

HAITI NEWS ROUNDUP: OCTOBER 12-20, 2006

Denouncement of UNSMH Violence in Haiti

Prensa Latina

October 20, 2006

Port au Prince,

Four people died and several were wounded in the capital neighborhood of Cite Soleil by soldiers from the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (UNSMH), denounced the Haitian News Agency Friday, although a UNSMH spokesman said he has not been informed of the situation.

John Jo 1 Joseph, from the Fanmi Lavalas political platform, stated that foreign troops will undermine the efforts of authorities and people to establish peace and security in the poorest neighborhood of the nation.

In the last few weeks, several cultural groups have performed in that area, to support those who have illegal weapons and have promised the Rene Preval government to return them in the national disarmament program.

The UN has over 9,000 police and soldiers in this country.

CARICOM in Haiti to Maximize Aid
Prensa Latina
October 18, 2006

Bridgetown, Barbados

First Minister of St. Kitts and Nevis, Denzil Douglas will lead the high level Caribbean Community (CARICOM) delegation, which this Wednesday will move to Haiti to carry out a visit of goodwill.

It is about "doing everything possible" in an attempt to help the impoverished nation to achieve "concrete advantages," local sources indicate.

Nowadays, more than a third of the Haitian population lives in extreme poverty, and almost 50 percent of school age children do not receive any education at all.

Life expectancy of the 8.5 million inhabitants is only 51 years old and infant mortality rate is around 100 per 1000 life births.

The team includes Santa Lucia Head of Government, Kenny Anthony and from Dominica, Roosevelt Skerrit, as well as CARICOM Secretary-General, Edwin Carrington.

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Witnesses say 2 civilians killed in Haiti clash with U.N. troops
The Associated Press
International Herald Tribune
Published: October 19, 2006

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti

A gunbattle broke out Thursday between U.N. troops and gunmen after peacekeepers bulldozed debris from a road in a volatile slum, and witnesses said at least two civilians were killed.

U.N. military spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Neuzivaldo Dos Anjos said peacekeepers removed old car frames and part of a wall lining a road in Cite Soleil, a vast slum on the edge of Haiti's capital and a base for well-armed gangs.

Dos Anjos said they were trying to clear debris to allow vehicle traffic on the road, which runs behind the main U.N. military base in the slum.

"While we were doing that we received gun shots and exchanged fire in self defense. No one was injured from our side and I do not have any information as to injuries on the aggressors' side," he said.

But residents said U.N. personnel razed at least one abandoned cinderblock home, sending people in nearby homes fleeing for safety.

Residents said they threw rocks at peacekeepers and accused them of opening fire, killing two men.

"I was inside my house when they (peacekeepers) started breaking things apart," said Naomi Exint, 24, who said part of her house was destroyed.

Dos Anjos said no homes were destroyed.

Weeping relatives screamed and fainted as emergency workers used a stretcher to carry off one man's body, which was covered by a blood-soaked white sheet. They said he was buying food at a market when he was shot.

The violence shattered a shaky calm that had prevailed in the area for weeks and added to residents' anger at an 8,800-strong U.N. force sent to restore order after armed rebels forced former president Jean-Bertrand Aristide from power in 2004.

The seaside slum, populated by rows of scrap-metal shacks and rutted dirt streets, is home to an estimated 300,000 people.

In a goodwill tour earlier this month, Haitian police entered Cite Soleil for the first time in nearly three years, shaking hands with residents and announcing plans to replace a base that was destroyed during the revolt.

At least three said killed in clash in Haiti slum

19 Oct 2006

By Joseph Guylor Delva

Reuters

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, - At least three people were killed in Haiti's largest and most dangerous slum on Thursday when a protest over the alleged destruction of homes by U.N. peacekeepers turned violent, witnesses said.

Residents of Cite Soleil -- a teeming warren of shantytowns on the southern tip of Port-au-Prince -- said the victims were shot dead by Brazilian peacekeepers.

The shootings came after angry protesters confronted the U.N. troops and accused them of razing homes to make way for a road, according to the witnesses, who asked not to be identified for fear of reprisals.

A spokeswoman for the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Haiti, Sophie Boutaud de la Combe, said she was unable to say whether anyone was killed or wounded during the clash.

But she said U.N. peacekeepers had only been trying to break down a number of low-lying walls, to open up access to a paved road, when they returned fire after coming under attack from one of Cite Soleil's notorious armed gangs.

A Reuters' reporter saw the body of a middle-aged man killed during the clash, but was unable to confirm other deaths or witness claims that at least three children were injured.

Marc Evans Jean, one eyewitness, said someone had tried to hurl a Molotov cocktail at the peacekeepers but insisted no gunshots were fired at them.

Several armed groups in the impoverished Caribbean nation are believed to be loyal to former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who was forced from power in February 2004 by an armed rebellion and pressure from the United States and France. U.N. peacekeepers were deployed four months later to stabilize the country.

Caribbean Leaders: Haiti Not Ready To Join Regional Trade Bloc
International Herald Tribune
October 18, 2006

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti A high-level Caribbean delegation promised to support Haiti as it returns to democratic rule but said Wednesday that the troubled and impoverished nation was not ready to join a regional trade bloc.

