



HAITI:

A RISK ASSESSMENT BRIEF

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Based on the CIFP Assessment Methodology

BACKGROUND

The outcome of a formal slave uprising, Haiti was founded in 1804 as the first Black republic. Following an armed struggle and financial compensation to the former French settlers, efforts to rebuild the economy and political system provoked internal unrest, providing the foundations of Haiti's current instability. Toussaint Louverture, the leader of independence, structured the Haitian economy in line with the previous plantation economy while the landed minority Mulatto elite began to appropriate and concentrate the country's wealth, which in turn served to marginalize the majority Black population. The events of the next century and a half saw a continuation of the status quo as political crises continued to plague Haiti: The American occupation (1915-1934); the Duvalier dictatorships (1957-1986); the ousting of elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide by a military coup sponsored by economic and political elites within the Haitian army led by General Raoul Cedras (1991); the contested return of President Aristide (2000), and lastly the forced exile of Mr Aristide in 2004 due to the chaos, militarization and socio-political crisis. All of these events worked to undermine Haiti's progress towards stability and prosperity. More recently, violent gangs, often made up of former military personnel, have taken control of the urban centers via a strong illegal drug and arms trade as well as human trafficking and kidnapping.

The United Nations entered Haiti in 1993 in response to repeated reports of human rights abuses,

military coups, violence, political instability and ever increasing flows of refugees.

A Multinational Interim Force was created in 2004 following the coerced departure of President Aristide. The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) was also established in 2004 by the Secretary General in response to the failing international initiatives in Haiti. MINUSTAH's mandate, as presided over by the Security Council, was to provide security and stability as well as support to the political process while bolstering human rights through international military, police and civilian components. MINUSTAH is now on its 8th mission (as of Oct 2008) and is expected to stay in the country past the present mandate of Oct 2009.

A sharp rise in commodity prices in 2007 followed by a sharp increase in the cost of living in April 2008 sparked further violent political protests in Haiti, bringing about a no-confidence vote in Parliament against Prime Minister Alexis who later resigned. A new Prime Minister, Michelle Pierre Louis, was appointed in September, 2008.

Haiti's faltering economy and development progress has also been hampered by a history of environmental disasters. Most recently, hurricanes Fay, Gustav, Ike and Noel, in addition to tropical storm Hanna, have devastated Haiti, further exacerbating its economic despair and institutional incapacity.

KEY INDICATORS

INDICATORS	CONTRIBUTING FACTORS
History of Armed Conflict CIFP Score: 1.67 (2006)	Stabilizing Factors: UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti since 1995. The Haitian National Police (HNP) increased its forces substantially since 2005. In December 2008, UN peacekeeping force, along with the HNP, launched operation "Blue Helmet" to fight violence and gang activity. ¹ 15 % Decline in number of asylum applications to industrialized countries compared to 2006. ² Destabilizing Factors: History of military coups, violence, and several failed attempts by international community to provide security in the country.
Governance and Political Instability CIFP Score: 9.45 (2006)	Stabilizing Factors: President Preval has remained in power since the 2006 election and is still enjoying the support of international community. ³ Preval has been determined to fight corruption within the country, particularly throughout the police force and the judiciary. A new Prime Minister (Michelle Pierre Louis) was appointed in September, 2008 with the aim of better addressing the food and fuel crisis. ⁴ Violence against journalists has been on the decline in 2007. ⁵ Destabilizing Factors: History of colonialism, dictatorship, violence, and power struggles. Relationship between the President and the government has often been tense, and the president's party Lespwa controls a relatively small percentage of the seats in the National Assembly. In fact, even the nomination of PM Pierre Louis' cabinet by presidential decree was deemed unconstitutional by some members of the government. ⁶ Haiti is one of the most corrupt countries in the world with the judiciary system being the most corrupt and ineffective. ⁷ Therefore, it is very hard to restrain gang related violence and protect the freedom of speech. Steep increases in food prices led to mass demonstrations/riots against the government, this spring. ⁸ The Haitian National Police force is half its intended size

