



UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL VIRTUAL ARRIA- FORMULA MEETING ON HAITI

Title: Beyond the inconvenient truths about underdevelopment in Haiti: seeking pan-African solutions/pathways and supporting national dialogue and reconciliation

Date and time: 15th October 2021, 3:00pm (New York time)

CONCEPT NOTE

Introduction

The A3+1, namely, Kenya, Niger, Tunisia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines together with Mexico, the United Kingdom, the United States, Haiti, Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and the Dominican Republic, as early and main co-sponsors, will convene a virtual Arria Formula Meeting on 15 October 2021, titled “*Beyond the inconvenient truths about underdevelopment in Haiti: seeking pan-African solutions/pathways and supporting national dialogue and reconciliation*”. The main aim of the meeting will be, among other issues, to encourage genuine dialogue on how Haiti can transform itself from the current state to regain stability and focus on socio-economic development agendas.

Background and context

Haiti, once the richest country in the Western hemisphere and the first black republic in the world, became a beacon of freedom and hope for many colonial countries fighting for independence during the 19th and 20th centuries. It was in Haiti where slavery was first abolished and the triumphant Haitian Revolution that inspired oppressed people and triggered liberation crusades across continents, paved the way for many democratic societies today.

Unfortunately, Haiti’s glorious march to freedom and independence has suffered tremendous setbacks. As a result of the Haitian revolution, and its struggle to protect and defend human rights, adverse policies were imposed on the Caribbean nation in a way that deeply curtailed its stability and economic development.

Specifically, Haiti had to pay, rather than receive reparations, for ending slavery, and this has had lasting negative impacts. Haiti also became the first country to ever face an international embargo imposed by colonial powers.

During the latter part of the 20th Century, the Haitian people overthrew a brutal dictatorship that ruled the country for over 30 years and then created the conditions for free, fair and democratic elections. At the start of the 21st century, the country was, once again, facing another setback after a coup d'état overthrew the elected constitutional government, bringing a brutal end to democracy and prompting the United Nations to establish the first peacekeeping mission in the Caribbean country.¹

Haiti, included amongst the forty-six members of the LDCs, is today in an extremely dire situation that is overlapped by political, constitutional, security, socio-economic and humanitarian crises. The country also continues to grapple with the catastrophic effects of the 2010 earthquake, as well as this year's 7.2 deadly earthquake, cataclysmic tropical storms, the COVID-19 pandemic and the assassination of former President, Jovenel Moïse.

Though underreported, Haiti continues to experience increasing levels of sexual and gender-based violence which disproportionately affects women and girls; a problem further exacerbated by natural disasters and the pandemic.

Uncertainty looms large and the country needs more than humanitarian aid. Haiti is in urgent need of solidarity, support and cooperation from the international community. As acute and dire the problems are; one cannot lose sight of the context of Haiti's multifaceted crises. Their interconnected nature demands durable parallel solutions, commencing with addressing the root causes and drivers of existing problems.

Emerging solutions must therefore ensure that Haitian women and youth fully and meaningfully participate and lead in the institutional and state-building process, and that they too are beneficiaries of socio-economic transformation. The role of Haitian women traders in underwriting the economy is well documented. Addressing root causes requires an approach that values women's contribution, and positions women as equal partners in and beneficiaries of change at all levels of Haitian society.

Furthermore, the legacy of slavery, colonization and environmental degradation must be addressed to overcome the security, political, economic, humanitarian and human rights crises Haiti faces today, as well as to bring justice, reconciliation and right historic wrongs. Additionally, keen attention to the intersections of gender and race as historically structuring arrangements in Haiti is necessary in developing a suitable response from the international community to the security situation, the lack of

¹ On May 30, 2004, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1542 establishing the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) for a period of six months.

institutional capacity, the impact of rainfall and natural disasters on Haiti and the chronic hunger and poverty in the country.

Haitians have shown that they are capable of taking ownership of their challenges. In order to find solutions to existing challenges, they require the support of the international community. The Haitian people, their political organizations/parties and civil society must be the ones to devise and implement a Haitian solution to Haiti's problems and challenges. The Haitian people require meaningful and efficacious engagements with, and support from, regional, hemispheric, and international partners to assist in charting and implementing the way forward.

Objective

To facilitate a dialogue between Haitians and actors who have experience in post-colonial nation building and national dialogue processes, as well as other partners and friends of Haiti. This is a step to directing their practical solidarity to assist in the implementation of solutions generated and backed by the people of Haiti, and that are equal to the dire challenges the country is facing and rooted in a vision of transformation.