Leaders from the 15-member Caribbean Community praised President Rene Preval's new government for working to steer Haiti toward stability after a 2004 revolt toppled former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

"We found a clear commitment of the people responsible for government to move this country forward out of the very difficulties it finds itself," St. Kitts Prime Minister Denzil Douglas told reporters, as the leaders wrapped up a one-day visit.

Haiti was suspended from the Caribbean Community, or Caricom, after armed rebels forced out Aristide, the country's first democratically elected leader. It was formally readmitted in July.

In meetings with Preval and other officials, Douglas said the delegation observed "an openness" to bridge Haiti's deep political divide, noting that the country's Cabinet includes members of six political parties.

"We shall in fact advise the heads of government of the Caribbean Community to continue to embrace and work with Haiti," added Douglas, Caricom's chairman.

However, St. Lucia's Prime Minister, Kenny Anthony, said Haiti wasn't ready to join the Caribbean Single Market, which allows the free flow of goods, services and certain workers throughout 12 Caribbean countries with more than 6 million people.

Anthony said Haiti had yet to adopt a common external tariff waving duties and taxes on goods from other Caribbean nations, noting that talks to establish the mechanism were cut off after the revolt.

"Now we have to resume the process," Anthony said. "Essentially we will be able to move as fast as Haiti is prepared to go."

Haitian officials did not immediately comment.

The revolt plunged Haiti's ragged economy deeper into despair, sending inflation and unemployment soaring.

Douglas urged foreign donors to speed up aid disbursement needed for recovery, saying: "We are concerned at the slow pace of movement in this regard."

Other officials participating in the visit include Caricom Secretary-General Edwin Carrington and Dominica's Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerritt.

Haiti, which has 8 million people, is Caricom's most populous member state.

Kidnappers free U.S. missionary in Haiti

STEVENSON JACOBS

Associated Press

San Jose Mercury News

Wednesday, Oct. 18, 2006

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti - A U.S. missionary was kidnapped as he left his church in northern Haiti and later freed unharmed, his family said early Wednesday.

The Rev. Pritchard Adams III, a 24-year resident of Haiti, was freed Tuesday night after two days in captivity, his father, Pritchard Adams Jr., said in a telephone interview from his home in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

Adams Jr. said he didn't know if a ransom was paid to free his son, who left a voicemail at his parents' home saying he had been released.

"He actually left a voicemail saying that he was free and that he was going back home. He sounded fine," Adams Jr. said. "We don't know any of the details."

The 50-year-old missionary was kidnapped Sunday night in the northern town of Cap-Haitien, U.N. police spokesman Fred Blaze said. Four men grabbed Adams, his wife and a Haitian groundskeeper as they left Adams' church. The kidnappers drove the three to a secluded area, released Adams' wife and the groundskeeper and sped off with Adams.

Before his release, Adams' mother, Lucy Adams, said the kidnappers contacted her son's wife and demanded \$80,000 for his release. They later lowered the demand to \$5,000.

The kidnappers allowed her son to speak with his wife but insisted he speak in Creole so they could understand, Lucy Adams said by phone from her home in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

Foreign missionaries have recently become prime targets for kidnappings, which flourished in the aftermath of a February 2004 revolt that toppled former president Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Though kidnappings are common in Haiti's violent capital of Port-au-Prince, the crime has been rarer in the outlying provinces.

Lucy Adams said her son went to Haiti when he was 26 and worked as a principal of a Christian school. He later moved to Cap-Haitien to become a missionary, running his first church out of a World War II medical tent with holes in it.

Today, he has more than 1,000 church members. He also runs an elementary school and an adult literacy program.

"He started from scratch. It certainly hasn't been easy," she said.

She said her son had been threatened in the past but never kidnapped.

U.S. missionary's wife pays \$5,000 for husband's release in Haiti
The Associated Press
Wilmington Morning Star, NC
October 18, 2006

FAYETTEVILLE, N.C. | The wife of a U.S. missionary kidnapped in Haiti paid \$5,000 for her husband's release, his mother said.

The Rev. Pritchard Adams III, a 24-year resident of the Caribbean nation, was abducted at gunpoint Sunday as he left church in the northern city of Cap-Haitien. The kidnappers asked for \$80,000 but lowered the ransom to \$5,000 by Tuesday.

His mother, Lucy Adams of Fayetteville, said Adams' wife Dana met the kidnappers outside a small town called Limbe and paid the ransom as some armed kidnappers hid in the brush.

They returned the family's Jeep, which had been stolen during the kidnapping, then fled on foot and by motorcycle. Later, as promised, Pritchard Adams walked into town.

Lucy Adams said she spoke with her son Wednesday by satellite phone.

He told her three of the four kidnappers were fugitives, accused of killing a dozen men including two police officers, and needed money to flee the country. They threatened to kill him.

"He told them, 'If you do away with me, I'm going to a better place. Where are you going?'" Lucy Adams said. "They tried to intimidate him and they couldn't do it. He was cool as a cucumber."

Dana Adams and a Haitian groundskeeper also had been abducted but were released after they began singing and praying in the back of their vehicle. Dana Adams then worked feverishly to raise the ransom money at their missionary compound in Cap-Haitien, Lucy Adams said.

The family is now trying to repay the loan.

