

March 5, 2014

Mr. John Kerry
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry,

We write as members of the Haitian-American community deeply concerned by the United Nations' failure to take responsibility for the cholera epidemic that it brought to Haiti. We are writing to you with deep respect, for your decades of support for Haiti, the rule of law and global health, and asking you to do everything in your power to ensure that Haiti's cholera epidemic is stopped and we are provided justice.

As you know, the cholera epidemic has killed over 8,500 Haitians and sickened over 700,000 since October 2010. Every week 1,100 people are infected and nine are killed. We in the diaspora have lost family and friends to cholera, and we live in fear of losing more of our people. Haitian-Americans visiting family in Haiti are among those who have contracted this disease and died. In addition, cholera has an economic impact on members of the diaspora, where many of us regularly send money to our relatives. The epidemic has placed a harder financial burden on those living abroad due to funeral expenses, healthcare costs and sending funds for school fees for children whose parents died.

There is overwhelming and conclusive evidence—from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, top universities all over the world and the UN's own Panel of Experts—which establishes, in the words of President Bill Clinton, that the UN's troops were "*the proximate cause of cholera.*" This evidence has inspired many voices from all over the world—current and former UN officials such as High Commissioner for Human Rights Navanethem Pillay and former UNICEF Deputy Director Stephen Lewis, over 100 members of the U.S. Congress, the Haitian Senate and thousands of Haitians who have taken to the streets—to demand justice for the victims of the epidemic.

When the UN refused to consider the claims of Haiti's cholera victims, the victims turned to the courts of the United States for justice. We are concerned that the UN will now try to prevent the victims from having their day in a U.S. court by asking your Department to intervene in favor of its impunity. We urge you, and your Department, to stand up for justice and international law by refusing to intervene, and letting the cholera victims take their case to court.

The UN peacekeeping mandate in Haiti includes promoting the rule of law, but the UN refuses to allow the victims of its cholera epidemic to have any access to justice, despite having a legal obligation to do so. This insistence on impunity sets a dangerous example in Haiti, and profoundly undermines the organization's credibility and ability to carry out any of its missions.

We are committed to advocating for justice until the victims have their day in court, and we are hopeful that you will join us in this noble cause. Thank you for your careful attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Boston Missionary Baptist Church
Boston Public School Teacher Association
Cholera Justice Project
CRI-Haiti
Diaspora Community Service
Fanm Ayisyen nan Miyami, Inc. (Haitian Women of Miami)
Fondation Ayitim
Four Square Church
Friends of Haiti – New York
Greater Boston Inter Faith Organization
Greater Boston Nazarene Center
Haiti Solidarity Network of the North East
Haitian American Grassroots Coalition
Haitian American Lawyers Association for New Jersey
Haitian American Lawyers Association for New York
Haitian American Leadership Coalition
Haitian Cultural Association at Boston University
Haitian Missionary Association
Harvard Haitian Alliance
International Coalition for Haiti, Inc.
Mouvement d'union de la diaspora Haïtienne en Haïti- MUDHAH
National Association of Haitian Professionals (NAHP), Inc.
New Jersey Forum for Human Rights
Perspective Haïtienne - Florida
Sant La, Haitian Neighborhood Center, Inc.
True Alliance Center, Inc.

cc: Andrew O'Brien, Special Representative for Global Partnerships, U.S. Department of State