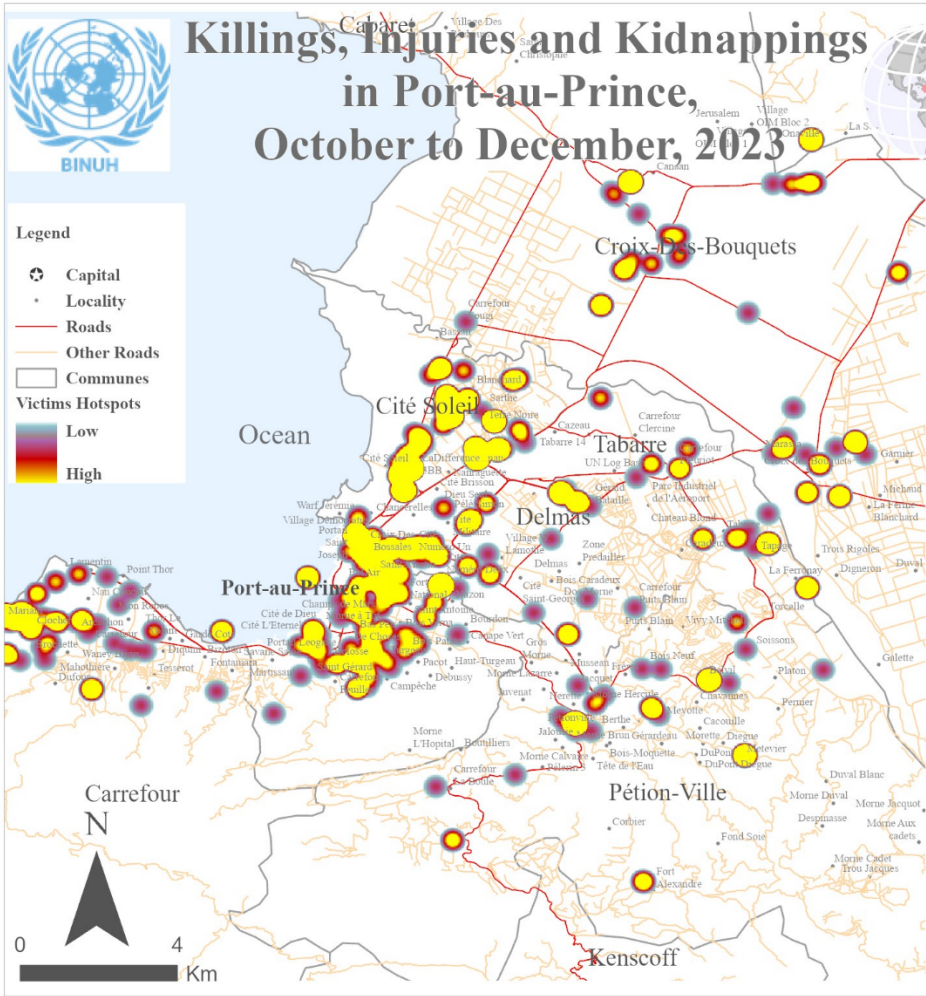


UNITED NATIONS INTEGRATED OFFICE IN  
HAITI



## I. Armed violence

During the fourth quarter of 2023 (October-December), the Human Rights Service (HRS) of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) recorded 2,327 victims of killing, injury and kidnapping across the country; men representing 73% of victims, women 24% and children 3%. This represents an increase of almost 8% on the previous quarter (July-September 2023)<sup>1</sup>.

The highest number of victims of killing and injury continued to be documented in the capital (80%), where violence spread to the communes at the southern entrance. The capital was also marked by large-scale attacks marking the territorial expansion of criminal groups in order to access new "sources of income" and create escape routes from police operations.

In the Artibonite department, criminal activity accounted for 9% of murder and injury victims nationwide. What's more, for the second quarter running, kidnappings in this region continued to exceed those recorded in the Ouest department.