It is hoped that Africa, as represented by the African Union and its member states, will join its efforts to those of the CARICOM, hemispheric partners and the United Nations in support of Haiti. Across the African continent, there is a wealth of experience in resolving difficult political crises in the context of resource constraints, insecurity and geopolitical contestation. Haiti can draw from such experiences to its benefit. The African Union member-states may also be invited to more concretely offer assistance during the transitional period in Haiti.

This event will be held as an Arria Formula meeting to better inform the Security Council, which determines the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti and helps pave the way for humanitarian assistance. It is hoped that the discussion will, at a minimum, offer ideas on how to support and strengthen the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) to be a more effective and achieve solutions for Haiti.

It will also be imperative that the participants indicate how the international community can move beyond the business-as-usual approach, including in the Security Council, and consider the efficacy of some, or all, of the following initiatives:

- 1) How to support a comprehensive national dialogue and reconciliation process to accompany ongoing local efforts that is informed by best practices in similar resource and political settings.
- 2) To look at existing CARICOM initiatives aimed at addressing the legacy of underdevelopment in Haiti.

- 3) Ways to link the solidarity of the African Union and its members to the stabilization, recovery and development of Haiti.
- 4) Means of addressing the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons, including gender responsive and youth focused approaches.
- 5) Determine how to support and strengthen BINUH and make it more adaptable to the circumstances in the country, including by strengthening coordination with the UN Country Team.
- 6) In the context of COP-26, how to advocate for climate change adaptation efforts in Haiti that safeguard the country from further harm and contribute to giving relief and opportunity to the most vulnerable.
- 7) The full and meaningful participation of women and youth in institutions and state building process.
- 8) Building and strengthening institutions. For instance, considering what benefits that Haiti can enjoy by joining the UN Peacebuilding Commission.
- 9) How to minimize insecurity caused by gang violence and address gendered effect of insecurity.
- 10) Strengthening the approach to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including in fighting poverty and inequality.
- 11) Tackling the legacy of past human rights violations and promoting the rule of law in Haiti.
- 12) How to build social inclusion into the Haitian state as a way to strengthen cohesion and resilience.

These are major subjects that will not be exhaustively discussed in a single sitting but it is hoped that this event will at least indicate the future shape of a fuller process of engagement for the United Nations and the broader International Community with Haiti's government and civil society.

Possible Briefers/ discussants:

1. Hon. Ariel Henry, Prime Minister of the Republic of Haiti (tbd)
2. Hon. Michele Pierre- Louis, Former Prime Minister of Haiti and President of the Fondation Connaissance et Liberte- FOKAL (tbc)
3. **Ms. Magali Comeau-Denis, Coordinator of the Commission for Haitian Solution to the Crisis and Former Minister of Culture and Communication of Haiti**
4. **H. E. Dr. Carla Natalie Barnett, Secretary General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)**
5. **H. E. Professor Peter Anyang' Nyong'o, Governor of Kisumu County, Kenya**

6. **H. E. Louise Mushikiwabo, Secretary- General of the International Organization of La Francophonie (IOF)**
7. H. E. Fatima Mohammed, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations (tbc)
8. **Ms. Kalinda Magloire, CEO and Founder of SWITCH**
9. **H. E. David Comissiong, Barbados' Ambassador to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)**
10. **H. E. Collen Vixen Kelapile, President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**
11. H. E. Osama Abdelkhalek, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (tbc)
12. **H. E. Bob Rae, Chair of the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti**
Briefers presentations (5-7mins)

Modalities

- The meeting, to take place on 15th October at 3:00pm, will be Co-chaired by H.E. I. Rhonda King, Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in her capacity as a member of the A3+1 Group from the Region and H.E. Dr. Martin Kimani, Permanent Representative of Kenya in Kenya's capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of October.
- Participation is open to all members of the Security Council, all members of the United Nations, permanent observers, and regional organisations.
- Group interventions are limited to 5 minutes, and 2 minutes for individual member states. Participants are encouraged to offer concrete, practical, solution-oriented remarks and interact with briefers through directed questions.

Format for participation: All interested Permanent and Observer Missions are invited to register via the following [link https://forms.gle/Jfihcet1mnRSUFy5](https://forms.gle/Jfihcet1mnRSUFy5), and indicate whether they wish to inscribe to the speakers list by C.O.B. 14 October 2021. Connection details will be shared with registered participants only. A kind reminder that group interventions are limited to 5 minutes, and 2 minutes for individual Member States and Permanent Observers.

Written statements "as delivered" should be submitted at the end of this meeting to Ms. Roxanne Russell at ambassadorassistantsvg@gmail.com.

Language: English and French

Live streaming: The Arria- formula meeting will be streamed live and opened to the public via <https://media.un.org/en/webtv>.

Expected Outcome: Compilation of statements and a Chair's summary