with the new elected Government to address the underlying issues holding Haiti back from building a future based on those strengths.

**The President:** I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Estonia.

I would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary General Helen La Lime and Ms. Chantal Hudicourt Ewald for their briefings. I would also like to express Estonia's strong support for Ms. La Lime and her team for their valuable work. This is a critical year for Haiti. As a result of the long-lasting political, economic and humanitarian crisis, the country has become acutely vulnerable. The first serious outbreak of the coronavirus disease has had an additional impact. Therefore, it is important that the allocations of vaccine doses reach more people in Haiti.

We are deeply concerned about the ongoing political impasse, the lack of accountability and the worsening security and social situation, which threaten the stability of Haiti. It is crucial to find a way out of that dire situation and restore the path leading towards political stability and security in Haiti. More progress is needed in setting a consensual reform agenda to ensure free, fair, transparent and credible legislative, local and presidential elections in the fourth quarter of 2021. It is crucial to create the necessary conditions to hold elections, as that is the only way to restore democratic institutions and a functioning Government in Haiti. The Haitian people have the right to elect their country's leader and representatives.

We welcome the decision of the Organization of American States to assist the Haitian authorities in facilitating dialogue among national stakeholders. In addition, the widely debated and controversial constitutional referendum cannot be held in the current conditions. Both the referendum and the electoral processes need to be inclusive and transparent.

The security situation remains challenging. We note with concern the continuing gang violence and the increased number of kidnappings and killings. It is of the utmost importance to ensure public safety and provide security for Haitians. We encourage the

Haitian authorities to take further steps with regard to the national strategy on community violence reduction.

The human rights situation has also deteriorated. Stronger measures against insecurity and impunity need to be taken. We reiterate the importance of enhancing accountability and call on the Government of Haiti to reform the justice system. Judicial institutions need to be strengthened to ensure that all cases are properly investigated and perpetrators are held accountable for their crimes. We support the establishment of a country office of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Haiti.

Lastly, the Haitians deserve a stable State based on democracy, the rule of law and sustainable development. We remain hopeful that the continued efforts of all parties will bring about a better future for Haiti.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to the Acting Prime Minister of Haiti.

**Mr. Joseph** (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I thank the Security Council for the interest it has always taken in the constructive development of the economic, political, social and security situation in Haiti.

Today's meeting is of the utmost importance at a time when the Republic of Haiti, my country, is at a crossroads. For more than two years, the country has experienced an extremely difficult sociopolitical situation, characterized by recurrent attempts to destabilize it and the public order by a certain faction of the opposition whose actions seek only to create disorder and instability.

We thank and commend the Secretary-General for his latest report on the situation in Haiti (S/2021/559), the key points and recommendations of which we accept. We regret, however, that the report does not sufficiently take into account the significant progress made in the country over the past three or four years in promoting and respecting human rights, fighting corruption, improving governance and strengthening the rule of law. I thank all those Council members who have shown their unwavering solidarity with the Haitian people, who have so often fallen victim to the incomprehension of certain politicians and oligarchs driven by petty interests.

Allow me to take this opportunity to reaffirm the commitment and determination of the President of the Republic of Haiti, His Excellency Mr. Jovenel Moïse, to work towards mitigating the sociopolitical climate through dialogue and consultations with all of the nation's key stakeholders, including political parties and civil society organizations.

While we wait for the opposition to finally embrace dialogue and cooperation as the only way out of the protracted political impasse, the executive branch is assuming its responsibilities towards the nation. It has set its sights on organizing elections at all levels by the end of the year with a view to renewing the political landscape in Haiti, restoring the operation of all democratic institutions and ensuring the transfer of power to a legitimately elected president on 7 February 2022.

The Government of the Republic of Haiti is well aware of the extreme complexity of the situation and the concerns it may raise. That is precisely why we are taking all necessary measures to curb the problem of gang violence and kidnapping and restore security throughout the country.

The Haitian National Police, as the guarantor of security and the maintenance of law and order, is fully mobilized to that end, despite its limitations and lack of resources. To achieve our goals, we need the support and solidarity of our friends in the international community more than ever, particularly when it comes to technical assistance and strengthening the operational capacities of the Haitian National Police.

The political situation in Haiti over the past two years has been extremely worrisome. Recurrent political instability fuelled by the 1987 Constitution, which is completely out of sync with the country's historical and sociocultural realities, together with the resulting flagrant imbalance between the branches of Government, are the main reasons for that, as well as other structural problems that hinder the national economy and the sustainable development of the country.

In an act of patriotism and in order to tackle the root causes of Haiti's problems and provide lasting solutions to them, the Head of State — who is highly attentive to the aspirations of the population, which has often spoken out in favour of a new social contract — intends to offer the nation a new constitution to put an end to the vicious cycle of political instability, thereby



rendering the country governable. Therefore, following broad consultations with the various strata of society, he issued a decree on 28 October 2020 establishing the Independent Consultative Committee, which is responsible for drafting the new constitution.

A section of the political class and certain other actors, who in many ways benefit from the flaws and weaknesses in the current Constitution, have contested this initiative from the outset and done everything possible to derail the project. However, the Independent Consultative Committee has performed its responsibilities well, drawing on the reports of the various rounds of consultations carried out between 2007 and 2020 concerning the 1987 Constitution. That documentary approach was complemented by hearings with the participation of more than 30 national and international experts, including experts from the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti and the Organization of American States.

