

# **SOLIDARITY MEETING WITH THE HAITIAN PEOPLE**

**3<sup>rd</sup> EDITION**

**August 20-26, 2006**

**DO NOT MISS OUT THIS OPPORTUNITY  
TO EXPRESS ACTIVE SOLIDARITY  
WITH THE HAITIAN PEOPLE IN THEIR FIGHT FOR THE  
RECOVERY OF THEIR DIGNITY**

**PLEASE DISTRIBUTE THIS DOCUMENT IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

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## **1.- BRIEF OVERVIEW**

On January 3, 2004, on the eve of the commemoration of the bicentennial of the Independence of the first black Republic of the world, in the wake of an endless media smear and disinformation campaign aiming at the destabilization of the democratic process in Haiti, similar to the one led by the traditional enemies of our people at the commemoration of the first century of our independence in 1904, and while the crackle of gunfire of mercenaries recruited, trained and paid by the C.I.A. to destabilize a government working to end to the 200-years of social exclusion was heard from the Center and Artibonite Departments, we organized the first Edition of the Solidarity Meeting with the Haitian people. More than a hundred persons, Haitians and Friends of Haiti representing 35 organizations, participated in this meeting that took place under the auspices of the September 30<sup>th</sup> Foundation (Haiti) and the Haiti Action Committee (California, USA) at the Aristide Foundation for Democracy located in Tabarre, Port-au-Prince.

The 29 February 2004 coup d'etat, followed by the kidnapping of Haiti's democratically elected president, pushed many citizens who were working to reinforce the democratic process into exile, and created in the country a situation of repression which cost the lives of more than 15,000 of our compatriots (men, women and children). These difficult conditions made it impossible to hold the 2nd Edition of the Solidarity Meeting with the Haitian People in Haiti. The September 30<sup>th</sup> Foundation decided to organize this 2nd Solidarity Meeting together with Fondation Mapou, which was held at Trinity University in Washington DC. In all 150 people, mostly friends of the Haitian people with some of our Haitian compatriots participated in this assembly. Two Haitian jurists came directly from Haiti to share with the participants their experiences in the fight and promotion of human rights, particularly in the defense of the rights of political prisoners.

Today, it is more than necessary to continue this experience in order to further the progress made in the fight of a people who prefer to die than to live on their knees. That is why we want to organize the 3rd Edition of the Solidarity Meeting with the Haitian people.

## 2.- CONTEXT

After 2 years of hell from the imperialist forces and their local henchmen, consisting of members of the bourgeoisie, the traditional politicians and the «intellectuals», but also after 2 years of heroic résistance, the Haitian people turned back the clock by their tremendous win in the elections of February 7, 2006. This is one victory, but the battle is not over and the resistance continues. After the installation of the constitutional government, pressure from the bourgeoisie, the traditional politicians and the international community is becoming increasingly high in order to block all change in the administration and direction of the government, so that the apparatus of state stays in the power of the people's enemies. While the corruption investigations conducted by the de facto Boniface/Latortue administration were widely publicized, as a result of audits carried out by the *Cour Supérieure des Comptes et du Contentieux Administratif* (CSCCA), while the incursions of the “Little Machete Army” (paramilitary group created by the government de facto to pursue the Lavalas militants) continued incursions into the Grand Ravine, Ti Bwa, and Dekayèt neighborhoods, while the troops of occupation of the United Nations (MINUSTHA) repress the populations in other poor neighborhoods, the people's demands remained unchanged:

- Immediate and physical return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.
- Immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners.
- Arrest and judgment of all criminal involved in the massacres of the population before, during and after the February 29, 2004 coup.
- Justice and Reparation for the victims.
- Compensation and Reinstatement in the Public administration of the employees illegally fired after the kidnapping of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.
- Suspension of repression and the intimidations perpetuated in the popular neighborhoods by the occupation forces and the paramilitary groups.
- Rescinding of arrest warrants and the wanted notices issued against the Lavalas activists on account of their political conviction.
- Unconditional departure of the occupation troops.

The 3rd Edition of the Solidarity Meeting with Haitian people will take place one month to the day after the International Conference of the Donors in Port-au-Prince. When we look at the great pressure from the so-called «International Community», on the new government, one might ask what the Haitian people should expect from this conference. In the recent past, the International Financial Institutions made commitments regarding Haiti which they had not honored. During more than 5 years, including the first presidency of Rene Garcia Préval, and the second presidency of Jean-Bertrand Aristide (two Lavalas governments that had started to effect profound changes in the living conditions of the underprivileged Haitian masses), this so-called "International Community" froze more than 500 million dollars in development assistance and maintained the country under an economic embargo. This contributed to slow down considerably the fight of the Lavalas governments to put an end to social exclusion.