Foreign missionaries have recently become prime targets for kidnappings, which flourished in the aftermath of a February 2004 revolt that toppled former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Kidnappings are common in Haiti's violent capital of Port-au-Prince, but such crimes have been rarer in the outlying provinces.

Pritchard Adams, 50, went to Haiti when he was 26 and worked as a principal of a Christian school, his mother said. He later became a missionary, operating a church out of a World War II medical tent with holes in it. He now has more than 1,000 church members, an elementary school and adult literacy program.

CARICOM optimistic following Haiti trip
BY JACQUELINE CHARLES
Miami Herald
October 19, 2006

PORT-AU-PRINCE - Three Caribbean leaders concluded a one-day fact-finding visit to Haiti Wednesday, saying they were pleased with the progress President René Préval has made toward reconstructing the country but concerned about the slow pace of international community assistance for that process.

POWER BROKERS

The prime ministers of Dominica, St. Lucia and St. Kitts and Nevis spent the day in meetings with Préval, Prime Minister Jacques-Edouard Alexis and all of the members of the Haitian Senate and lower House.

Following a luncheon hosted by Préval, they also met with 15 members of the private sector.

The heads-of-government meeting came two days after a seven-member technical team from the 15-member nation Caribbean Community arrived in Haiti to assess the situation following the February election of Préval and parliament.

The three visiting heads of government expressed optimism at the end of their one-day visit that Haiti is on the right path back to rebuilding following a violent revolt in 2004 that led to the ouster of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and then two years without a democratically-elected government.

Of special concern, according to delegation members, was the work needed to help Haiti benefit from the CARICOM single-market and economy initiative launched earlier this year. Once Haiti officially joins, certain skilled Haitians would be easily allowed to work in other CARICOM member nations.

The prime ministers were joined in their visit by CARICOM Secretary General Edwin Carrington and Assistant Secretary General Colin Granderson.

VISA DELAYS

During their meetings, the private sector members said they appreciated the visit as the beginning of a needed dialogue, according to persons at the session, but expressed concerns about other CARICOM members' visa requirements for Haitians. Some visa requests can take weeks.

"This is a big problem," said Bernard Craan. "These are the kinds of issues they have to tackle right away."

One solution suggested was that any Haitian businessman already holding visas from the United States, Canada or the European Union should be allowed to travel to other Caribbean nations without having to submit obtain other visas.

Haitian leaders want to end human rights abuses, says top UN rights official
20 October 2006
UN News Centre

Although the human rights situation in Haiti is cause for concern with reports of extrajudicial executions and arbitrary detentions in deplorable conditions, there is room for optimism in light of the Government's will to confront and resolve these problems, according to the top United Nations rights official.

"The balance sheet of my visit is very positive in so far as all the signals transmitted to me by my interlocutors demonstrate that there is a kind of energy to move forwards and I hope also a solidarity on the part of the Haitian people stemming from its confidence in its democratic institutions," UN High Commissioner Louise Arbour told a news conference in Port-au-Prince, the capital.

"Without being naïve in minimizing the challenges facing the Government and citizens of Haiti, I think that at this moment we must be very confident. It is a unique and historic moment for the country to take a step forward which, I hope this time, will be irreversible," she said on Tuesday at the end of a three-day visit.

Ms. Arbour, who met with President René Préval, Prime Minister, Robert Fico and other Government leaders as well as numerous sectors of civil society, cited the economic and social conditions of the population as "equally alarming and deserving of the same energy" as the extrajudicial killings and prison conditions.

"The indecent conditions of life suffered by the poorest members of the population constitute human rights violations," she said. "The right to food, health, suitable housing is not respected for a very large sector of the Haitian population."

She added that the difficult conditions of life of the people in general are reflected in the "inacceptable" prison conditions throughout the country. "In Gonaïves, I could see the gravity of the situation," she said. "Dozens of people are being detained in quasi-inhuman conditions and a large majority of them have not even been sentenced, in violation of Haitian law and the international law of human rights."

U.S. and Haiti Sign Agreement to Support Haiti's Economic and Social Development

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 11, 2006

Press Office: 202-712-4320

Public Information: 202-712-4810

www.usaid.gov

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) signed a three-year agreement with the Haitian Government as part of ongoing United States Government efforts to assist Haiti in its progression towards stability and growth. USAID/Haiti Mission Director Paul Tuebner, United States Ambassador Janet A. Sanderson, Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis, and Minister of Planning and External Cooperation Jean-Max Bellerive took part in this event by signing the agreement.

While the agreement commits \$53 million of fiscal year 2006 funds for USAID assistance programs in Haiti, these funds are part of an overall Country Strategy Grant Agreement (CSGA) covering the next three years (FY 2007 to FY 2009). The total contribution under the terms of the agreement is estimated to be up to \$492 million for all USAID activities that support the Haitian people during this period. Subject to the availability of funds, this includes \$312 million dollars to be bilaterally obligated with the Government of Haiti (GOH), plus an estimated contribution of \$180 million in complementary programs during the same period, including President Bush's Emergency Plan for HIV/AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and PL 480 Title II food aid activities.

Under this agreement, USAID will partner with the Government of Haiti to help meet the basic needs of the Haitian population, focusing on job creation, community revitalization and empowerment, local government partnerships, expansion of financial services, watershed development, agribusiness and marketing, public health care, AIDS prevention and treatment, education services, civil society and media improvement, judicial and parliamentary systems reform and improved governance and fiscal policy.