	<p>(15,000) and still far from being self-sufficient.⁹ The process to disarm gangs and other non-state actors has been slow and largely unsuccessful. Gunshot violence is widespread and the number of kidnappings and other violent activities by military gangs has increased dramatically in past year.¹⁰ Prevalent civilian fear/distrust of national police (arbitrary arrests, wrongful detention, inhumane prison conditions, excessive use of force, extrajudicial executions).¹¹ The food crisis has exacerbated acts of vandalism and looting. Haiti is still a major transit hub for drug trafficking from Latin America to the United States and Europe.¹²</p>
<p>Militarization</p> <p>CIFP Score: Not Rated (2006)</p>	<p>Stabilizing Factors: Security provided by MINUSTAH improving. Successful operations against gangs in Cite Soleil, Bel-Air, and the Tabarre District of Port-au-Prince. Enhanced cooperation between the national police and MINUSTAH.¹³ On October 14, 2008, the Security Council extended the mandate of MINUSTAH until 15 October 2009 “with the intention of further renewal.”¹⁴</p> <p>Destabilizing Factors: Continual violent actions by former President Aristide supporters. Former military and armed gangs involved in drug trafficking and illegal arms trade.¹⁵ Status of the former military (how it should be incorporated into the public sector) is a troublesome issue.¹⁶ Lack of tactical intelligence.¹⁷ Lack of French-speaking MINUSTAH members.¹⁸ Participants in the former military disarmament/demobilization campaign not satisfied with the benefits offered. Unfulfilled promises made by Transitional government to members of former military.¹⁹ OIOS investigated reports of sexual exploitation and abuse of children by MINUSTAH contingents finding that “acts of sexual exploitation and abuse were frequent [...] at virtually every location where the contingent personnel were deployed.” 144 individuals were repatriated in 2008 on disciplinary grounds.²⁰ In 2006, the United States partially lifted an arms embargo that was in place since 1991 (in order to arm the national police to fight gangs). Considering the government’s failure to tackle gun violence, as well as the high levels of corruption in the police force and judiciary, this may lead to increased violence.²¹</p>
<p>Population Heterogeneity</p> <p>CIFP Score: 3.50 (2006)</p>	<p>Stabilizing Factors: USAID training Haitian national police (funding \$279 million in 2008) to deal with civil unrest including minority rights issues.²² Amnesty International/local NGOs monitoring/publishing human rights conditions in Haiti²³</p> <p>Destabilizing Factors: Haiti signed an agreement with the Dominican Republic in 1999 for the modes of conduct for Haiti illegal immigrants. However, violence against Haitian refugees in the Dominican Republic still includes mob-like persecution in 2009. An estimated 1 million, mostly illegal, refugees are living in the Dominican Republic. 1,120 Haitian were repatriated in 3 days in January 2009.²⁴ Mulatto and light skinned people dominate the elite class and most of the elite industries and Blacks (making up 95% of the population) are kept from participating in politics and the economy.²⁵ 2007 GPI indicators also show that violent crime, likelihood of violent demonstrations and willingness to fight are moderate to high risk.²⁶ Several human rights activists are currently in hiding due to threats being made as well as past incidences of torture and murder of activists.²⁷</p>
<p>Demographic Stress</p> <p>CIFP Score: 6.20 (2006)</p>	<p>Stabilizing Factors: The Haitian strategic action plan from 2007-2015 is addressing the issues of urbanization, population growth, as well as developing rural agriculture with the world bank and other international donors.²⁸</p> <p>Destabilizing Factors: Population density is at a high risk (354.9 per square kilometer).²⁹ There is an alarming urban growth rate of 3.01% which has been ranked by the UN as 58th/184 countries as one of the highest urban growth rates globally.³⁰ This is in comparison to the 0.4% increase in the rural area.³¹ 37% of the population is aged 0-14 (2007) and is ranked by the UN as 45th/136 countries as having one of the highest youth populations (youth bulge).³²</p>
<p>Economic Performance</p> <p>CIFP Score: 7.48 (2006)</p>	<p>Stabilizing Factors: Haiti was approved in 2006 for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative.³³ The IMF Executive Board approved approx. US\$26.5 million in additional financial assistance to Haiti under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility.³⁴ US Congress in May 2008 passed the HOPE II Act extending preferential treatment of Haitian textiles for an additional five years as well as less stringent origin requirements.³⁵ Total loans and grants approx US\$500 million (2007).³⁶</p> <p>Destabilizing Factors: Due to constant crises in the past fiscal year (price hikes, food crisis, five months of political uncertainty, natural disasters, the financial crisis) Haiti’s growth objective (2007-2008) reduced to 1.5% instead of 4%.³⁷ Inflation rose to 16.5% in April 2008 from 7.9% in Sept 2007. Trade deficit widened by \$185 million (2.5% of annual GDP) from Oct 07-March 08. The gourde weakened by approx. 10% against the dollar since the end of September 2007.³⁸ Unemployment rate is at 25%.³⁹ Haiti’s economic freedom score is 50.5 making its economy the 147th freest in the 2009 Index and locating it just 0.6 above the label of economically repressed in the “mostly unfree” category.⁴⁰ Trade deficit widened by US\$185 million (2.5% of annual GDP) in first half of fiscal year 2008.⁴¹ GDP per capita average annual growth rate -2.1% (1990-2007). 55% of the population is living below international poverty line per day (2005). Debt service as a % of exports of goods and services is 3% (2006).⁴²</p>
<p>Human Development</p> <p>CIFP Score: 8.91 (2006)</p>	<p>Stabilizing Factors: Although HIV/AIDS epidemic is prevalent, especially among women, (ages 15 to 49 at 2.2%) (2007) infection rate decreasing especially in urban areas and from mother to child. Increasing human development index value (1980 = 0.442, 1985=0.462, 1990=0.472, 1995: 0.487, 2005 = 0.529). Increasing access to improved sanitation (1990 = 24%, 2004 = 30%). Increasing access to improved water source (1990 = 47%, 2004 = 54%). Population increasingly less undernourished (1990-92 = 65%, 2002-04 = 46%). Life expectancy increasing (1970= 47, 1990=54, 2007=61).⁴³ Last two years, UNDP, ILO,WFP implemented work programs (360,000 workdays created),⁴⁴</p>

