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**Haitian Victims of UN Cholera Tell UN: “Universal Means Haitians Too”**

*For Human Rights Day 2011, cholera victims urge respect for Haitians’ human rights*

Port-au-Prince, Haiti, December 7, 2011 – On Friday, December 9, 2011 (10 am EST), victims of the cholera that United Nations (UN) troops introduced to Haiti will demonstrate at the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) base in St. Marc to demand that the UN respond justly to the cholera epidemic.

The demonstration coincides with Human Rights Day 2011, the 63<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The UDHR enshrines people’s basic human rights, including the rights to life, health, and a just remedy for violations of these rights. The UDHR declares that these rights are “universal.”

Cholera victims remind the UN that “universal” human rights belong to Haitians too.

As the UN rallies the world to honor the UDHR via its “*Celebrate Human Rights*” campaign, it continues to deny thousands of Haitians the very rights the UDHR enshrines.

On November 3, 2011, over 5,000 cholera victims submitted claims to the UN asking that it take responsibility for causing the cholera outbreak. The claims ask the UN to compensate victims and install the health and clean water programs necessary to control the epidemic.

More than one month later, the UN has yet to respond to victims’ claims and has declined to give a timeline for a response. In that time, an estimated 26,000 more Haitians contracted cholera and over 200 died. Since October 2010 over 500,000 Haitians have contracted cholera, with over 7,000 killed.

Cholera victims will gather in St. Marc to insist that the UN respond justly to victims and act to stop this ongoing harm. Victims from the Artibonite Region, the *Bureau des Avocats Internationaux* (BAI) and the *Groupe d’Action pour la Defense des Droits Humains* (GADH) are co-organizing the demonstration.

Mario Joseph, Managing Attorney of the BAI and the victims’ attorney, remarks, “The UN says it needs more time. We do not have time. Fourteen months later, cholera is sickening tens of thousands of Haitians and killing hundreds more each month. The UN must act now to end this injustice.”

Marc-Arthur Mèsidort, President of the GADH states, “Human rights are universal, belonging to all people, including the Haitian people—the UN has a responsibility to respect our rights. The UN must show that it is not above the law.”