



SECURITY COUNCIL

BCNMUN 2024

Identity and Conflict

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Topic: Implementing measures to ensure stability and peace in Haiti.

Chair: Alexis Magee

Position: Chair

Introduction

The instability Haiti is currently facing, and has been facing for decades, is one of the largest and most lengthy humanitarian crises in the world. Recently, however, there has been a sharp upturn in gang violence, punctuated by the assassination of Haiti's president, Jovenel Moïse. This has plunged the nation into chaos, allowing prominent gangs, specifically the G9, a coalition of gangs headed by former police officer Jimmy Chérizier, to assume a role akin to that of government. Recently, in March of 2024, the G9 organised a joint jailbreak of thousands of Haitian prisoners and takeover of Haiti's major airport while interim president Ariel Henry was out of the country, therefore barring him from returning. Further, the G9 possesses 80% territorial control of the capital city of Haiti, Port-au-Prince, including all major routes in and out of the city. There have been major influxes in Haitians attempting to leave the country, which has created a refugee crisis and large-scale displacement, affecting the international community as well as Haiti. While there have been numerous UN initiatives to stabilise the nation, they have failed to make a positive impact, and the situation has continued to deteriorate.

Haiti is a geographically small Caribbean nation, yet its state holds great implications for the entire world. Not only is it a humanitarian crisis, with the majority of Haitians living in poverty, its stability affects the entire region, and continued chaos presents the possibility of gangs around the world, especially in fellow Latin American and Caribbean countries, following Haiti's example and reaching for more control through violence. The gangs gain power and monetary resources from facilitating the drug trade between South American countries, Europe and the United States, which directly affect the lives of many citizens. As previously mentioned, refugees fleeing Haiti put pressure on other nations to take them in, especially in the Caribbean and the Americas. Furthermore, the Caribbean is a hotspot in the global community, specifically with certain rising states' continued push to cement their presence and influence in the region by forging economic and political ties to

nations such as Venezuela, Nicaragua, Peru, and Brazil due to their strategic advantages and proximity to the United States. The United States, alongside other states, have each consistently tried to exert soft and hard power over Central and South American nations, and this pattern only continues today. Haiti is tightly connected to the international community through past actions of countries and their current civic responsibility to aid Haiti, trade and economic interdependence, regional stability, possible refugee and migration concerns, or its position from a strategic vantage in terms of mitigating and delegating global power.

Definition of Key Terms

Criminal Gangs

While the definition of gangs is fluid, in this context, the gangs we are referring to are highly organised with clear structures of leadership, even making media appearances and assuming a political role. Therefore, criminal gangs, and specifically street gangs, can be defined by the United Nations as “criminal organisations formed on the street operating throughout a national territory”.

Corruption

Corruption is an abuse of power for personal gain. It includes, but is not limited to, bribery, trading in influence, abuse of functions, illicit enrichment, and obstruction of justice. Trading in influence and abuse of functions are the most common types of corruption seen in Haiti, as corruption is rooted in a slanted judiciary system and a weak rule of law.

Coup d’etat

A coup d’etat is commonly known as the violent and involuntary overthrow of an existing government by a defined group. Even though there is no international or established definition for a coup, scholars unilaterally identify them as having 3 components: a state perpetrator, or military or governmental involvement in the coup; a chief executive as the objective to overthrow; and illegal ways used in the coup. Military coups are those most common in Haiti, which are simply coups perpetrated by members of the military.

Poverty

Poverty is defined by the United Nations as having an income of less than 2\$ dollars per day. Poverty is also seen as a lack of access to basic human needs, such as water, food, shelter, and a primary education, which create challenges for growth and development. Almost 59% of Haitians live below the poverty line, making it the poorest country in the Americas.

