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**Press Release**

The Bureau des Avocats Internationaux (BAI), in its mission to defend Haiti's poor and the inalienable rights inherent to all human beings, including internally displaced people, welcomes the decision of the Haitian National Assembly to ratify the International Covenant of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

The ratification of the ICESCR binds the Haitian Government to its obligations, notably the resettlement of Haitian citizens internally displaced after the January 12, 2010 earthquake. Article 11 of the ICESCR states:

The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right, recognizing to this effect the essential importance of international co-operation based on free consent.

The BAI hopes that the Government of Haiti will take appropriate measures to respect the economic, social, and cultural rights of its citizens, including those living in camps under inhumane conditions.

The BAI makes special note of legislators' willingness to ensure Haiti's place among those civilized nations that respect human rights. Yet the BAI denounces the indifference of certain judges who, spurred by greed, delight in disregarding the international instruments that Haiti signs and ratifies. A judge's recent ordinance recommending that Jean-Claude Duvalier need not face trial for human rights abuses is an exemplary case.

Crimes Against Humanity and house arrest, while not a part of the Criminal Code of 1835, are a part of Haitian law under Article 276.2 of the Constitution. The judge has applied Criminal Code of 1835, still in force, to the detriment of the victims of the Duvalier regime by denying the allegation of Crimes Against Humanity. The judge has allowed Jean-Claude Duvalier to remain under house arrest, which is to the detriment of his victims and amounts to both a distraction and unprecedented fraud.

The BAI holds hope that the Haitian justice system will follow suit and integrate into its work the cardinal principals that, today, illuminate the path to universal justice.

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