### *Victims of murder and injury*

In the last quarter of 2023, at least 1,634 people were killed or injured as a result of violence by criminal groups. Most were victims of bullets fired during extremely violent attacks, particularly in the communes of Carrefour, Cité Soleil, Gressier and Port-au-Prince (West Department).

<sup>1</sup> In the fourth quarter of 2023, the HRS recorded 1,104 murder victims, 532 injury victims and 691 kidnapping victims.

Large-scale gang attacks in the fourth quarter of 2023		
Location	Number of people killed and injured	Duration
La Saline (Port-au-Prince)	42	3 days
Belekou, Boston, Brooklyn, Pierre VI, Terre Noire (Cité Soleil)	268	17 days
Carrefour and Gressier	201	During the quarter

On 13 October, clashes between gangs belonging to the *G-9 famille et alliés* (hereinafter *G-9*) coalition resumed in the La Saline area of downtown Port-au-Prince.<sup>2</sup> They had began at the end of September, following tensions over the distribution of "income" from truck hijackings. In early October, *G-9* leader Jimmy Chérizier attempted to eliminate the leader of an allied gang, the *Tokyo* gang, who had challenged his authority. The coalition was divided into two camps: on one side, the gangs of *Carrefour Drouillard*, *Chen Mechan*, *Tokyo* and *Wharf Jérémie*; on the other, those of *Belekou*, *Boston*, *Fort Dimanche*, *La Saline* and Chérizier's *Delmas 6* gang<sup>3</sup>. The hostilities, which lasted four days, weakened the *G-9*, as gangs from the first camp reportedly left the coalition. In the end, at least 29 people were killed or wounded, most of them victims of stray bullets while in their homes where they were trying to protect themselves.

<sup>2</sup> A first wave of armed violence within the *G-9* broke out between September 27 and 29.

<sup>3</sup> Gangs generally adopt the name of the neighborhood in which they are based (see Appendix II – Mapping of criminal groups).

Over the last two weeks of November, several Cité Soleil neighborhoods were the scene of violent territorial confrontations within the *G-9*, but also between the *G-9* and the *G-Pèp*, another coalition of gangs. The clashes were sparked by the death, in undetermined circumstances, of *Belekou* gang leader Andrice Isca on 12 November. Isca was an important member of the *G-9*, who controlled strategic locations in Cité Soleil, including access to the Varreux oil terminal and Route Nationale 1, which links the capital to the north of the country. Following his death, the *Boston* and *Terre Noire* gangs attacked the *Belekou* gang in an attempt to take control of its territory. Similarly, taking advantage of the void left by Isca's death and the clashes within the *G-9*, *G-Pèp* gangs, notably those from *Brooklyn* (located in the coastal area of Cité Soleil) and *Canaan* (established in the north of the capital) attacked the *Boston*, *Belekou* and *Pierre VI* groups. These confrontations killed or wounded at least 174 members of the population (including nine children), most of whom were targeted by *sniper* fire. In addition to the loss of human life, the humanitarian toll of the clashes was disastrous: over 1,000 people were forced to abandon their homes and take refuge in nearby areas.

Over the past quarter, the *Grand Ravine* and *Village de Dieu* gangs, belonging to the *G-Pèp* coalition, have been aggressively expanding their territory south of the capital, particularly in Carrefour and Gressier, which straddle National Road 2. At the end of October, these two gangs launched violent attacks against the local population living in these communes and set up a cell there, with the aim of increasing their sources of "income" from kidnapping and illegal taxation of trucks transporting goods to and from the capital. These attacks have resulted in at least 201 deaths and injuries. The control of Gressier is also motivated by a strategy aimed at ensuring the possibility of escape, to hard-to-reach areas, in the event of police operations. In addition to shooting anyone considered to be opposed to their presence, these gangs have kidnapped road users, robbed and set fire to homes and hijacked trucks carrying goods. The lack of police resources to prevent the restoration of security in the area, and led to a strong reaction from a Carrefour-based "self-defense" group known as *Caravane*. Made up of presumed active and former police officers, this "self-defense" group killed and wounded at least 17 people accused of being linked to gangs.

