

Dear colleagues,

Please find below the mainstream news on Haiti for November 29 – December 11, 2006.

The consensus impression of Haiti's December 3<sup>rd</sup> municipal and local elections was a low voter turnout coupled with mostly peaceful voting. While the AP and Miami Herald highlighted the 'peaceful,' Reuters honed in on the few reports of violence. The AP/Miami Herald reported two polling stations burned and one man shot in the northern town of Limonade. The election voted into office 1,000 new mayors and other local officials out of more than 29,000 candidates.

The AP and Gainesville Sun reported on a visit by Florida Congressman, Kendrick Meek and incoming Chairman of the House International Relations subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, Eliot Engel of New York and four other lawmakers to the Dominican Republic monitoring the treatment of Haitian workers in the DR. The delegation visited a sugar refinery where most Haitian migrants work. The delegation was intended to focus broadly on trade, port security and human rights but highlighted Haitian workers' discrimination by Dominicans, most reflective in the inability to obtain citizenship for children born in the DR. The visit was apparently inspired by activist Sonia Pierre's recent honor as the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights award recipient for her work with Haitians in the Dominican Republic. The delegation also visited Haiti, but that part of the itinerary did not make it into the news.

The House and Senate passed the H.O.P.E. Act, which gives the Haitian garment assembly industry beneficial textile trade preferences "allowing it to increase duty-free exports to the United States of clothes that aren't made with U.S. yarn and fabric." The bill was passed on the last day of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, as part of a larger trade and tax bill.

Both the AP and Reuters reported on conflicting messages from US and Haitian authorities on the issue of deported Haitian criminals from the US. Despite pleas from Prime Minister Alexis for the U.S. to reduce or eliminate deportation of Haitian criminals, the U.S. intends to increase the number of deportees from 25-100 per month. Alexis has repeatedly voiced his administration's concern about the role these deportees are increasingly playing in gang violence and kidnappings. Alexis and the Haitian government are asking U.S. officials for greater support and negotiation in how and when the deportees are returned. Alexis claims the "U.S. administration has threatened to cut its assistance to the country and to revoke Haitian officials' visas if we refuse to receive those deportees." Though U.S. embassy officials discount the threats, and offer vague statements of supporting "Haiti's efforts to address the security situation through a broad-based judicial and police reform." Meaning, the U.S. will continue deportations regardless of its impact on Haitian security.

Ohio Senator Mike DeWine's upcoming departure from the Senate and most notably his enduring interest in Haiti was covered by the Cincinnati Post and the AP. Senator DeWine's latest and final visit to Haiti as a U.S. official also sealed his and his family's commitment to combating AIDS and poverty in Haiti as a private citizen..

The media darling of the 2004 coup, rebel leader Guy Philippe, is once again promoted as a major player in Haitian politics, this time by the AP. Philippe is quoted alongside “Haitian legislators and business leaders [pushing] for a tougher stance against the gangs.” Philippe’s comments come in the wake of a recent spate of killings felling eight citizens of Martissant following the killing of an off-duty police officer. Philippe and the business leaders have waged a common struggle against Haiti’s poor since 2003. The mainstream media gave Mr. Philippe a high profile as both a “liberator” of Haiti and a Presidential candidate. Haitian voters gave him less than 2% of the vote.

There was widespread coverage of President Preval’s recent trip to Cuba for treatment of his recurring prostate cancer. The exams were inconclusive and Preval will return for more tests or treatment (unclear) following Christmas. Preval had been diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2001 at the end of his first presidential term. There is much speculation within and outside of Haiti around the actual state of Preval’s health.

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#### **1. Delayed Haitian elections are mostly peaceful**

**A low turnout characterized long-delayed local elections in which Haitians had to choose among 29,000 candidates running for 1,420 slots.**

**BY STEVENSON JACOBS**

**Associated Press**

**Miami Herald**

**December 4, 2006**

[http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/world/haiti/16158041.htm?source=rss&channel=miamiherald\\_haiti](http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/world/haiti/16158041.htm?source=rss&channel=miamiherald_haiti)

PORT-AU-PRINCE - AP) -- Haitians cast ballots Sunday in long-awaited municipal and local elections marked by low voter turnout and isolated reports of violence.