The coup, followed by the kidnapping of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, orchestrated by the US government, took place on February 29, 2004 and during the two following years of nightmares for the people, where in the country a tyrannical government were installed and supported by this "International Community", more than 950 million dollars have been available to these tyrants who used them to feed corruption and reinforce repression against the population, particularly in the popular neighborhoods.

Scandal about the purchase and sale of gasoline outside of proper procedures, implicating one of the most noted downtown lawyers, who is also a member of the Private Cabinet of former president de facto Alexandre Boniface.

Scandal about many Commissions established by the former de facto Boniface/Latortue government, with huge salaries and the waste of Treasury funds to the profit of these commissions that existed in name only.

The extravagant spending carried out by the former Prime Minister Gerard Latortue during his many trips abroad costing the Treasury more than one Million American dollars in two years... just to give these two examples of corruption.

The massacre of Fort National, October 26, 2004, implicating the National Police, where more than a dozen young men were killed.

The massacre of Martissant, August 2005, perpetrated by death squads (the Little Machete Army) acting under obvious protection of police force, that cost the lives of more than 15 of our compatriots. This massacre took place during a soccer game financed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the channel of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

The massacre of City Soleil which took place on July 6, 2005 during which soldiers of the Brazilian component of the occupation force of the United Nations (MINUSTHA), with the help of a helicopter breathing fire from the sky, invaded the City and started to fire heavy weapons in all directions. Churches, hospitals, schools, private houses, and businesses were not spared. About twenty deaths, men, women and children, added to the list of victims. The saddest image of this nightmarish film was: this mother lying with her bullet ridden body bathing in its blood, along with her two children killed also during the attack.

The backdrop of these two years has been the maintenance of the campaign of denigration and misinformation orchestrated by the putchists sectors against the Fanmi Lavalas political organization. In order to clear the way for setting up structures to facilitate the return to a status quo ante, they had to demonize Lavalas. But the campaign is not enough. On top of kidnapping and forced exile by the US Marines and “Special Forces” of the National Representative of Fanmi Lavalas, then President of the Republic, they forced into exile and hiding the majority of Lavalas leadership. With the assistance of the « media of hatred » grouped together in ANMH (National Association of Haitian Media), supported in their macabre action by so-called human rights organizations such as RNDDH, (*Réseau National de Défense des Droits de l'Homme*, previously known as NCHR, National Coalition For Haitian Rights) [a name change does not mean a change in mission or practice as CIA agent], and COEDH (*Centre Oecuménique des Droits de l'Homme*), in fabricating cases of so-called massacres, put in jail for more than 25 months, with no trial or formal charges, the former Prime Minister, Yvon Neptune, who went on a 15 month-hunger strike to protest against this injustice until his recent provisional release order in his favor by the Appeals Court of the Gonaïves jurisdiction dated July 27, 2006, the former Minister of Intérieur, Jocelerme Privert, released after two years in prison, under the same conditions, the former delegate (Representative of the Executive branch) of the South Department, Jacques Mathelier, who has been release for lack of evidence after two years of imprisonment, the

former Député of St-Marc Amanus Mayette, Paul Raymond et Yvon Antoine alias Yvon Zap-Zap, the two latter two, activists of the Haitian popular movement. More than a thousand members of Fanmi Lavalas have been held in prison, for their political beliefs.

On February 7, 2006, a Provisional Electoral Council, or CEP, established by the so-called International Community, the bourgeoisie, the de facto government, and the traditional politicians, organized tailored elections, clearly in favor of the bourgeois' representative, industrialist Charles Henry Baker (Representative of the Goup of 184) and of the "macoute" sector, intellectual Leslie François Manigat. To continue to protest against the bloody coup of February 29, 2004 and to dissociate themselves from all these putschists, Fanmi Lavalas, by far the greatest political force of the country, refused to form part of the CEP and refused to participate in the electoral process. However, bribed by the Embassy of the United States, certain executives of the organization, joined by some opportunists, without the knowledge of the National Representative and other persons in charge of Fanmi Lavalas, could register the organization with the electoral process. Nevertheless, the popular base of the organization turned their backs and would not budge. It was necessary to await the advertisement of the candidature of René Préval, the Lavalas former Prime Minister and President, who stood as a candidate to the Presidency for a second mandate under the hat of another political platform named: "*LESPWA*", (HOPE) to move the electorate of Fanmi Lavalas. The electorate was mobilized en masse, behind President Préval, and invested the voting centers to once again thwart the traditional politicians, the bourgeoisie and the imperialists, in spite of their various attempts at fraud.

