

Addressing Governance Challenges in Haiti: The Role of the International Community

Remarks by Ambassador Raymond A. Joseph

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Haiti's situation today can be summarized in one word: Chaos.

But the chaos didn't happen overnight. We've watched it developed while those who were supposed to help stabilize, democratize and institute justice in Haiti said nothing, did nothing. And the gangs were established under their watch. I mean under the watch of the international community, with a United Nations presence in the country since 2004.

Today, there's no Legislature! No working Judiciary! There's a Police Force in name only and no Army, whereas armies of other countries are brought in, introducing cholera in the country and leaving a slew of fatherless children, who are candidates to swell the ranks of the gangs.

As far as the head of government is concerned, there is an illegitimate Prime Minister, Ariel Henry, named by de facto President Jovenel Moïse, who didn't have time to swear him in on July 7 when he was assassinated. And Moïse himself destroyed all the democratic institutions, under the watch of the United Nations. He even facilitated the "federation of the gangs," with its flagship unit, the "G-9 Family and Allies," registered at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor as a non-profit organization, under the leadership of former policeman-turned-gang leader Jimmy Chérizier, aka Barbecue.

I note that all this happened under the glare of the CORE Group of Western diplomats in Port-au-Prince, who staunchly supported the presidency of the self-proclaimed "Legal Bandit" Michel/Michael Joseph Martelly, who organized the gangs, assisted by his Prime Minister Laurent Salvador Lamothe. Now, with State money that they stole and

mismanaged, Martelly and Lamothe are preparing their return to power, probably with international support, as before.

Only a Marshall Plan for Haiti, initiated by a broadly-based interim government over a period of at least two years, will be able to bring order to the country and keep Haitians at home, instead of their becoming refugees throughout the Western Hemisphere, even reaching the southern border of the United States, and being airlifted back to the hell-on-earth from which they fled.

Only such a plan will finally make Haiti into the little paradise it was supposed to be after our ancestors had defeated the slave masters on November 18, 1803, and declared the first free Black Republic in the world on January 1st, 1804. Even able sons and daughters of Haiti living abroad would want to go back and help in the flowering of a new nation.

But we know the story of the embargo declared by the slave masters, including the United States, and of the debt of reparations imposed on Haiti in 1825 for property loss by the enslavers, including slaves. Thus, was Haiti's feeble economy mortgaged from the beginning, and the country, under threat of cannons, kept paying until 1947, when the last penny was collected by the precursor of New York's Citibank. Only a Marshall Plan for Haiti will undo such crying injustice.

