

Dear Colleagues,

Please find below the mainstream news on Haiti for January 30 – February 9, 2007.

Last September, dozens of papers reported the personal attacks against the authors of a study revealing shocking levels of violence in Port au Prince from 2004-2006 published in the British medical journal *The Lancet*. This week, when *The Lancet* confirmed the study's findings, only Canada's *The Globe and Mail* carried the correction. *The Lancet* found no systemic bias and reaffirmed the report's findings that 8,000 murders and 35,000 rapes occurred in the metro Port au Prince area in the 21 months following Haiti's February 2004 coup d'état. *The Lancet* determined that one author, Athena Kolbe had an 'undeclared conflict of interest' for failing to disclose her previous volunteer work with an orphanage founded by ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and her earlier journalism work under the name of Lyn Duff. However the *Lancet* editor chastised the report's critics for obscuring "the real issue—the welfare of civilians in Haiti" with debate "aimed at exploiting historical divisions in Haiti."

The *Economist* article "Building a reluctant nation" supports a continued UN peacekeeping presence in Haiti. The article loosely mentions a January 2am raid as part of the UN's establishing "strongpoints in Cite Soleil" while failing to mention the increasing frequency and deadly results such raids wreak on the civilian population. The *Economist* inflates the UN's role by criticizing the expense and utility of the Haitian democratic process: "all this voting gives Haitians the chance of a fresh start, but it has also diverted resources from other priorities." (MINUSTAH's annual budget greatly exceeds the Haitian government's budget for elections, security and everything else).

The AP and Reuters covered the US government's announcement to give \$20 million to the Haitian government to "create more youth jobs in a gang-ridden slum in the capital that is testing the government's ability to bring peace to the country." The US simultaneously announced its continued support for the UN presence in Haiti. UN Special Envoy to Haiti, Edmond Mulet addressed the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington DC vowing "to eradicate violence and gangs from the Cite Soleil slum in Haiti by July." The *Washington Post* reports 350 Nepalese peacekeepers are headed to Haiti. The *Post* article, unlike AP and Reuters, mentions accusations by Cite Soleil residents of deadly UN raids resulting in innocent civilian deaths.

There was extensive media coverage of an American missionary's kidnapping in suburban Port-au-Prince. The missionary, Nathan Jean-Bieubonne of Haitian descent, was eventually freed following intervention from the UN anti-kidnapping unit and FBI negotiators flown in from the US.

#### **Contents:**

- 1. Author of study on Haiti cleared of bias by journal, *Globe and Mail*, Canada**
- 2. Building a reluctant nation, *The Economist***
- 3. New U.S. aid to create more youth jobs in Haitian slum, *Miami Herald***
- 4. US gives Haiti \$20 million, seeks longer UN mission, *Reuters Foundation***

**5. U.N. Sends More Peacekeepers to Haiti, AP Washington Post**

**6. American missionary kidnapped in Haiti, AP and The Houston Chronicle**

**1. Author of study on Haiti cleared of bias by journal**

**Report criticizes Canadian-led UN effort**

**MARINA JIMÉNEZ**

**Globe and Mail, Canada**

**February 9, 2007**

[http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/LAC.20070209.LANCET09/TPStory/  
National](http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/LAC.20070209.LANCET09/TPStory/National)

The Lancet, a prestigious British medical journal, has cleared the author of a study on Haiti of systemic bias, and reaffirmed the findings of her report.

Athena Kolbe's report concluded that widespread human-rights violations in Haiti have occurred, despite the presence of a Canadian-led United Nations police force and Brazilian-led peacekeeping mission.

The Lancet investigation was launched after a British-based Haiti Support Group complained she wasn't objective.

Richard Horton, editor of The Lancet, noted that Ms. Kolbe had an "undeclared conflict of interest" for failing to disclose to its readers that she had worked as a volunteer in 1995 at an orphanage founded by former president Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and as a journalist under the name of Lyn Duff.

However, Mr. Horton said there was no evidence of bias in the study's findings, and that much of the debate in this case was "aimed at exploiting historical divisions" in Haiti.

"That process has obscured the real issue -- the welfare of civilians in Haiti -- to whom attention should now turn," he said.

