

Port-au-Prince, May 11, 2005 (AHP)- The Committee of Lawyers for the Respect of Individual Liberties (CARLI) published its report Wednesday on human rights violations observed in the country during the month of April 2005.

As during the preceding month, CARLI reports that April was marked by very serious violations of human rights, notably arbitrary arrests, prolonged preventive detention, violations of civil and political rights but, above all, said CARLI, cases of summary executions involving officers from the national police.

The human rights organisation observed in its report that the presumed authors of these violations are generally officers assigned to the West Department Directorate of the police (DDO), or working out of police stations and sub-stations in the capital and in some provincial cities, or from the Anti-Gang and Investigation Service of the Delmas police headquarters, or the Departmental Section of the Judicial police, or unidentified armed individuals.

Several victims of human rights violations called CARLI's Hot Line and their cases were handled through that program in April, said the organization.

CARLI explained that most human rights victims who call their Hot Line prefer to keep their cases confidential for fear of reprisals.

Other non-confidential cases include those that have already been reported through the local media, observes the CARLI report. These cases include the killing of the radio host Robenson Laraque from Radio Télé Kontak in Petit-Goâve on April 4, 2005, and the killings of five Haitians during the dispersal of a demonstration by supporters of Fanmi Lavalas held on April 27, 2005 when officers from the Haitian National Police (PNH) reportedly opened fire near the Bourdon office of the UN's MINUSTAH, according to the CARLI report.

The dead are Délangé Mesanal, age 25, Stevenson Saint Cloud, age 21, James Lahens, age 22, Réginald Colon, age 32 and a young man named Rodriguez, age 19.

CARLI said it believes it is important to emphasize that this aggravation of the human rights situation comes at a time when there is talk of lifting the embargo against the sale of firearms to the PNH.

In a statement by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) published April 22 at the conclusion of its visit to Haiti, the Commission expressed grave concern at the situation of human rights in Haiti.

Just since September 30, 2004, more than 600 people have been killed, including 19 police officers, according to the IACHR statement.

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Several human rights organizations express concern at the staggering increase in insecurity in Haiti

Port-au-Prince, May 11, 2005 (AHP)- Several human rights organizations said they are deeply troubled by the breathtaking increase in reported cases of kidnappings, killings, indiscriminate shooting and what they referred to as other forms of human rights violations in the country.

In a news release sent to AHP dated May 9, 2005, organizations including the National Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, POHDH (the Platform of Haitian Human Rights Organizations), CHR (the Haitian Conference of Religious), GARR (Group in Support of Repatriated Refugees) and the Toussaint Louverture Center "call upon and strongly urge the State authorities and the government to take all necessary steps to correct the situation and prevent honest and peaceful citizens from continuing to be victims of all types of assaults by armed bandits who are acting with complete impunity".

The UN's MINUSTAH, whose mission includes maintaining a secure and stable environment in the country does not seem to be involved in this work any more than the government, said the organizations that signed on to the news release.

The human rights groups also pointed out that scarcely a day goes by without at least ten people being kidnapped or shot dead in the Haitian capital.

The principle causes of this deterioration of the socio-political environment are impunity, the lax attitude of the government and the judicial authorities and the dysfunctional state of the Haitian National Police, according to these organizations. "The current confluence of events appears to be manipulated by national and international political sectors who would like to project an image of Haiti as a country which has become a chaotic, ungovernable entity, in order that these sectors may achieve their shameful and unconfessed objectives".

The above-mentioned organizations call upon the government to find and punish the individuals responsible for the kidnappings and enact concrete measures without delay enabling it to reassert control of the high risk zones in the capital that have been held hostage for the past several months by armed groups.

The human rights organizations also called upon the authorities to adopt measures designed to enable the public to clearly identify genuine police officers, regularly inform the public of the measures adopted to combat kidnapping and insecurity, and to report on the results achieved, ensure that the assets of the Haitian National Police, particularly its vehicles, are placed in service for the benefit of the population day and night.

To the traumatized public, they asked that people not yield to the pressure of the bandits who would like to see the entire population on its knees to compel Haitians to accept everything they want.

Several other local and international human rights organizations have indicated that Haiti's violence is manifesting itself through executions in the populist districts of the capital and through bloodshed during peaceful demonstrations without there being investigations to find and punish the authors of these crimes.

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