

AHP News - March 22, 2004 - English translation (Unofficial)

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**Fanmi Lavalas denounces a campaign of systematic repression orchestrated against its supporters in several regions of the country**

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Port-au-Prince, March 22, 2004 -(AHP)- The Fanmi Lavalas Political Organization spoke out Monday against what it termed a campaign of systematic repression orchestrated against its supporters in several regions of the country, particularly in the vicinity of Cap-Haïtien, in the Artibonite region, in Trou du Nord and in the Central Plateau.

In a news release copied to AHP, Fanmi Lavalas spokesperson Gilvert Angervil indicated that many supporters of the party have been killed, déchoukés (a Kreyol term for "uprooted", often with violence) or reported disappeared.

This is a campaign, he asserted, aimed at dismantling Fanmi Lavalas to the benefit of the parties belonging to what was until recently the opposition political Platform.

He expressed hope that measures will be adopted to put an end to the persecution and violence carried out against Fanmi Lavalas activists.

Mr. Angerville also criticized the manner in which the new government team of Gérard Latortue was put together.

According to the former Deputy from La Gonave, this government was formed in violation of the constitution, as well as the proposal for resolving the crisis proposed by CARICOM which foresaw, he said, the formation of a government of national unity.

Fanmi Lavalas, which has become the opposition ever since the overthrow of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, pointed out that the formula for putting in place this government can not in any way reassure party supporters who are the object of extremely serious persecution. Nor can it lead to peace and national reconciliation, said Gilvert Angervil.

Several other officials of the Fanmi Lavalas Party also denounced this Monday the recent calls for violence issued against members of the party.

In particular they denounced individuals who have publicly urged that people tie up Fanmi Lavalas supporters with hoops wherever they are to be found.

Three men were discovered dead and tied up with barrel hoops this Monday at Fronts Forts Street.

At least ten corpses were also discovered at Cité Militaire.

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**A professor who is a member of Fanmi Lavalas denounces the continuation of abuses against party supporters in the north of the country**  
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Port-au-Prince, March 22, 2004 -(AHP)- Lorgeat Claude, a young professor who belongs to Fanmi Lavalas, criticized Monday the physical abuses he suffered at the hands of members of the Army of the North, who abducted him, he said, during the night of March 12.

In an interview with AHP, Lorgeat Claude explained that these men, who were hooded and wearing camouflage clothing, had fired rounds of machine-gun fire at his home in Barrière Boutelle, at the entrance to the city of Cap-Haitien, before kidnapping him and taking him to a torture center set up in a customs hall in the city.

He stated that his abductors were angry about his political affiliation and accused him of possessing illegal weapons.

Lorgeat Claude said he was released several hours after his abduction and denied that he possessed any illegal weapons. "No weapon was found on me at the time of my abduction", he added.

Lorgeat Claude has been in hiding since he was released. He said he was severely beaten, especially on the face and the hip. He said he still suffers from the blows he received.

Mr. Claude also explained that due to this campaign of repression, many residents of Cap-Haitien are starting to leave the city to take refuge elsewhere in order to escape the fury of the armed men.

They say they fear for their security despite the deployment in the region of French military forces who are co-habiting, they say, with the men of the army of the north, who they say remain very active on the ground.

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**Thirteen firearms are handed over leaders of the armed front of the opposition in Gonaïves**  
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Port-au-Prince, March 22, 2004 -(AHP)- A leader of the armed front of the opposition in Gonaïves, Butteur Métayer, handed over 13 firearms Saturday to the new police authorities under a disarmament program launched in the country since the departure of Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

This hand over of weapons took place on the occasion of the visit on Saturday of the newly-designated prime minister at the city of independence. He was accompanied by the minister of the interior, Hérard Abraham, and the minister of justice, Mr. Bernard Gousse.

When questioned about the quantity of weapons possessed by the front for its effort to overthrow President Aristide, Butteur Métayer declared that they have no more than 45 weapons for all their men deployed in Port-de-Paix, Cap-Haitien and Gonaïves.

Butteur Métayer said he is ready to hand over the other weapons whenever they are collected.