The United States is Haiti's largest single-country donor and trade partner, and is committed to work with Haitian citizens and their government over the long term to address the country's many challenges and provide hope and opportunity to all Haitians.

For more information about USAID efforts in Haiti, visit our web site at www.usaid.gov/ht.

Haiti: Time to Make Some Hard Choices

BY CARLO DADE

Latin Business Chronicle

Friday, October 13, 2006

One hundred days into the administration of Haitian President René Préval and the country has witnessed scant movement on the political or economic fronts.

Key challenges — some long-standing, others caused by recent stumbles — are looming and time is growing short for the new government to act.

In one sense the lack of movement in Haiti can be seen as positive—at least the downward trajectory of the past decade has stalled. On the other hand, the lack of movement is creating anxiety because of the elevated expectations among the popular elements in the Haitian society that enthusiastically elected Préval and who took to the streets when attempts were made to rig the voting results and deny him the presidency.

Of course, not everyone had high expectations for the new government. Most of those in the Haitian private sector and international community who supported his candidacy did so somewhat reluctantly and have been waiting to be surprised by the new president. In this case, Préval is looking a lot like Godot.

Four key challenges loom for the Haitian government and will force Préval into action in the very near future.

SECURITY

Surprisingly, in this area some progress has been made as Préval has given the United Nations (UN) forces the green light to go after the gangs that had been behind a recent spike in kidnappings and shootings. However, this was a reactive gesture; the rise in gang activity was viewed as a direct threat to Préval himself and he had no choice but to allow the UN a freer hand. When he acted, he did so forcefully, going on the air to tell the gang leaders to “give up your weapons or die.” In response, the UN has moved Chilean troops from Cap Haitien and Uruguayan troops from Jeremy to Port-au-Prince and in recent weeks has taken back the airport road and sections of neighborhoods held by the gangs.

This success will be temporary unless the government develops the capacity to incarcerate captured gang leaders. In response to the crackdown in Port-au-Prince several gangs have tried to establish a beachhead in other cities. They have been turned in to the UN forces by locals who fear the gangs. But no sooner are gang members arrested, then they are released by the Haitian courts. This is doubly dangerous as it increases the feeling of impunity on the part of the gangs and the sense of impotence of the law-abiding populace. The Haitian judiciary and penal institution are incapable of coping with the situation due to the capacity, human resource and corruption constraints that face all branches of government. It was suggested by some in the international community that foreign judges could be brought in to assist in a reform of the judiciary and handle the backlog of cases. This was vehemently criticized by the Haitian judiciary, most Haitians and by the Diaspora as a gross infringement on Haitian sovereignty. Given a choice between the loss of sovereignty implied in rampant lawlessness

and impunity among gangs versus that implied by accepting further international help, Préval, in line with the popular opinion seems to have chosen the former.

CHINA

Despite the presence of Chinese troops in Haiti as part of the UN forces and the presence of China on the UN Security Council, which has to approve the UN Mission in Haiti every six months, Haiti continues to recognize Taiwan. Given the massive support provided by Taiwan for Préval's election, this situation will not change. In effect, China has sent peace-keeping troops to a country that does not officially recognize its existence. China and Haiti appeared to have worked out a detente on this issue where Haiti would keep its relationship with Taiwan low-key and China would overlook it. This came to an end when Haiti deliberately provoked China at the UN. Haiti is serving a term as part of the committee that sets the UN General Assembly agenda. In this capacity it was given a resolution, prepared by Taiwan clients Nicaragua and Gambia, calling for discussion of "the security of the Korean peninsula and the straits of Taiwan." Haiti not only presented this resolution to the agenda committee where it was unanimously rejected, but the Haitian mission turned around and presented the same resolution again the very next day. China was not amused. Beijing termed the offense "grave" and the "trade office" in Port-au-Prince called upon the government demanding an explanation. The Chinese government has promised that there will be repercussions.

PARLIAMENT

The new parliament has passed no legislation in four months and its main preoccupation appears to be what type of cars members will be given, the size of per diems and other critical matters of state. The aid and technical assistance that Canada is providing to the parliament has been ineffective. The one area where Parliament did move was potentially disastrous. There was strong support in the new body to reconstitute the Haitian army. Given that no donor funding, which accounts for over 65 percent of the government's budget was available, the parliament decided to take money from the President and Prime Minister's Office. Luckily, business and civil society organizations managed to convince the lawmakers that this move would have severe repercussions from the international donors and instead the body voted to approve a modest sum for a study on creating a new security force. However, the business and civil society groups behind this intervention were an ad hoc group and it is questionable if they can continue to play this role with Parliament without donor support.

REFORM OF CONSTITUTION

According to the Haitian constitution, the country will have to have 11 elections in the next 5 years. The elections scheduled for this December will be postponed because so many UN troops are tied up in Port-au-Prince. There will likely be rumbling from the Haitian street over this delay and more rumbling if the future electoral schedule is reduced. However, it is clear that Haiti simply cannot afford 11 elections in 5 years. The next round are local and municipal elections. If newly elected officials mimic the newly-elected Parliament there will be new demands on aid and expectations from a new domestic constituency without offsetting contributions to governance.