Background Information

A Brief History of Haiti

Haiti became an independent nation, in 1803, being the first country to establish independence from colonial powers in Latin America. . This revolution was largely inspired by the French revolution, though it was not welcomed by the international community, with fears that this rebellion against slaveholders would create unrest among enslaved people in their own countries. France refused to recognize Haiti's independence unless Haiti paid the equivalent of 21 billion euros in today's money. Haiti was loaned this money from American and French banks at incredibly high interest rates, leading 40% of its national income to be used each year to pay back debt until 1947. Because of this cycle of forced reparations, Haiti was unable to invest in its own country, leading to a lack of lasting infrastructure, a developed economy, and a revolving door of politicians, oftentimes ousted by military coups. Further, Haiti has been invaded and controlled by other countries in the past, namely the United States, from 1915 to 1934.

The Duvalier Regime

In 1957, Francois Duvalier, nicknamed "Papa Doc", was elected president, and quickly declared himself President-for-Life, establishing a dictatorship instead of the previous democracy. He also created a private militia to enforce his rulings and eliminate political opponents and rebellion, marking the first time gangs had a permanent role in politics. This reign of terror only benefited the Duvaliers and those close to them, leading to poverty and famine across the nation. He was succeeded by his son, Jean-Claude Duvalier, also known as "Baby Doc", who was forced to flee Haiti after a popular revolt in 1986. While democracy was restored, the nation was plagued by military run governments and coups, as well as devastating natural disasters.

