

U.S. sanctions Haiti

written by Lallan Schoenstein
December 10, 2022



Jimmy Cherizier addressing a rally of Haiti's poor in La Saline, one of Port-au-Prince's poorest shantytowns. Photo: Jean Wesley Amady

Crime has played a dominant role in Haiti since the Taíno and Arawakan people were decimated by Spanish and French colonialists, and its earliest workers were

kidnapped from their homes in Africa and exploited with unimaginable violence.

When those early workers freed themselves from bondage, they were forced to pay France reparations — a looting and impoverishing of Haiti's economy. Can it be today that they are still being punished for the first revolution led by Toussaint L'Ouverture in 1804, the world's first Black republic guaranteeing the rights and freedoms for all Black people?

The Haitian Lavalas Movement overthrew the U.S./French puppet dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier in 1990 with the popular election of Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Aristide was ousted from Haiti by a CIA-backed coup d'état in 1991 and then again in 2004. The Fanmi Lavalas Party has been denied an electoral role in Haiti ever since.

Today, the U.S. political administration speculates on the exploitation of an extremely low-wage workforce as well as Haiti's strategic location in the Caribbean.

In 2021, President Jovenel Moïse was assassinated. Ariel Henry, a suspect in the assassination, is now Haiti's acting president, with U.S. support.

The global conditions of inflation, food and fuel shortages caused by the U.S./NATO war drive are taking a toll on the poorest countries like Haiti. New cases of cholera, first introduced by the U.N. intervention following the 2010 earthquake, have reemerged in Haiti along with a crisis in potable water.

A deepening crisis is sweeping Haiti. The racist mainstream U.S. media reports unimaginable violence of gang wars and drug trafficking. Their unsympathetic reports are designed to justify one more intervention by the governments of the U.S., Canada and France in the sovereign nation of Haiti. On Oct. 15, the United States submitted a draft resolution to the U.N. Security Council calling for the "immediate deployment of a multinational rapid reaction force" to Haiti. Haiti is the

most intervened-in country in the hemisphere. Each previous invasion and intervention has destabilized the economy and left people stranded on the edge of survival.

Haitians want to secure their own country

In Haiti, anti-government protests are sweeping the country. There are reports that the “gangs” most targeted by the White House are actually those struggling to liberate their country. The newspaper *Haïti Liberté*, in conjunction with *Uncaptured Media*, has released a documentary: “Another Vision: Inside Haiti’s Uprising.” *Haïti Liberté* says that “the film plumbs the origins, actors, and tactics of a multi-faceted demonization campaign against Jimmy Cherizier, the FRG-9 and its allies.”

In Washington, D.C., and in other U.S. cities, Haitians and their supporters are holding protests to demand that the Biden administration end its support for the regime of Ariel Henry. Protesters demand that Haitian sovereignty be respected, that there be no intervention. Haitians are the only ones who can solve their crisis and determine their own future. The U.S. and Canada have already announced the dispatch of military aircraft to carry weapons for the country’s security services, [Resumen](#) reported Oct. 24.

Sanctions

Demands for self-determination coming from almost every social sector of Haiti may have temporarily stalled the imperialist intervention. But it has not paused the sinister machinations of the U.S. Treasury or FBI.

Brian Nelson, Undersecretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, issued a hypocritical statement stressing U.S. “commitment to act against those who encourage drug trafficking, allow corruption and seek to profit from the social-economic crisis that is facing the country.” Nelson’s ridiculously

transparent statement cannot hide the source of weapons, drugs, and corruption in one of the world's poorest countries.

The Nov.15 issue of Haiti Progress reported that the U.S. and Canada have jointly placed sanctions on Haitian politicians and the business sector, as well as suspected gang leaders. On Oct. 21, the U.N. passed a resolution establishing specific sanctions, most notably on Jimmy Cherizier, the FRG-9, and all who give them support. It is widely recognized that sanctions, however specifically targeted, are intended to deny critical support to the whole population and force them to accept foreign domination.

Further, the FBI is bringing criminal charges against alleged gang leaders in Haiti, using the kidnapping in 2021 of 16 U.S. missionaries in Port-au-Prince as their excuse. In addition to the indictments for the kidnapping, the U.S. Department of Justice has announced charges against the leaders of other gangs. According to Christopher Wray, director of the FBI: "These charges are a reminder of the bureau's ability to reach criminal actors overseas." In so saying, Wray is asserting the U.S. intention to police the world.

Once again, Haitians are being punished for struggling to liberate their country. They suffer an inflation rate of 33%, and 4.7 million people are suffering from food insecurity, according to data from the United Nations World Food Program.

What Haiti needs is solidarity – food and fuel – and support for their liberation struggle. NOT sanctions and criminalization.