	<p>MINUSTAH and ILO launched 20 labour-intensive projects (2008) employing 38, 172; set up additionally technical training for former prisoners; trained youth as Ambassadors of Peace for communities.⁴⁵</p> <p>Destabilizing Factors: 2008 reports indicate a high degree of risk for major infectious diseases.⁴⁶ High incidents of rape, physical and sexual abuse of women, especially under age of 18.⁴⁷ Human rights investigations hampered by security concerns of victims and witnesses.⁴⁸ Low human development index of 0.529.⁴⁹ 65% of the population living below the national poverty line (1990-2004).⁵⁰ Approx. 300,000 unprotected child labourers in Haiti (2008).⁵¹ Local food production meets 43% of needs, food aid meets 5% of needs, and remaining 52% is imported at increasingly unmanageable prices.⁵² Primary school attendance rate male 48%, female 52% (2000-07). Secondary school attendance rate male 18%, female 21% (2000-07).⁵³ After a sharp decline in 2007, kidnappings increased in first half of 2008.⁵⁴</p>
<p>Environmental Stress</p> <p>CIFP Score: 7.67 (2006)</p>	<p>Stabilizing Factors: Estimated that less than 10% of available water resources being used.⁵⁵</p> <p>Destabilizing Factors: Less than 4% of territory has plant cover, while less than 2% of original forest remains.⁵⁶ Further deforestation resulting from rural population's need for fuel and agriculture.⁵⁷ Soil erosion extensive. Estimated 1600 hectares/year lost to erosion, and severely eroded (infertile) areas constitute 20 to 30% of land under cultivation.⁵⁸ Vulnerable to natural disasters (earthquakes, hurricanes, draught, tropical storms, tornados and flooding).⁵⁹ Less than 43% of population has access to potable water (<i>per capita</i> 116cu m/yr).⁶⁰ Waste disposal and management problematic.⁶¹ Institutional incapacity preventing effective environmental protection and reform.⁶² Depletion of surface layer fish stock due to overexploitation of resources as a result of substandard fishing equipment and practices.⁶³</p>
<p>International Linkages</p> <p>CIFP Score: 5.78 (2006)</p>	<p>Stabilizing Factors: <i>Economic Organizations-</i> Regional economic integration initiative through EPA's with Caricom/ACPs.⁶⁴ World Bank initiative (2008) creates funding package following hurricanes, on top of \$260 million approved in 2005⁶⁵. USAID expands original 2003 to 2006 program of \$2 million to \$14.6 million for 2006 to 2010.⁶⁶ OAS, WTO, IMF, UNDP, IDB, EEC (through ACP), and FAO membership.⁶⁷ <i>Military Alliances-</i> Technically none, but MINUSTAH forces and policing crucial to security (7060 troops and police component of 2091)⁶⁸. Interpol and OAS working to implement political stabilization and security measures.⁶⁹ <i>Diaspora -</i>remittances, especially from Canada, the US and France, in the range of \$1billion annually, equaling nearly a quarter of GDP and nearly twice the earnings from exports.⁷⁰</p> <p>Destabilizing Factors: No real security alliances. Relations with Dominican Republic deteriorating; arbitrary deportations, violence and systemic human rights abuses perpetrated against Haitians.⁷¹ Bush revokes TPS (Temporary Protected Status) for undocumented Haitians seeking refuge in US following storms, adding to Haiti's demographic stress and overwhelming its institutional capacity.⁷² Repatriated criminal Diaspora adds to criminal element in Haiti; situation aggravated by immigration reforms and legislation in foreign countries, particularly U.S., but Canada as well.⁷³</p>

