
At least two kidnappings have been reported over the past 48 hours including a Canadian citizen, one police officer has been killed

Port-au-Prince, June 13, 2005, (AHP)- Unidentified armed individuals abducted at least two people over the past 48 hours. This Monday, a police officer was killed in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan region.

One of the two kidnapping victims is a Canadian citizen from Montreal identified as Madame Goulet. The kidnappers have reportedly asked for a ransom of \$ 300,000 (U.S.) for her release.

The sum of \$ 250,000 was demanded as ransom for the release of Rachelle Suzan, the daughter of the late Pastor Antoine Suzan.

Last Saturday kidnappers reportedly attempted to abduct Richard Widmaier, director of the private Port-au-Prince station, Radio Métropole.

ANMH, an association of Haitian media directed by Mr. Widmaier, stated that it will not be intimidated by these acts.

The Haitian police officer who was killed this Monday was reportedly a member of the CIMO specialized unit.

According to official sources, diverse sectors are behind the kidnappings.

Haitian National Police spokesperson Gessy Cameau Coicou recently indicated that even police officers and people one would not expect are involved in these crimes.

For his part, interim Prime Minister Gérard Latortue attributed responsibility for the kidnappings to criminal deportees from North America. He has indicated that he intends to ask the United States to end its program of deportation of Haitians convicted of crimes in the United States.

Many questions have been asked as to the precise affiliations of the sectors involved in this type of activity, which is plaguing the Haitian capital.

According to some observers, the people behind the kidnappings must be from the populist districts because, they say, the kidnappers tend to head for these districts after they commit their crimes.

However, the testimonies of several kidnapping victims have suggested that the perpetrators are not always from the populist districts and that the homes where the victims are being held are not located solely in the populist neighborhoods.

"I was detained in a luxurious location where I lacked nothing", confided a young woman who was kidnapped for two days in late May.

The owner of a studio indicated for her part that the kidnappers "are apparently people who are well off and who speak fluent French".

One student affirmed for her part that "my principal kidnapper was a man speaking English who was making sure that his comrades didn't harm me in any way".

A college student abducted last Friday said that her kidnappers were people from the middle class who are bent on making money. "They are my friends, in fact they still call me on the telephone", she said, observing that they are very much attached to their money.

Not all the kidnap victims appear to have received such favorable treatment.

A skilled professional said for his part "the people who kidnapped me kept me in a stinking place and live in such a state of destitution that if we do nothing to help the poorest among us, peace and security might not happen any time soon".

A man who is active in politics confided last that he was taken to Bel-Air where his kidnappers ranted at the fact that a good portion of the population is labeled "chimères".

Over the past weekend and into Monday, gunfire was heard in several districts of the Haitian capital, notably in Lalue, Poste-Marchand, Nazon, Delmas and even in the vicinity of the National palace.

In greater Léogane, south of the capital, one person was killed this Monday and two others injured by gunshots, one of whom is pregnant, in the hamlet of Cassagne.

The families of the victims denounced the climate of insecurity that prevails in the country and appealed to the interim authorities to take on their responsibilities to re-establish peace in the country.

They also called for justice and reparations.

AHP June 13, 2005 5:00 PM
