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Haitians protest threat of foreign military intervention in the country

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October 12, 2022

De-facto leader Ariel Henry's request for foreign military support to curb gang violence has generated widespread criticism among civil society organizations, political and social leaders, and citizens in general.



Since August 22, Haitians have been mobilizing against deepening economic, political and social crises in the country under the US-backed de-facto regime of PM Ariel Henry. Photo: Radyo Rezistans/Facebook

On Monday October 10, under the banner of “Down with Ariel Henry, Down with the Foreign Occupation,” hundreds of thousands of Haitians took to the streets across the country against a resolution passed by de-facto Prime Minister and acting President Ariel Henry, requesting the international community to send armed help to resolve gang-related crisis in Haiti.

In the capital Port-au-Prince, thousands of citizens gathered in the Cité-Soleil commune and marched towards the Pétion-Ville commune via the Delmas commune, demanding Henry’s unconditional resignation and an end to all kinds of foreign interference in the country’s internal affairs. Protesters raised slogans such as “the United States is the problem, it cannot be the solution.”

At the Delmas 40 B crossroads, the protesters were brutally repressed by the police. Police officers used tear gas and fired live bullets against them. According to reports from local media, at least one protester was killed in the repression.

Similar massive demonstrations were also organized in other main cities. The mobilizations were held as a part of the week-long protests against the US-backed Henry administration. On Saturday, October 8, various civil society organizations, trade unions, and left-wing opposition parties called for nationwide protest actions against the multidimensional crisis facing the country due to the misgovernment of the ruling far-right Haitian Tèt Kale Party (PHTK). October 10 was the first day of the nationwide protests, which will continue until next Monday, October 17.

<https://twitter.com/viliusyvonn/status/1579535415111225345>

For the past seven weeks, since August 22, Haitians have been tirelessly mobilizing against increasing poverty and food insecurity amid soaring prices of essential commodities and basic services; acute shortage of fuel amid brutal increase in prices; widespread gang-related kidnappings, killings and violence; and the crushing devaluation of the national currency, the Haitian Gourde, against the \$USD.

[Watch: Radyo Rezistans live from the protests](#)

Protesters have criticized that during the past one year of Henry's illegitimate leadership, the economic, political and social crises have deepened in the country. Many have denounced that activation of criminal gangs, following the assassination of the country's de-facto president Jovenel Moïse in July 2021, is a part of Henry's strategy to remain in power, where he was put and held up by the US, the UN, the OAS and the Core Group. Several also have stated that Henry's open call for foreign invasion, using gang-violence as pretext and criminalizing people's movements demanding his resignation, provides further evidence of his intentions.

Nevertheless, the Haitian people have stressed that they will defend their sovereignty, will not allow another foreign occupation, and will themselves find a concrete solution to their situation. They have clarified that the application of the Montana Agreement is the ultimate goal of their struggle. The Montana Agreement advocates for the installation of a transitional government to govern the country for two years, in order to recover the nation from the institutional crisis caused by the PHTK, rebuild society, and organize elections for the next government.

Henry's call for foreign intervention

Last week, on October 5, Henry, while addressing the nation, expressed his intention to request the assistance of the international community to deal with the humanitarian crisis caused by criminal gangs. The statement came after the gangs blocked access to the main fuel terminal, limiting the operation of hospitals and water treatment companies amid a resurgence of cholera in the country, which has already left at least sixteen dead.

On October 6, the Council of Ministers met to discuss the PM's proposal. On October 7, the Council authorized Henry to request foreign military support to curb gang violence. According to the decree published in the Official Gazette, the prime minister is authorized to request the presence of a specialized armed force in the country, "to stop the humanitarian crisis caused, among other reasons, by the insecurity derived from the actions of the gangs and their sponsors." It also stated that the foreign military presence would help "resume the distribution of fuel and drinking water throughout the country, reactivate hospitals, restart economic activities, the movement of people and goods, and reopen schools."

On October 9, Henry wrote a letter to the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, officially asking the UN to intervene militarily in the country. It is important to note that in the past weeks, Guterres, on French international radio, seconding Henry's false claims, said that mass protests in the streets against the Henry government are

being led by gangs.

