Why #StopTheProp: Nothing in Haiti Will Change Until the U.S. Government Stops Propping Up Haiti's Corrupt, Repressive, Illegitimate *De Facto* Government

Haitians insist that there is a clear cause for the hellish conditions they endure: over a decade of corruption and repression – with foreign support – by a group of actors associated with the *Parti Haïtien Tèt Kale* (PHTK). The current illegitimate *de facto* government has presided over a catastrophic decline, which includes unprecedented levels of killings and sexual violence, gangs controlling most of Port-au-Prince, children suffering from wasting hunger, and not a single elected official in office. This government was put in place by the United States and other powerful members of the international community. It is maintained in power by foreign interests against the wishes of Haitians. And so long as foreign interests – led by the U.S. government – continue to prop up the very actors responsible for and benefiting from Haiti's crises, no initiative will meaningfully reduce Haitians' suffering.

Clear diagnosis: state capture by corrupt, anti-democratic PHTK actors enabled by foreign support

For twelve years, the PHTK and its allies have acquired power and wealth by dismantling Haiti's structures of democracy and accountability, installing loyalists at every level of government and stealing billions from the Haitian people. Top officials work with gangs to build power and attack political opponents, including massacres that a Harvard Law School report found likely constitute crimes against humanity. Over 20 PHTK-allied former officials, including a President, four Prime Ministers and seven members of Parliament face international sanctions for violence and corruption.

International actors, led by the U.S. government, are complicit in the PHTK's rise, starting with support for the 2004 coup that overthrew Haiti's democratic government and election interference in 2010/11that ushered in PHTK rule. The same international actors stood by PHTK governments as they refused to hold timely and fair elections, pillaged the treasury, crushed popular protests, and facilitated gang expansion. The U.S. and UN claim to be seeking consensus in Haiti, but they insist on the current government being an essential part of any solution to Haiti's crisis. This insistence gives the PHTK and its allies a veto over any solution and removes any incentive for them to compromise towards fair elections that they cannot win.

Propping up Henry comes at the expense of workable solutions to Haiti's crises

As PHTK governments looted Haiti's coffers and trampled its democracy, diverse civil society actors came together to take back their country. Haitians have protested, organized, and established roadmaps for a transition to democracy. But the international community has persistently rejected these efforts, imposing barriers and removing incentives for civil society to publicly suggest alternatives.

For Haiti to recover, international actors must first stop propping up the *de facto* regime

Haitians have many ideas for how they can solve Haiti's challenges – including how international actors might help. Civil society is confident that if the international community ceases to prop up the *de facto* regime a consensus transitional government can be established to run elections and decide how the international community can help. As a group of prominent Haitian human rights organizations recently implored,"[a]n essential first step is to stop propping up the set of actors who created the crises facing the country, including those currently in power." Any other international response, however well-meaning, is doomed to be wasted effort at best, and more likely to deepen the crisis at worst.