

WHERE IS YOUR BROTHER? THE VOICE OF YOUR BROTHER'S BLOOD IS CRYING TO ME FROM THE GROUND (Gen 4:10)

As Congregation of the Carmelite Sisters of Charity – Vedruna, catholic and consecrated women called to live the project of Jesus, which proposes that all should have life and life in abundance (Jn 10:10), we stand for life, a life of dignity, in freedom and free from fears. That all Haitian citizens may live in peace and harmony.

We express our solidarity with the relatives of the more than 1500 Haitian people who have been assassinated so far this year, the thousands of women and girls who have suffered sexual violence, and in the same way with the more than 2,500 kidnapped persons.

The humanitarian situation in Haiti is in chaos. Haiti is on the verge of collapse. Criminal groups control almost the entire capital, Port-au-Prince and its metropolitan area. Between March 8 and 9 April, due to the escalation of violence by these armed groups, 94,821 have people left the capital, mainly to join the departments of the Great South. The area was already home to 116,000 displaced people who had fled in recent months, IOM said in a press release¹.

It pains us that at this moment the power is held by the gangs that roam freely, sowing terror, chaos, pain and death and preventing humanitarian aid from reaching its destination. Many of the schools are not functioning, most of the hospitals are razed and inoperative, gangs have opened prisons, attacked police stations, educational centers, Churches... everything they find in their path. To buy any product means having to pay a lot of money and running the risk that the product will not arrive, the prices of the products go up permanently.

We are saddened that the Dominican Republic only opens its borders for trade and deports irregular Haitians who are in their country.

We long for and dream that peace and order will be established throughout the country and that students will be able to return to school, that those who have lost their jobs will have the security conditions to return to producing benefits for the nation, and that their people will be able to continue in their own country without the need to always have their backpacks ready for when they have to run away

Unfortunately, the current political instability in Haiti does not allow people to live in peace. Many people who can help develop the country leave in search of new opportunities and, above all, to save their lives.

It is shameful that, globally, we look the other way and fail to take the necessary interventions to help reverse this situation. We cannot sit idly. The crisis in Haiti is testing global solidarity.

¹<https://www.france24.com/es/am%C3%A9rica-latina/20240412-hait%C3%AD-ante-crisis-de-violencia-se-constituye-oficialmente-el-consejo-de-transici%C3%B3n-presidencia>

We reject: The levels of insecurity to which the population is subjected, anxiety, anguish, fears, and hopelessness; The indifference of the international community to the suffering of this people and the lack of decision to put an end to their situation and the fact that international organizations do not have a plan to help lift the country after the chaos in which it is being left by violence.

As a Congregation present in Haiti, we **reaffirm our commitment** to:

- ❖ Continue to contribute to an education in values and principles that aims at Transformation of society by forming citizens capable of creating bonds of fraternity, who are integrated into social participation from a faith committed to the reality of their people.
- ❖ Pray incessantly to God for an end to the suffering of the Haitian people and that their cries may be listened to in all the agencies that have responsibility and power to solve them.
- ❖ Continue to collaborate so that the inhabitants of this nation have access to health and can enjoy life in abundance.

We demand:

1. That the arms embargo established by the Security Council be respected, since neither the Dominican Republic nor Haiti produce weapons, and according to a recent UN study, most weapons arrive in Haiti from the United States.
2. That the international community help to find the necessary ways to stop the violence to citizens and control the gangs that roam freely.
3. That air and sea borders be opened so that people and humanitarian aid can move freely.
4. That the UN send a multinational security support mission and fulfill its promise to help Haitians.
5. That Latin American governments make an effort to provide asylum and promote legal options so that Haitians can receive international protection or residence and work permits, at least for a reasonable period of time.

May Our Lady of Perpetual Help, patroness of Haiti, accompany us on this path of seeking justice and national dialogue and bless us with the fruit of peace.

Lima, April 16, 2024

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