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More than 5,000 Haitian Victims of Cholera File Complaint Against UN/MINUSTAH to Seek Justice and Reparation
Victims' lawyers have already filed a complaint to the UN/MINUSTAH seeking justice and reparation for introducing cholera in Haiti

Tuesday, November 8, 2011, New York, Port-au-Prince — On Thursday, November 3, 2011, more than 5,000 Haitians, victims, parents and/or dependents of cholera victims filed a complaint against the United Nations (UN) and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), for the damage and harm caused by the outbreak of the cholera epidemic in Haiti, in October 2010. Since then, the cholera epidemic has killed more than 6,600 Haitians and has made more than 475,000 sick.

The complaint explains that the UN and MINUSTAH are responsible for: (1) failing to properly investigate and treat MINUSTAH soldiers from countries where cholera is endemic; 2) directly dumped untreated feces (human waste) from a UN soldiers' camp into a tributary of Haiti's longest and most important river, the Artibonite; and 3) failed to respond adequately to the epidemic.

The victims seek individual compensation, an adequate response from the UN at the national level, as well as a public apology. They also demand that the response at the national level include the medical treatment of current and future victims, and the construction of health and sanitation infrastructure, the only solution to halt the cholera epidemic in Haiti.

Mario Joseph, director of BAI said “this is an opportunity for the UN to demonstrate that its ideals for the elimination of disease and the promotion of respect for human rights in Haiti are not empty promises.” Brian Concannon, director of IJDH, added: “The majority of the facts on which this complaint is based are drawn from UN reports. The United Nations has participated in the development of most of the principles and legal provisions we cite. Our clients therefore commit the United Nations to act according to what it knows to be true and just.”

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