A similar tactic was followed by the *400 Mawozo*, a gang affiliated to *G-Pèp*, in the communes of Ganthier and Thomazeau, north of the capital. The *400 Mawozo* carried out "scorched earth" tactics, particularly in Thomazeau, with a view to driving away large numbers of people and preventing them from returning to their homes, which had been looted and burned. On 4 October, the gang also set fire to the Thomazeau police station, forcing police officers to abandon the area.

*Kraze Baryè*, another *G-Pèp*-allied gang operating in the communes of Delmas, Kenscoff, Pétion Ville and Tabarre, was also affected by internal divisions. The gang's leader, Vitel'Homme Innocent, had imposed brutal "punishments", including executions and dismemberments, on any member of his gang who dared to challenge his authority. As a result, many members left the group. However, these departures were quickly offset by new recruits, enabling the gang to continue its criminal activities. Between October and December, the *Kraze Baryè* gang killed or wounded 67 people.

Although clashes between gangs operating in the capital claimed the lives of at least 262 of their members during the period under review, the ease of recruitment among the poor populations living under their control enabled them to rapidly replenish their ranks.

In the Artibonite department, support from *G-Pèp* gangs based in the capital has enabled local gangs to continue committing human rights abuses. A joint report, published by BINUH and OHCHR in November 2023, entitled "Criminal violence extends beyond Port-au-Prince"<sup>4</sup>, showed how criminal groups in Artibonite attack urban and rural centers, or public transport vehicles, killing, injuring and kidnapping their residents and passengers.

Persistent gang violence in the capital and Artibonite department, and the failure of state authorities to protect the population, continued to

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4 BINUH-OHCHR (November 28, 2023). "Criminal violence extends beyond Port-au-Prince: the situation in the lower Artibonite from January 2022 to October 2023", available at: [https://binuh.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/rapport\\_artibonite\\_fr\\_vf.pdf](https://binuh.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/rapport_artibonite_fr_vf.pdf) (last visited: January 17, 2024)

fuel mass lynchings and murders perpetrated by "vigilante groups". Between October and December, these groups shot, stoned, or killed with machetes at least 76 people accused of committing common crimes or supporting gangs. Seventy-seven percent of these incidents took place in the West department.

At the same time, the fourth quarter saw an increase in the number of individuals killed or wounded during police operations, from 279 (in the third quarter) to 345, 217 of whom were alleged gang members.

### *Kidnappings*

At least 693 people were kidnapped in the last quarter of 2023, an increase of 18% on the previous quarter. Most of the kidnappings (63%) took place in the Lower Artibonite region, where mass kidnappings of people travelling in public transport vehicles on main roads have become frequent.

In the metropolitan area, almost 50% of victims were abducted in the communes of Croix-des-Bouquets and Port-au-Prince. Kidnappings have also been reported in the communes of Carrefour and Gressier since gangs set up cells there at the end of October. No social category has been spared: from street vendors and farmers - usually caught up in mass kidnappings while traveling in public transport vehicles - to high-level professionals, including doctors and civil servants - who have been targeted while driving their private vehicles, or while in the vicinity of their homes or workplaces. In some cases, the kidnappers wore uniforms similar to those worn by the police, in order to intercept the victims more easily.

### *Sexual violence*

New cases of sexual violence perpetrated by gangs were recorded throughout the last quarter of 2023, in the communes of Carrefour, Cité Soleil, Gressier and Port-au-Prince (West department), as well as in Gros Morne, Liancourt and Petite Rivière de l'Artibonite (Artibonite department). During attacks on localities controlled by "rival" groups, heavily armed individuals collectively raped women and girls inside

their homes or in the streets, with the aim of spreading fear and causing suffering among the population. In Cité Soleil, for example, members of the *G-9* gang raped at least five women in the Terre Noire neighborhood during clashes with the *G-Pép* in November. Some of these acts were recorded on video by the perpetrators and shared on social media, with a view to humiliating their victims.