Massive aid inflows have distorted the rationale of expectations on the part of the Haitian populace and parliament. Eleven elections in five years, or reconstituting the army, or perks for parliamentarians all

seem like fine ideas if one either has the money to afford them or if one does not have to worry about paying the bills. Neither applies to Haiti. The advice given by Polonius to Laertes in Hamlet is quite appropriate, "costly thy habit as thy purse can bear [...]." Someone in the international community will have to remind the country of this hard reality. Fortunately for Haiti the new head of the UN Mission appears up to this task. We can only hope that as with the crackdown on the gangs, Préval can rise to the challenge and support him.

Carlo Dade is Deputy Director of the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL). Republished with permission from FOCAL POINT, FOCAL's monthly electronic newsletter.

International Donors' Conference for Haiti Set for November 29
New U.S.-Haiti pact supports Haitian stability, economic growth
By Eric Green
US State Department
12 October 2006

Washington -- The United States will participate in another international donors' conference for Haiti, scheduled for November 29 in Madrid, Spain.

A State Department official told the Washington File October 12 that the Madrid conference will discuss technical and coordination issues related to the financial aid being provided by the United States and other donor nations and multilateral groups to Haiti. The conference will focus on "stocktaking" of progress being made to bring stability and security to Haiti, said the official from the department's Office of Caribbean Affairs.

At a previous donors' conference for Haiti, held July 25 in that nation's capital of Port-au-Prince, the United States pledged almost \$210 million over the next year to help in Haiti's economic recovery.

Thomas Shannon, State Department assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere affairs, said at the July conference that the United States has disbursed more than \$390 million to Haiti in the two years since a donors' conference for Haiti was held in Washington in July 2004. At the 2004 conference, the United States pledged \$230 million but since has gone far beyond that commitment. (See related article.)

A new three-year agreement signed by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) with Haiti continues efforts by the United States to support the Caribbean nation's progress toward stability and growth.

In an October 11 statement announcing the agreement, USAID said the pact commits \$53 million of fiscal year (FY) 2006 funds in agency assistance programs to Haiti. USAID said these funds are part of an overall agreement with Haiti covering the next three years from FY 2007-FY 2009 that are estimated to amount to up to \$492 million.

The agreement was signed September 15 in Port-au-Prince. Signing for the United States was U.S. Ambassador to Haiti Janet Sanderson and USAID Mission Director to Haiti Paul Tuebner.

The agreement calls for USAID to partner with Haiti's government to help meet the basic needs of the Haitian population. The agreement will help expand employment and improve "sustainable" livelihoods, increase access to social services and reinforce the rule of law and good governance in Haiti.

USAID said the United States is the world's largest single-country donor to Haiti and also the Caribbean nation's biggest trade partner. The United States "is committed to work with Haitian citizens and their government over the long term to address the country's many challenges and provide hope and opportunity to all Haitians," said USAID.

USAID official Adolfo Franco said in September 28 testimony before the U.S. Congress that generating jobs in Haiti is key to the country's long-term success.

Franco, USAID's assistant administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean, said the U.S. strategy to help reduce political tensions and violence in the most volatile and desperate areas of Haiti is to undertake quick, visible projects that "constructively" engage local residents, especially youth.

The U.S. focus is to help peaceful civic groups in Haiti work with local authorities and play a "lead role in moving" downtrodden communities "beyond conflict," Franco told the House International Relations Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere. (See related article.)

For more information on U.S. policy, see Haiti.

The full text of the USAID press release on the agreement with Haiti is available the agency's Web site.

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

**Thousands march in Haiti demanding end to reign of terror
by Dave Welsh - Haiti Action Committee
What is the reality of Haiti under foreign occupation today?
October 14, 2006**

Right-wing death squads, working in tandem with Canadian-trained Haitian Police, continue to ravage with impunity the pro-Lavalas neighborhoods that make up the majority of Haiti's capital city. No one is disarming the death squads or bringing them to justice.

The 9,000 Brazilian and other U.N. troops and tanks continue to fire heavy weapons into densely-populated civilian areas, and U.N. Special Envoy Edmond Mulet has vowed to intensify these operations.

Residents believe their neighborhoods are targeted because they are considered bastions of support for the Lavalas movement of exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.
The resistance that will not die

On September 30th thousands of pro-democracy activists marched to the US consulate in Port-au-Prince, demanding an end to this reign of terror. Slogans denounced members of the small Haitian elite and their foreign sponsors [in particular the US, France, Canada and Brazil] - the ones the marchers hold responsible for what Jamaican writer John Maxwell calls "the Holocaust still under way in Haiti."

The demonstration commemorated the 15th anniversary of the first coup against President Aristide in 1991. It was spearheaded by the September 30th Foundation, an organization of victims of the '91 coup, together with others resisting the 2004 coup and current repression.

The march stepped off from the site of St. Jean Bosco Church where — then Catholic priest Father Aristide — had ignited a huge mass movement in the 1980s that ended up toppling the Duvalier dictatorship. The march proceeded through the popular districts of Cite Soleil and Bel Air to the city center. They demanded freedom for jailed Lavalas activist Rene Civil, former parliamentarian Amanus Mayette and all the estimated 1000 political prisoners still in Haiti's jails.