Ms. Kolbe's study, co-authored with Royce Hutson, an assistant professor at Detroit's Wayne State University, found that 8,000 Haitians have been slain and 35,000 women and girls raped since the ousting of Mr. Aristide in early 2004. The perpetrators were Haiti's National Police, members of the disbanded army, common criminals, armed anti-Lavalas (Mr. Aristide's political party) groups and in some cases, members of the UN peacekeeping mission. A small number were Lavalas.

Ms. Kolbe said that according to local Haitians, Canadian peacekeepers made death threats against them during house raids, and sexual advances against women while they were drunk and off-duty.

"Now that The Lancet study has reaffirmed our findings, I hope that groups criticized for human-rights violations will be investigated and held accountable," said Ms. Kolbe, who is working on her master's degree at Wayne State's school of social work.

In one alleged incident, a resident of Delmas, on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince, said Canadian troops raided his house and threatened to kill him if he didn't give them names of Aristide supporters.

In another alleged incident, a woman said she was grabbed by a drunk, off-duty Canadian soldier while out with friends near a base in the capital. She claims he threatened her with sexual attack.

The Canadian military briefly investigated the allegations, but couldn't substantiate them because respondents were anonymous.

Yves Engler, with Haiti Action Montreal, a solidarity group, said The Lancet's reaffirmation of the study's findings underscore the massive human-rights violations that occurred after Mr. Aristide left office.

"This study reaffirms the indictment of Canada's foreign policy in Haiti. Canada helped to overthrow the government and now the human-rights situation has worsened," he said.

Mr. Aristide was ousted on Feb. 29, 2004, after a rebellion of thugs and ex-soldiers forced him out. He argues the United States and France forced him into exile.

## **2. Building a reluctant nation**

**The Economist**

**Feb 8th 2007**

[http://www.economist.com/world/la/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=8669177](http://www.economist.com/world/la/displaystory.cfm?story_id=8669177)

THE United Nations is rebuilding a house. A couple of soldiers mix cement on the street, lifting it up by a backhoe to their colleagues who use it as mortar, placing concrete block on top of concrete block. The house is tiny, and cramped inside; there is barely room for the gun emplacements that face every which way from the second storey, pointing out over sandbags which are being replaced by the concrete blocks.

It is the newest outpost of the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (known as MINUSTAH from its initials in French). Brazilian troops under the command of Colonel Cláudio Barroso Magno took over the house in a 2am raid in late January. It was part of an effort by UN troops, begun a month earlier, to set up strongpoints in Cité Soleil, a slum district of Haiti's capital which has been under the control of criminal gangs for years.

This tenuous foothold of law and order is a microcosm of Haiti's snail-like progress a year after René Préval was elected as president of the poorest and most lawless country of the Americas. The election came two years after the ousting of the thuggish socialist regime of Jean-Bertrand Aristide at the hands of a rebel band and American and French troops.

For a failing state, the election was a success. Mr Préval, a moderate former president who was once an ally of Mr Aristide, won just over 50% of the vote. But he did not form a government until June, after legislative elections. Local elections followed in December, with more due in March. All this voting gives Haitians the chance of a fresh start, but it has also diverted resources from other priorities.

The most pressing issue remains crime. The government tried at first to negotiate with the criminal gangs. But kidnaps, assaults and drug-trafficking rose. A UN scheme under which those who hand in guns get job training has few takers. The new, tougher policy is aimed at regaining control of places like Cité Soleil, a district of more than 200,000 people which has been too dangerous for aid groups to enter.

The new UN presence there is meant in part to get the gangs to react, says Colonel Magno. In that, at least, it is working. There are nightly attacks on the strongpoints; the concrete blocks are pockmarked with bullet scars. It may also be having a wider effect: January saw only a third as many kidnappings as December, according to MINUSTAH. "We can end kidnapping" by the summer, says Colonel Magno.

This modest progress underlines that the UN force of 6,700 soldiers and 1,700 police—mainly from Latin America but including troops from Jordan and Nepal and police from China—will be needed for a long while yet. The government is rebuilding a national police force, but it is slow work. The police number only about 6,000 for a rugged country of 8.5m people. Another 500 or so are graduating every six months from the police academy run by the UN. The new police have been vetted in an effort to avoid the corruption of the country's past gendarmeries.

