

HE Sacha Sergio Llorenti
Permanent Representative to the UN
Of the Plurinational State of Bolivia
President of the Security Council
New York, NY 10017 USA

Dear Ambassador Llorenti,

Receive a fraternal embrace and our best wishes for your period as Security Council president. We write to you on this occasion and through you to the entire Council, hoping that the forthcoming visit to Haiti will be a step in favor of justice, human rights, and peace.

In relation to the objectives set for that visit, we hope above all that it will lead to concrete recommendations and measures that contribute to settling the immense debt that has been accumulated with the Haitian people, by the Council itself, the UN and the countries that have contributed troops, police and resources to MINUSTAH over its 13 years: a debt to the people who are victims of the MINUSTAH's catastrophic balance in human rights terms.

This debt now defines the lives of these people as well as the legacy of the MINUSTAH, seriously undermining the credibility of any future UN action in Haiti. It is a debt to the people of Haiti as a whole, in particular to the women and young people who were raped and sexually exploited by members of the Mission, the neighbors who suffered the military and police repression - such as in Cité Soleil, where MINUSTAH troops intervened 15 times with lethal weapons, sometimes firing more than 25,000 bullets in a single operation - and the hundreds of thousands of people and families who suffer death and disease due to the introduction of cholera.

The magnitude and impunity of these human rights violations and the UN's denial of responsibility for cholera over six long years demand integral reparation. Through this visit the Council has a unique opportunity to fulfill its obligation to initiate the urgently needed remedial actions as an essential part of MINUSTAH's conclusion.

The Security Council has recognized in Resolution 2350 (2017) that respect for human rights and measures to end impunity are essential to guarantee the rule of law and security in Haiti. We know from long experience in Latin America and elsewhere, that on the basis of impunity it is impossible to build stable democracies, robust state institutions and respect for human rights and the rule of law, the very objectives set by the Council for the MINUSTAH and now, for a new mission to Haiti. It is time that the Council recognizes that the necessary effort begins at home.

We urge the Security Council to take advantage of its visit to pay off its debt and start a new path, indispensable steps for the responsible closing of the MINUSTAH and a transition towards a relationship based on respect for Haitian sovereignty, self-determination and human rights.

We urge you in particular to give priority to consultation and direct exchange with representatives of Haitian popular movements and organizations and of groups of victims of cholera and other human rights abuses committed by the UN, fundamental for their perspective and action in relation to Security Council objectives for its visit and for their country. It is also indispensable given the weakness of Haitian public institutions, including governing bodies elected on the basis of minimal suffrage after the international community's repeated interventions in their country.

We also urge the Council to address specifically how the "New UN Approach to Cholera in Haiti" is being incorporated into the process of closing down the MINUSTAH. The Council

has established that implementation of this program, which seeks to respond to the demands of justice and compensation of cholera victims, will not be the responsibility of MINUSTAH or its successor. However, there is no doubt that ensuring that the program is fully established as part of MINUSTAH's conclusion, with necessary funding in place and the central participation of intended beneficiaries in the design and implementation of its two lines of action, will determine the possibility of both a successful closure and any future UN role.

To date, however, only 2% of the requested \$ 400 million - an amount equivalent to less than one of the 13 years of MINUSTAH funding - has so far been collected to cover the cost of compensation to families of the 10,000 people killed and more than 800,000 survivors, along with the investments needed to improve the sanitation system, achieve universal access to safe drinking water, and provide comprehensive reparations to Haiti for the immense economic damages suffered due to the introduction of cholera. This situation is totally unacceptable.

The Security Council must recognize that fulfilling its own human rights obligations, including redress of violations perpetrated, is a requirement for peace and security in Haiti as anywhere. The recommendations that you make in this regard, as a result of this visit and exchanges with the organizations and persons indicated in particular, will be decisive. These must include the political decision to actively involve the victims of the MINUSTAH's human rights violations in the preparation and implementation of required remedial actions and the exemplary commitment by the Council's member countries to finance these actions in accordance, minimally, with the established quota system.

Along with numerous popular movements and organizations in Haiti and Latin America, we have long questioned the MINUSTAH's role, understanding that it was not a response in keeping with the Haitian people's rights and needs. Indeed, the Security Council is well aware that the presence it installed in 2004, as well as that of yet another so-called Peace and Stabilization Mission as approved to begin in October, are widely considered an occupation, alien to the ideals of the UN and the rights and objectives reaffirmed time and again by the Council itself.

The worsening of the systemic and humanitarian crisis in Haiti reflects this evaluation, in addition furthermore to the infamous balance in human rights and impunity. We hope that the Security Council will recognize this situation and, in line with the objectives established for this visit, begin to pay off its debts and start a truly new approach with the people of Haiti. We wish you every success in this regard, as we also reiterate our willingness to contribute with whatever is within our reach.

With a fraternal embrace of Peace and Goodwill,

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel
Nobel Peace Laureate 1980

Jody Williams
Nobel Peace Laureate 1997

Shirin Ebadi
Nobel Peace Laureate 2003

Rigoberta Menchú Tum
Nobel Peace Laureate 1992

Betty Williams
Nobel Peace Laureate 1976

-Buenos Aires, June 16, 2017

cc. UN Secretary General António Guterres