They demanded justice, an end to impunity and ending the persecution of Lavalas people by the Haitian justice system. Marchers called for the immediate return of President Aristide. "He is a citizen of Haiti," went one chant. "He doesn't need a US or French visa to return to Haiti." Another chant opposed bringing back the hated Haitian army — disbanded by Aristide in 1995. Many of the police and paramilitaries terrorizing popular neighborhoods today are former military.

A large gathering of protesters also marched in the northern city of Cap Haitien on September 30, chanting "Long live Aristide!"

Another sign of the Haitians' refusal to accept the imposed "reign of terror" was the triumphal, early September visit to Cite Soleil by Só Anne — her first since her recent release from two years in prison. Tumultuous crowds greeted Só Anne — a grassroots political leader and folksinger — as she toured various neighborhoods within the vast community of Cite Soleil. They were cheering her call for restoring Haiti's sovereignty and democracy.

New offensives by U.N. soldiers, police & death squads - "A war against the poor"

New assassinations and massacres in the Martissant/Grande Ravine district

Between September 24 and 26, the Little Machete Army — *Lame Ti Manchet*, a death squad with close ties to the Haitian National Police — went on a three-day killing spree in the Delouis neighborhood; eight were killed, others wounded, AHP reported. Deputy Jean Cledor Myril "invited police authorities to shoulder their responsibilities to prevent [them] from continuing to kill, steal and burn." (Agence Haitienne de Presse)

On September 21, community leader Esterne Bruner, who had called for strong action against the death squads, was assassinated with gunshots to the face. According to AHP it was the work of the Little Machete Army. Mr. Bruner, a father of six and coordinator of the Grande Ravine Community Human Rights Council, had been working to get help and justice for victims of the July 6-7 massacre in Grande Ravine.

On the night of July 6-7, 2006, a group of heavily armed men including *Lame Ti Manchet* massacred at least 22 people— five of them children — wounded some 15 and burned 20 houses in Grande Ravine. The names of the dead are documented, as are the names of many of the killers, who are well known to the townspeople of Grande Ravine and well known to the police.

One eight year old girl told a Haiti Action Committee (HAC) delegation last August that she had lost both her parents in the massacre. Esterne Bruner, who had taken over care of the little girl as her guardian after the death of her parents, was himself killed barely two months later.

UN troops from Sri Lanka, UN police from Nigeria and Haitian police are all stationed in this hillside community. But residents told the HAC delegation that these armed, uniformed "peacekeepers" have shown no interest in bringing the killers to justice.

Martissant was also the scene of the police-orchestrated "soccer field massacre" before 5,000 witnesses on August 20, 2005, during a soccer game organized by the US government agency USAID. Police chief Mario Andresol admitted — during an October 2005 interview with the Commission of Inquiry — that the original police plan was to seize Lavalas activists at half-time, as they were pointed out by police informants. At a signal from Inspector Jean-Michel Yves Gaspard, police opened fire on the soccer fans, as TV cameras rolled.

The Little Machete Army, carrying machetes distributed earlier by police, then moved through the crowd, hacking to death those fingered as Lavalas, while UN troops, stationed close by the soccer field, did nothing. The next day, the Little Machete Army returned to terrorize Grande Ravine, burning down houses including the shop of community leader Esterne Bruner.

A police investigation documented involvement of 20 police officers in the Soccer Field Massacre, and 15 of them were arrested. But by March 2006 all police had been exonerated and freed.

Intensified UN military operations - Neighborhoods under lockdown - Checkpoints of an oppressive occupation

Incursions by MINUSTAH (UN occupation forces) and shootings happen every day now in Lavalas strongholds like Cite Soleil. UN tanks rumble down the streets of these crumbling districts like they own the place. Sandbagged bunkers bristling with barbed wire -- with machine guns pointing out nervously at the civilians walking by - conjure up televised images of other occupations in Palestine or Iraq.

On August 24, an International Human Rights Delegation witnessed at close range an attack by UN "peacekeepers" on the community of Simond Pele, in Cite Soleil. Brazilian MINUSTAH troops in four tanks pumped multiple rounds of heavy caliber ammunition into houses in this densely populated residential area. The only other presence seen on the streets were unarmed civilians, including small children.

A young man, Wildert Samedy, 19, was killed in the assault, while he was on the roof fixing his radio antenna. This followed a series of deadly Brazilian attacks in Simond Pele in the preceding days. While the delegation was in Simond Pele, a UN dump truck and bulldozer arrived, dumping a load of dirt to block one of the entrances to the neighborhood. A resident noted that blocking entrances was a tactic used by MINUSTAH prior to the July 6, 2005 Cite Soleil blitzkrieg massacre, in which 60 civilians were killed by UN troops, tanks and helicopters under Brazilian command.

"The indiscriminate UN attacks on civilians in the poor neighborhoods have got to stop," said a delegation statement. "The residents of Cite Soleil have repeatedly said they want an end to the violent repression of the country's poor by Haitian police and the UN occupying force."

Then in mid-September, UN Special Envoy Edmond Mulet, civilian chief of MINUSTAH, brazenly announced a new escalation — increased UN troop levels, military occupation of new areas of the capital, and 32 new checkpoints where citizens will be subjected to search and interrogation, harassment and intimidation. (Reuters) Foreign troops giving orders to Haitians in their own country! "This is a war," said one Cite Soleil resident, "against the poor."

