

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION IN HAITI

1. Historical Background

Haiti was the first black country to gain its independence with the blood and life of its combatants on January 1st, 1804. At the time of independence its population was 500 000 inhabitants and its territory had a forest cover of 80%. Today the population is of over 12 million and the original forests have been reduced to about 1%. It is clear that the environmental situation is very serious. This nation, birthplace of freedom, is going through one of its worst moments.

2. Immediate Causes of the Current Situation.

The country has long been in a situation of structural crisis, which could be said to have begun in 1804 with the assassination of Father Jean Jacques Dessalines. But it has become a global crisis that impacts greatly on all sectors of society in the last 10 years, during the regime of the PHTK (Parti Haitien Tèt Kale, the “bald headed” political party). This is a Creole expression that normally could not be used as a name of a political organization but the party was founded by President Joseph Martelly, who came to power in 2011 with fraud supported by The Organization of American States (OAS). Martelly, with the complicity of imperialist forces, handed over power to his protégé Jovenel Moïse in an election with many political scams between the oligarchy and imperialism. Jovenel was officially elected with 500,000 voters out of more than 6 million who were eligible to vote. Thus, he was a president with no legitimacy from the beginning. Jovenel's constitutional mandate expired on February 7, 2021 but he decided to stay in power in violation of electoral law. For Haitians, he is a de facto president.

On the night of July 6-7, Jovenel was assassinated in his private residence and his wife was mortally wounded. At this time, her health condition is reported to be stable and her life is no longer in danger.

3. Information about the Assassination of Former President Jovenel.

There is a lot of information circulating, yet none of it provides clarity on how Jovenel died. The government is talking about a Colombian commando of 28 soldiers, a group that includes 2 or 3 U.S. citizens of Haitian origin. This commando would have entered the residence around one o'clock in the morning of July 7th and assassinated him. A controversial point is how these people managed to assassinate the president without killing any of his security personnel. No one was killed or injured on the road leading to the house, despite the fact that it had 3 checkpoints before reaching the building. It is quite clear that the assassination involved Jovenel's security team and government itself. We must wait for the truth, even though the investigations are being carried out by the government itself.

4. What is happening and why? What is the plan behind this?

The assassination of Jovenel has to do not only with the PHTK's attempt to remain in power but also many other reasons. First, the PHTK is divided in 2 opposing groups that fight for control and power: one group headed by Jovenel and the other by Martelly. Secondly, one way or another they have to protect

the embezzlers and thieves of the PetroCaribe Fund –more than 4 billion US dollars–, of the reconstruction funds after the earthquake –more than 10 billion dollars. They have to protect the public funds embezzlers and thieves who have taken billions of gourdes for 10 years. The financial criminals are many and can be found in many sectors, in many places inside and outside the country.

The PHTK also offers protection to the leaders of the gangs that are sowing terror in the poor neighborhoods, massacring poor people. There are more than 100 groups of “banditos” working for the PHTK camps. There is a struggle between Jovenel and Martelly for the control of these groups with the goal of controlling more territories to prevent mobilizations from their political opponents. To achieve a life of luxury, the “banditos” organize kidnappings of middle class people, especially professionals, to get hundreds of thousands of dollars. Today, kidnappings also take place in the working class neighborhoods for a few dollars. We have a government of officially federated gangs that appoint ministers. The last prime minister appointed by Jovenel before his death was on the order of the leader of one of these gangs.

The PHTK wants to orchestrate an electoral farce with the support of a very keen United States, interested in this kind of government with drug trafficking connections that they can use as puppets dependent on the CIA or other sectors of imperialist power.

Imperialist forces are pushing for a new national constitution that would allow transnationals to openly buy land legally in Haiti to control the natural resources of the country. It is a project to terminate the peasantry, a project of plunder defined in the green economy plan. There is no doubt about the PHTK being a sure ally because it can continue to squander and steal the resources of the State.

5. After 10 years of PHTK government, what have been the results for the masses and for the country in general?

After the fall of Duvalier the country started a process of bourgeois democratization, especially with the adoption of the constitution of March 87. This constitution, normally the fundamental basis for all laws, was meant to allow a good participation of the citizens in the affairs of the country. But in fact, the ruling class wants to continue its total domination over the masses. That is why they seek full control of all public institutions in order to block any political participation of the general public. Since its approval by a massive vote in its favor, no government has implemented the constitution.

