

Port-au-Prince, September 6, 2004 (AHP)- There is no change in the situation in parts of the country where the demobilized military forces have taken over, such as at certain local police stations, more than four days after interim President Boniface Alexandre threatened to dislodge them.

In Petit-Goâve, the demobilized forces reinforced their presence at the city's police station.

Several additional demobilized soldiers and civilians identified by local residents as members of the FRAPH paramilitary organization arrived to add to the numbers occupying the station according to reliable sources.

A fresh coat of yellow paint (the traditional color used in Haiti to identify military facilities) was applied to the walls of the police station, as if to tell the interim government that the demobilized forces are not about to

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leave the premises any time soon.

The Les Cayes facilities of the Haitian Coast Guard also remain under the control of the former military as well as the offices of Radio Timoun in Jacmel.

Upon his return from Panama, provisional President Boniface Alexandre expressed outrage, stating that his government will do everything it can to dislodge the demobilized military personnel from the places they occupy and that the government will not pay salary arrears to the former armed forces, which was dissolved in 1995.

The threats made by Boniface Alexandre were ratcheted up a notch by the interim Ministers of the Interior and Justice, Hérard Abraham and Bernard Gousse respectively, who vowed to restore the authority of the State which they said was damaged by the actions of the demobilized forces.

These statements, like those of the provisional president, were downplayed by the leaders of the demobilized forces, Rémicinte Ravix, Franklin Jean, Rony Bernard and the others.

They reaffirmed that no government that lacks constitutional legitimacy can claim to be in a position to cast doubt upon an institution (the Haitian armed forces) that is recognized by the Constitution.

According to these former military figures "the government of February 29 is rotten; it was given a 90-day mandate for organizing elections and that mandate expired three months ago".

An article about Haiti published Friday in the O Globo newspaper indicated that Brazilian troops were beginning to re-deploy to new positions to neutralize the movement of the former Haitian military.

However in an interview the following day in the same newspaper, Brazilian General Augusto Heleno Ribeiro, who directs the UN forces in Haiti, indicated that the problem is more political than military.

The offensive by the former Haitian military forces took place in his absence.

He said that any strategy aimed at pursuing the demobilized military personnel could trigger a more serious crisis in the country.

The statements by General Ribeiro are at odds with those of the interim authorities who suggested last week that the dislodging of the former soldiers was imminent.

For the moment, MINUSTAH has only 2,400 of the 8,000 peacekeepers promised by the UN's Secretary-General. Of the 2,400 now in place, 1,200 are Brazilian.

According to several Brazilian newspapers, the Haitian crisis is now an integral part of Brazil's public policy discussions.

After having won many fans during his visit to Haiti last month where he was warmly applauded nearly to the same extent as the stars of the Brazilian soccer team, President Luis Ignacio Lula da Silva is now facing criticism and at the same time MINUSTAH is facing its first difficulties in Haiti.

His domestic critics accuse him of tolerating the ouster of a constitutionally elected government as evidenced by the presence of Brazil's forces in Haiti.

The office of the Brazilian president replied that the Brazilian soldiers are in Haiti to provide assistance and to re-establish peace there.

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