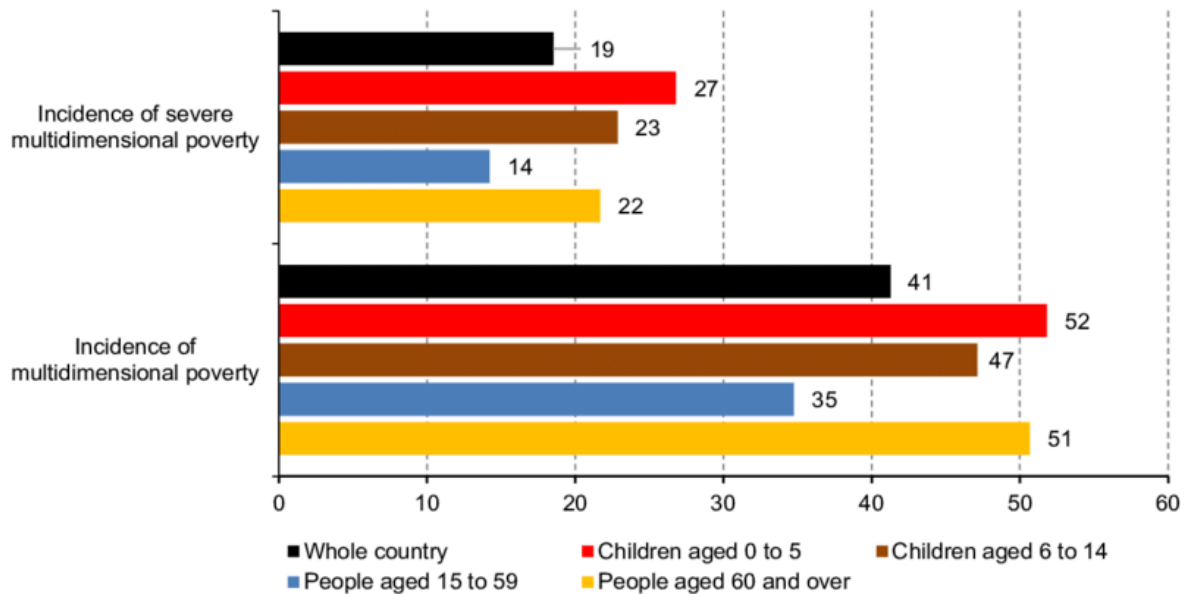
Aristide's Presidency

In 1990, in what is recognized as the first fair democratic election in Haitian history, Jean-Bertrand Aristide was elected as president. However, in 1991, he was ousted from power due to a military coup led by Lieutenant General Raoul Cedras on account of his promise to impose restrictions and control the military and police. The OAS, or the Organization of American States, led by the United States, quickly intervened, imposing sanctions and blockades. Later, in 1994, he was restored to power after the United States threatened a full-scale military invasion. Aristide was reelected in 2000, in his second, although non-consecutive term, but was forced to flee Haiti again in 2004. This was caused by yet another coup, perpetrated by right-wing ex-military and led by Guy Phillippe, although Aristide and others have continually accused the United States of forcing him out of the country after his implementation of policies that challenged the US. The United States' official statement is that he voluntarily left the country.

Instability and Natural Disasters

Afterwards, there were multiple prime ministers and presidents, but many were dismissed before the end of their term. In January of 2010, Port-au-Prince was hit with an earthquake of magnitude 7.0. The city was destroyed and approximately 300,000 people lost their lives, Haitians and members of the peacekeeping force stationed there. Haiti was slow to rebuild after the devastation, inciting protests on corruption in the administration. That October, there was an outbreak of cholera caused by UN soldiers, resulting in the death of thousands. In 2011, Michel Martelly was elected president of Haiti, and had multiple prime ministers before finally ending his term in 2016, holding long-delayed presidential elections. Despite allegations of electoral fraud, Jovenel Moise was named president of Haiti in January of 2017.

Present Day



ResearchGate, 2020

Currently, Haiti is in a period of great poverty. After Moïse was assassinated, his vice president, Ariel Henry, became interim president. Unfortunately, he was relatively unknown and soon became incredibly unpopular, allowing gangs to control more and more of Port-au-Prince, eventually taking over the airport and not allowing him to return. As of now, there is a council set to appoint the next president, but the majority of these 9 people are from the “Old Guard”, or the so-called older generation of politicians. These politicians tend to have connections with prominent gangs that act as their arm, and even threaten or injure political opponents or dissidents. From this, it is clear that corruption is still present in the government. Furthermore, these gangs, especially the G9, seem to be above the law. Recently, they broke 4500 prisoners out of prisons in Port-au-Prince, as well as continuing to control routes in and out of the city. Police forces have dropped from 12000 to 9000 for a population of 11.4 million, with many of these police officers deciding to join gangs as opposed to work for the government. Because of this, Haitians are struggling, with over 1.6 million citizens facing famine. This cycle of violence and poverty is not sustainable nor acceptable, and, if allowed to continue, millions of Haitians will lose their lives.

The question of if the international community should interfere in the affairs of Haiti, especially due to past failures of United Nations missions, is one that is prevalent in the debates of the best course of action. However, when considering international intervention in Haiti stemming

from colonial times, it becomes clear that the United Nations and other states must act. As previously explained, Haiti's inability to reinvest in itself due to being forced to pay back extremely expensive loans at high interest rates, as well as the multiple occupations of Haiti by the United States, are significant contributing factors to the poverty and instability of Haiti today. Furthermore, an argument could be made that, especially in the current era of globalisation, 1st-world nations that profited from exploiting other states in both colonial and post-colonial times have an obligation to help, through personnel or aid, 3rd-world states facing humanitarian crises and conflict. Without a doubt, the United States and other countries participated in acts to benefit themselves economically and socially that proved extremely detrimental to Haitian society, and therefore must help Haiti in its current state. Additionally, Haiti does not have a stable government, and instead has a council to appoint a president, although one has not been appointed thus far. Therefore, while Haiti's sovereignty should be respected, rule of law does not particularly exist in the state, as it has become overrun by gangs and violence, and previous Haitian presidents have requested aid from the international community. Thus, in this case, the international community has the obligation to interfere without risk of failing to uphold Haiti's principle of sovereignty.

