



January 19, 2016

Letter from the Haitian-American Community to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry on Elections in Haiti

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

Dear Secretary Kerry:

We have been increasingly concerned about the unhelpful role the State Department has been playing in Haiti’s election crisis and strongly urge the far different course outlined below, which we believe alone promises to respect democracy in Haiti.

As *Miami Herald* and *New York Times* editorials in December stressed, echoing the strong and consistent call of Haiti’s religious leaders and civil society, no credible runoff can be held, and consequently no legitimate government for the next five years result, without, first, the Haitian-led, independent investigation into the credible reports of massive fraud in the August 9 and October 25 rounds, which have been broadly reported by human rights groups, journalists and others. As the *NYT* editorial board wrote on December 12, "the United States should know that it's impossible to build a legitimate government on a rotten foundation."

Under pressure, President Martelly finally appointed a commission to evaluate the electoral process but rushed its work. On January 3, the commission issued a report confirming widespread fraud and irregularities on October 25, unfortunately not identifying who was responsible and who benefitted, but urging a fuller investigation.

U.S. diplomats have instead ignored or dismissed the fraud allegations and insisted that elections be completed before February 7. (They are scheduled for January 24 as this is written.) *But this consistent State Department pressure to proceed is a recipe for further upheaval, unrest, and installation of a government illegitimate in the eyes of Haiti's people and in reality and unable to address Haiti's problems during the next five years.* As the evaluating commission report stated, "A President of the Republic and other elected officials resulting from elections tarnished by major irregularities would further aggravate the political crisis and instability of the country."

Instead of continuing to recklessly push and underwrite with U.S. tax dollars this rush to a fraudulent outcome, which disrespects the very idea of democracy and has led to the current impasse, we strongly urge the State Department to do the following:

- Stop imposing unrealistic deadlines on Haiti's electoral process and give Haitians, who have now begun a robust dialogue, the time and support they need to resolve the crisis. The Haitian people have shown over the last many months that they will not accept fraudulent elections.
- Support implementing the Commission's recommendations and a full vote recount, as urged by several Commission members and observer groups. These would seem to be minimum conditions for proceeding with a credible electoral process, given the Commission's findings and the demands of Haitian religious leaders and civil society.
- Actively support all steps needed to restore confidence and fairness in the electoral process to insure credible results and an ensuing legitimate government, which certainly means postponing the runoff recently scheduled for January 24.
- Urge that any transitional government -- since meeting the above necessary conditions will likely require the formation of one, as many in Haiti are urging -- should be fair, just and widely representative.

The next few weeks are critical for the future of democracy, stability and progress in Haiti. The State Department's "proceed regardless" pressures have been extremely unhelpful and led to the current impasse. It is time, Mr. Secretary, to change course and side with Haiti's people, whose demonstrations and opposition to the current fraudulent process has been and remains clear. It is not too late to respect and further democratic principles in Haiti. Mr. Secretary, please give Haiti and Haitians a chance.

Sincerely,

The Undersigned

Organizations

1. 1804 Institute, Prospere Charles, President, Washington, D.C.
2. Alliance Citoyenne (Citizens Alliance), Francklyn B. Geffrard, Chairman, Miami, FL
3. Association of Exchange and Development of Activities and Partnership (AEDAP), Miami, FL, Dr. Marie Flore Lindor -Latortue, Ph.D, Executive Director (Dr. Lindor served as a member of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women, 2000-2006)
4. Association of Haitian Professionals (AHP), Giles C. Charleston, Chair, Board of Directors, Washington, D.C.
5. Center for Self-Sufficiency, Edeline B. Mondestin, RN, BSN, Executive Director, Miami, FL
6. Collective in Solidarity With the Victims of Cholera (Collective Solidarité Avec Les Victimes de Cholera), Jimmy Mertune, Representative, Orlando, FL
7. Community2Community, Marie-Yolaine Eusebe, Chief Executive Officer, Brooklyn, NY
8. Democracy for Haiti, Claude Janvier, Co-Director, Boston, MA
9. Diaspora Community Service, Carine Jocelyn, Chief Executive Officer - Brooklyn, NY
10. Diaspora In Action, Joel Leon, Executive Director, Philadelphia, PA
11. Fanm Ayisyen nan Miyami/Haitian Women of Miami, Inc (FANM), Marleine Bastien, MSW, LCSW, Executive Director, Miami, FL
12. Fondasyon Mapou, Eugenia Charles, Executive Director, Washington, D.C.
13. Global Haitian Diaspora Federation, Bernier Lauredan, M.D., Executive Vice President, Irvington, NJ
14. Haiti Solidarity Network of the North East (HSNNE), Jersey City, NJ
15. Haitian American Democratic Club of Greater Miami, Jacques Despinosse, President, Miami, FL (Mr. Despinosse has also served as Councilman, City of North Miami, FL)
16. Haitian American Grassroots Coalition (HAGC), Jean Robert Lafortune, Chairperson, South Florida
17. Haitian American Lawyers Association of New York, Annel-Stephan Norgaisse, Esq., President

