



## **Statement of Serious Concern for the the Protection of Haitian Human Rights Lawyer Mario Joseph**

The International Association of People's Lawyers (IAPL), an international alliance of progressive human rights lawyers, jurists, law students and legal workers coming especially from countries where human rights violations are most severe, the rapacities of imperialism most felt, and where the people's struggles are most intense, has been informed of the increasing pressure of the Haitian government on prominent human rights lawyer Mario Joseph.

We have information that Mario has consistently and courageously been involved and known for his human rights work, especially for representing dissidents who are being arrested and harassed.

IAPL was made aware that the former Chief Prosecutor for Port-au-Prince refused to execute an order of arrest for Mario and has consequently earned the ire of the Haitian authorities.

The IAPL expresses its deep concern for the safety of Mario. We will follow this case with close attention. Lawyers have to defend their clients without pressure of the government.

We will join calls to the UN Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers and the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to take protection measures for Mr. Joseph.

We shall cooperate with the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL) of which Mario is a member of the Bureau and with other international lawyers' groups and our allied national bar associations and to take the necessary legal and metalegal measures in this regard.

We ask the Haitian government to respect the independence of lawyers, especially those like Mario who has steadfastly been on the side of the poor and the oppressed. #

Antwerp, Belgium. 1 October 2012

***Raf Jaspers***  
***Secretary General***