Some 29,000 candidates were vying for 1,420 local and municipal posts in Sunday's vote, billed as the final step in the troubled Caribbean country's return to democratic rule following a bloody February 2004 revolt that toppled former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Assailants burned two polling stations and shot and wounded a man in the northern town of Limonade, local media reported. Police later shot and wounded an official of the Fusion party after they found him with two Molotov cocktails.

In the Port-au-Prince slum of Martissant, automatic gunfire rang out after polls opened, but there were no immediate reports of injuries. Rival gangs have been fighting for weeks and had threatened to disrupt the polling, residents said.

United Nations peacekeepers used tear gas to disperse a small crowd that shouted anti-U.N. slogans at a polling station in Cite Soleil, a volatile slum on the edge of Port-au-Prince.

Voter turnout appeared low in most parts of the capital of Port-au-Prince, with many polling stations virtually empty.

Officials had predicted turnout at 40 to 50 percent, well below the massive participation in February's presidential vote won by Rene Preval.

Visiting a polling center in the capital, Preval's prime minister, Jacques Edouard Alexis, praised the organization of the elections but said he had hoped for a higher turnout.

"Citizens must be informed of the importance of local communities," Alexis told local Radio Metropole.

Sunday's election took place more than a year late because of street violence and logistical delays.

Final results aren't expected for at least several days.

## **2. Violence mars Haiti's local elections, one killed**

**04 Dec 2006**

**Source: Reuters**

**By Joseph Guyler Delva**

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti- An off-duty police officer was killed and several people were wounded on Sunday during local elections in Haiti, police said.

The officer was shot in the head by gunmen near the slum of Martissant in the capital, Port-au-Prince, police Inspector General Jean Saint-Fleur said.

"We have opened an investigation into the murder of the policeman and other acts of violence while we try to keep the situation under control," said Saint-Fleur.

The motive for the killing was not immediately clear but a witness said the police officer was killed after a dispute with two people linked with a political party.

Haitians were choosing more than 1,000 mayors and other local officials out of more than 29,000 candidates.

The winners of the elections will control the nomination process for an electoral council that will organize elections for the next decade. Victory also gives the winning party authority over the nomination process of judges and executive powers for local administrations.

Two people were injured by gunfire during incidents resulting from a conflict among rival candidates in the northern city of Gonaives, while two other people who possessed handmade bombs were wounded by police in the town of Limonade.

Heavy gunfire was heard through the weekend in several slum areas in the capital such as Martissant and Fontamara.

Police said they had arrested several people who tried to enter polling centers with guns or were involved in electoral fraud.

Witnesses reported a series of electoral frauds in the capital, Gonaives, Hinche and Jeremie.

"I saw with my own eyes a poll worker fraudulently inserting ballots into the box," said Maxon Maurice, who complained he couldn't find his name on the voters' list in a polling center in the capital. Officials at the polling center denied the allegation.

Haiti, the poorest country in the Americas, held a presidential election in February, its first election since then-President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was ousted by a bloody rebellion two years earlier. In that vote, Rene Preval was declared the winner after he alleged massive fraud at polling stations.

### **3. Meek, lawmakers monitor Haitian treatment in Dominican Republic**

**By JONATHAN M. KATZ**

**Associated Press Writer**

**The Gainesville Sun**

**December 09, 2006**

A Florida congressman and five other U.S. lawmakers visited two Dominican villages and a sugar refinery Saturday to observe the treatment of Haitian migrants who seek better-paying jobs here but often face discrimination.

Haiti and the Dominican Republic share the island of Hispaniola, and while Haiti has been plagued by poverty, violence and political instability, the Dominican Republic emerged from early struggles to be seen as a comparative land of opportunity by Haitians.

The Democratic congressional lawmakers - Reps. Eliot Engel, of New York; Donald Payne, of New Jersey; Kendrick Meek, of Florida; and Barbara Lee, Maxine Waters and Lynn Woolsey, all of California - wore hard hats and safety goggles while they watched Haitian workers loading sugar cane at the refinery about 40 miles east of the capital.

"I think it's the United States' responsibility to monitor the condition of workers in an economy such as this one that we're supporting through our trade efforts," said Meek, whose district is home to many Haitians. "Many of my constituents tell me about concerns about the conditions of their families" in the Dominican Republic.