Rape also continued to be used against women travelling in public transport vehicles in the communes of the lower Artibonite region. On 3 October, the *Kokorat Sans Ras* gang abducted 17 "Madan Sara", as street vendors are commonly called, as they were traveling through the commune of Gros Morne. The victims, who were on their way to a local market to sell their wares, were raped on the spot by gang members before being forced to walk naked to their place of captivity. Similar attacks have been documented against women living in the Brooklyn neighborhood (Cité Soleil), crossing *G-9-controlled* areas in an attempt to return home after selling their wares at the markets.

In the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, in addition to being exposed to rape during attacks by "rival" areas, women and girls continue to suffer sexual violence on a daily basis at the hands of gang members controlling their neighborhoods. For example, on 3 November, 13-year-old Sophie<sup>5</sup> was raped by two members of the *Ti Bwa* gang on a street in Carrefour as she was returning home from buying groceries.

Health care and psychosocial services for survivors and their dependents remain largely inadequate, particularly in the Artibonite department. Distrust of the police and the justice system, as well as the stigmatization of victims, remain major obstacles to reporting these cases, fostering widespread impunity for these crimes.

### *Child victims of gang violence*

The impact of gang violence on children remains of particular concern. At least 53 children, some as young as six months old, were killed or injured during the last quarter of 2023.

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<sup>5</sup> The names of the victims have been changed to preserve their identity and that of their families.

Most of the victims were hit by stray bullets while in the street or inside their homes during gang clashes. Others were executed by gangs or "vigilante groups" on suspicion of supporting other gangs or cooperating with the police. On 6 November, Aristil, a ten-year-old boy, was walking home in Mariani (Gressier commune) when he came across members of the *Grand Ravine* gang "patrolling" the neighborhood streets. After questioning the boy, they accused him of being a police informant and executed him on the spot.

Exposed to the risk of being killed or injured during confrontations, children in gangs also commit acts of violence by actively participating in kidnapping, robbery and extortion of drivers. In the long term, this puts them at risk of suffering serious psychological trauma and social adjustment problems. According to social actors, while most children join gangs due to a lack of socio-economic opportunities, after a short period in their ranks, many express the desire to leave them, but are prevented from doing so for fear of reprisals.

#### *Socio-economic impact*

Freedom of movement and economic activity continued to be hampered by the presence of gangs on the main roads linking the capital to the rest of the country (in particular on national roads 1, 2, 3 and 8). Drivers of private and public transport vehicles are forced to pay "traffic taxes" at the many improvised "checkpoints" set up and manned by armed men along the roads. Passengers and passers-by are also frequently robbed or kidnapped, especially in Artibonite. Owners of trucking companies, for their part, are forced to pay monthly "protection taxes", which can reach up to 8,000 US dollars per month, as well as an additional tax, which varies according to the value of the goods transported, every time a truck passes through one of these "checkpoints". The gangs' control of the roads has also hampered the delivery of humanitarian aid.

Problems of access to education persisted. In October, during gang clashes in La Saline (Port-au-Prince), dozens of pupils were forced to leave their classrooms and return home when intense gunfire was heard throughout the neighborhood. Almost 500 other children had no time to escape, and remained trapped in their school buildings for two days. During the clashes, several schools, including the Lycée National de La

Saline, and some religious institutions were ransacked by gang members.

The violence has also limited access to healthcare services. For example, after finding itself at the heart of violent gang attacks against several Cité Soleil neighborhoods in November, Fontaine Hospital - one of only two hospitals operating in the area - took the decision to evacuate over 100 patients, including several newborns, to a safer facility in the capital. Clashes around the other Cité Soleil hospital, located in the Drouillard district and run by Médecins Sans Frontières, have jeopardized the continuation of medical services. In the Turgeau district of Port-au-Prince, Médecins Sans Frontières was also forced to suspend operations at its emergency care center, after armed individuals stopped one of their ambulances and killed a patient being transferred to another hospital.

