HAITI

A. President Luis Abinader Engages in the Mass Deportation of Haitians and Visibly Dark Complexioned Nationals from the Dominican Republic

The last quarter of 2024 has born witness to increased instability on the island of Hispaniola, a land mass shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Heightened levels of gang violence and a fragile executive branch have contributed to a mass exodus of Haitians into the Dominican Republic. On October 2, 2024, citing a lack of support from the international community, President of the Dominican Republic, Luis Abinader, stated: that he would take "special measures;" and that he would enforce a "stricter immigration policy." Since October of this year, 71,000 people who are either Haitian or who appear visibly Black have been deported. Trucks regularly line up at the Elias Pina border between the countries in preparation for the deportations. Dominican officials have stated that they have a goal of deporting at least 10,000 people a week. Questions persist as to whether the deportations are rooted in nationalism, xenophobia and or racism. **(1)**

Outside observers have noted that Abinader's October 2nd edict coincided with the 87th Anniversary of Parsley Massacre. The recent mass deportations bare similar characteristics to the racially based pogroms that have taken place on the island from 1937 until present. Survivors of the Parsley Massacre recall being forcibly removed and or attacked based on their complexions. At the time, an arbitrary barometer for expulsion was put in place: based on the pronunciation of the Spanish word perejil or parsley, Blacks were deported and or killed en masse from the country. Survivors of the massacre then and the deportees today both recount that they were attacked and or deported whether or not they were Haitian, Dominican and or if they spoke Spanish. Again, questions abound as to whether today's deportations are a remnant of former President Rafael Truijilo's race-based xenophobic whitening policy, or whether the deportations are rooted in the strain on the country's resources.**(2)**

B. UN Secretary General Issues Statement After Increased Gang Conflict Leads to Deaths of 184 People Between December 6th and 8th

Between December 6th and December 8th, residents of Wharf Jeremie bore witness to 184 people who were slain by ongoing gang violence. Local outlets have attributed the killings to gang leader Monel Felix aka Micanor Altes aka King Micanor. Accounts state that Felix's child died over the past week, and that he was told that the death was rooted in Voodoo. Although Felix has previously targeted Voodoo practitioners, the most recent slayings have garnered attention from the international community. **(3)**

On December 9, 2024, Antonio Guterres, the spokesperson for the UN Secretary General issued a statement about the continued loss of life due to gang violence in Haiti.**(4)** According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), between December 6th and 8th more than 4,500 people have become newly displaced; this was in addition to the more than 700,000 that have already been displaced due to gang violence. **(5)**

Despite recent coverage however, gangs or paramilitary groups have been a persistent presence in Haiti's politics: the Tonton Macoutes under the Duvaliers from 1957 to 1986; the Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti (FRAPH) under Raoul Cedras from 1991-1994; the Chimeres, National Revolutionary Front for Liberation, and Reconstruction of Haiti under Jean Bertrand Aristide, Boniface Alexdre and Gerard Latortue from 1994 to 2006; the 400 Mazowo Gang under Rene Preval and Michel Joseph Martelly from 2006 to 2016; and the G9 and Family which emerged during the presidency and assassination of Jovenel Moise from 2017 to present.**(6)**

Overall, the long-standing role of gangs or paramilitary forces present the international community with more profound questions. Attaching the nomenclature of gangs may oversimplify the issue. The groups are well-armed and effective in one of the poorest countries on the planet, as such, how are they being financed? Is the current unrest part of an ongoing effort by international actors, the elite and criminal syndicates to keep the country unstable for selfish and illicit objectives? When will international efforts effectively address Haiti's turmoil in a comprehensive and substantive way?

1: "Desperate Haitians Who Fled to the Dominican Republic Are Being Sent Back in Cages," by Hogla Enecia Perez and Frances Robles, https://www.nytimes.com/2024/12/09/world/americas/haiti-dominican-republican-cage-trucks.html

2:"80 Years On, Dominicans and Haitians Revisit Painful Memories of Parsley Massacre," by Marlon Bishop and Tatiana Fernandez,https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2017/10/07/555871670/80-years-on-dominicans-and-haitians-revisit-painful-memories-of-parsley-massacre

3: "Massacre in Haiti's Capital Leaves Nearly 200 Dead," by Frances Robles, https://www.nytimes.com/2024/12/08/world/americas/haiti-gang-massacre.html

4: "Secretary General Strongly Condemns Continued Gang Violence, Loss of Life in Haiti," Antonio Guterres, https://press.un.org/en/2024/sgsm22491.doc.htm

5: "December 10, 2024: Daily Press Briefing by the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary General," https://press.un.org/en/2024/db241210.doc.htm

6: "Haiti Evolution of Gangs, Armed Groups and Political Violence: October 2022," by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/GITOC-Gangs-of-Haiti-Timeline.pdf