In January 2005, John Maxwell wrote a memorable and still-timely column about Haiti in the Jamaica Observer. "The world," he wrote, "...is not paying any notice to the 200-year Holocaust still under way in Haiti. There, too, the people in hazard must feel tortured and murdered by the indifference of a world conned into believing that the high-minded leaders of the United States, France, Canada and Brazil have the interest of the Haitian people at heart, when their agents torture, murder, maim and rape Haitians for no better reason than that [the Haitians] support their democratically elected and unconstitutionally removed president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide."

For more information, contact Haiti Action Committee 510 483 7481 or info@haitiaction.org

CARICOM mission for Haiti tomorrow
RICKEY SINGH
The Jamaica Observer
Tuesday, October 17, 2006

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados - Prime Minister Denzil Douglas of St Kitts and Nevis will tomorrow lead a prime ministerial mission to Haiti with a pledge to do "everything possible" as current CARICOM chairman to help influence "tangible benefits" for the Haitian people.

The Douglas-led team will include prime ministers of St Lucia (Kenny Anthony) and Dominica (Roosevelt Skeritt) as well as CARICOM Secretary-General Edwin Carrington.

The one-day mission is in keeping with a decision by CARICOM leaders at their annual summit in St Kitts last July to "demonstrate the Community's support to the government and people of Haiti", following the restoration of a legitimate administration in Port-au-Prince, led by new President Rene Preval.

Douglas said he was particularly keen on promoting health benefits for the Haitian people now that Haiti had returned to the CARICOM fold.

He has lead responsibility for regional health development matters, with a specific focus on countering the dreaded HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Ahead of tomorrow's Haiti mission, Douglas will today chair a one-day meeting of the CARICOM Bureau -the Community's management committee between Heads of Government Conferences - at the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank.

The meeting is scheduled to deal with a range of issues, including arrangements for the November 2 United Kingdom Caribbean Investment Forum at Lancaster House, London.

The Bureau will also review the work agenda for the 12th special summit meeting to be hosted in Port-of-Spain by Trinidad and Tobago's prime minister Patrick Manning.

Primary focus of the meeting will be collective action, across the Community, in the implementation process of the Sir George Alleyne-led high-level Commission on Health and Development in the Caribbean.

Other members of the current CARICOM Bureau are Vincentian Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves, who is scheduled to host the next Inter-Sessional Meeting of Community leaders in February next year; and Anthony, who has been requested to address outstanding issues on governance and justice, for which he has lead portfolio responsibility.

Kidnapped US Missionary Released in Haiti
By VOA News
18 October 2006

Parents of a U.S. missionary kidnapped in Haiti say he has been released after two days in captivity.

Pritchard Adams had been kidnapped by four men as he left his Cap-Haitien church Sunday night.

His parents confirmed he was freed late Tuesday. In a telephone interview, they said the kidnappers had originally demanded at least \$80,000 for his release, and then lowered the ransom to \$5,000. They did not know whether the ransom was paid.

Adams went to Haiti some 24 years ago, where he became the principal of a Christian school. He later moved to Cap-Haitien, where he opened a church, at first holding services in a World War II-era tent. His ministry has grown to include some 1,000 members.

CARICOM Prime Ministerial Mission to Haiti will assess country's re-entry into integration movement and return to democracy

Press Release of Government of St. Kitts and Nevis: Office of the Prime Minister

October 18, 2006

BASSETERRE, ST. KITTS, OCTOBER 17TH 2007 (CUOPM) – St. Kitts and Nevis' Prime Minister and current Chairman of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Hon. Dr. Denzil L. Douglas said the Prime Ministerial Mission to Haiti on Wednesday is aimed at consolidating that country's re-entry into the integration movement and assess its recent return to democracy following the election of President Rene Preval earlier this year.

Dr. Douglas, who will be accompanied by Dominica's Prime Minister Hon. Roosevelt Skerritt; St. Lucia's Prime Minister Dr. the Hon. Kenny Anthony and CARICOM Secretary General, His Excellency Dr. Edwin Carrington said his delegation will meet with the CARICOM Technical Mission that is currently in Port au Prince before holding a series of consultations with the Haitian leaders including President Preval, the Prime Minister, the Parliamentary officials and representatives of the private sector to ensure that Haiti as a member of the Caribbean Community benefits from all of the advantages in being a part of the family of nations.

“We want to ensure that the important institutions of Government in Haiti that are responsible for the discharge of good governance are in fact in place and functional,” said Prime Minister Douglas, who noted that CARICOM Heads of Government at their 27th Conference in St. Kitts last July had identified specific areas of concern.

“We want to make sure that apart from democracy and that human rights be allowed to flourish and people's rights are protected, we also want to ensure that the serious issue of sanitation and general public health conditions were being addressed. We would want to make sure that the basic structure – a network of roads that would be critically important in enhancing the development of agriculture and other important areas of economic development in Haiti are in place and also look at the prospects for tourism development in Haiti,” Prime Minister Douglas told a Press Briefing Tuesday night at the end of the 21st Meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community.

Dr. Douglas noted that the international and regional donor community on its visit to Port au Prince, last August to look at how it can assist in the financing of development projects, Haiti indicated an interest in furthering its relationship with its CARICOM neighbours by the establishment of a campus of the University of the West Indies in the French-speaking nation.

