

October 31, 2022

President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

As a diverse group of civil society, faith-based, humanitarian, peacebuilding, and diaspora organizations with strong ties to the Haitian grassroots, we write to express our profound concern about the proposed deployment of military force to Haiti and your administration's support for it. We were heartened to see in your 2022 National Security Strategy a commitment to "not use our military to change regimes or remake societies," and we encourage you to follow through on that commitment in Haiti.

We are acutely aware of the dire situation on the ground in Haiti. Nearly half the country is facing severe food insecurity and limited access to clean water; cholera, introduced by UN peacekeepers more than a decade ago, has rapidly reemerged; and fuel — critical to basic life, including water purification and electronic communication — is unavailable or prohibitively expensive. Compounding these issues, violence and insecurity have reached exceptional levels, and have particularly affected women, children, and the most marginalized.

As Haiti faced this growing and multifaceted crisis over the past year, thousands of Haitians have risen up to protest the deteriorating living conditions; the misgovernance of the de facto Prime Minister, Ariel Henry; and recent proposals for an international intervention. Leading civil society organizations have also strongly rejected the deployment of foreign forces to Haiti.<sup>1</sup>

We write to once again encourage your administration to listen to Haitian civil society; respect the fundamental rights of the Haitian people to shape Haitian solutions; and reevaluate U.S. support to the de facto Prime Minister Henry, as that unconditional support has removed any incentive for him to negotiate with opponents in good faith. We are deeply worried that the deployment of a military force now will only perpetuate and strengthen Henry's grasp on power, while doing little to ameliorate the root causes of today's crisis.

We encourage your administration to reflect on the long history of international interventions in Haiti, and how those actions have served to undermine state institutions, democratic norms, and the rule of law. Previous interventions have had a costly human toll, including through rape, sexual exploitation, and extrajudicial killings. As Doctors Without Borders has warned, such an intervention would mean "more bullets, more injuries and more patients."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cepr.net/de-facto-haitian-authorities-call-for-another-foreign-military-intervention/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/09/more-bullets-more-bloodshed-haiti-aid-groups-warn-against-request-for-foreign-forces>

Rather than supporting a military-led response to the multifaceted crisis in Haiti, your administration ought to use robust diplomacy to help resolve the situation, including through impartial support to Haitian-led political dialogue. The imposition of a United Nations sanctions regime targeting not just leaders of armed groups but also those who support such groups with financing, arms, and ammunition, is a welcome but insufficient step. The U.S can and should go further through the enforcement of U.S. laws on illicit arms trafficking, money laundering, and tax evasion, with a particular focus on those actors that are contributing to the violence. We also urge your administration to halt all deportations and expulsions to Haiti and redesignate Haiti for Temporary Protected Status (TPS).

At the heart of the insecurity plaguing Haiti is the continuation of a political and economic system that excludes the vast majority of its citizenry. A long-term solution can only be achieved by addressing these underlying dynamics of inequality and exclusion and by providing for the population as a whole. The removal of fuel subsidies last month, something long requested by international donors, deprived the most marginalized Haitians of the only concrete support their government had provided. The United States should encourage the reversal of that decision at least until such a time that compensatory social protection measures can be put in place and should use its influence within multilateral institutions to prioritize the provision of basic services in Haiti's popular neighborhoods.

The United States should support the Haitian people's desire for democracy, peace, and economic stability by listening to Haitian civil society and championing Haitian-led solutions, through support to peacebuilding and equitable development. Peaceful ends must be achieved through peaceful means. We strongly urge you to reject the imposition of an international military intervention in Haiti which will merely perpetuate and strengthen the anti-democratic system that is responsible for today's conditions.

Sincerely,

1804 Institute  
Al Otro Lado  
American Friends Service Committee  
American Jewish World Service  
Arraigo.org  
Ayiti Now Corp  
Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists – Social Justice  
Beyond Borders  
Black Women Organizing for Power  
Center for Economic and Policy Research  
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies  
Church of the Brethren, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy  
Church Women United in New York State  
Church World Service  
Colombia Acuerdo de Paz NGO  
Community Asylum Seekers Project (Brattleboro, VT)  
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces  
Crushing Colonialism

Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, USA  
Demand Progress Education Fund  
Denver Justice and Peace Committee (DJPC)  
Diaspora Community Services  
Dominican Leadership Conference  
Elmont Cultural Center  
Faith for Black Lives  
Faith in Action  
FANM in Action  
Forced Trajectory Project  
Forum Haïtien pour la paix et le développement durable  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Gender Action  
Global Birthing Home Foundation  
Global Justice Clinic, New York University School of Law\*  
Global Ministries – Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ  
Haiti Justice Alliance  
Haiti Justice Committee of Minnesota  
Haiti Progress  
Haiti Solidarity Network of the Northeast  
Haiti Ti Marchand Economic Development  
Haitian Bridge Alliance  
Holy Cross International Justice Office  
Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti  
Interfaith Welcome Coalition  
Just Foreign Policy  
La Troupe Makandal, Inc.  
Loyola Social Justice Ministry  
MADRE  
Make It Plain with Rev. Mark Thompson  
Manifest Haiti  
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns  
Mass Liberation Project Nevada  
Mennonite Central Committee U.S.  
Mercy Focus on Haiti  
Mi Villita Neighbors (MVN) Chicago  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund  
National Justice For Our Neighbors  
New Jersey Industrial Union Council  
NouVleViv  
Ohio Immigrant Alliance  
Parish Twinning Program of the Americas  
Paroisse Sainte Bernadette de Cadusg

Pax Christi USA  
Pen ak Pwason Program of St. Joseph's House of Hospitality  
People's Response Network  
PICO California  
Plateforme of Organisations Jeunesse Reveillée  
Quixote Center  
RAICES  
Rethinking Schools  
Rochester Committee on Latin America (ROCLA)  
Sant La, Haitian Neighborhood Center Inc.  
Sisters of Charity Federation  
Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, Office of Peace, Justice, and Ecological Integrity  
Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, Office of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation  
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, Congregational Leadership Team  
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, Western Province Leadership  
Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team  
Sisters of the Holy Cross  
Sojourners  
Solidarity Committee of the Americas (SCOTA) - Minnesota  
The Black Church Center for Justice & Equality  
The National Council of Churches USA  
The Road to Hope  
True Alliance Center Inc.  
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee  
Unite North Metro Denver  
United Church of Christ, Justice and Local Church Ministries  
Until Freedom  
UUFHCT  
War Prevention Initiative  
Washington Office on Latin America  
Win Without War  
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center  
Youthaiti  
Zanmi Lakay

*\*This communication does not purport to represent the institutional views, if any, of New York University.*

CC:

Antony Blinken, U.S. Secretary of State

Linda Thomas-Greenfield, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations