

Forum: Security Council (SC)

Issue: The Situation in Haiti

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Introduction

Ever since Haiti gained independence in 1804, the nation has been faced with a myriad of issues that continue to exacerbate their current situation. Issues such as corruption, gang violence, natural disasters, and other problems are some of the hurdles that Haiti has tried to overcome. Most recently, a magnitude 7.2 earthquake struck Haiti's Tiburon Peninsula, resulting in an estimated 2,248 deaths and at least 12,760 casualties. This devastating earthquake left more than 650,000 people in need of emergency humanitarian assistance. In response to the earthquake, the Haitian government and humanitarian partners provided assistance to 457,800 people with basic necessities such as food, water, healthcare, and protection to alleviate the repercussions of the earthquake. Since the catastrophe, the International Medical Corps has provided healthcare services to nearly 6,000 patients. As the international community continues to provide aid to Haiti, the ultimate goal of this assistance is to establish a secure and stable government that can lead Haiti in prosperity.

Definition of Key Terms

Natural Disasters

Haiti has been the victim of numerous natural disasters including droughts, floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes. Even though neighboring countries experience similar natural catastrophes, the economic and political instability makes Haiti more vulnerable as a nation to these inevitable accidents. One of the most prominent examples of a natural disaster is the 7.2 magnitude earthquake that struck Haiti in August 2021, leaving many Haitians homeless and in a state of national emergency. Similarly, a 7.0 magnitude earthquake struck Haiti in 2010, demolishing its capital and killing an estimated 220,000 civilians in Haiti. Furthermore, the incident also resulted in 102 UN staff workers losing their lives. Moreover, the continuous droughts has created food insecurity in Haiti, leaving 1.5 million Haitians in a

severe shortage of food. The effects of natural disasters in Haiti has not only disrupted daily life, but left an everlasting impact on Haiti's economy and society.

Basic Necessities

Basic Necessities is defined as something that an individual must need in order to survive. This includes food, water, and shelter. In the context of Haiti, natural disasters, gang violence, and political corruption has caused a massive shortage of basic necessities. Prices of food have skyrocketed following natural disasters and allegations of government corruption. Organizations such as UNICEF have supported the needs of Haiti by ensuring access to basic services such as water, nutrition, and sanitation.

Gang Violence

Amidst the political vacuum in Haiti, gangs have taken control of Haiti. Human rights organizations estimate that as many as 165 gangs continue to terrorise the citizens of Haiti. This includes kidnapping, sexual assaults, and even murders. It is important to note that many children and women are not just victims from the result of gang violence, but are now becoming targets. As more and more gangs continue to control the streets of Haiti, there is also an increase in panic and insecurity.

Government Corruption

Government corruption in Haiti can be traced back to the 2010 presidential election when Michel Martelly was elected as Haiti's president. The Guardian explains that human rights organizations "reported that much of the \$2 billion dollars in Venezuela PetroCarbe oil loans were embezzled despite supposed to be used on infrastructure and public health." As Martelly's presidency was transferred over to Jovenel Noise, Haiti civilians began to rally for anti-government corruption protests but were crushed by a combined effort of police and gang forces.

History

The instability of Haiti can be traced back to European colonialism. Haiti was once a French colony with sugar plantations that were labored by enslaved African people. However, the 1791 Haitian revolution destroyed the stability of Haiti by causing chaos and disorder. Toussaint Louverture, the first Black general of the French army, led a rebellion against the French hegemony, and a war soon ensued between the enslaved African people against French colonial rule. After the rebels were victorious in the revolution, Haiti was officially declared a sovereign nation in 1804. This made Haiti the first independent country in Latin America, and one of the few rebellions that were successful against European

colonialism. However, despite Haiti declaring independence and claiming itself as a sovereign nation, many other countries refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of Haitian independence. Nations like the United States continued to trade with Haiti, but did not recognize Haiti as an official country until 1862. Ultimately, the lack of recognition and constant exploitation of Haiti from European countries became the foundation for political instability in Haiti.