Major Countries and Organisations Involved

United States of America

The United States of America is one of the most important countries in relation to the continued conflict in Haiti. Not only is it that American banks that loaned Haiti money to repay its debt to France, the United States has also had multiple full scale invasions of Haiti, and held control of the territory for decades at a time, as recently as 1934. Furthermore, Haitian gangs profit off of the drug trade to the US, and buy their weapons from states with loose gun laws, such as Louisiana, Florida, and Georgia. Lastly, they have contributed to and led multiple initiatives and multilateral forces to restore stability to Haiti, especially due to their position as the leading power in the Americas and Caribbean.

French Republic

The French Republic, or France, has played a role in the conflict in Haiti going back to the nation's colonial roots. France required Haiti to pay a large sum in exchange for the country's

independence, which greatly benefited France but permanently stunted the state's growth and created a lack of economic or social progress. Recently, France has been involved in multiple UN initiatives to restore peace to Haiti, but, despite calls from both Haitians and global citizens, refuses to reimburse Haiti for the forced reparations. They have, however, donated aid during natural disasters and contributed to said UN initiatives.

People's Republic of China

The People's Republic of China has contributed multiple aid packages to Haiti, especially during natural disasters, namely during the 2010 earthquake. While Haiti and China do not currently hold diplomatic relations, with Haiti refusing to recognize the One China Policy, China has continually voted in favour of supporting Haiti and has been the first to give aid. Experts say that this may be to strengthen China's presence in the Caribbean and eliminate criticism of the One China Policy.

Co-operative Republic of Guyana

While Guyana is not one of the main producers of drugs and other illicit substances, they do play a role in the smuggling of these illicit drugs to the United States and Europe. Many times, Guyanese cartels will traffick drugs through Haiti and into the United States, or further. This cycle is the largest reason for the power possessed by gangs such as the G9.

Revolutionary Forces of the G9 Family and Allies

The G9 is the largest alliance of gangs of Haiti. Composed of 12 gangs, it is headed by ex-police officer Jimmy Cherizier, also known as "Barbecue". This coalition controls over 80% of the capital city of Haiti, Port-au-Prince, and is responsible for a large majority of crimes, ranging from drug smuggling to kidnap and murder. During the interim presidency of Ariel Henry, Cherizier and the G9 used Henry's unpopularity and the power vacuum it created to become political figures. Cherizier has even done media appearances and to assert that he, and the G9, have the citizens' best interests at heart, as opposed to the elected government. The G9 does not adhere to the law, but controls the majority of Haitian imports and exports, humanitarian aid, and more.

Republic of Ecuador

Ecuador, similarly to Guyana, does not play a large part in the production of illicit drugs, but is an influential player in the smuggling of them. Many of their cartels will smuggle drugs through Haiti, which fuels the gangs' power and control, as they profit off of this trade. Furthermore, arms trafficking is one of the fastest growing criminal markets in Ecuador, which Haitian gangs play a large role in, as they are able to buy weapons from the United States and smuggle them into Latin and South America.

Organization of American States

The Organization of American States, also known as the OAS, is a group of 34 nations located in the Americas. The OAS has been pivotal in missions to Haiti, and has contributed a large amount of support to the region. Some members of the OAS are the United States of America, Haiti, Ecuador, and Guyana.

Timeline of Events

Date

Description of event

February 7, 2017

Jovenel Moise becomes president.

Jovenel Moise took office as president of Haiti, as he had been elected for a 5 year term. This comes after allegations of election fraud in 2015 and 2016, postponing his presidency. Moise is the mentee of previous Haitian president Michel Martelly.

February 2021

Constitutional Crisis over Moise's term limits.

Civil unrest grows as Moise continues to stay in office. Critics argued that his term ended in that February, as was planned, whereas Moise alleges that due to him taking office a year late, he should get the presidency for the full 5 years, ending in 2022. Moise also alleged that these efforts to have him replaced by Judge

Jean-Louis were an attempted coup.

July 7, 2021

Moise assassinated.

