



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

November 17, 2020

The Honorable  
Frederica Wilson  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ms. Wilson:

Thank you for your October 15 letter to Secretary Pompeo. The Department of State shares your concerns regarding democracy, insecurity, and human rights in Haiti.

The Secretary has called on Haiti to schedule its long-overdue legislative elections, form an inclusive Provisional Electoral Council (CEP), and strengthen respect for the rule of law and human rights as key elements of the democratic process. Haiti's Parliament must be restored as soon as free, fair, and credible elections are technically feasible so that Haiti can return to a path of democracy. The Department shares your view that elections, when scheduled, should include the broadest possible participation of civil society in order to strengthen Haiti's democratic process.

Haiti's political situation is increasingly complex, in part because its constitution does not expressly address the country's current impasse, either with respect to the overdue legislative elections or formation of a new CEP. The president ruling by decree for an extended period is not an acceptable alternative to a functioning legislature. Embassy contacts across Haitian society, including a variety of constitutional experts, assert that there is widespread consensus about the need for constitutional reform, though not necessarily on the specific nature of such reforms, and there are distinct differences over the legal mechanisms required for making any such reforms. The U.S. position is that legislative elections should take place as soon as technically feasible to end this prolonged period of rule by decree, and that constitutional reform should not delay legislative elections. The U.S. continues to support efforts to reach political accord on these issues but also recognizes that failure to reach agreement should not result in further prolonged unfulfilled assurances of an elected legislature and effectively rule by decree.

Our Embassy continues to regularly raise concerns about insecurity and human rights abuses with the Haitian government. U.S. officials have urged the Haitian government to protect its most vulnerable citizens by countering the proliferation of gangs and by holding the perpetrators of violence accountable. The killing of Monferrier Dorval was alarming, and the United States, along with the rest of the international community in Haiti, continues to press for a thorough investigation and justice on his behalf. We understand that the Haitian National Police is making progress with its investigation and hopes to arrest a suspect soon. The Department

also continues to urge the Haitian government to bring Jimmy “Barbeque” Cherizier to justice. Finally, through several Department of State International Narcotics and Law Enforcement programs, the United States supports the Haitian National Police’s efforts to maintain order, arrest perpetrators of human rights abuses (such as Cherizier), and strengthen accountability within the police force.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R M Kaldahl". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Ryan M. Kaldahl  
Acting Assistant Secretary  
Bureau of Legislative Affairs