Significant events during Haiti's history of independence can mostly be seen in devastating natural catastrophes that resulted in substantial economic and social repercussions for Haitian citizens. The 2010 7.0 magnitude earthquake was estimated to cost approximately \$14 billion dollars in order to recover from the earthquake. Analysts from The Inter-American Development Bank estimated that money needed to repair the damage caused by the earthquake will have cost nearly twice the amount of profit produced by the country's goods and services industry. This emergency use of government funds took away money that could have been used to develop infrastructure and modernize Haiti. Although the United Nations did send peacekeeping forces to aid Haiti's reconstruction, their sewage system contaminated a major water supply in Haiti. This then caused a cholera outbreak, further exacerbating the consequences of the earthquake. The lack of development in Haiti ultimately led to its economic collapse when the earthquake struck.

Furthermore, the assassination of Haiti's former president Jovenel Moise caused further political turmoil in Haiti. Investigators believe that a group of mercenaries, mainly composed of Columbians, carried out the assassination of the president. Unfortunately, the vacant spot for presidency means the continuation of an unstable government for Haiti. In response to this assassination, the Haitian government has called for the U.S to aid Haiti by sending security assistance to preserve infrastructure in Haiti. In the past, US foreign intervention has helped stabilize Haiti's political system. In Operation Restore Democracy, the US sent troops to help President Bertrand Aristide reclaim his presidency after Haiti experienced a military coup. According to Robert Fatton, a Haitian-born historian and political science professor at the University of Virginia, "[Haiti] is still at the mercy of what the international community is willing to give". Even though past interventions have been successful, many are still wondering whether this time's foreign intervention will yield the same success as it has in the past.

Key Issues

Natural disasters have and will always be a prominent issue in Haiti. Being located in the Caribbeans, Haiti experiences the same natural disasters (droughts, floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, etc.) as those of neighboring countries. However, the lack of adequate financial resources and societal development makes Haiti more vulnerable to the destruction of these natural disasters. The constant natural attacks that Haiti has to endure makes the nation entrapped in a cycle of susceptibility.

Even though natural disasters are a key factor in hindering Haiti's development, political instability is the most urgent issue that needs to be attended to in order to ensure Haiti's survival. Without a strong and stable government, Haiti lacks the ability to gain resources and make affirmative decisions to improve the status quo. With Haitian presidents coming into power typically through corrupted and unfair means, Haiti needs to re-establish itself as a proponent of true democracy and ensure that the next generation of presidents have the capability to make correct decisions that will bring prosperity to Haiti.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

USA

The USA has always been involved in the affairs of Haiti. Since the beginning of its origin, Haiti has come to rely on the United States of America for help when disaster strikes. For example, when a military group attempted to overthrow the government in 1994, the US deployed military troops to restore order in the region. In more recent times, after the announcement that the 7.2 magnitude earthquake destroyed Haiti, the US government rushed to provide resources for the Haitian government and its people. In addition, the US government even deployed a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to Haiti and coordinated with internal agencies and departments to fulfill the needs in Haiti.

European Union (EU)

Since 1994, the European Union has provided €451 million euros to Haiti. These funds were then allocated accordingly to cover the needs created by the coronavirus pandemic, food shortages, and infrastructure damage. After hearing about the devastating earthquake, the European Union allocated €3 million euros to address the urgent needs of those most affected by the earthquake. With these generous donations to the Haitian government, the European Union has established itself as a strong ally to Haiti's development.

UNICEF

UNICEF is a United Nations agency that helps provide humanitarian and developmental aid to children around the world. After the 7.2 magnitude earthquake shook Haiti, many families and children lost their homes and family members to this incident. UNICEF has responded to this humanitarian crisis by trying to ensure access to basic necessities for the Haitian population and delivering necessary medical supplies to injured civilians.

Mercy Corps

Mercy Corps is a non-governmental organization that has dedicated itself to fighting against poverty and oppression. Since 2010, the NGO has been involved in Haiti, attempting to provide relief for those affected by the natural disasters. They have helped lift thousands of Haitian families out of poverty and provided economic opportunities to stimulate economic growth. Mercy Corps has recruited professionals that help teach Haitian community members about savings, financial education, and linking members to services like health insurance.

