

**BUREAU DES AVOCATS INTERNATIONAUX**

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**Press Note**

The Bureau des Avocats Internationaux (BAI), whose primary mission is defending the rights of the poorest—the inalienable, imprescriptible and inherent human rights, in particular those of the victims of cholera imported by MINUSTAH, women and child victims of rape, sexual aggression and other rights abuses—invites the national and international press to the **launch of the “National Forum on Civics and Ethics” on Thursday, December 3 2015 from 08:30 to 11:00 at the Plaza Hotel, 10 Capois St.**

**The National Forum on Civics and Ethics** is an initiative of the Bureau des Avocats Internationaux (BAI), the Center of Education and Social Interventions (CEIS), the Socio-Political Movement of Workers and Citizens (MSTPC), the League of Progressive Youth and Solidarity of Haiti (LJPSH) and the Movement of Freedom and Equality of Haitians for Fraternity (MOLEGHAF). The general objective of the Forum is to encourage and to facilitate a civic and popular appropriation of the country by its citizens.

We live today in Haiti in an era of a crisis not only political, but also civic, ethical and moral. Incapable of providing for the needs of the population, the State is a parasite working to the disadvantage of the Haitian people. Social exclusion is a disease which handicaps the country. Individual interests, of particular people and of groups, are prioritized over the superior interests of the nation. Notions of citizen engagement, common good, collective interests and national sovereignty are losing all their meaning and content.

**The National Forum on Civics and Ethics** offers an opportunity for all Haitian citizens to benefit from civic and ethical education in order for a true Haitian dialogue to emerge and to create a common vision on the primary mission and functions of the State in a democratic regime. We all have the possibility of and responsibility for creating a better Haiti.

As defender of the rights of the poorest, BAI has always adopted this position: citizens have to be educated and be able to themselves participate in the changing of the judiciary and the political system of the country. The Program of Civic Engagement (PEC BAI/IJDH) was put in place in June 2014 in the communes of Mirebalais, Boucan Carré, Saut d’Eau and Chapelle, BAI teaches courses on the rights to education and to health, and gives participants the necessary tools to develop community solutions to community problems in order to question political actors and protect their own rights. This project, which now has over 30,000 participants, shows the practical and participatory power of civic and ethical education.

**The National Civics and Ethics Forum** is organized to stimulate a deep debate on the actual state of the country and the future of the fight of democratic and popular sectors for the setting up of a State of law, social justice and conscious participation of citizens in the life of the nation.

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