During the last quarter of 2023, gangs and "vigilante groups" continued to steal and destroy private and public property across the capital and Artibonite department. At least 500 homes and other buildings were ransacked and/or burned in attacks, including the Thomazeau police station, which was set on fire.

## II. Judicial system

The judicial system remained largely dysfunctional due to widespread violence and persistent structural problems, notably recurrent strikes by justice officials. There have, however, been some positive developments.

#### *Functioning of the judiciary*

On 11 December, the Haitian Magistrates Collection (In French, Collectif des magistrats haïtiens, or COMADH), which has staged several strikes throughout the year to demand higher salaries and improved working conditions, announced the temporary suspension of its latest work stoppage, which began in November 2023. According to COMADH, this suspension was intended to contribute to the efforts of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security to combat the high rate of preventive detention affecting most prisons across the country (see the

section on "Detention conditions in Haitian prisons"). However, on the same day, 11 December, the National Association of Haitian Court Clerks (In French, Association Nationale des Greffiers Haïtiens, or ANAGH) began an unlimited work stoppage, which was still in progress on 31 December. ANAGH is calling for the implementation of an agreement reached in November 2017 with the Ministry of Justice, including a pay rise.

#### *Strengthening ethics and respect for the law within the judiciary*

On 3 October, the Superior Council of the Judiciary (in French, Conseil Supérieur du Pouvoir Judiciaire, or CSPJ) published an ethics guide for judges. The guide aims to promote judicial accountability and combat corruption within the judicial system, as well as restore public confidence in the system.

During the fourth quarter of 2023, 16 magistrates were certified and four non-certified by the CSPJ<sup>6</sup>. The files of three other magistrates have been retained by the CSPJ for further examination. Some Haitian human rights organizations have expressed concern about the CSPJ's method of certification, pointing out that several competent judges have not been certified by the CSPJ, while others considered to be of "lesser integrity" have been. They were also concerned about the lack of mechanisms for appealing CSPJ decisions on non-certification of judges. Following the filing of a petition before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) by the Haitian Institute for Human Rights (In French, Institut Haïtien des Droits Humains, or IHDH), representing one of the magistrates concerned by the non-certification, in November 2023, the IACHR declared the case admissible and recommended that the Haitian State provide it, within six months, with all the necessary information relating to the case.

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<sup>6</sup> The certification procedure for magistrates and public prosecutors, provided for by the law of 27 November 2007 but not operational until 2014, involves verification of the integrity, skills and training of those wishing to become magistrates, or those already exercising these functions without having undergone a certification procedure, by a commission made up of four representatives of the CSPJ and three representatives of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security.

On 15 November, the Government Commissioners of Miragoâne and Les Cayes received a "final call to order" from the Minister of Justice and Public Security, condemning "the illegality of some of their actions". It is important to remember that in 2022 and 2023, the Miragoâne government commissioner summarily executed at least 11 people suspected of gang affiliation. Despite these acts, some civil society organizations regret that this magistrate seems untouchable due to the support he enjoys from the Miragoâne population, the local Catholic Church and the Haitian diaspora.

#### *Detention conditions in Haitian prisons*

On 31 December 2023, 11,822 people were being held in Haiti's 19 prisons. Eighty-three percent (83%) of them were in pre-trial detention, down 1% from the previous quarter. The cell occupancy rate exceeded 307%. In the last quarter of 2023, 34 inmates died, most of them from diseases caused by malnutrition, bringing the total number of deceased inmates to 107 in 2023.

On 20 October, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security and the Superior Council of the Judiciary published a memo inviting government commissioners and deans of courts of first instance to organize non-jury correctional and criminal sessions on a daily basis from 30 October 2023 to 31 January 2024, in order to combat prolonged pre-trial detention and relieve prison overcrowding, in view of the deployment of the multinational security support mission and the possible increase in arrests.

In the last quarter of 2023, thanks to this initiative, approximately 400 files were processed, leading to the release of more than 258 people (including 11 children), detained for minor offenses, from 13 prisons across the country.

