



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

January 24, 2021

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken:

We appreciate your commitment to providing support for Haiti's safety, security, and development. We write to respectfully request that you take urgent steps to mobilize international support for the Haitian people as they work to rebuild from years of natural disasters, economic hardship, and political turmoil. Specifically, we ask for a whole-of-government effort to ensure Haiti receives the necessary aid to achieve lasting security, health care, and economic mobility through coordinated strategy and funding.

As you know, the July 7th assassination of the country's president, Jovenel Moïse, has thrown the Caribbean Island nation of 11 million into disarray. Well before this tragic incident, Haiti's situation was volatile as the island grappled with political protests, gang violence, crushing poverty, rising COVID-19 cases, and no vaccine doses. Currently, the country's economic situation is dire, and recently, widespread civil unrest continues to rise Haiti due to the life-threatening shortage of fuel, food, medicine, and insecurity.¹

For instance, Haitian authorities and their Dominican neighbors have called on the international community to ramp up efforts in the areas of security and protection of civilians.^{2,3} The transportation of goods from the Dominican Republic (DR) is essential to Haiti, and Dominican authorities are striving to maintain that lifeline while taking measures to protect their shared border and secure their people and territory amid growing chaos.

While we appreciate your agency's foreign assistance to the region thus far,⁴ we strongly feel that more is needed to support human rights and the rule of law in Haiti. We believe that positive change will come from financial assistance to Haiti for the purpose of adequate resourcing, re-training, and technical assistance for the Haitian National Police to produce an elite national police unit skilled to combat the violence and gangs that are currently obstructing access to essential goods for the Haitian people. We urge you to work with Canada,

¹ Coto, E. S. (2021, October 29). *Haiti PM condemns gangs, kidnappings in public address*. Retrieved from AP News: <https://apnews.com/article/business-latin-america-caribbean-port-au-prince-kidnapping-77907eb0a1bc9f5b6fede48fccff211e>

² Wyss, J. (2021, November 2). <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-11-02/dominican-republic-cracks-down-on-migration-amid-chaos-in-haiti>. Retrieved from Bloomberg: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-11-02/dominican-republic-cracks-down-on-migration-amid-chaos-in-haiti>

³ Security Council (2021, October 4). *Amid Fraught Situation in Haiti, Foreign Minister, Briefing Security Council, Urges Adjusting Mission Mandate to Bolster Rule of Law Institutions*. Retrieved from United Nations: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/sc14652.doc.htm>

⁴ The White House. (2021, July 21). Fact Sheet: U.S. Assistance to Haiti. Retrieved from The White House Briefing Room: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/07/13/fact-sheet-u-s-assistance-to-haiti/>

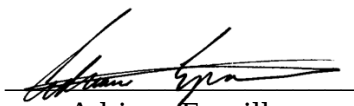
European Union, France, and other CORE group members to increase financial aid to revitalize the Haitian National Police, enhancing community development and violence prevention programs.

Moreover, Dominican hospitals and clinics are overwhelmed by the influx of pregnant Haitian women fleeing to the DR for medical care due to the collapse of Haiti's healthcare system compounded by the ongoing conflict.⁵ Thus, we encourage you to advise and assist in revamping Haiti's healthcare infrastructure to help address the most pressing health concerns, including maternal and neonatal health. A significant first step would be international partners coming together to aid in constructing hospitals at the Haitian border, proactively responding to the volume of Haitian mothers in dire need of quality medical care. While the House of Representatives passed an appropriations measure for Fiscal Year 2022 supporting dialogue in Haiti aimed at resolving the political crisis, urging stronger action against human rights abuses, and addressing the plight of pregnant Haitian women leaving their country to seek neonatal care—this dialogue must be met with funding, strategy, and international coordination to mitigate on the ground challenges.⁶

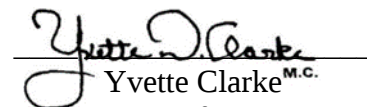
Likewise, we invite the Administration's Haiti team to consult and collaborate with Congressional Members who have a long-standing constructive commitment to Haiti and its people. In addition, we welcome consultations with the Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development, and other agencies on the urgent funding requirements of Haiti's relief and rehabilitation, as well as immediate assistance to mitigate the impact of Haitian unrest on its neighbors. Doing so will allow for upward economic mobility and stimulate job creation- especially at a time where the World Bank has infused \$75 million to encourage labor demand in Haiti. This investment, coupled with international aid, will undoubtedly foster economic recovery and create much needed sustainable and resilient jobs for Haitian people.

We appreciate your leadership in this challenging environment and look forward to continued engagement to advance democracy and the rule of law in the region.

Sincerely,



Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



Yvette Clarke^{M.C.}
Members of Congress

/s/ Eleanor Holmes Norton
Members of Congress

/s/ James P. McGovern
Members of Congress

/s/ Stacey E. Plaskett
Members of Congress

/s/ G. K. Butterfield
Members of Congress

/s/ Juan Vargas
Members of Congress

/s/ Grace Meng
Member of Congress

/s/ Mondaire Jones
Members of Congress

/s/ Jason Crow
Member of Congress

CC:
The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President of the United States, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Samantha Power, Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20004

⁵ Dyer O. Haiti's health system collapsing under weight of doctors' strike BMJ 2016; 354 :i3939 doi:10.1136/bmj.i3939

⁶ House Committee on Appropriations. (2021, July 26). *State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Bill Report*. <https://www.congress.gov/117/crpt/hrpt84/CRPT-117hrpt84.pdf>. Pages 53, 66, 118. Accessed on (2021, November 30).