The strategy of PHTK is to not organize elections in the times foreseen in the constitution. This allowed Jovenel to impose a dictatorship in Haiti since January 2020, after the formal expiration of the mandate of the entire Chamber of Deputies and 2 thirds of the Chamber of Senators. Out of 30 senators only 10 are left who legally cannot do anything but continue to judge their privileges.

After dissolving the parliament, Jovenel had been ruling by decree. He passed more than a hundred illegal decrees and decided to draft a new constitution, following the directions of the World Bank through the representative of the UN Secretary General, who is essentially an agent of the United States government.

In the last 10 years the country has experienced the most terrible economic situation in its history. When Martelly headed the government in 2011, the GDP of the country was 13.1 billion dollars with a per capita income of \$ 1200. By the end of 2020, the GDP was 8.3 billion with a per capita income that fell to \$ 756. We must highlight here the population increase, of 200 thousand more people to feed.

In 2010, workers earned 250 gourdes a day, worth \$6.25. In 2019 the amount of gourdes has doubled to 500 gourdes but the currency value dropped to \$ 4.66. The workers are undergoing an aggressive impoverishment process. They cannot make a decent living.

In 2011, the value of the Haitian gourde was 40 gourdes for a dollar. By May 2020, it had dropped to 110 for a dollar. 5000 gourdes were worth \$123 in 2011, but in 2020 the amount to only \$41.44.

According to economist Enemy Germain, from December 2010 to December 2020, the Haitian gourde has lost 140% of its value. It is unbelievable, unthinkable. But it is so. The masses cannot make a decent living in this situation while the PHTK regimes are stealing, squandering the country's resources.

The farmers are the first victims of the PHTK governments. The rural exodus is cruel. Most of the youth migrate to the cities to become drivers, abandoning food production. They pressure their parents into selling their land to buy motorcycles or to buy flight tickets to go to Dominican Republic, Brazil, Chile or other countries. In only 2 years 300 thousand young people left the country for Chile alone. They are the peasants who increase every day the lumpen proletariat in Port-au-Prince in the poor districts, a source of recruitment for gangs.

6. What are the prospects for the future after Jovenel's passing?

In the short term, there is still nothing clear for the future of the country. It is the same Jovenel's government that is in power, saying that they will continue Jovenel's projects to organize presidential and legislative elections on September 26th of this year. The U.S. Secretary of State declared that his country supports the power of the de facto Prime Minister Claude Joseph, whom Jovenel had deposed to appoint Ariel Henri and published his nomination in the official newsletter. Yet Biden's administration continues to support the electoral calendar that Claude Joseph is keeping for September. The representative of the UN Secretary stated that the United Nations supports Claude Joseph in organizing elections and give over his mandate to the newly elected president on February 7, 2022.

This plan from the international community for Haiti is a project of death. At the same time, the opposition to PHTK is splitting in search of a share of power with sectors of the PHTK. It will be very difficult to reach a political agreement with the majority of the parties in political platforms with civil society organizations to form a transition government, which would have the following urgent tasks:

- Dismantling the gangs.
- Ensuring the right to move freely in the country.
- Ending corruption in public administration.
- Re-organization of the police outside the influence of politics.

- Creation of employment in the short term.
- Promoting agroecology and peasant agriculture to return to food sovereignty.
- Establishing a program for urgent recovery and protection of the environment.
- Prosecuting those responsible for financial crimes and massacres.
- Organizing a national conference to build a strategic plan for the next 25 years.
- Analyzing the necessary modifications for the 87 constitution and the mechanisms to bring them about.
- Resuming the process towards reliable elections at all levels in a period of between 18 and 24 months.

7. In conclusion.

The whole country was struggling to defeat Jovenel and the PHTK regime but this assassination does not advance the project of the people. The popular organizations must remain alert to what is happening because the PHTK may manage to remain in power through the urgent upcoming. This is very important, but also very difficult due to a heavily fragmented opposition.

The organizations of farmers, workers, youth, neighborhood and the political organizations of the left must strengthen themselves even more in order to sustain a permanent mobilization to get PHTK out of power and change the path the country is on, to move on to the path towards food sovereignty.

As organizations of CLOC-VC in Haiti, we are in the struggle with other popular, civil society and political organizations in search of an acceptable solution to the crisis, a solution that takes into account our project for the future. We need the solidarity of all our sister organizations in this struggle. Onwards to victory! Until the final victory!

WE WILL TRIUMPH!
CLOC-VIA CAMPESINA HAITI.