18. Haitian American Lawyers Association of New Jersey, Wilson Antoine, Esq., President
19. Haitian American Leadership Coalition, Jacques Despinosse, Chairperson, Miami, FL
20. Haitian American Leadership Council (HALEC), Emmanuel Coffy, Esq., Chairman, Freehold, NJ
21. Haitian Empowerment Foundation, Inc. (HEF), Ralph Cheriza, President, Lake Worth, FL
22. Haitians for Democracy in Haiti, Etzer Lalanne, Secretary General, Leesburg, FL
23. Haitians Unified for Development and Education (HUDE), France Casseus, Chair/Executive Director, Jersey City, NJ
24. Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti (IJDH), Brian Concannon, Executive Director, Boston, MA
25. Konbit for Haiti, Johnny Celestin, Director, Miami, FL
26. Making the Impossible Possible, Inc. (MIPO), Felina Backer, President, New York, NY
27. National Alliance for the Advancement of Haitian Professionals (NAAHP), Serge Renaud, President, Hillside, NJ
28. National Haitian Student Alliance, Lucson Joseph, President, Fort Lauderdale, FL
29. Positive Women United, Sylvia Cothia, founder and President, New York, NY
30. Radio Soleil, Rico Dupuy, Director and radio host, New York, NY
31. Saint Anastasia Haiti Support Group (SAHSG), Georgette Delinois, Chair, Teaneck, NJ
32. Sant La, Haitian Neighborhood Center, Inc., Gepsie M. Metellus, Executive Director, Miami, FL
33. Sons of Little Haiti (SOLH) Academy, Ragasten Paul, President, Miami, FL
34. The Haitian League, Bernier Lauredan, M.D., President, Irvington, NJ
35. The Haitian Patriots of Chicago (Les Patriotes Haitiens de Chicago), Lionel Chery, President, Wheeling, IL
36. Voice of Haitian Americans in the Diaspora (VHAD), Daniel Eugene, President, Boca Raton, FL

37. Centre International de Documentation & d'Information Haitienne, Caraïbénne & Afrocanadienne (CIDIHCA), Frantz Voltaire, Board President, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
38. Haiti Support Group, Shodona Kettle, Chair, London, United Kingdom
39. 1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, Monica Russo, Executive Vice President, Florida Region
40. Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI), Opal Tometi, Executive Director, Brooklyn, NY (Ms. Tometi is a co-founder of #BlackLivesMatter.)
41. Florida State Conference of the NAACP, Adora Obi Nweze, President, Bradford E. Brown, Chair, International Affairs
42. SEIU Florida State Council, Monica Russo, President
43. South Florida Interfaith Worker Justice, Coral Gables, FL