The trip - focusing on trade issues, port security and human rights - was meant to set the tone for Engel's chairmanship of the U.S. House International Relations subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, expected to begin in January when the Democrats take control of the U.S. Congress.

They were also expected to discuss with Dominican leaders a U.S.-sponsored regional free trade agreement and visit a port before leaving for Haiti on Sunday. The final requirements to bring the Central American Free Trade Agreement into effect here should be met by the end of the year, officials have said.

Haitians, many of whom cross the border illegally to work on sugar plantations and in construction in the Dominican Republic, are often victims of discrimination and sometimes violence and death.

Dominicans, who measure their national independence from the 1844 end of a Haitian occupation, say the illegal migrants violate their sovereignty. Word that the delegation would be visiting Haitian workers' villages drew fire from many Dominicans, for whom the status of 500,000 to 1 million ethnic Haitians is a matter of fierce debate.

Children born to Haitian workers are often denied citizenship, although Dominican law mandates that any child born on Dominican soil receive it. U.S. Ambassador Hans Hertell recently rebuked the Dominican government for not giving birth certificates to the children of foreigners.

The visit comes shortly after a Dominican-Haitian activist received an award on Capitol Hill, re-igniting debate over the issue.

The congressional delegation visited two villages located 15 miles north of the refinery where many Haitian migrant workers and a few Dominicans live in tin or concrete shacks without running water or electricity, and the streets have holes filled with trash.

Many people have injuries that go untreated and most have to grow food to feed their families. Children also work in the sugar cane fields.

"This is an example of government not caring about its people - looking for continuous investment - but abandoning its people," Payne said. "If you want to abandon your people then don't do it with our money."

It wasn't clear what the delegation would do with its findings. They were scheduled to meet with the Dominican foreign minister late Saturday. A meeting with President Leonel Fernandez was canceled when voting in the U.S. Congress ran late Friday, delaying travel to the Dominican Republic.

#### **4. House passes trade bill for Vietnam, Haiti**

**Fri Dec 8, 2006**

**By Missy Ryan**

**Reuters**

[http://today.reuters.com/news/articlenews.aspx?type=politicsNews&storyID=2006-12-09T021519Z\\_01\\_N08397786\\_RTRUKOC\\_0\\_US-CONGRESS-TRADE.xml&WTmodLoc=NewsHome-C3-politicsNews-2](http://today.reuters.com/news/articlenews.aspx?type=politicsNews&storyID=2006-12-09T021519Z_01_N08397786_RTRUKOC_0_US-CONGRESS-TRADE.xml&WTmodLoc=NewsHome-C3-politicsNews-2)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Lawmakers narrowly approved a raft of trade legislation on Friday to normalize trade ties with former enemy Vietnam, expand trade preferences for dirt-poor Haiti, and renew duty reductions for the Andean region and over 100 developing nations.

The House of Representatives voted 212 to 184 for the trade package, which is expected to go to the Senate this weekend as part of a larger tax and energy package in an 11th-hour push to close the current Republican-led Congress.

"This legislation will help to create stronger trading partners for the future, while also recognizing our responsibility ... to help developing countries grow," Republican Rep. Bill Thomas, outgoing chairman of the influential Ways and Means Committee, said in a statement.

The measure grants Permanent Normal Trade Relations to fast-growing Vietnam, 30 years after its war with the United States, but it comes late for President George W. Bush, who arrived empty-handed at a Hanoi summit last month after an initial PNTR vote failed.

The legislation also broadens textile preferences for Haiti, allowing it to increase duty-free exports to the United States of clothes that aren't made with U.S. yarn and fabric.

"We hope that ... we can send a signal to other countries to come to the aid of this poor nation," said New York's Charles Rangel, a Democrat who will head the Ways and Means Committee when Democrats take control of Congress next year.

But sharp opposition from southern-state Senators, like Elizabeth Dole of North Carolina, to the proposed changes to Haiti trade threaten to slow down the vote in the Senate.

"It's a job-destroying bill," said Cass Johnson, president of the National Council of Textile Organizations. The textile industry fears the rules will squeeze out U.S. producers of yarn and fabric who supply Haiti's apparel industry. Continued...

U.S. Trade Representative Susan Schwab hailed Friday's vote, saying increased trade had not only helped workers in poor countries but lowered priced for U.S consumers.

