

BUREAU DES AVOCATS INTERNATIONAUX

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Press Release

Bureau des Avocats Internationaux (BAI), in its primary mission to defend the rights of the poor, the inalienable rights, imprescriptible and inherent to humans, especially those of victims of cholera imported by MINUSTAH, women victims of rape, sexual assault, and citizen victims in the exercise of their public freedom, is concerned about cases of police repression perpetrated Sunday, September 9, 2018, at Bois Verna, against Haitian citizens exercising peacefully their right to freedom of expression and assembly, guaranteed and protected by Articles 28, 31 and 31-2 of the 1987 Constitution, by Articles 21 and 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and Article 16 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). the American Convention on Human Rights signed and ratified by the Haitian State.

BAI notes that since last August 14, following the question raised on social networks by a citizen in a hashtag **#petrocaribechallenge** asking: **where is the money from Petro Caribe?** Haitian citizens, especially young people, have mobilized on social networks and in the streets to denounce impunity and corruption in the management of the petro caribe fund.

On August 24, citizens gathered in front of the Superior Court of Accounts and Administrative Litigation (CSC / CA) to demand that light be made on the US \$ 3.8 billion squandered petro caribe fund. Since then, citizen mobilization has intensified throughout the country for the restitution of this money and the arrest of the squanders of this fund which was destined to the development of Haiti, according to the terms of reference of the Petro Caribe agreement signed in 2006 between the Venezuelan State and the Haitian State.

BAI regrets that police authorities make agents of the National Police of Haiti (PNH) their instruments of indiscriminate violence to quell the popular mobilization, including the tear gas bombing of citizens on the road to Bois Verna who were demonstrating peacefully against the looting this money.

BAI believes that the violent behavior of the police towards these protesters is not in the perspective of the potentates of the Parti Haïtien tèt kale (PHTK) in power, including Mr. Jovenel Moïse who said in France that the petro caribe file is a case of political persecution.

BAI wishes to remind the police that the HNP does not have the mission related to the interests of the ruling classes and corrupt officials to asphyxiate, beat up or shoot at close range citizens who ask for count or watch out for them. conditions in which state funds have been used by the authorities to whom they have been entrusted with the management of these funds.

BAI also recalls that corruption is an act of massive violation of human rights. Human rights defenders, wherever they may be in the world, should not tolerate the state money that should be used to build hospitals, schools, decent housing, mentor small farmers to guarantee economic, social and cultural rights of the Haitian people, either stolen or squandered.

BAI urges the authorities of the Conseil Supérieur de la Police Nationale (CSPN) to recover because the law requires them to secure citizens in the free exercise of their public freedoms, not to bludgeon them.

BAI welcomes young academics, schoolchildren, peasants and those from working class neighborhoods who decide to take charge of their common destiny of fighting corruption, impunity and social justice.

Mario JOSEPH, Lawyer
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