

KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

Statement by

H.E. Mr Marc Pecsteen, Permanent Representative of Belgium
to the United Nations

Security Council meeting on Haiti - BINUH

New York, 20/2/2020

Excellencies, Dear colleagues,

I would also like to thank the SRSG, Helen La Lime, for her speech, and Ms Yolène Gilles from the 'Fondasyon Je Klere'.

We are very concerned by the situation in Haiti. **The political impasse has contributed to a socio-economic and humanitarian crisis** that is seriously affecting the most vulnerable members of the population. Belgium would like to stress the importance of political responsibility and urgently calls for **open, inclusive dialogue** with a view to the organisation of free, fair and transparent elections. According to a UN survey, nine out of ten Haitians favour dialogue; this is a clear message to the political classes. Civil society bodies in Haiti play a constructive role and we congratulate organisations such as the 'Fondasyon Je Klere' for their important work. The demonstrations in 2018-2019 revealed the expectations of the Haitian people in the areas of good governance and the fight against corruption. The significant involvement of the Haitian people must be taken into account through social dialogue.

The government must tackle the **root causes of instability and poverty** in the country. All parties must refrain from violence and solve their differences through peaceful means. Political negotiations must be based on the broad consensus that Haiti needs constitutional and structural reforms if it is to offer its people economic opportunities and improve the legitimacy of its public institutions.

Impunity and insecurity are some of the main sources of frustration. The legal system must be reformed, corruption tackled and human rights protection improved. It is only then that the political elite will be able to win back the trust of the population. We note that the Haitian National Police is working in difficult circumstances. The surveillance and responsibility systems must be further strengthened. Intimidation and attacks against journalists and civil society representatives must end and gang violence must be tackled urgently. With regard to the attack on the offices of the Fondasyon Je Klere management yesterday, we remind the Haitian authorities of the importance of protecting the voices of civil society against reprisals. The prevalence of sexual and sexist violence remains alarming.

Impunity must be eliminated, and we request the urgent judicial follow-up of the investigations into the massacres, including those in La Saline and Bel Air, and the allegations of corruption against the PetroCaribe fund. We welcome the attention that BINUH and the HCHR are giving to this issue. We are encouraged by the progress made in validating the National Action Plan on Human Rights.

With regard to the work of the United Nations, we **support the work of BINUH and the agencies and funds present** in Haiti. The transition to a new institutional presence must continue smoothly and we call on the parties in Haiti to take full advantage of the "good offices" role of the mission. We encourage BINUH to work closely not only with the other international stakeholders, in particular the European Union, but also with Haitian civil society. We await the finalisation of the Integrated Strategic Framework with interest. The indicators proposed by the Secretary-General in his report will allow us to monitor progress in the country in the key areas of the mission mandate.

Dear colleagues,

To conclude, Belgium reiterates its **commitment** to working with the Haitian people and government to create a democratic, peaceful and secure future. We now await concrete measures by the authorities to resolve the political crisis.

Thank you.