

Letter dated 15 September 2023 from the Panel of Experts established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2653 (2022) addressed to the President of the Security Council

The members of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2653 (2022) Security have the honor to transmit herewith their final report, submitted pursuant to paragraph 21 (c) of the resolution. The report was communicated on August 18, 2023 to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2653 (2022) concerning Haiti, which considered it on September 8, 2023. The Group of Experts would be grateful if you would carry the text of this letter and the final report to the attention of the members of the Security Council and to have it published as a document of the Council. Panel of Experts on Haiti established by Security Council resolution 2653 (2022).

Summary

Since the Security Council adopted resolution 2653 (2022), security conditions have further deteriorated in Haiti, primarily in the Ouest and Artibonite departments, where armed violence and rights violations are increasing and gangs are expanding their control into new territories. As of the date of submission of this report, gang violence affects all of Port-au-Prince. Gangs control or hold under their influence 80% of the metropolitan area, but the remaining 20% are not safe from their incursions either.

The absence of elected representatives, strong political divisions and the slow pace of the political transition contribute to maintaining very poor governance, which does not promote effective action by the authorities in the face of current social and economic or security-related crises. Political problems and insecurity make the holding of long-awaited crucial elections uncertain.

The Haitian economy continues to be controlled by a relatively small group of powerful families, who put their competing business interests above all else and count political figures and government officials in their networks. Several members of the economic and political elites siphon public resources and use gangs and violence to serve their political or economic objectives, while undermining the rule of law to preserve their impunity; they thus threaten the peace, security and stability of the country.

With elections in the near future appearing hypothetical and unilateral sanctions hitting a certain number of Haitian personalities, the gangs seem to be increasingly emancipating themselves from their traditional landlords, helped by the diversification of their income. However, if we note a current decline in visible collusion between gangs and certain members of the political and economic elite, we cannot infer a complete disengagement.

During the period under review, the G-Pèp coalition and its allies in Port-au-Prince significantly strengthened their cooperation and diversified their income, notably through kidnappings for ransom, which allowed them to strengthen their combat capacity. The influence of Johnson André (aka "Izo"), one of the leaders of the 5 Segond gang, is increasing more and more in the G-Pèp alliance in general; it provides support in men and firearms to its allies, including to serve its own criminal objectives. Jimmy Chérizier (aka "Barbecue") (HTi.001) – the only individual targeted under resolution 2653 (2022) at the time of submission of this report – remains head of

the rival alliance, "Famille G9 and allies", which launched major bloody attacks against neighborhoods under the control of rival gangs, committing numerous murders and rapes and leading to population displacements. The Artibonite department, north of the capital, is also experiencing a sharp increase in gang violence, with several of them continuing to commit appalling crimes against the population and the police.

The levels of violence and depth of cruelty that gangs are willing to indulge in when committing these human rights violations are unprecedented; they regularly and indiscriminately attack the population and block humanitarian aid. Sexual and gender-based violence and rape in particular have become one of the most horrific manifestations of violence in the last two years. This violence and insecurity not only compromises the political transition, it destroys the national economy and threatens the future of the country, because many children do not go to school and many qualified people leave the country.

Given the almost total absence of convictions over the past three years and the resulting feeling of insecurity and impunity, the Bwa Kale popular justice movement, launched in April 2023, has spread across the country. This movement, which is responsible for several hundred gruesome executions of suspected gang members, favors the strengthening of existing self-defense groups and the creation of new ones.

Insecurity, institutional vacuum and weak border controls serve the interests of criminals, particularly drug traffickers, who are intensifying their operations. The Haitian crisis is impacting transnational criminal activity in the region, with the demand for and circulation of illicit firearms in Haiti fueling trafficking in the Dominican Republic and Jamaica.

Arms and ammunition trafficking is one of the main drivers of the expansion of gangs and extreme levels of gun violence in the country. The constant demand for guns and munitions by gangs and civilians and their very high prices in Haiti have led to the creation of a myriad of small transnational "ant trafficking" networks. The gangs have increasingly sophisticated arsenals and their firepower exceeds that of the Haitian National Police, the only security agency still operational in the country, which does not have sufficient means of response. As designed, the targeted arms embargo imposed by the Council in resolution 2653 (2022) remains ineffective; considering expanding its scope is an urgent matter.

Haitian stakeholders met by the Group of Experts believe that sanctions alone cannot curb the current levels of armed violence in the country and that they must be complemented by strong security support from the international community; however, they expressed hope that the UN sanctions regime would expand and be implemented quickly.

Link to full text in French: <https://www.haitilibre.com/docs/N2324629.pdf>