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STATEMENT ON THE CURRENT HAITIAN CRISIS

Haiti is poor because it is caught in the vise grip of a corrupt mafia whose members change over time, but their operatory mode remained the same. Over the past 30 years, the International Community has tried to help by providing major support to the United Nations various missions in Haiti. The objectives of the UN mission were to develop democratic norms, restore the rule of law, strengthen the National Police and bolster our electoral apparatus to the point that it can deliver fair and accurate results, thus giving the population the potential to believe in the electoral process. However, voters' participation has gone down from close to 50% in 2006 to less than 20% in 2015. President Jovenel Moïse was elected with less than 10% of the electorate in 2016.

It is imperative to break the cycle of poverty which fosters violence and political instability. To achieve these goals, these steps must be taken:

1. Promote national dialogue
2. Adopt a new Constitution
3. Revamp the electoral body

A) Promote national dialogue

The objective of the national dialogue is to define the terms for a new social contract:

- Rule of law;
- Social stability, order and security, fair and democratic elections;
- Civil society implications;
- Economic development and social justice;
- Gender equity and equality;
- Performing educational system;
- Universal access to health services.

B) Adopt a new Constitution

- Rationalize the cycle of elections by adopting a new system with general elections (Presidential, parliamentary and local) every four years. For the President, allow 2 consecutive mandates of 4 years.
- Strengthen the executive branch by eliminating the position of Prime Minister;
- Reinforce the judicial branch by increasing its independence from the executive;
- Allow full participation of the Haitian diaspora in the political system;

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- Reduce the number of elected local officials. Current system is huge burden for the government coffers.

C) Revamp the electoral body

- Amend or change the law on political parties to raise the quantity of members required for the creation of a new political party;
- Guarantee more transparency in the financing of political parties and candidates;
- Obtain international assistance and expertise not only in the Tabulation Center but also to the candidate-qualification, electoral-challenge, and evaluation spheres.
- Non-involvement of the electoral body in litigation procedures, allowing candidates to have their say in court and in the formal judiciary system.

This agenda of reforms can only be done through a broad political agreement between all the stakeholders. The International Community is and will remain for Haiti an indispensable partner in our Quest of social progress, human development and political stability. In that regard, Haiti will need the support of our international partners to achieve the goals stated here. Democratic consolidation means respect of the Constitution, integrity of the electoral process and adherence to the rules of Law.

In this testimony, I have responded to the great challenge posed by the committee – rebuild Haiti, justice for Haiti, a new day for Haiti.



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