But the whole judicial system also needs reform. According to International Crisis Group, a Brussels-based organisation, 96% of the inmates of the main national prison have not been tried. Past efforts by international donors to achieve judicial reform failed. Now parliament is discussing, without urgency, plans to vet judges and increase their salaries, currently \$200-500 a month.

Mr Préval's main achievement has been to get the budget approved in the legislature. His party, itself a makeshift coalition, has only a fifth of the seats in the lower house and a third in the upper. The main obstacle is not partisanship, but individualism. Legislators spent several of the past few weeks trying to get a policeman sacked for inspecting a congressman's car (he found illegal weapons).

Even in Port-au-Prince's richer suburbs, rubbish fills the streets. The economy has stopped contracting. Venezuela supplies subsidised oil and Haitians in the United States send money home. But Haiti still depends on foreign aid for over 65% of the state budget. A job-creation scheme, backed by \$128m from the United States and the World Bank, is only just starting up. According to the bank, 83% of skilled Haitians live abroad. Driven out by instability and poverty, they have yet to show any sign of returning.

The motto of Colonel Magno's brigade is: "To be more than it seems". That is Mr Préval's task, too, if Haiti is to become a functioning nation-state. Enough has been achieved to warrant staying the course. But the burden will increasingly be on Mr Préval to produce results.

### **3. New U.S. aid to create more youth jobs in Haitian slum**

**The United States said it will give Haiti \$20 million to curb gang violence in the Cité Soleil slum.**

**BY PABLO BACHELET**

**Miami Herald**

**February 2, 2007**

<http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/world/haiti/16602658.htm>

WASHINGTON - The United States will provide Haiti with \$20 million to create more youth jobs in a gang-ridden slum in the capital that is testing the government's ability to bring peace to the country.

Nicholas Burns, undersecretary of state for political affairs, made the announcement Thursday after a meeting of 21 countries and multilateral institutions that have contributed troops or money to Haiti.

Burns said the group also agreed to ask the United Nations Security Council to renew the mandate of the 8,400-member blue-helmet peacekeeping force for an additional year. The decision is expected later this month.

"Violence in Port-au-Prince is an important and very serious issue," Burns said at a press briefing, with Haitian Foreign Minister Jean-Raynald Clerisme at his side. "And we understand that Cité Soleil in particular is a place where there are many challenges for the Haitian government."

Special U.N. envoy to Haiti Edmond Mulet, a Guatemalan diplomat, said security was better today than it was a year or two ago but nonetheless painted a grim picture of marauding gangs terrorizing civilians in urban areas when he addressed on Wednesday the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington think-tank.

He vowed to eradicate violence and gangs from the Cité Soleil slum in Haiti by July. Cité Soleil, where ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide is still popular, remains a no-go zone for security forces even as the gang activity spreads to other Port-au-Prince neighborhoods, and some rural communities.

As early as a year ago Haitian police officials complained that the gangs were moving out of Cité Soleil and into Port-au-Prince neighborhoods like Martissant. Last fall, both Haitian and UN authorities launched a program to disarm up to 1,000 gang members.

UN peacekeepers are coming under fire every day, Mulet said, and 24 have died since the mission began in 2004.

He said last summer the UN security mission worked out a plan with Haitian authorities that was "working wonders" in returning security to Port-au-Prince before troops had to be redeployed into the countryside for provincial and municipal elections Dec. 3.

In December, following a surge in kidnappings of school-age children, the UN and Haiti stepped up efforts going after bandits and kidnappers where they lived.

The 6,000-member Haitian National Police is undergoing a vetting process to root out members linked to gangs. Mulet said he expects about 1,000 officers will be fired after the process is completed.

Mulet also cited an "extremely corrupt" judicial system and rising drug trafficking as major challenges.

On the same day as Mulet's visit, Organization of American States Secretary General José Miguel Insulza reiterated the importance of international agencies coordinating their efforts.

Miami Herald staff writer Jacqueline Charles contributed to this report.

