



Embassy of the Republic of Haiti
Washington, DC

The Honorable James McGovern
The Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission
5100 O'Neill House Office Building
200 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20515

March 2, 2020

Dear Chairman McGovern:

The Republic of Haiti is the world's oldest black country, which gained its independence in 1804. The United States and Haiti share a common bond -- one forged after each country became independent from its colonial empires during the same era. They both established constitutional republics and have been partners for over 200 years. Unfortunately, the two countries have had different destinies. The purpose of this letter is to explain some of the challenges impacting the Republic of Haiti and to thank the United States Congress for its bipartisan support in promoting democracy in the republic.

In 2016, His Excellency Jovenel Moise was democratically elected in an election, which has been recognized by the international community and Haitians as free and fair. Until our democracy was reconstituted in 2011, our past was littered with Presidents who seized power undemocratically or clung to power against the people's will. In contrast, President Moise will serve only one term until 2022.

Under the old parliament, the Haitian government could not pass a budget, hold midterm elections or make new agreements with international financial institutions for economic development or address many other urgent problems. As a result, the political crisis in Haiti has prevented the constitutional republic from functioning. The political divisions have also rendered the Haitian government powerless. However, after the mandate of most members of Parliament expired, it led to the president constitutionally ruling by decree. After months of negotiating with stakeholders, on Monday, March 2, 2020, President Moise announced a new Prime Minister in an effort to move the country towards political stability and institutional stability by organizing election.

This has been fight against a president who is committed to dismantling a political system, which has historically favored the rich and those who are privileged. I understand the changes in some of the domestic policies have angered many in Haiti, however, those changes are necessary in order to create a system, where regardless of one's socioeconomic status and/or political affiliation, can pursue life, liberty, and happiness. A

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system where our children can have access to better quality education and opportunities.

Furthermore, a minority in parliament use past controversies that began before the presidency of Moïse, like the Petrocaribe, to stall progress and block each government that has been nominated. He has addressed this issue head on, working with the Organization of American States (OAS) to appoint an independent and neutral team of experts to deliver a fair audit. It is the intention of the Haitian government to bring to justice those the commission determines are responsible and seek to return any remaining funds that are recoverable.

It is time to end the political gridlock in Haiti and restore the basic functioning of its government and reestablish the rule of law in order to begin to pursue peace and prosperity. This can only be done by the drafting of a constitution that represents the reality of Haiti and to organizing free and fair elections.

In spite of the challenges, in May 2019, USAID and the government jointly announced Haiti INVEST, a new initiative to attract private capital and credit for small and medium sized enterprises across Haiti. Also, in May we welcomed the acting-CEO of OPIC to Haiti to discuss how Haiti can cooperate with the agency as it transitions to the Development Finance Corporation (DFC). We are proud DFC has decided to make Haiti a priority country to harness private sector funds to build essential infrastructure.

I invite you and members of the Commission to the Republic of Haiti to meet with President Moïse and other elected officials.

I avail myself of this opportunity to present to you, Dear Chairman McGovern, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Ambassador Hervé Denis
Chargé d'Affaires