

## **ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti appeals to the international financial institutions to support Haiti's efforts towards stability and sustainable development**

**14 February 2023**

Deeply concerned by the continued worsening of the living conditions of the Haitian people, the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti carried out a visit to Washington D.C. on 7 February 2023, where it met with representatives of the International Monetary Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank as well as the Organization of American States. The Group's objective was to deepen its understanding of the measures taken to support Haiti's path to stability and sustainable development in the face of a multidimensional crisis with political, security, human rights, humanitarian, and development dimensions.

All those briefing the Advisory Group agreed that the current escalation of gang violence is a severe threat to the stability and prosperity of Haiti. The Advisory Group is concerned that the perilous security situation undermines development efforts and hinders the work and ability of international financial institutions and other development partners from scaling up their programmes.

The Advisory Group heard that Haiti's economic growth continues on a downward path, contracting for four consecutive years and with inflation close to 50 per cent as its currency continues to rapidly depreciate. This will deepen poverty levels in a country where 57 per cent of the population is poor and 24 per cent extremely poor.

The Advisory Group is particularly worried that a collapsing economy will deepen the humanitarian crisis, increase the levels of food insecurity, and drive further instability and insecurity. Already half of the country's population is food insecure, including 1.8 million people in emergency phase (Integrated Food Security Phase) and 19,000 in the Cité Soleil neighbourhood of Port-au-Prince in catastrophic phase. Measures must be taken urgently to help address the emergency food needs of Haitians in the short-term whilst laying the foundation for creating a more resilient and productive food system in the medium- and long-term. The Advisory Group stresses the need to support the implementation of the food security and nutrition policy adopted by the Haitian government in 2021 to boost the productivity and competitiveness of the national agricultural sector. It also calls for support for food security initiatives carried out by the United Nations and its partners, including the homegrown school-feeding programme implemented by the World Food Programme and initiatives by the International Fund on Agricultural Development to create economic opportunities in rural areas for young people. There is an urgent need to ensure that the food needs of vulnerable Haitians, especially children, are met.

At the same time, it is clear that socio-economic development efforts will provide the necessary impetus to help promote democratization and peace in the country. The Group encouraged the international financial institutions to remain engaged in Haiti to re-establish macroeconomic stability while at the same time addressing the socio-economic root causes of the multidimensional crisis. The Advisory Group believes that the international financial institutions and donors should work closely together to enhance coordination of their actions based on their comparative advantages.

It is also clear that a more coherent approach across international assistance that responds to the needs of Haitians will be key to maximize the impact of such efforts. Providing Haiti with the necessary support in the immediate, medium-and long-term will require greater coordination between all international partners, including the UN and regional organizations, such as the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

While welcoming the installation of the High Council for the Transition resulting from the Agreement of 21 December 2021, the Advisory Group strongly encourages Haiti's political actors; Haitian civil society, including women and youth groups; religious leaders; and the private sector to continue their efforts to pursue an inclusive national political dialogue to move the country towards credible, free, fair and transparent elections.

This is the time for the international community to take urgent action, working in a coordinated way with the Haitian people to help the country address its multidimensional challenges and achieve stability and sustainable development.

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The Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti is composed of Argentina, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Brazil, Canada (Chair), Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, France, Haiti, Kenya, Mexico, Peru, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States of America, and Uruguay. The President of ECOSOC is an ex officio member of the Group. It was initially formed in 1999 and its mandate is to follow closely and provide advice on the long-term development strategy of the country.