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Dear Members of Canada Haiti Action Network,

On behalf of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs. Louise Arbour, I would like to thank you, and your affiliated organizations and supporters, for your letter of 8 December 2006 in which you raised your concerns regarding the situation of human rights in Haiti.

After visiting Haiti from the 15 to the 17 October 2006, Mrs Arbour made a public statement, offering an overview of the most pressing human rights issues brought to her attention by different sectors, namely the Haitian Government and the leading NGOs, and characterized the human rights situation as follows:

"The official report that can be done regarding the situation of human rights in the country is globally worrying. People talk a lot about violations of civil and political rights, such as extrajudicial executions and arbitrary detentions, but the economical and social situation is also alarming, and requires to be considered with the same energy."

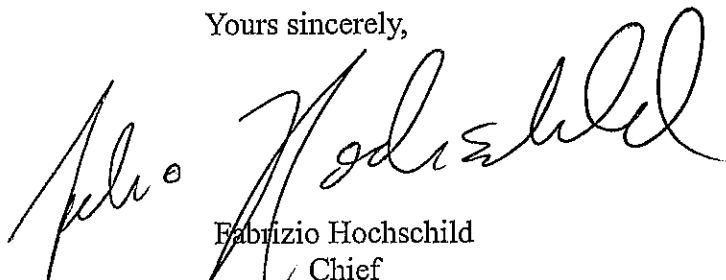
I trust you would agree that this assessment can hardly be viewed as optimistic. Nevertheless, Mrs. Arbour did express some optimism with regards to the willingness and the determination showed by the Haitian authorities (President Préval, Prime Minister Alexis, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Justice and Secretary of State for public Security) to take concrete steps in order to improve the overall human rights situation, currently affected by violence, extreme poverty, impunity and absence of rule of law.

Mr. Joe Emersberger
Mr. Kevin Skerrett
Mr. Stuart Neatby
Ms. Marcella Adey
Canada Haiti Action Network

The High Commissioner was also encouraged by the positive meeting that was held with representatives of the leading Haitian NGOs, in which they reaffirmed their determination to continue their fight for the protection and the promotion of Human Rights, in cooperation with MINUSTAH's Human Rights Section, whose director is also the Representative of the High Commissioner in Haiti.

Please be assured that we will continue to pursue the strengthening of human rights protection in Haiti, through the work of the human rights component in MINUSTAH.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fabrizio Hochschild', written in a cursive style.

Fabrizio Hochschild
Chief

Capacity Building and Field Operations Branch