“They felt very strongly that the University of the West Indies has been an instrument of integration and wanted to be a part of this institution to further embrace them within the integration movement,” said Prime Minister Douglas, who also pointed out that Haiti also want to have access to other campuses of the tertiary level institution.

Dr. Douglas said that CARICOM, which has closed its Mission in Haiti following the overthrow of then President Bertrand Aristide, would now explore the possibility of reopening the Mission now that the democratically-elected President Rene Preval “appears to be fully in place and to use the

CARICOM Office to help to strengthen the various institutions in Haiti and to advance Haiti's economic development.”

“We want to explore the possibilities of trade and that is why we are placing greater emphasis on our meeting on Wednesday with representatives of the private sector because Haiti needs to be able to trade with us,” he said.

The CARICOM chairman said there are issues of immigration that need to be addressed. “We must speak frankly on these issues because those issues involved the possibility of illegal trade and we want to make sure that we do not have those possibilities taking place within the Caribbean Community among members of the Community,” said Prime Minister Douglas.

He said CARICOM wants to work with the international donor community, as Haiti needs financial aid. “We intend to ensure that we are in a position to provide the necessary institutional support so that Haiti can access the aid that is there and which is absolutely necessary for its development thus allowing the people of Haiti to improve their standard of living,” said Dr. Douglas.

He said that the CARICOM Mission now in Haiti would also assess the possibility of technical assistance, the manpower and human resource that can come from CARICOM to assist Haiti in re-establishing its democracy.

The CARICOM Chairman said the Mission will also ensure that Haiti also benefits from the Trinidad and Tobago Petroleum Stabilisation Fund and the Petro-Caribe deal offered by Venezuela.

Photo: (left to right) CARICOM Secretary General, His Excellency Dr. Edwin Carrington; Barbados' Deputy Prime Minister Hon. Mia Mottley; St. Kitts and Nevis' Prime Minister and Chairman of CARICOM, Hon. Dr. Denzil L. Douglas and Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Dr. the Hon. Ralph Gonsalves at Tuesday night's Press Briefing. (Photo by Erasmus Williams)

Douglas leads Caricom delegation to Haiti
Wednesday October 18 2006
by Corliss Smithen
The St. Kitts and Nevis Sun

Chairman of the Caribbean Community (Caricom), Prime Minister, Dr. Denzil Douglas is leading a delegation of the Bureau of Heads of government to Haiti today.

“Apart from myself and the secretary general who will be going as part of the Bureau, we will also have the benefit of the prime minister of Dominica and the prime minister of St. Lucia who will be accompanying us to Haiti.

“We’ll be meeting with an advanced team that has already gone into Haiti and then we would become engaged in a series of consultations with the president, the prime minister, the leader of the Parliament at the Lower House and also officials and representatives of the private sector to ensure that we consolidate Haiti’s presence within the family of nations of the Caribbean Community and to some extent, lend some assessment to how far Haiti has advanced since she has returned to a democratic government with the election of President René Préal a few months ago,” Dr. Denzil Douglas told the press yesterday, following a one-day meeting in St. Kitts of the 21st conference of the Bureau of Heads of government.

He outlined certain specific areas of concern that will be addressed during the visit.

“We want to ensure that the important institutions of government in Haiti that are responsible for this charge of good governance are in place and functional...In July of this year when we met in St. Kitts and Nevis we identified certain areas of concern...

“We wanted to make sure that there were basic infrastructure in place, for example the network of roads that we believe is going to be critically important in enhancing the development of agriculture and other important areas of economic development in Haiti.

“We wanted to also look at the prospects for tourism development in Haiti and back earlier this year, when the donor community visited Haiti to look at how they can assist in the financing of development projects, Haiti did mention an interest in furthering the relationship with its Caricom neighbours by way of having possibly a campus of the University of the West Indies established in Haiti...These are some of the areas that we shall be looking at to ensure that Haiti quickly advances as a member of the Caribbean Community and thus be in a state to benefit from all of the advantages that there are in being part of this family of Caribbean nations,” said Douglas.

The Caricom chairman further explained the organisation’s role in assisting Haiti to develop.

“We indicated that we would want to re-establish our office that we had in Haiti and which had been closed since the overthrow of President Aristide.

"Now that President Préval is fully in place, we want to explore the possibility of having a permanent presence in Haiti and to use that presence to begin to help to strengthen the various institutions in Haiti and to advance Haiti's economic development.

"We want in particular to explore the possibilities of trade and that is why we're placing great emphasis on our meeting with the private sector, because Haiti needs to be able to trade with us. There are some immigration problems which need to be addressed, we must speak frankly on those issues because those issues involve the possibility of illegal trade and we want to make sure that we do not have those possibilities taking place within the Community," Douglas said.

He added that part of the remit and part of the work of the official team that has been sent there in advance of the Bureau of Heads is to also access the possibility of technical assistance, the manpower and human resource in particular, that can come from Caricom and thus assist Haiti at this very difficult time as she tries to re-establish her democracy.

"The facility for Petroleum Stabilisation Fund from Trinidad and Tobago and also the offer that we're receiving from President Hugo Chavez, we want to make sure that Haiti is not left out in these important facilities that are now being provided to the other members of the Caribbean Community," Dr. Douglas said.