#### *The fight against corruption*

On 15 November, the Anti-Corruption Unit (in French, the Unité de lutte contre la corruption, or ULCC) handed over 11 corruption investigation files to the judicial authorities for prosecution. These investigations concern five former senators. They were summoned to appear before the Port-au-Prince government commissioner on 1

December. Only two of them showed up for the hearing. The acts of corruption in which they are allegedly implicated affect several state institutions, including the National Pensions Office, the the National Equipment Center, the Senate of the Republic, the Port Autonome of Saint Marc, the Ministry of National Education and Professional Training, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ouanaminthe Town Hall and the Haitian State Lottery. According to ULCC reports, corruption is estimated to have led to the loss of some 4 billion gourdes (nearly 30.5 million US dollars) in government revenue over the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

On 23 November, the former Deputy Director General of the National Pension Office (in French, Office National d'Assurance-Vieillesse, or ONA), named in one of ULCC's investigation reports on corruption within public institutions, was arrested as she attempted to board a plane at Port-au-Prince international airport. Following her arrest, she was questioned by the Government Commissioner of the Port-au-Prince Court of First Instance and released on 27 November on "humanitarian grounds". Her travel documents were confiscated by the judge, pending the outcome of the judicial inquiry into the case. On 11 December, the lawyer of the former director of the Social Assistance Fund (in French, Caisse d'Assistance Sociale, or CAS), who has been in pre-trial detention since April 2022 on corruption charges, filed a request for her release before the Court of Appeal. The decision is expected on 15 January, 2024.

On 22 December, investigating magistrate Al Duniel Dimanche issued two arrest warrants for the former and current Director General of the National Equipment Center (in French, Centre National des Equipements, or CNE) for misappropriation of public assets and other acts of corruption within the institution.

#### *Emblematic cases*

In the last quarter, no action was taken in the cases concerning the Grand Ravine (2017), La Saline (2018) and Bel Air (2019) massacres.

In December, Judge Marthel Jean-Claude recused himself from the investigation into the murder of Monferrier Dorval, President of the Port-au-Prince Bar Association, who was killed in August 2020. This

decision was reportedly motivated by the refusal of judicial authorities to provide him with the resources necessary to conduct his investigation. On 12 December, Judge Merlan Belabre was appointed as the fourth judge in charge of investigating the case.

With regard to the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, Judge Walter Wesser Voltaire, in charge of the investigation, has heard several political figures, including two former Ministers of Justice and Public Security, a former Senator from the South Department, the Secretary of the National Palace, a former President of the Republic and the current Prime Minister. The Prime Minister's hearing was made possible by a special decree issued by the Council of Ministers on 19 December, 2023, authorizing the hearing of ministers and other senior government officials by the courts as part of this investigation. After more than two years on the run, a suspect in this case was arrested on 19 October in a Pétion Ville supermarket, then heard by Judge Voltaire before being transferred to the national penitentiary.

In October and December, retired Colombian army officer Germán Alejandro Rivera García and former Haitian senator John Jöel Joseph were the second and third people to be sentenced to life imprisonment by a Miami federal court for their involvement in the assassination of President Moïse. In December, two other people, Joseph Vincent, a former *Drug Enforcement Administration* (DEA) informant, and Mario Antonio Palacios, a former Colombian military officer, plead guilty to plotting to assassinate Jovenel Moïse. In total, US authorities have convicted three people and detained eleven others in connection with this case since the investigation was launched.

#### *Sanctions and travel bans*

On 8 December, the UN Security Council added four Haitian gang leaders to its sanctions list: Johnson André (aka "Izo"), leader of the *Village de Dieu* gang; Renel Destina ("Ti Lapli"), leader of *Gran Ravine*; Vitel'homme Innocent, leader of *Kraze Baryè*; and Wilson Joseph



("Lanmò San Jou"), leader of *400 Mawozo*<sup>7</sup>. On the same day, the United States imposed economic sanctions and travel bans on the same individuals, and on 11 December sanctioned three former Haitian politicians: former Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive and former senators Nenel Cassy and Hervé Fourcand. As of 31 December, Canada and the United States have sanctioned 33 people<sup>8</sup>. In addition, they and the Dominican Republic have cumulatively imposed visa restrictions on at least 50 people.