Leaders

44. Myrtha Desulme, Assistant Vice-President for Advocacy and Public Policy, Haitian Diaspora Federation (HDF) and President, Haiti-Jamaica Society
45. Dr. Jean Philippe Austin, Chief of Radiation Oncology, Aventura Radiation Oncology, Miami, FL
46. Dr. Rudolph Moise, DO, MBA, JD, North Miami, FL
47. Commissioner Mack Bernard, Florida Election Commission (2014-2015) ; Member, Florida House of Representatives, District 84 (2009-2012); Commissioner, City of Delray Beach, FL (2008-2009)
48. Vice Mayor and Councilman Alix Desulme, City of North Miami, FL (representing Council District 4)
49. Councilman and former Acting Mayor Philippe Bien-Aime, City of North Miami, FL (representing Council District 3)
50. Harry Fouche, Economist and former Consul General for Haiti in New York; Chicago, IL
51. Philippe Derose, former Councilman and Vice-Mayor, City of North Miami Beach, and former Mayor, City of El Portal, FL (Mr. Derose was the first Haitian American elected to public office in the United States.)

52. Rev. Dieufort Jean Fleurissant, Executive Pastor, Voice of the Gospel Tabernacle Church, Mattapan, MA and Strategy Team Member, Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO), Boston, MA
53. Rev. Mullery Jean-Pierre, Pastor, Beraca Baptist Church, Brooklyn, NY
54. Ven. Archdeacon J.Fritz Bazin for the Episcopal Diocese of S.E. Florida
55. Pierre Imbert, Senior Advisor on Haiti, The Barr Foundation (2010 to present); Deputy Director, Department of Social Services, State of California under Governor Schwarzenegger (2008-2010, three years); Director, Office of Refugees and Immigrants, Commonwealth of Massachusetts under Governor Romney (2005-2007); and Executive Director, Catholic Charities Haitian Multi-Service Center, Boston, MA (1994-2005), among other activities; Cutler Bay, FL
56. City Councilman Dabouze Antoine, Forest Park, GA
57. Luckner Bayas, PE, General Secretary, Congres des Ingenieurs, Architectes, Scientifiques et Technologues Haitiens (CIASTH), Boston, MA
58. Jacques P. Bingue, Ph.D, Lexington, KY
59. Guerda Nicolas, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Educational & Psychological Studies, School of Education and Human Development, University of Miami, Coral Gables, FL
60. Kerlens Tilus, Secretary General, Alliance Saint-Martialoise, Inc., Central Islip, NY
61. Gina Cheron, Educator, Briarwood, NY
62. Karl Andre, teacher, Dr. E. Alma Flagg School, Newark, NJ
63. Daniella Bien-Aime, founder of Bien-Aime Posts, blogger and educator, New Rochelle, NY
64. Justin Manuel, President, MJM Capital Realty, and founder and former president of the Haitian American Scholarship Fund, Miami, FL
65. Marilys Valcourt Ewa DDS, MPH; Chief Executive Officer, Gentle Dental Center, and Immediate Past President, DuSable Heritage Association, Chicago, IL
66. Orisseau Acelas, Pharm.D, West Palm Beach, FL
67. Michelle Guillaume, Vizyon Culture Productions, Hollywood, FL
68. Isnel Sanon, Founder and Vice-President for Sales, Sanon Global LLC, Jersey City, NJ

69. Edens Desbas, Journalist, Radio Tout Haiti, Floral Park, NY
70. Dieury Dumas, CEO, Demokrasi Ateri, Orange, NJ
71. Greg Durandisse, Coordinator, Haitian Response, Brooklyn, NY
72. Jean Elie, Director, Radio Unite, West Palm Beach, FL
73. Ford Eloge, President, Leve Haiti Piwo (Raise Haiti Higher), West Palm Beach, FL
74. Romane Petit Joseph, labor union organizer, Miramar, FL
75. Remy Marseille, Chairman, United Drivers of Broward, Inc., Sunrise, FL
76. Fabienne Rene, Spokesperson, Interstate Coordination Fanmi Lavalas in the Diaspora (Coordination Interstates Fanmi Lavalas 11 Department), Winter Park, FL
77. Hérold Jean-François, Journalist, Writer, and Director General, Radio IBO, Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Other Individuals and Leaders

