



Sent by email

justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca

Montreal, March 8, 2021

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

Re: Canada must stop supporting the Government of Jovenel Moïse in Haiti

On February 7, 2021 Haiti's de facto president, Jovenel Moïse, remained in office in violation of the country's constitution, in defiance of the recognition of the end of his term by many independent and religious institutions, human rights organizations and trade unions, including the Federation of Haitian Bar Associations and the Superior Council of the Judiciary. He then proceeded to arbitrarily arrest a total of 23 people, including a judge of cassation, and forcefully retire three others, thereby acting in violation of the rule of law and the separation of powers and heralding greater centralization of power and more repression.

With this letter, the signatory civil society organizations wish to express our support for Haiti's civil society who are currently mobilizing to defend genuine democracy and the rule of law in Haiti. We further respond to their international call to "show solidarity with the Haitian people in their efforts to rid themselves of the criminal, regressive, corrupt and dictatorial regime" headed by Jovenel Moïse.

Like the nascent coalition of civil society organizations from several countries, we are calling for an end to the complicit silence of several nations, including Canada, regarding the social and political crisis in Haiti and for these nations to stop supporting the government of Jovenel Moïse. According to numerous analyses, it is this support that has allowed him to remain in power despite massive public protests since July 2018.

Respect for the rights of the Haitian people and an end to impunity and the violence that undermines democratic practices requires respect for the Haitian people's right to self-determination and an end to external interference in this democratic transition process. The UN High Commissioner's report dated January 19, 2020 highlighted the flagrant violations of the Constitution and human rights in Haiti by the government of Jovenel Moïse, stating [TRANSLATION] "an epidemic of daily kidnappings, sometimes by the dozens, pupils from public and private schools being kidnapped for ransom, girls being raped. At the same time, armed gang leaders operate under police protection, and victims who denounce these crimes are repressed and sprayed with tear gas."¹

As signatory civil society organizations we urgently request that:

1. The nations involved, through the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), the OAS and embassies, stop supporting the criminal and unconstitutional regime of Jovenel Moïse and respect the Haitian people's right to self-determination;
2. Canada, a key member of the Core Group, cease its support to the Moïse Government, as it has been increasingly decried and denounced for its involvement in massacres and violence aimed at establishing a climate of terror, removing the opposition and preventing the emergence of a real transition;
3. Canada must cease all forms of support for the illegitimate electoral process and the constitutional reform project that the government wants to put in place, because the process does not respect the standards of independence required to establish a government's legitimacy. The presidency, having failed to organize the legislative elections provided under the Constitution, now governs by decree, holding all powers alone;
4. Canada and international institutions consider transitional alternatives, without external interference, proposed by the various sectors of the opposition and civil society instead of blindly supporting the government of Jovenel Moïse. The establishment of a transitional government was supposed to take place as of February 7, 2021, the date on which the Constitution formally stipulates the end of the president's term. A new government, accompanied by a transitional body, should hold office for at least two years. In addition, it would be established according to a specific institutional procedure, determined in a concerted manner within civil society and the opposition, which would ensure its limited term and its independence. The goal is to work toward the adoption of a new constitution in accordance with the wishes of the Haitian people, to prepare new elections, to adopt a plan to alleviate the population's misery, to restore order in the public administration and to reinstate the judicial system.

¹ Laënnec Hurbon. <https://blogs.mediapart.fr/laennec-hurbon/blog/310121/l-image-de-l-onu-et-la-democratie-en-haiti>

We request a meeting with you to discuss the best ways to foster a democratic transition in Haiti, while respecting the country's sovereignty.

Sincerely,

*The Concertation pour Haïti*²

cc: The Honourable Marc Garneau
Minister of Foreign Affairs
marc.garneau@parl.gc.ca

This initiative is supported by:

Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC)

Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux du Québec (APTS)

Alternatives

Artisans de paix internationale

Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale (AQOCI)

Carrefour de solidarité internationale de Sherbrooke

Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ)

Centre international de solidarité ouvrière (CISO)

Centre justice et foi

Clowns Sans Frontières

Comité de solidarité / Trois-Rivières

Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN)

² The *Concertation pour Haïti*, the initiators of this letter, are a coalition of Quebec civil society organizations working on the ground in Haiti and individuals whose work is to promote Canada's and Quebec's solidarity with the Haitian people.

Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)

Conseil central du Montréal métropolitain- CSN (CCMM-CSN)

Conseil régional FTQ du Montréal métropolitain (CRFTQMM)

Développement et paix – Caritas Canada

Église unie du Canada

Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec (FIQ)

Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec (FTQ)

Fédération nationale des enseignantes et enseignants du Québec (FNEEQ-CSN)

Fonds humanitaire des Métallos

Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)

Syndicat des Métallos du Québec

Terres Sans Frontières

Unifor-Québec

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