Shortly after the power struggle and constitutional crisis of February, Jovenel Moise was assassinated after a team of armed gunmen broke into his home. Multiple Colombians and Americans have been charged, but investigations in Haiti are still underway, with Moise's widow, the ex-chief of police, and more indicted. The vice president, Ariel Henry, assumed the interim presidency.

August 14, 2021

Deadly earthquake hits Haiti.

A 7.2 magnitude earthquake strikes Haiti. This was the deadliest natural disaster since the 2010 earthquake, with over 2000 dead and 1.2 million affected. Because of the lack of a strong state and established government, there was a weak response to the disaster, leaving thousands homeless and in poverty.

April 24-May 5, 2022

Gang war erupts.

Gang violence erupted north of Port-au-Prince, in the area known as Plaine-du-Cul-de-Sac. Haiti's single largest gang, 400 Mawozo, invaded by force some of the territory from a neighbouring gang, Chen Mechan. Chen Mechan is a member of the G9 and called in reinforcements while holding massacres of those suspected of being involved. In total, at least 148 people, most civilians, were killed, along with hundreds of homes being burnt down.

July 8-12, 2022

Gang war in the capital.

Gang violence is sparked in Port-au-Prince, between the two largest gang coalitions in Haiti: the G9 and G-Pep. Attacks on both sides lead to around 100 people dead with more injured. Most of these people were civilians living in the densely populated capital city.

April 2023

Reports show exponential increases in crime, including kidnapping and murder.

Reports from the United Nations show a dramatic increase in crime and gang activity, with over 2000 killed by the middle of the year, 1000 kidnapped, and over 100 instances of sexual violence, including gang rapes. These acts, along with others, such as the refusal to give water or food to residents, are used to terrorise civilians into submission to the gangs.

June 2023

Civilian vigilante movement is growing.

A vigilante movement called Bwa Kale grows as gang violence increases. This movement kills gang members in gang wars or suspected gang members, mostly by burning alive. However, they have also killed multiple police officers who were obstructing their idea of justice, inciting more terror among civilians.

October 22, 2023

Multinational Security Support authorised by the United Nations.

The Security Council passes UN resolution 2699, which establishes a task force, called the Multinational Security Support (MSS), of Kenyan police to enter Haiti and help local police regulate gangs. This program is meant to be funded and created outside of the UN, and therefore needs individual countries to plan and execute.

March 3-6, 2024

G9 launches an attack on Port-au-Prince.

The G9 calls for the resignation of interim president Ariel Henry. After hearing rumours of his return, they launch a coordinated attack on Port-au-Prince. In it, they took more land, extending past the slums into wealthier areas, broke approximately 4500 prisoners out of two nearby prisons, as well as shutting down the airport so that Henry could not return. These

attacks killed hundreds and left Port-au-Prince infrastructure in shambles. They also sent the message that the gangs had no law to abide by, creating more fear within civilians.

April 24, 2024

Ariel Henry resigns.

Interim president Ariel Henry officially resigns. This comes after the coordinated attacks in the Port-au-Prince area over a month before by the G9, as well as protests from civilians about his ineffective leadership. Henry was not well known when he was appointed vice president, which worsened trust and credibility with the country. In his place, a council of 9 officials has been appointed, composed of 7 voting members and 2 replacements. They will hopefully elect the next president and government of Haiti, ensuring a firm state and reliable politicians. s comes as a response to the coordinated gang attacks over one month ago. In his place, a council has been appointed. It is composed of 9 individuals: 2 replacements and 7 voting members. This will hopefully elect the next president of Haiti and create a strong state to combat rising gang violence.

June 25, 2024 June 25, 2024

Kenyan troops land in Haiti.

Kenyan troops, authorised by Security Council resolution 2699, entered Haiti. This is along with troops from other African and Caribbean countries, amounting to 2500 personnel in total. Even so, they are largely outnumbered and outgunned by gangs such as the G9. As expected, they have already been met with violence and resistance from gangs. However, their aim is not to eradicate the gangs entirely, but instead take back land in Port-au-Prince and weaken their control over the region. Unfortunately, questions continue to arise regarding the role of these gangs, especially given their deep entrenchment within both Haitian politics and society.