#### **4. US gives Haiti \$20 million, seeks longer UN mission**

**Reuters Foundation**

**01 Feb 2007**

WASHINGTON, Feb 1 (Reuters) - The United States said on Thursday it will give Haiti \$20 million to create jobs in a volatile slum and called for the U.N. peace-keeping force in the impoverished Caribbean nation to be extended for a year.

U.S. Under Secretary of State Nicholas Burns said the United States would give Haiti \$20 million to help create jobs in Cite Soleil, a Port-au-Prince shantytown run by warring gangs and so overcrowded some residents sleep in shifts.

Speaking to reporters after a Haiti "contact group" meeting that gathered officials from 15 nations and seven international organizations, Burns also told reporters there was unanimity among the group to push for a 12-month extension of the U.N. military mission in Haiti, whose mandate expires on Feb. 15.

"The presence of that mission is essential for stability and peace and to deter crime in Haiti and to renew it for anything less than 12 months would not be right," Burns said, saying the force could continue at its current levels.

The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti had nearly 8,400 uniformed personnel at the end of last year, including 6,684 troops and 1,692 police, according to U.N. figures.

U.N. Security Council diplomats say China initially opposed renewal of the U.N. mission in Haiti because of Haitian ties to Taiwan, but has since relented. However, China continues to argue for limiting any extension to six months, arguing the Council should keep a closer eye on its peacekeeping missions.

The U.N. force has been in Haiti since shortly after former president Jean-Bertrand Aristide was ousted in an armed rebellion in February 2004.

Politically motivated violence appears to have eased since President Rene Preval, regarded by the country's poor as their champion, was elected almost a year ago. But poverty, joblessness and the drug trade fuel widespread crime.

## **5. U.N. Sends More Peacekeepers to Haiti**

**By TRENT JACOBS**

**AP, Washington Post**

**Tuesday, January 30, 2007**

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti -- The United Nations said Tuesday it will send 350 more peacekeepers to Haiti in the latest effort to flush out armed gangs from the capital's slums.

The light infantry battalion of Nepalese soldiers began arriving this week and will be fully deployed by early March, the U.N. mission said in a statement.

Maj. Gen. Carlos Alberto Dos Santos Cruz, the Brazilian commander of the 9,000-strong U.N. force, said some of the Nepalese troops will be deployed as early as this week in Cite Soleil, a gang-controlled slum on the edge of the capital of Port-au-Prince.

"I am determined to increase the pressure on the gangs who have been holding the innocent people of Haiti hostage for so long," Santos Cruz said in the statement. "We must not give the gangs time to relax."

Peacekeepers arrived in Haiti in July 2004 to quell violence after a bloody revolt toppled former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Haiti's first democratically elected leader and a champion of the poor.

U.N. troops in recent weeks have stepped up offensives against armed gangs blamed for a wave of killings and kidnappings in the Caribbean nation's capital.

Since their arrival, peacekeepers have made several attempts to secure the slum but have struggled to root out the gangs, which often shoot at passing U.N. patrols and then retreat deep within the sprawling, mazelike shantytown.

Residents of Cite Soleil have accused the force of killing civilians during nighttime raids in the densely populated area of flimsy wooden shacks. The U.N. says its troops only fire when attacked on and try to limit civilian casualties.

**6. American missionary kidnapped in Haiti**  
**Associated Press**  
**The Houston Chronicle**  
**February 5, 2007**

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — Armed kidnapers seized an American missionary as he left his church near Haiti's capital and have demanded a ransom for his release, U.N. police said Monday.

Nathan Jean-Bieubonne, a U.S. citizen of Haitian descent, was snatched Sunday afternoon as he and three others drove home from church in Croix-de-Bouquets, a suburb of Port-au-Prince, U.N. police spokesman Fred Blaise said.

The kidnapers surrounded Jean-Bieubonne's all-terrain vehicle and forced him out at gunpoint while leaving the other three passengers, Blaise said.

"The men who kidnapped him are in touch with the family to demand the ransom," Blaise said, declining to discuss the amount.

Blaise said a U.N. anti-kidnapping task force was working with Haitian police to recover Jean-Bieubonne, whose hometown in the U.S. and church denomination were not immediately available.