Brazil

Brazil has been one of the long lasting supporters of Haiti. Brazil led the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti for more than 10 years and has been a part of a group of nations that provide supplies to Caribbean countries. After hearing about the 7.2 magnitude earthquake, a Brazilian Air Force aircraft carried 7 tons of food and medical equipment to alleviate the damages caused by the earthquake. Brazilians have also donated a total of 3.5 tons of medicine and supplies to Haiti for treating injuries and taking preventative measures to resist any potential diseases that might arise after the disaster.

Canada

After Canada and Haiti established diplomatic relations in 1954, Canada has remained a big supporter of Haiti. Canada's aid mostly consists of funding to fight food shortages and providing relief to victims of natural disasters. For nearly 30 years, Canada has participated in all UN peace missions aimed at Haiti. These missions included sending financial aid and sending members of the Canadian military to stabilize the region. After the devastating 2010 earthquake, Canada has also provided \$1.8 billion in funding. The common French language and the growth of Haitian communities in Canada has only further facilitated the friendly relations between the two nations.

Timeline of Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

Date and events should be organized in chronological order. The description of events shouldn't be just a few words; like the first example below, the description should be at least one or two sentences explaining the situation.

| Date | Description of Event |
|-------------|---|
| 1804 | Haiti becomes an independent country and former slave Jean-Jacques Dessalines self proclaims emperor |
| 1915 | US invades Haiti due to internal conflicts in the region in an effort to prevent potential property and investment losses |

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| 1934 | US withdraws troops from Haiti, but maintains fiscal control until 1947 |
| 1964 | Francois Duvalier declares himself president for life and establishes a dictatorship with the aid of a militia group |
| 1990 | Jean-Bertrand Aristide becomes the first elected president in a free and peaceful election |
| 1991 | Aristide is overthrown in a military coup, resulting in sanctions imposed by the US |
| 1994 | US intervenes in Haiti, helping reestablish Aristide as the president of the Haiti |
| 2010 | A 7.0 magnitude earthquake strikes Haiti, leaving an estimated 300,000 people dead |
| | A Cholera outbreak claims the lives of thousands of Haitians |
| 2021 | President Jovenel Moise is assassinated in Haiti |
| | A 7.2 magnitude earthquake devastates Haiti, causing considerable infrastructure and economical damage |

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- Security Council Press Statement on Haiti, 7 July 2021 (SC/14574)
- Resolution 2547, 15 October 2020 (S/RES/2547)
- Resolution Adopted by the Human Rights Council, 30 March (A/HRC/46/7)
- Resolution 2600, 15 October 2021 (S/RES/2600)
- Resolution 1908, 19 January 2010 (S/RES/1908)
- United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) established (September 1993)

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Past attempts to resolve the humanitarian crisis in Haiti have been somewhat successful. The amount of support that the international community has gathered in favor of Haiti has amassed tons of medical supplies and food donations. Even though these efforts have not gone in vain, Haiti still lacks the adequate resources to stabilize the current situation.

Possible Solutions

1. Deploying military troops to monitor and deter acts of violence from gangs and criminal organizations

- Pro: Gang violence has oftentimes been linked to the instability of Haiti. Thus, military troops from members of the UN can act as a deterrence and prevent gangs from causing unrest in Haitian cities.
 - Con: UN member states are not required to help aid Haiti, and thus do not have to dispatch their own military troops in Haiti to stabilize the nation
2. Promoting awareness of Haiti's current situation and attempting to gather donations from the international community.
 - Pro: By promoting awareness about Haiti's situation, more people will be inclined to donate or provide resources for the Haitian population. Ultimately, these donations will improve the quality of life for many Haitian people.
 - Con: Promoting awareness does not take affirmative action and does not solve the root of the problem. Even though raising money will indubitably be useful, this solution fails to address the government corruption.
 3. Guaranteeing a free and fair election in Haiti
 - Pro: Addressing governmental corruption is one of the key solutions in saving Haiti. By establishing a free and fair election, Haiti can ensure that its future leaders are reliable and a representation of true democracy
 - Con: It is difficult to enforce a free and fair election when Haiti's economy is on its downfall. Many countries may not see a legitimate presidential election as an urgent priority when addressing Haiti.

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