Relevant UN Treaties and Resolutions

July 14, 2023 - S/RES/2692

This resolution was approved by the Security Council, and its main purpose was to call on member states to take action and set the stage for a possible multilateral task force to enter Haiti. The resolution does not outline a plan to combat the instability and violence, but instead recommissioned BINUH's Mandate, which focuses on aiding Haiti in an advisory capacity, as well as discouraging the sale of arms to non-state actors supporting gangs in Haiti.

October 22, 2023 - S/RES/2699

This resolution was approved by the Security Council, and established a Multinational Security Support (MSS) to enter Haiti and aid its own police forces in combating gang activity and creating a state. The goal of the MSS is to restore security and allow for fair elections to be held, therefore diminishing gang power and advocating for democracy. Unfortunately, the MSS was delayed for months, whether that be because of lack of funding, the Kenyan soldiers not being prepared, or other reasons. Additionally, the MSS was built to be facilitated by the UN but organised and funded by member states outside of the UN, which caused difficulties in terms of designated responsibilities. However, recently, Kenyan soldiers landed in Haiti. While Haiti supports this initiative, the force is under equipped and underfunded, causing worries pertaining to the effectiveness of the MSS.

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

Humanitarian Aid

Although there have been many attempts at restoring stability to Haiti, most projects of the UN or the OAS, none have made significant progress or improvement. In fact, some have worsened the conditions or caused damage to the nation. To begin, not only have there been missions or forces sent, but there have been outpours of humanitarian aid, especially during the 2010 earthquake. While these are all in good faith, and billions of euros have been sent to Haiti, there are a few major flaws within this model that have caused the aid to have very little effect on Haitian citizens. Primarily, the majority of aid is intercepted or given to local gangs such as the G9, instead of being evenly distributed as intended. The majority of rural citizens rely on these gangs for their aid,

which is being misused, despite the best efforts of NGOs. Only 40% of given aid is actually received by Haitian civilians, but because of the incredibly large number of natural disasters and catastrophes in short periods of time, it is not enough to make an impact.

Secondly, because of the lack of stability in the Haitian government, and the revolving door of presidents and prime ministers, countries and organisations such as the United Nations donate their aid through these NGOs and other international charities. Because of this, we are left with a “nation of NGOs”, in which there are several international organisations distributing aid at the same time but not necessarily coordinating with each other to ensure that it is being distributed correctly. This also weakens the state, as citizens are left to rely on NGOs for basic social needs instead of their own government, leading to distrust and further instability. In many circumstances of countries like Haiti, the international community sends in peacekeeping forces to “hold the country over until the next election”. Unfortunately, in Haiti’s case, circumventing aid through NGOs does not create conditions conducive for stable government and fair elections, leading to a lack of overall progress.

MINUSTAH

While MINUSTAH, or the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, was a long-lasting UN peacekeeping force sent to restore order to Haiti, critics argue that it only worsened the country’s political, social, and economic state. Firstly, a major controversy to leave MINUSTAH was the cholera outbreak of 2010. Just months after the devastating 2010 earthquake, Nepalese peacekeepers, sent to aid in the reconstruction since the earthquake, were discovered to have been dumping their waste next to one of the largest rivers in Haiti, the Artibonite river. Because so many people relied on the water for drinking, and cholera comes from contaminated water, the disease spread rapidly, leaving thousands dead. The United Nations refused to open an investigation, and only in 2016, with Ban Ki-Moon as secretary general, did they apologise for the lack of accountability which resulted in a large amount of lives lost.