78. Senet Achil, Cambria Heights, NY
79. Nadege Adam, Vice-President, COFHA, Smyrna, GA
80. Guerson Bayard, Founder and Director, College Mixte Bayard Guerson, New Rochelle, NY
81. Vanessa Bernadotte, Jacksonville, FL
82. Elsie Altara Bernier, President, Action Contre l'Antihaitianisme en Republique Dominicaine (Action Against Anti-Haitianism in the Dominican Republic), Maplewood, NJ
83. Rodney Bonhomme, Lake Worth, FL
84. Roody Bouzy, Founder, Foundation Roody Bouzy, Fort Myers, FL
85. Adlin Calixte, Miami, FL
86. David Charles, Frederica, DE
87. Harry Charles, Electrician, Fort Myers, FL

88. Lynn Cherenfant, Jacksonville, FL
89. Fritzgerald Chevalier, North Miami, FL
90. Harry Comeau, Freeport, NY
91. Serge Comeau, Miami, FL
92. Yvelt Daniel, Vision Diaspora, Linden, NJ
93. Jose Davilmar, Economist, Wellington, FL
94. Dave Bentola Deresias, teacher and business administrator, Miami, FL
95. Jean M. Fanord, industrial electrician, Brandywine, MD
96. Robinson Felix, Randolph, MA
97. Genio Francois, Boston, MA
98. Ciemara Garcon, Brockton, MA
99. Gregory Jean, Brooklyn, NY
100. Marckenson Jean, Ayisyen Angaje, Kennesaw, GA
101. Sainca Jean, activist, North Lauderdale, FL
102. Denold Jean Louis, Boynton Beach, FL
103. Ernst Joseph, O'Fallon, MO
104. Hugues Girard, Tampa, FL
105. Harry Hyppolite, Coral Springs, FL
106. Marckenson Jean, Kennesaw, GA
107. Fritz Jean Baptiste, law school graduate in Haiti (Gonaives); Los Angeles, CA
108. Manasse Jefferson, Casselberry, FL
109. Don Joseph, Grand Rapids, MI
110. Wideline Julien, Jacksonville, FL

111. Franz Lambert, Forest Hills, NY
112. Tina Lorquet, Greenfield, MA
113. Thimoleon Louis, Orlando, FL
114. Roberson Louis Jean, Pittsburgh, PA
115. Lucson Maceus, Fort Pierce, FL
116. Jean Paul Mathurin, Supervisor, Brooklyn, NY
117. Viking Merceron, Marietta, GA
118. Max Metelus, Rosedale, NY
119. Jean Milord, businessman, Nashville, TN
120. Paulson Mondesir, Wyoming
121. Dr. Rodrigue Morisseau, Brooklyn, NY
122. Rony Morisset, Roselle, NJ
123. Arnold Nelson
124. Magalie Normil, RN, Orlando, FL
125. Rene Previlon, Brooklyn, NY
126. Oslaude Rousseau, Hialeah, FL
127. Wisler Rene, Tampa, FL
128. Herard Saint-Albord, Englewood, NJ
129. Marc Sony, President, OPDH, Jacksonville, FL
130. Stan Saint Anne, Entrepreneur, New York, NY
131. Delicien St. Fleury, Lehigh Acres, FL
132. Antoine St. Julien, ASJ Enterprises, Covington, GA
133. Rolex St. Preux, MBA-Finance, Boston, MA

134. Natacha Thomas, Kingston, RI
135. Daphnee Florestal-Augustin, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
136. Gary Nicolas, Ottawa, Quebec, Canada
137. Civil Paul, Nova Scotia, Canada
138. Rony Altanas, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
139. Gerald Francois, President, ROLNAP, Cite Soleil, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
140. Odvert Jean, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
141. Olicier Pieriche, former Minister for Haitians Living in the Diaspora and President, Party to Rebuild Haiti (Parti Reconstruire Haiti), Port-au-Prince, Haiti
142. Huguens Previlon, Vice-President for External Affairs, Collective of Haitian Economists of Tomorrow (Collectif des Economistes Haitiens de Demain), Haiti
143. Jean Sebastien Roy, President, CDRH, Port-au-Prince, Haiti