However, the election of President Préval for a second mandate for the Presidency of the country did not mark the end of the popular fight to end social exclusion. We advance, as proof, the pressures exerted on President Préval, by the retrograde forces:

- to leave the putschist administration intact,
- to keep away in exile President Aristide, the living symbol of the fight for democracy, and the end of exclusion,
- to not release the political prisoners
- to continue applying the same neoliberal economic policies;

- to install a structural adjustment regime.

In short, to ignore the right popular demands. In fact the new government's hesitation justified the first great demonstration of July 15, 2006, which gathered in the streets of Port-au-Prince between 700,000 and 800,000 people chanting slogans favorable to the immediate return of President Aristide. It was, however, not a demonstration against the government. It was one moment to recall to the government the popular demands, but also its obligations to the people.

It is also in this context, that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Solidarity with the Haitian people will be held.

### **3.- OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the Solidarity Meeting remain unchanged:

- Assemble the different components of the force fighting here and abroad at the side of the Haitian people for the reconquest of their dignity and sovereignty,
- Assemble the true friends of the Haitian people,
- Construct a vast Movement of Solidarity in order to support the fight of the Haitian people,
- Define strategies of resistance and of struggle that can help the Haitian people make their contribution to unity in Latin America and the Caribbean for a common front against imperialism.

### **4.- DATE, PLACE AND DURATION**

The 3rd Meeting of Solidarity with the Haitian people will take place in Port-au-Prince from August 20 to 26, 2006. Additional information will be available as soon as possible at the Center of Information for the Meeting whose contact information is on the cover page. A field trip is planned for the Central Plateau and the Southeast, on Thursday, August 24, 2006, in order for the participants from abroad to visit projects developed by peasant organizations.

## **5.- Meeting Themes**

- Human Rights
- Lessons from cooperation with our brothers and sisters from Cuba
- The Bolivarian Revolution and the Haitian people
- The Union Movement in Haiti today
- The Press in Haiti today
- Haiti/Dominican Republic, positive aspects of migration
- MINUSTHA, occupation force or peacekeeping force?
- Self determination and the current situation in Haiti
- Haiti, “the International Community’s dictatorship”
- The religious sector and the current situation in Haiti
- Tactics and Strategies for the democratic and popular movement in Haiti today.

## **6.- REGISTRATION**

The Solidarity Meeting with the Haitian people is a non-profit activity. Individuals and Organizations can register by sending an email to the Center of Information (see cover page) with the following details:

- Name of the person or organization
- His/her nationality
- The name of the organization
- Contact in Haiti or lodging place.

A person willing to register can come personally to the Center of Informations (#3, 2<sup>e</sup> Impasse Lavaud Port-au-Prince), or call from Monday to Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

However, to cover all expenses incurred by the organization of the Meeting, the committee asks for everyone's generosity. The Committee of the 3rd Solidarity Meeting with the Haitian people requests donations to enable it to complete its work, which can be made directly or through the Haiti Emergency Relief Fund/Vanguard (see [www.haitiaction.net](http://www.haitiaction.net)). The Committee will issue a receipt to each donator through the Vanguard Public

Foundation for taxes purposes. When making donations, please mention the 3rd Solidarity Meeting with the Haitian people.

The registration fees, are as follows :

For Haitian citizens living in Haiti..... 50.00 Gdes

For popular organizations in Haiti..... 100.00 Gdes

For non governmental organizations in Haiti..... 500.00 Gdes

For Haitian and Friends of the Haitian People

Of other nationality from abroad

    North America and Europe..... 20.00 US\$  
    Latin America, the Caribbean and elsewhere.....  
10.00 US\$

For organizations outside of Haiti

    North America and Europe..... 100.00 US\$  
    Latin America, Caribbean and elsewhere..... 50.00 US\$

For those living in Haiti, the registration fees should be paid in advance (August 18, 2006 the latest) at the Center of Information of the 3rd Meeting of Solidarity, between 8:30 a.m and 4:30 pm from Monday to Saturday.

See cover page for the address.

For those living outside of Haiti, the registration fees can be paid in advance, if possible by **Transfer via WESTERN UNION** in the name of **Sandra Viau, Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The receipt should be sent to the Information Center by Fax: 509- 244-7986.**

For those who live in countries where transfers are difficult, an explanatory note can be sent by e-mail (see cover) to the Information Center. The participant can then pay at the time of the confirmation of registration at the opening of meeting.

## **7.- THE PARTICIPANTS**

The participants in the Meeting of Solidarity can be either individuals, or organizations that share the ideals of the democratic and popular struggle in

Haiti and want to testify to their Solidarity at the place of the people, or accompany the grassroots organizations in Haiti in this fight against those who impede their blossoming, particularly against imperialism. Three special delegations, resulting from peasant organizations will come respectively from Pandiassou, Center Department, Cotes-de-Fer, South Department, and Marmalade, Artibonite Department to take part in this 3e Meeting of Solidarity with the Haitian People.