#### PREFERENCE EXTENSION FOR ANDES

Many Democrats usually take a harder line on trade than their peers across the aisle, and some U.S. industries hope Congress' new Democratic leaders will be on their side, blocking deals some here fear will cost American jobs.

That could bode poorly for developing countries like Peru and Colombia, which both signed bilateral trade pacts this year with Washington. Approving those deals could be more difficult with Democrats like Rangel insisting they be renegotiated to include stronger protection for workers.

Friday's package renews duty preferences for six months for four Andean nations under the Andean Trade Preference and Drug Eradication Act, or ATPDEA, which is due to expire this month. It grants another six months only to countries with bilateral trade deals in place with Washington.

The House also extended for two years the Generalized System of Preferences, another duty program that expires this month. Some lawmakers had argued it was time to cut off more prosperous countries from a program created to help the world's poorest countries. Nations like Brazil and India have also emerged as opponents to the United States in trade talks.

The bill also extends preferences to African nations.

(Additional reporting by Thomas Ferraro and Donna Smith)

#### **5. U.S. and Haiti at odds over deported criminals**

**Fri 8 Dec 2006**

**By Joseph Guylar Delva**

**Reuters**

<http://today.reuters.co.uk/news/CrisesArticle.aspx?storyId=N08434408&WTmodLo=c=World-R5-Alertnet-2>

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, Dec 8 - (Reuters) - Washington has threatened to punish Haiti if the troubled Caribbean country refuses to accept criminals deported from the United States, Haiti's prime minister said on Friday.

A U.S. embassy spokeswoman denied Washington had threatened to cut aid to its impoverished hemispheric neighbor.

Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis said he had discussed on several occasions with U.S. officials the threat that deported criminals posed to Haiti's fragile security. But instead of being inclined to reduce the number of deportations, the U.S. government told him it intends to increase them.

"The U.S. told us the number of deportees will rise from 25 to 100 per month," Alexis told Reuters.

"The U.S. administration has threatened to cut its assistance to the country and to revoke Haitian officials' visas if we refuse to receive those deportees," said Alexis.

Like other Caribbean countries struggling with rampant crime, such as Jamaica, Haitian authorities say criminals deported from the United States after serving prison sentences fuel violence and gang activity.

Many joined gangs as youths and their criminal experience and connections are highly valued by criminal organizations back home.

A spokeswoman for the U.S. embassy in Port-au-Prince said the two governments were in constant talks about deportees.

"At no time in these discussions did U.S. officials suggest that U.S. aid to Haiti was in jeopardy," she said. "The United States continues to be supportive of Haiti's efforts to address the security situation through a broad-based judicial and police reform."

Alexis and police chief Mario Andresol said deportees were heavily involved in a wave of kidnappings that has afflicted the capital Port-au-Prince.

Alexis said his government was not categorically opposed to accepting Haitians deported from the United States. But he said the deportations should be carried out with some care.

"Many of those deportees left Haiti when they were 3 or 5 years old. So they have learned to become criminals in the United States," said Alexis.

"We have asked the U.S. to help us build a high security prison to hold those deportees and we have asked them to send us the deportees before the end of their prison time," Alexis added, arguing that would improve the Haitian government's chances of controlling their activities.

The number of kidnappings has risen alarmingly in the Haitian capital in recent weeks.

The crime wave has largely ended a lull in violence which followed elections in February that brought President Rene Preval to power and ended the controversial rule of a nonelected interim administration appointed after ex-president Jean-Bertrand Aristide was ousted in an rebellion in 2004.

## **6. U.S. Denies Threat on Haitian Aid, Visas**

**By STEVENSON JACOBS,**

**Associated Press**

**December 8, 2006**

**The Los Angeles Times**

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/wire/sns-ap-haiti-us-deportation,1,7837185.story?coll=sns-ap-world-headlines>

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti -- The U.S. Embassy on Friday denied that Haiti's government was threatened with the suspension of aid and travel visas if it tried to block the United States from deporting convicted Haitian criminals back to their homeland.

U.S. Embassy spokeswoman Shaila B. Manyam told The Associated Press that Haitian officials were only informed that U.S. law allows the blocking of visas for officials from any country that refuses to accept its citizens after they have been convicted of crimes.

But Manyam, denying an assertion by Haitian Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis, said the U.S. did not warn Haitian officials that they would be subject to the penalty.