#### *Investigations into human rights violations committed by police officers*

The HRS continued to support the General Inspectorate of the Haitian National Police (IGPNH) in investigating allegations of human rights violations involving police personnel. Between 1 October and 31 December 31, the HRS documented 14 new incidents involving at least 30 police officers. Over the same period, 15 investigations involving 21 police officers in allegations of human rights violations were opened by the IGPNH, and four were concluded. The IGPNH also recommended that three police officers be administratively sanctioned and two be placed on leave of absence and brought before the courts.

### III. Support for national institutions and civil society

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7 The four gang leaders were added to the UN sanctions list in accordance with resolution 2653 (2022), which authorizes the imposition of an asset freeze, travel ban and targeted arms embargo against individuals deemed directly or indirectly responsible for acts that threaten the peace, security or stability of Haiti. The other individual sanctioned by the UN is Jimmy Chérizier, leader of the *G-9* gang coalition, who was included in the list of designated persons in October 2022.

8 Office of Foreign Assets Control - Sanctions List Search, available on : <https://sanctionssearch.ofac.treas.gov/> (last visited January 9, 2024) and Government of Canada - Haiti Special Economic Measures Regulations, available at: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/fra/reglements/DORS-2022-226/TexteComple.html> (last visited January 9, 2024)

During the fourth quarter, the HRS continued to support national authorities and civil society organizations in their efforts to ensure that human rights are respected, protected and promoted.

#### *Violence prevention*

The HRS has supported activities aimed at building the capacity of civil society and local authorities in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. To this end, "departmental youth forums for peace and sustainable development in Haiti" were organized with the support of the UNDP, the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Civic Action, and the Ministry of Culture and Communication. During these forums, 500 representatives of youth organizations and local authorities discussed opportunities for youth participation in local decision-making, as well as their role in civic engagement and conflict prevention and resolution. In December, the HRS also launched an awareness-raising program aimed at promoting respect for human rights and countering narratives that glorify violence. This initiative will be implemented across the country by 37 cultural associations.

#### *The fight against sexual violence*

On 30 November and 1 December, in Les Cayes (South department), the Superior Council of the Judiciary, in collaboration with the Magistrature School (in French, *École de la Magistrature*) and with technical and financial support from the HRS, facilitated a training session on investigation and prosecution techniques against crimes of sexual violence, for 50 magistrates, including seven women, from six jurisdictions. A first session had been held in September 2023 in Cap-Haïtien for 26 magistrates.

#### *The fight against corruption*

The HRS also supported a series of awareness-raising activities to combat corruption. One of these was facilitated by the Haitian Human Rights Institute (in French, *Institut Haïtien des Droits de l'Homme*), which organized two community discussions between 9 and 13 October in Les Cayes and Jacmel. Participants included some 200 students and representatives of local associations. In addition, some twenty young journalists based in Port-au-Prince took part in a five-day program

entitled "Civic education to support journalists in the fight against corruption and electoral fraud", coordinated by the Haitian organization *Gouvernance Group*.

In close collaboration with the United Nations Police, the HRS supported the IGPNH in organizing four workshops to prevent the risk of corruption within the police force. These workshops took place in the communes of Jérémie (Grand'Anse department), Cap Haïtien (Nord department), Fort Liberté (Nord-Est department) and Les Cayes (Sud department), between 2 October and 8 November.

#### *International and regional mechanisms*

The HRS and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) jointly organized two online work sessions to train national actors in the IACHR's petitions and cases system. A total of 30 people took part, including members of human rights organizations, the Office of Citizen Protection (in French, Office de la protection du Citoyen, or OPC) and the Interministerial Committee for Human Rights (in French, Comité Interministériel des Droits de la Personne, or CIDP).