## **8.- HOUSING**

The participants can make their own reservations in hotels in Port-au-Prince:  
Hôtel Montana in Pétion-Ville

Hôtel El Rancho

Hôtel Ritz Kinam

Hôtel Villa Créo

Hôtel Villa Idéal in Delmas

Habitation Hatts

Hôtel Le Plaza downtown Port-au-Prince

Hotel Olofson

Also, alternative lodging can be found for participants from outside the country who send us a request at least 8 days in advance.

## **9.- EXPECTED RESULTS (IMPACTS)**

- The International Solidarity Movement with the Haitian people is more focused, enlarged and reinforced.
- Pressure groups are organized to dynamize the International Financial Institutions to respect their commitments towards Haiti.
- Solid and direct contacts are established between organizations of the popular and democratic movement in Haiti and the organizations of the international solidarity movement.
- Expansion of the horizons of popular organizations in Haiti.
- Showing a more positive and constructive image of the popular organizations in Haiti.
- The Haitian people move closer to other peoples, which will create a new dynamic of cooperation that will **globalize solidarity**.

## **10.- USEFUL INFORMATION**

a .- Climate

Haiti is a tropical country. In summer in Port-with-Prince, high temperatures range between 28 and 30 degrees Celsius.

b .- Currency

The national currency is the Gourde. 1 US \$ = 39 Gourdes. The rate can vary. Although there are sidewalk moneymen, it is recommended to change money in an exchange office or bank.

c .- Transportation

Within Port-with-Prince, public transport is via the tap tap (public buses) or the taxi. A trip by tap tap costs between 7, 10 and 15 Gourds. In the taxi, a one-zone trip costs 25 Gourds. The cost can be doubled or tripled, according to the distance. Tap-taps have fixed routes. Taxis can transport several passengers at once depending on the destination.

d .- Visa/Airport

Entry into Haiti does not require a visa from most countries. At the time of departure, an exit tax must be paid in U.S. dollars at the Toussaint Louverture International airport of Port-au-Prince. If a participant provides arrival information in advance, a member of the committee can pick him/her at the airport.

E .- Water

Do not drink water from taps. Drink treated water, available in bottles or plastic bags.

## **11.- AGENDA (Proposed)**

### **Sunday, August 20, 2006**

Participant arrival

Airport

Lieu d'hébergement

## **Monday, August 21, 2006**

09:00	Participant registration
10:00 - 11:00	Opening Ceremony Speech of His Excellency Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Honorary President of the Meeting, and President of the opening Ceremony Other speeches...
11:00	Presentation of Delegations
11:30	Presentation of the Program
12:00	Free Time
01:30 - 4:45	Presentations by foreign delegations
04:45	Wrap-up session

## **Tuesday, August 22, 2006**

09:00	Introduction
09:15 - 12:00	Presentations by Haitian Delegations
12:00	Free Time
01:30 - 04:45	Presentations on Selected Themes
05:00	Wrap-up session

## **Wednesday, August 23, 2006**

09:00	Introduction
09:15- 12:00	Presentations
12:00	Free Time
01:00 - 05:00	Stations of the Cross in Port-au-Prince or visits to sites of major assassinations or massacres by the police, paramilitaries or MINUSTAH

## **Thursday, August 24, 2006**

The group divides in three, for field trips to :  
a) Plateau Central (Pandiassou)  
b) Southeast (Côtes-de-Fer), or  
c) Artibonite (Marmelade)  
to visit projects developed by peasant organizations.

## **Friday, August 25, 2006**

11: 00 Return to Port-au-Prince

2-5:00 Sharing the experiences of the three groups

## **Saturday August 26, 2006**

09:00	Introduction
09:15	Workshop : Drafting a Resolution
12:00	Free Time
01:00	Arts and crafts exhibit
03:00	Closing ceremony Speech by a member of a peasant organisation Speech by a member of a popular organization Speech by a labor activist Speech by the President of the Republic, His Excellency René G. Préval, president of the Closing Ceremony Artistic and Folkloric Activities

## **12.- SPONSORS PAGE**

We will classify as Sponsors the people or organizations which will have made gifts to facilitate the realization of the 3rd Edition of the Solidarity Meeting with the Haitian people. To sign up for this page, the Solidarity Meeting Information Center (see cover page)

Based on the amount contributed, listings are made in the following order:

**DIAMOND DONOR.....**

**GOLD DONOR.....**

**SILVER DONOR .....**