That important preparatory work resulted in a first draft of the new constitution, which was submitted for comment and analysis by the whole of society on 2 February. Within that framework, meetings were organized throughout the country's 10 administrative divisions. More than 800 civil society organizations were involved in the process, the vast majority of which joined forces to brief the Independent Consultative Committee on their views.

On the basis of those criticisms and recommendations, a second draft was circulated on 18 May. The aim was to gather additional suggestions from civil society before producing a consensual text to be submitted to the population for approval through a constitutional referendum, which was scheduled for 27 June.

Unfortunately, the resurgence of cases of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in the country at the beginning of May led the Provisional Electoral Council to postpone the referendum vote indefinitely, in line with the recommendations of the Ministry of Public Health and Population and the scientific unit responsible for the management of the COVID-19 crisis in Haiti. A new date for holding the referendum will be communicated shortly by the Provisional Electoral Council.

In the meantime, we are working hard to advance the electoral process, which is irreversible. It is a guarantee of the consolidation of democracy, the rule of law and political stability in the country. The President

of the Republic of Haiti, His Excellency Mr. Jovenel Moïse, and the Government as a whole are deeply and resolutely committed to that end. Under no pretext can there be any interruptions to the electoral process, which would be a serious blow to Haiti and the Haitian people, especially in terms of democracy, the rule of law and political stability.

My physical presence at this briefing on Haiti is mainly to reiterate the determination of the President of the Republic of Haiti to assume his responsibilities and keep his promises to the Haitian people in their entirety, all while respecting Haiti's international commitments.

As far as the holding of the upcoming elections is concerned, I can assure Council members that there is nothing to worry about, apart from certain logistical problems and the crucial issue of security, which will promptly be addressed in all their aspects. From an organizational perspective, the Provisional Electoral Council has already set in motion most of the machinery required to hold the elections.

At the financial level, the Provisional Electoral Council has prepared and submitted a budget for the organization of a referendum and the elections. Based on that budget, on 21 January the Haitian Government has signed an agreement with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on the reactivation of the Basket Fund, which has been replenished with resources from the public treasury on several occasions. All that remains is for our international partners to fulfil their pledges of financial support, which amount to more than \$17 million. With regard to logistical issues, the Provisional Electoral Council is working closely with UNDP and the United Nations Office for Project Services. A total of 12 sites throughout the country for the storage of voting materials have been identified and a deployment plan has been elaborated.

President Jovenel Moïse has declared 2021 to be an "election year". True to his commitment and promises, he has done everything possible to facilitate the organization of elections in the course of this year. The electoral machinery is up and running; the Provisional Electoral Council has the resources it needs; and the electoral process is following its normal course.

The Head of State is determined to make the process as inclusive, transparent and participatory as possible. He continues to invite all branches of the political opposition to the table for dialogue and consultations with a view to reaching a historic compromise that will

result in a government of national unity that includes all political tendencies. The renewal of my mandate at the head of an ad interim Government is a powerful testimony to the openness of the President of the Republic of Haiti.

I wish to conclude my remarks by reaffirming, loud and clear that, contrary to what some of my friends in the opposition may think, the path of transition is one that Haiti should avoid. We have had plenty of experience in that regard throughout Haiti's history, especially recently. From 1986 to 2016, the country experienced no fewer than 15 transitional Governments, including 10 from 1986 to 1993 alone, with the only results being total institutional paralysis and the further weakening of the State.

Transitional regimes promote all kinds of dishonesty, corruption and misappropriation, while the country sinks into instability, poverty and economic inequality and struggles to find its way to development. Only honest, democratic, free, inclusive and credible elections can guarantee the political stability necessary for the socioeconomic stability and progress of the nation.

**The President:** I now give the floor to Ms. La Lime to respond to the comments and questions raised.

**Ms. La Lime:** I think it has all been said during the course of this meeting. The attention paid to the concerning humanitarian and security situation and the violence that threatens peaceful and fair elections, as well as the call on the part of all participants here today for democratic processes to resume and for dialogue to happen so that consensus can be built and elections can take place in 2021, has been well heard.

The United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti and the United Nations country team will continue to work

to address the humanitarian situation, improve the security situation and mount the electoral apparatus that will ensure free and fair elections.

**The President:** I thank Ms. La Lime for the clarifications she has provided.

I now give the floor to Ms. Hudicourt Ewald to respond to the comments and questions raised.

**Ms. Hudicourt Ewald:** I think that most of the issues have been covered. However, I am very concerned that one aspect of the issues covered was not mentioned, which in my view is an emergency — the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) health crisis. I mentioned in my presentation that vaccines were not available. In addition, oxygen, which is the first product used to treat COVID-19, is also very scarce in the country. We have received some machines, but some of them have not yet been installed. As recently as this morning, gangs broke into the site with the only operating industrial tank-filling centre in the country. This is an emergency. Today, some people in the hospital may be at risk as a result.

I would like to thank UNICEF for its support during the COVID-19-related problems we had last year. It was able to help the country address that issue. However, today the population is in danger. So, in addition to the gang threat, this point should be underlined. Apart from that, I think everything has been said and we do need to find a solution to security and political matters in order to move forward in Haiti.

**The President:** I thank Ms. Hudicourt Ewald for the clarifications she has provided.

I now invite Council members to convene in closed consultations to continue our discussion.

*The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.*