The United Nations Expert-designate on Human Rights in Haiti, William O'Neill, made his second visit to the country, between 23 October and 1 November - his first visit having taken place in June 2023. During his visit, he met with the Prime Minister, ministers, senior civil servants, members of the diplomatic corps and representatives of civil society organizations. He also visited Cap Haïtien, Fort Liberté and Ouanaminthe, where he met with local officials and human rights organizations. In his end-of-mission statement<sup>9</sup>, William O'Neill highlighted the high levels of violence and insecurity in the capital and other departments. He also expressed particular concern about the impact of violence on children, the humanitarian situation, and access to health, water, food and education. He was also alarmed by the fact that the judicial system remains dysfunctional and ill-equipped, and that prisons are overcrowded and inmates are living in deplorable sanitary conditions. Finally, the Expert urged the State to assume its

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2023/10/haiti-william-oneill-expert-human-rights-situation-haiti-concludes>

responsibilities in preventing human rights abuses and violations, and called on the international community to support these efforts.

#### *Support for the armed forces*

The HRS and the United Nations Police, in coordination with the Ministry of Defense, provided technical and financial assistance to the Haitian Armed Forces (FAd'H) to organize a human rights training activity, which took place on 12 and 13 December. The event benefited 26 FAd'H instructors, including six women, who will be responsible for raising awareness of human rights among some 600 military personnel.

#### *Protection*

With the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the HRS, as co-chair of the protection sector in Haiti, organized three workshops in Port-au-Prince and the Artibonite department on community-based protection mechanisms. Around a hundred participants attended, including local notables and protection staff from grassroots organizations working in areas affected by gang violence.

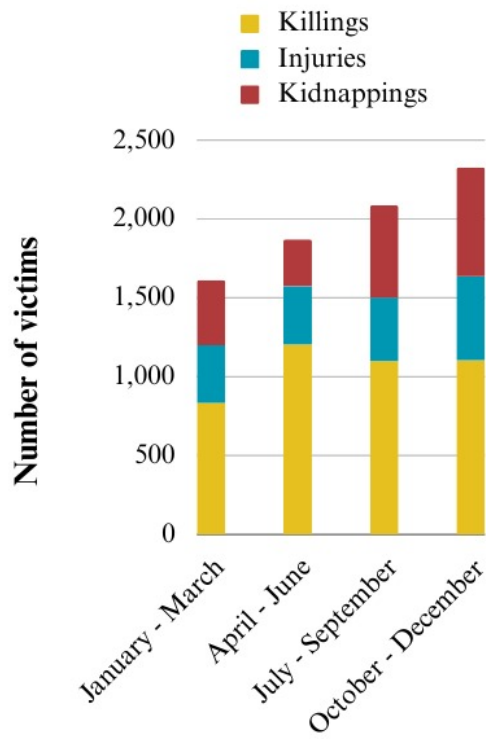
Between 1 October and 31 December, the HRS was able to provide, through the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), protection responses to more than 1,148 people in extremely vulnerable situations. These responses took various forms: support to enable them to access medical care and legal support, provision of medicines to pregnant women, travel assistance for at-risk people with disabilities, and payment of communication costs to contact response services. The HRS also referred 3,514 victims of protection incidents (including 1,214 children and 1,512 women) to UN agencies and community organizations for a holistic response.

#### *Human Rights Day*

As part of the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which took place between 4 and 10 December, the HRS supported national actors in organizing various awareness-raising activities. During the opening ceremony of the

commemoration, which took place on 4 December in Port-au-Prince in the presence of civil society organizations, government representatives and the diplomatic corps, the HRS presented an overview of its commitments, approaches and activities in Haiti. The rest of the initiatives were developed and implemented through local partners, including several state institutions (notably the Inter-ministerial Committee for Human Rights, the Ministry of Culture and Communication, the Office for the Citizen Protection and various police units), as well as various civil society and human rights associations.

### Victims of killings, injuries and kidnappings in Haiti 2023



### Kidnappings in 2023

