



## **Police in Haiti continue the killing**

by Haiti Information Project

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Port au Prince, Haiti (HIP) - The Police Nationale d'Haiti (PNH) launched another bloody incursion into a poor neighborhood of Haiti's capital today. The U.N. refused to comment on the operation that reportedly led to the deaths of three people and four people wounded.

Residents of Bel Air, a launching site for recurring demonstrations demanding the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, came under fire this morning as the police entered the area firing indiscriminately at residents. Following the shooting of several innocent bystanders by the police, unknown gunman accused of being Aristide supporters, returned fire wounding two policeman and forcing the heavily armed PNH forces to withdraw.

Among the first victims shot by the police was 17 year-old Natalie Luzius clutching her 6 month-old son Fritznel Luzius while protecting the child at the moment a police bullet struck her in the head and killed her. According to her brother, "Natalie fell without warning as the police shot her." Fritznel fell down next to the body of his dead mother and was grabbed by her brother who took him away from the shooting. Her brother continued, "There was no warning and Natalie was cooking when they killed her. She wasn't even on the street. They fired into our home without warning and without cause."

This latest deadly raid by the Haiti's police comes on the heels of a large demonstration last Tuesday against police violence in another purported bastion of support for Aristide, the seaside shantytown of Cite Soleil. Thousands of residents took the streets on June 14 to demand the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, to free Lavalas political prisoners, and to condemn the violence against their communities.

A Lavalas representative and member of the Famni Lavalas Political Commission, John Jorel explained, "We are here today to condemn the position of Andre Apaid, Charles Henry Baker and Reginald Boulos of the business community who are trying to pressure the U.N. forces to slaughter us." Jorel continued, "It's unacceptable the Juan Gabriel-Valdes [U.N. Ambassador to Haiti] would officially state there is no political persecution in Haiti today even after his boss Kofi Annan asked for an investigation into

the human rights violations by the police. It is unacceptable that he would declare there are no political prisoners in Haiti today when his boss Kofi Annan asked for an investigation into the thousands of Lavalas political prisoners held without charge in Haitian jails today. It's unacceptable that Apaid, baker and Boulos continue to pressure the U.N. to massacre us in the popular neighborhoods."

On May 27 Dr. Reginald Boulos, the president of the Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, demanded the U.S.-installed government of Gerard Latortue allow the business community to form their own private security firms and arm them with automatic weapons. Boulos also suggested the Latortue regime allow businesses to withhold taxes for one month and use the money to buy more powerful weapons for the police on the international market. "If they don't allow us to do this then we'll take on our own initiative and do it anyway" Boulos threatened. Since then, pressure has mounted from Haiti's traditional wealthy elite for stronger military action by the U.N. and the Haitian police.

Haiti's latest wave of violence and insecurity began after the Haitian police fired on peaceful marches in the capital demanding the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide on Feb. 28 and April 27. At least 11 unarmed demonstrators were killed in the two attacks prompting U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan to echo demands by human rights organizations for an official investigation.

The U.S.-installed government of Gerard Latortue has dismissed allegations against the police despite statements made by Brazilian General Heleno Ribera and video footage taken by a local television station confirming the unprovoked attacks. The video footage also shows members of Haiti's police force planting guns on corpses to justify the slayings on April 27.

Since then, there have been almost daily kidnappings and killings that U.S. Ambassador James B. Foley and the local Haitian business elite continue to blame on a small and violent minority claiming allegiance to Aristide.

The fact that members of Haiti's police force have been implicated and arrested in the recent spate of kidnappings has not softened the rhetoric of the U.N. and Haiti's wealthy elite who have recently called for retribution and violence against pro-Aristide neighborhoods.

Haiti's chief law enforcement officer, Bernard Gousse was forced to resign last week amid mounting criticism of killings committed by Haiti's police. In his letter of resignation he justified the summary execution of civilians during his tenure by referring to the ousted government of Aristide as a "dictatorship."

Canadian Foreign Minister, Pierre Pettigrew, was painted red today during a press conference in Montreal to support the upcoming U.S.-sponsored elections in Haiti. After shouting, "You've the blood of Haitians on your hands," and dousing a surprised Pettigrew with red paint, an unidentified protestor was escorted away by security officers.

*For article with photos: <http://www.haitiaction.net/> For more information visit: <http://www.teledyol.net/HIP/about.html> Contact: [HIP@teledyol.net](mailto:HIP@teledyol.net)*