"At no time in these discussions did U.S. officials suggest that U.S. aid to Haiti was in jeopardy," Manyam said.

In an appearance Thursday before the Haitian legislature, Alexis criticized the long-standing U.S. policy of deporting newly released Haitian convicts, blaming them for killings and kidnappings in the impoverished Caribbean nation.

He also said the U.S. planned to increase the number of criminals deported back to Haiti each month from 25 to 100.

Alexis told legislators he was warned that Haitian officials who don't cooperate risked a suspension in U.S. aid and loss of travel privileges to the United States.

Haiti and other nations have long complained that convicts deported from the United States fuel violent crime at home, a claim disputed by Washington.

The Haitian government does not track how many crimes are committed by people who have been deported. More than 720 people have been slain in the former French colony

this year, including 28 Haitian police officers, according to the Haiti-based National Defense Network for Human Rights.

## **7. DeWine's enduring interest in Haiti**

**The Cincinnati Post**

**December 9, 2006**

<http://news.cincypost.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20061209/EDIT/612090302/1003>

WASHINGTON - It is fitting that in one of his final acts as a lawmaker, Sen. Mike DeWine returned to a tiny, impoverished land that he has visited often during his congressional career.

The Cedarville Republican spent three days last week going back over familiar ground in Haiti.

DeWine did the things a U.S. senator usually does when he steps onto foreign soil. He met with the Haitian leader - President Rene Preval - to talk about security and about a trade bill that officials hope will boost the economy of the poor Caribbean nation.

He also got a briefing from U.S. ambassador Janet Sanderson and checked in with the United Nations, which updated him on what its peacekeeping forces in Haiti are doing and about the overall security of the country.

But DeWine's interest in Haiti has gone far beyond his official duties as a senator. The senator and his wife, Fran, have raised thousands of dollars over the years to help provide food and medical supplies to the inhabitants of Cite Soleil, a slum in Port-au-Prince that is home to the poorest of the poor.

So, on DeWine's last trip as a senator, they met up again with Father Tom Hagan, a Catholic priest who runs an agency that provides aid to the inhabitants of Port-au-Prince and Haiti in general. Hagan also runs a school in Cite Soleil that was named a few years back after the DeWines' daughter, Becky, who died in a car crash in 1993.

On this trip, the DeWines (who paid for the trip themselves, according to the senator) were accompanied by another daughter - Alice, a 23-year-old law student.

The threesome came bearing gifts for children at the school.

Fran DeWine and other members of the family had collected toys - everything from soccer balls to Beanie Babies. So many people donated toys that every one of the 4,500 children at the school ended up with a gift.

For the senator, whose congressional career officially ends at the close of the year, the trip may have been his last while in office.

But it won't be his last.

DeWine, who lost his re-election bid last month to Democrat Sherrod Brown, said his interest in the island nation won't go away just because he is no longer in the Senate. He expects to return to Haiti again as a private citizen. How could he not, when there is still so much sickness and poverty to overcome?

"We have an interest in what's going on in Haiti, and there are people that we are trying to help down there," he said. "Basically, we are helping people who are helping other people. That's the way it works."

DeWine was struck by the human suffering when he first set foot on the island as a freshman senator a decade ago. At the time, not many Republicans had taken much interest in Haiti and its people.

The Clinton administration had just returned Jean-Bertrand Aristide to the presidency, and Haiti had become a divisive issue in American politics

DeWine, a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, felt that a bipartisan approach was needed on foreign policy. So off he went to Haiti. He would return 15 more times over the next decade.

To those who may question why the United States should care about what goes on in a small, dirt-poor country, DeWine offers a couple of reasons:

One, Haiti is literally in America's back yard and is where many illegal drugs pass through on their way to the United States. "It's a country that clearly concerns us, if for nothing more than selfish reasons and if for nothing more than our own national interests," DeWine said.

Two, the misery there is so overwhelming that to do nothing would be inconceivable. "It's a place where you see unbelievable poverty, which manifests itself in children dying because they don't have enough to eat and they don't have enough medical care," DeWine said.

You might think that knowing this was his last trip as a senator would've made it a particularly emotional experience. Not so, DeWine said.

"What's emotional about going to a place like Haiti is to see the kids who are dying," he said. "That's what's emotional about it."