National condemnation of Henry's call for foreign military intervention

The resolution on the military intervention generated widespread criticism among civil society organizations, political and social leaders, and citizens in general, who considered that the decision put the sovereignty of the Caribbean country at stake.

Former senator and former presidential candidate Jean Charles Moïse, leader of the left-wing Platfòm Pitit Desalin party, [pointed out](#) that neither Henry nor his ministers have the authority or legitimacy to request a foreign military presence in the country. Charles Moïse added that the country's sovereignty had been threatened and called on the people to stand up against it.

The Organization of People in Struggle party (OPL) expressed its disagreement with the entry of foreign military forces and reiterated that the country needs support so that the National Police can carry out its work.

Reyneld Sanon, coordinator of Radio Resistance and Haitian Popular Press Agency, in a statement, rejected the decision of the PHTK and its allies "to request international imperialist forces to occupy the country for a third time." Sanon denounced that the decision insults "our ancestors, who fought to break the chains of slavery." He assured that "in the case that the foreign military occupation force arrived in Haiti, all Haitians, progressive groups, popular organizations, and left-wing political parties, will stand to fight."

Jean Launy Avril, a Haitian political science professor and anthropologist, [emphasized](#) that "the Haitian people do not need humanitarian refuge from any country. They have the right to live in peace in their country, without intervention, without interference, without gangs, without anti-popular governments and sepoys."

In a series of tweets, Launy Avril [said](#) that “the solution to the Haitian crisis must be in the hands of the Haitian people, their social and political organizations and must be recognized by the UN.” “We [demand](#) that the international community respect the right of the Haitian people to mobilize and demand a more promising future. The Haitian people are sovereign, they have been in the streets for more than a month demanding profound changes to put an end to the bad governments and the system that oppresses them,” he [added](#).

He [recalled](#) that “in a recent letter to the UN, Haitian social and political movements assured that it is the people, who are in the streets protesting, and that they are not bandits, and denounced the political persecution by repressive forces of the de-facto PM.”

Launy Avril [pointed out](#) that “military intervention has never been a solution; in Haiti the evidence is clear. The UN brought it Cholera, mass killings, more poverty, more people forced to seek bread in other countries.” “The UN with its MINUSTAH (Stabilisation Mission) soldiers raped girls, and have left countless boys and girls without parents, living in more poverty, the invasions of Haiti have only left pain,” he [added](#). He also [said](#) that “the MINUSTAH massacred the civilian population, between 2004 and 2008, with multiple massacres in Cité-Soleil, and with a new invasion they are going to massacre the townspeople who fight for Haitian sovereignty.”

He [stressed](#) that “the Haitian people do not want and will not accept more elections organized by foreigners. They are always fraudulent and place their puppets against the interests of the people.”

Likewise, Madame Boukman, an Haitian anti-imperialist blogger, in a series of tweets, rejected the call for military intervention and exposed the collusion between criminal gangs, the government and the imperialist forces.

“Haiti’s US-controlled police force is under-equipped by design through an arms embargo. All weapons must be approved by the US State Department. Meanwhile, an unlimited flow of illicit high caliber weapons enter Haiti from the US to arm the gangs to keep Haiti permanently destabilized,” Boukman [denounced](#).

“The gangs are low-level foot soldiers that take orders from the high level gangs in suits (imperialists, bourgeoisie and politicians). The system that upholds them needs to fall for them to fall, just like Duvalier Tonton Macoute’s gangs fell when the masses overthrew him,” she [added](#).

“Ariel Henry, a de facto, unelected puppet imposed on Haiti after he participated in the assassination of Jovenel Moïse, was ordered by his imperialist bosses to publicly call for a foreign invasion. He does not represent the masses,” she [criticized](#).

In another [tweet](#), she pointed out that the “2004-2019 UN proxy military intervention to “stabilize” Haiti resulted in Cholera, child sex rings, massacres, mass rape, endemic kidnapping, electoral fraud, chronic insecurity, gang infestation, indefinite detention, and chronic inequality, among other issues.”

<https://twitter.com/madanboukman/status/1579250659098267648>

Source: [Peoples Dispatch](#)