MAJOR STAKEHOLDERS

Preval Government	Contested by members of National Assembly but supported by international community. Risk of political crisis if ineffective in addressing food/fuel crisis/economic crisis.
Coalition partners and opposition parties	Not properly represented in the new cabinet. May lead to confrontation with PM and President. The CPP (most powerful bloc in the lower house) has been demanding reform of Haiti's economic policies. Famni Lavalese (Family Laval Party) regrouping and increasing its supporter base. May seek to participate in the 2011 presidential elections, under the promise of bringing back Aristide or perhaps under his leadership.
(MINUSTAH)/ International Community (NGOs/Donors)	Mandate extended for another year, until 2009. Vested interest in seeing success but at odds with low population support and accumulating operational costs. Continued training of Haitian National Police (PNH) and provision of security. Could shift its emphasis towards development and reconstruction work, as PNH improves its capacity to provide security in the capital. International community and donors have interest in seeing Haiti recover (trade access, preventing terrorism, illegal immigration, humanitarian interest) however dealing with global economic crisis. World Bank and IMF.
Armed Gangs	Vested interest in maintaining status quo of instability.
Haitian Diaspora	Crucial remittance provisions. Vested interest in economic/social/political conditions in homeland. However, criminal links between Haitian gangs, international criminal groups, and Diaspora.
Haitian Citizens	Looking to government or alternatively to non-government actors (usually local gangs and war-lords) to address most basic needs.
Neighbouring States	Tension with Dominican Republic over illegal immigration/movement of Haitian people. Important to maintain good relations with Venezuela for continued provision of oil at preferable prices. CARICOM/OAS members and US.
Elites (Local/Foreign)	Tension between interest of encouraging economic development and maintenance of the status quo.