## **8. AP Interview: Leaving Senate, senator keeps Haiti as his private aid project**

**The Associated Press**

**December 5, 2006**

**International Herald Tribune**

[http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2006/12/05/america/NA\\_GEN\\_US\\_Haiti\\_Senator.php](http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2006/12/05/america/NA_GEN_US_Haiti_Senator.php)

WASHINGTON: Sen. Mike DeWine is leaving the Senate after 12 years, but he says he will keep working as a private citizen to help the fight against AIDS and poverty in Haiti, an interest he developed during his two terms.

DeWine, a Republican, has been to the Caribbean country about 16 times. On his latest trip, DeWine met with Haitian President Rene Preval and checked on projects he has helped finance over the years as a member of the Senate committee in charge of spending. Principal among them were AIDS treatment by Harvard University medical anthropologist Paul Farmer and Haitian infectious disease specialist Jean William Pape and an orphanage for HIV-infected children.

Some politicians, such as former President Bill Clinton, have said they found ways to be more effective once they left public office. DeWine said he does not know if that will be the case for him, but he is eager to use his personal fortune to help with projects in Haiti, Guatemala and elsewhere.

"Even if we can't save the whole country, we can save one child at a time," DeWine said.

Financial statements gathered by the Center for Responsive Politics show his net worth in 2005 was between \$11.5 million (€8.6 million) and \$47.5 million (€35.6 million), which made him the 13th richest senator.

DeWine's support for much of President George W. Bush's Iraq policies and a longstanding association with the Ohio Republican Party made him a victim of voters' anti-Republican fervor in the Nov. 7 elections. After cruising to two previous Senate wins, he lost to Democrat Sherrod Brown by 12 percentage points as Democrats swept to power in both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

"If he wants to do humanitarian projects, he could write his own ticket on that, and it certainly would be welcome," said Rocky Saxbe, a former Ohio state legislator who has known DeWine for three decades and served as the senator's campaign attorney.

As optimistic as he is about his long-term, private humanitarian work, DeWine is pessimistic about what he can do for Haiti in his remaining few days in the Senate. He had hoped his colleagues would pass his bill to offer trade incentives to Haiti to encourage governmental reforms but said he would be surprised if it should get a vote.

His amendment to increase the Global Fund to Fight AIDS by \$100 million (€75 million) also probably will be left on the table when the Senate cuts the session short.

**9. Ex-rebel: Haiti failed to stem violence**  
**THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
**Seattle Post Intelligencer**  
**04 Dec 2006**

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti -- A former rebel leader who helped topple Haiti's first freely elected president criticized its newest one, accusing President Rene Preval's government of being soft on armed gangs and failing to stem a bloody tide of street violence.

Breaking a long silence, Guy Philippe said efforts by Preval and Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis to negotiate a peace agreement with the gangs has not reduced killings and kidnappings in the capital of Port-au-Prince.

"The Alexis-Preval government hasn't done anything to stop the insecurity," Philippe said in an interview Tuesday with Haitian broadcaster Radio Metropole. "The prime minister is still negotiating with gangs ... and there have been no results."

Philippe's remarks, his first in months, add to growing calls by Haitian legislators and business leaders for a tougher stance against the gangs, which clash frequently with U.N. peacekeepers in Port-au-Prince's slums.

The ex-police chief was the main leader of a 2004 rebel uprising that ousted former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. He retreated from the spotlight after losing his bid for the presidency in February elections to Preval, Aristide's former ally.

**10. 8 People Die During Gang Feud in Haiti**  
**At least 8 people killed during a gang feud in a Haitian slum**  
**CBS News**  
**December 7, 2006**

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, Dec. 7, 2006

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(AP) At least eight people were killed in a Haitian slum during a gang feud set off by the weekend murder of a police officer, a U.N. official said.

A former rebel leader who helped topple Haiti's first freely elected president criticized its newest one, accusing President Rene Preval's government of being soft on armed gangs and failing to stem a bloody tide of street violence.

Breaking a long silence, Guy Philippe said efforts by Preval and Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis to negotiate a peace agreement with the gangs has not reduced killings and kidnappings in the capital of Port-au-Prince.