Since MINUSTAH’s creation, there have been both abuse of power and sexual assault allegations lodged against UN peacekeepers, but no United Nations punishment or trial for those accused. In terms of the abuse of power, a striking example is the Cite Soleil raid, where over 1400 peacekeepers gathered around a square and fired shots inside, injuring and killing dozens of civilians and children. They claim that it was in self defence, but this has been disputed by civilians, and continues to be a subject of mistrust between citizens of Haiti and peacekeepers. As for the

sexual assault, dozens have come forward with stories of trading sexual favors for food and water, rape, and more. Once again, this has made Haitians incredibly weary of UN forces, with a study taken in 2011 showing that 74% of Haitians living in Port-au-Prince, arguably the area in the most need of peacekeeping, wanted UN forces to leave Haiti within the next year.

Support for Haiti

There has been no lack of support for Haiti. In fact, support has poured in in the form of personnel, soldiers, and countless hours drafting Security Council resolutions to aid the small Caribbean nation. Unfortunately, lack of support is not the issue. It is instead the continued failed attempts to help the country, thwarted by mistrust between UN peacekeepers and locals, uncoordinated NGOs, a lack of state and weakened state, and legacies of colonialism permeating to the present day. To address the issue at hand, delegates must attempt to present a solution that simultaneously supports Haiti, bridges the UN and locals, and solidifies a state to combat the rising gangs.

Possible Solutions

Delegates must focus on three areas in their solutions: installing infrastructure and aid programs that allow Haiti and its citizens to recover from natural disasters, while not boycotting its own government yet putting accountability on the government to equitably distribute said aid; creating a state that has been weeded of corruption and gang connections, therefore instilling trust in the citizens for the government; and taking back land in Port-au-Prince and weakening gang control over the economic state of Haiti, as well as the safety of its citizens. These three objectives are integral to the establishment of a functioning, free nation, and are interdependent to each other: if one is not achieved, the other two will also not be successful.

This would include reviewing the current elected council to be sure that these are the right people to choose the next president, using international support and assistance to ensure fair elections for some time in the future, increasing education programs about the rights of Haitians and the electoral process, investing in infrastructure, creating aid packages that will go directly to Haitian citizens, and creating armed force initiatives to take land back from gang coalitions such as the G9. Investments must be made in training programs for judges and members of the legal

system, as to rebuild confidence in the judiciary system and the fact that the government will hold criminals accountable for their actions, and not favour the elite through corruption. Instilling greater power in the legal system is key for a stable and balanced government. Education needs to be improved, and education initiatives need to foster trust between the new government and civilians, not fear. Education is the gateway to a higher economic and social standing, and it is something that is severely lacking in Haiti. Additionally, agriculture needs to be reestablished, as well as eventually making a market for tourism, which is typically a majority sector in Caribbean and Latin American countries. However, before beginning to work on Haiti's economy and relations with foreign nations, more pressing domestic concerns must be solved, including the corruption, wealth inequality, gang control, and crippling poverty.

Another necessary avenue to creating a stable state is transferring the creation and maintaining of social services such as school, healthcare, and distribution of aid and rations in times of crisis, such as natural disasters, from NGOs to the government. By increasing independence from charities, nonprofits, and other states, Haiti will be able to increase trust in the government, as previously established, and sustain itself for the foreseeable future. Stability within the state will increase the likelihood of foreign investment and local businesses, therefore further strengthening the economy and Haiti's ability to care for its citizens. This becomes a cycle as Haiti's economy grows and becomes self-sufficient, benefiting the citizens and allowing for Haiti to create infrastructure and put measures in place to prevent poverty and further crises, especially due to gang violence, a problem that has permeated Haitian society for decades.

Acting fast is also crucial, so establishing a task force that will go into effect immediately is necessary. Lastly, measures must be put in place to restrict both the illegal arms and drug trade, as these avenues profit from gangs such as the G9 and directly impact and harm other member nations. Without income, the gangs will lose their hold on Port-au-Prince, allowing the country to return to being governed by law and order.

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