

Haiti: In Solidarity with its Five Freedoms

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Today the acid test for all democrats in North and South America is the issue of the military occupation of Haiti, the economic pillage and denial of elementary political and human rights of the Haitian people.

In 2004 a US-led invasion force overthrew the democratically elected government of [Jean Bertrand Aristide](#) and subsequently promoted and organized an occupation army. This colonial military force has repeatedly violently repressed popular demonstrations, violently raided the neighborhoods of the poor and killed, wounded and arrested Haitians who were affirming their rights of self-determination and an end to foreign occupation.

Since the United States bears major responsibility for the invasion, occupation and subsequent pillage and privatization of essential public services, we have a special responsibility to speak out clearly and forcefully to the United Nations (UN) in support of Haiti's Five Freedoms:

1. The UN must end its military presence of Haiti through its occupation army (MINUSTAH), action contrary to the very founding principles of the organization. Haiti must recover the right of self-determination and the freedom to govern itself.
2. The Haitian people demand the end of the pillage of its national treasury by official and private banks extracting payments of \$1 million USD a week for illegitimate debts contracted by past corrupt dictatorial regimes. Haitians demand freedom from illegitimate elite debts in order to finance basic life-sustaining programs for the 80% of the population living in extreme poverty.
3. Every country, which has suffered massive natural disasters, as the hurricanes that recently devastated Haiti, is entitled to large-scale, long-term humanitarian aid with no strings attached. Haitians demand the immediate fulfilling of aid pledged and its allocation according to needs without MINUSTAH manipulation to perpetuate its occupation.
4. The collapse of the free market model today highlights the disastrous consequences of the IMF-World Bank policies of privatization of public services in Haiti, where 'private health and education' effectively excludes the vast majority of Haitians. Haitians must regain the right to re-nationalize public services and all other strategic economic sectors necessary for their well-being.
5. Free elections means the return of deposed, exiled and persecuted political leaders and the end of foreign military occupation and repression of anti-colonial movements. Elections with occupation guns pointed at the heads of the electors and candidates have no legitimacy. We, the American people in North, South and Central America, have a

responsibility to demand the end of MINUSTAH and the return national sovereignty to the Haitian people. No government no matter what its political claims and rhetoric can justify its democratic credentials when it acts as a colonial gendarme.

James Petras latest book , Zionism,Militarism and the Decline of U.S. Power - Clarity Press :Atlanta Ga.

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