"The Alexis-Preval government hasn't done anything to stop the insecurity," Philippe said in an interview Tuesday with Haitian broadcaster Radio Metropole. "The prime minister is still negotiating with gangs ... and there have been no results."

Philippe's remarks, his first in months, add to growing calls by Haitian legislators and business leaders for a tougher stance against the gangs, which clash frequently with each other, and with U.N. peacekeepers in Port-au-Prince's slums.

The latest to fall appeared to be gang members shot to death between Sunday and Tuesday, U.N. police spokesman Fred Blaze said Wednesday.

The violence in the Martissant slum erupted Sunday after unknown attackers shot and killed an off-duty police officer who had just voted in local and municipal elections.

The officer's killing reignited an ongoing battle between the rival Grand Ravine and Ti Manchet gangs, which are blamed for a wave of shootings and killings in recent months, Blaze said. The link between the officer's death and the gang killings was not immediately clear.

Haitian television showed images Tuesday night of victims laying face down in the street, their arms and legs bound. The bodies of two victims were found burned inside a car.

Barricades of flaming tires went up around the slum Wednesday morning as residents fled, traumatized by three days of shooting, local media reported.

U.N. peacekeepers have increased patrols in the area but were limited in how much they could do, Blaze said.

"Whenever they want to fight, they wait for our patrols to leave and start fighting. That's why it's been so hard" to prevent attacks, he said.

An 8,800-strong U.N. peacekeeping force arrived in Haiti in June 2004 to stabilize the impoverished Caribbean nation.

Philippe, an ex-police chief, was the main leader of a 2004 rebel uprising that ousted former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. He retreated from the spotlight after losing his bid for the presidency in February elections to Preval, Aristide's former ally.

### **11. Haiti's Préval to undergo cancer tests**

**Haitian President René Préval said that blood tests during his recent visit to Cuba suggested a possible return of prostate cancer and that he will be tested again.**

**BY STEVENSON JACOBS**

**Associated Press**

**Miami Herald**

**Monday December 11, 2006**

<http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/16211528.htm>

PORT-AU-PRINCE - President René Préval, who was diagnosed with prostate cancer five years ago, said Sunday that the disease may have come back and that he would soon leave the country for treatment and more tests.

Speaking to reporters after returning from a four-day trip to Cuba for medical exams, a fit-looking Préval said blood tests in Havana showed possible signs of cancer.

Préval said the tests were inconclusive and he would have to return to Cuba on Dec. 26 for more tests and unspecified treatment. He did not say how long he would be out of the country.

"[Doctors] are unable to say right now at what stage this is," Préval said after arriving at Haiti's international airport. "I have to go back for more tests. If it continues to grow, that will mean the cancer came back."

"The seriousness of it is not known," Préval added, saying he felt "physically and mentally well."

Préval, 63, was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2001, the last year of his first presidential term, and had surgery in Cuba to treat it.

He returned to Havana unexpectedly on Wednesday for what his office described as "medical reasons," setting off rumors in Haiti's capital that he might be gravely ill.

"If you are sick, you should say that you are sick, and I told you at what stage my health is. This is what the doctor told me," Préval said at the airport Sunday, flanked by his prime minister, Jacques Edouard Alexis, and several Cabinet members.

Préval's health adds to the uncertainty already facing his young coalition government, which has struggled to stabilize the divided and impoverished Caribbean nation nearly three years after a bloody rebellion toppled former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Haiti experienced relative calm after Préval's February election victory. Since the new government took power in May, however, dozens of foreigners and Haitians have been kidnapped and gang fighting has forced hundreds to flee their homes in the capital, Port-au-Prince.

An 8,800-strong force of U.N. troops and international police provides the only real security in a country plagued by well-armed gangs. U.N. officials have said some gangs are using violence to pressure Préval for concessions, but the president has said he doesn't believe the crime is political in nature.

The streets of the capital were mostly quiet Sunday, with little evident reaction to the news of Préval's possible sickness.

A legislator from the opposition FUSION party, Frantz Robert Monde, said Saturday that Préval appeared to be seriously ill and that Alexis might have to go before Parliament to give details on the president's health.

Speaking to private radio broadcaster Caribe FM, Monde said that could help legislators decide whether Préval should transfer powers temporarily to an executive council made up of Cabinet members and led by the prime minister, as outlined in Haiti's constitution.

Préval's office made no immediate comment on the remarks.