SCENARIOS

BEST CASE SCENARIO:

- MINUSTAH continues to renew yearly mandate with better communication and coordination with the citizenry. More Haitian police troops are trained. Increased joint operations between MINUSTAH and police force. A significant reduction in gang activity and violence and kidnappings. MINUSTAH able to dedicate more human resources for development and post-disaster relief work in the country.
- President Preval stays in power until 2011 with improved relationship between himself, the government and the citizenry. Reform of the judicial system and concrete anti-corruption legislation and campaigns (particularly among the judiciary and the police).
- Human development continues to incrementally improve. More resources dedicated towards treatment and prevention of HIV/AIDS. Economic and structural reforms improve the economy allowing for positive growth rates.
- Prolonged absence of intense storms and environmental disasters along with agricultural and environmental reforms, and the effective implementation of these reforms.
- Continued or increased support from Diaspora and the international community. HIPC initiative significantly reduces Haiti's foreign debt.

WORST CASE SCENARIO:

- Disease outbreak causes strain on resources/institutions resulting in an unproductive work force, destabilization of the economy, causing riots due to competition over scarce resources.
- Dominican Republic reneges on 1999 agreement to treat Haitian refugees humanely. Civil unrest in Haiti due to huge inflow of repatriated Haitians creating excess pressure on economy, food resources, human resources, and institutions. Fierce competition over scarce resources leading to violence.
- Natural disasters causing severe disease outbreaks, and depletion of natural resources including soil, crops and water. Mass evacuations distracting MINUSTAH from its mandate. Possible looting, gang violence due to limited state capacity to provide security and resources. Funds spent on reconstruction diverted from basic human needs towards security needs. Riots and violence over lack of limited resources.
- Scaling down of international programs/aid due to global economic recession leading to further institutional weakness resulting in civil unrest and violence.
- Continuing food shortages causing more civil unrest and violence, giving rise to criminal activity and creating political instability. This increases the risk of a coup and/or a civil war.
- MINUSTAH does not renew mandate or reduces its troop commitment or asked to leave after October 2009. Aid programs are significantly reduced causing state weakness resulting in unrest and violence. Less control over rural areas. Government unable to set up agricultural programs and state reconstruction mechanisms. Health care and education diminish significantly. Environment becomes unsustainable leading to major disease outbreaks. Riots, lawlessness and violence result. Increased risk of a coup led by gangs accompanied by civil war or degeneration into a Hobbesian state.

MOST LIKELY CASE SCENARIO:

- MINUSTAH's mandate is extended beyond 2009 but with limited resources due to global economic recession, decreasing possible aid donations. The UN force is still needed in the country to provide security because of high levels of violence and gang activity. National Haitian Police force still unable to independently provide security in the country.
- As a net importer of food, Haiti will continue to suffer from high inflation, a widening trade deficit and a depreciating gourde exacerbating the food crisis coupled with continually escalating unemployment rates, extreme poverty and a negative country growth rate. More demonstrations, civil unrest and violent outbreaks leading to further stress on security forces. Government is unable to respond effectively resulting in an increase in the number of refugees seeking asylum.

- Although the human development index, life expectancy, and access to safe water/sanitation are slowly improving, all indicators will still remain low. A lethal disease outbreak is expected. Human rights investigations will still be hampered and ineffective. Child labour, sexual/physical abuse will remain high, and low school attendance will continue, causing a frustrated and inadequately educated population to remain subject to a declining standard of living.
- Immigration reform and legislation in foreign countries leads to deportation and repatriation of Haitian Diaspora and criminal element, serving to exacerbate demographic stress and crime in Haiti.
- Current president stays in power until the end of his term as well as the PM. Frequent frictions between the president and the government. High levels of corruption remain in the government and the judiciary.
- Continued environmental degradation and frequent natural disasters due to climate change, further exacerbating economic crisis and the increasing risk of disease outbreak and violence.

End Notes

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