

# Restitution to Haiti of French Ransom estimated at more than \$22 billion

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Region: [Latin America & Caribbean](#)

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## **[The Petition](#)**

*This petition calls for the full restitution by the State of France of funds it extorted from the Republic of Haiti at gun point starting in 1825. In 2004, the value of the infamous Charles X ransom is estimated at \$22 billion U.S. This demand is an initial measure of economic justice and respect for Haiti's territorial sovereignty and revolutionary legacy.*

## **REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:**

### **DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE(1804)**

« The generals and chiefs of the army, in the name, of the people of Hayti signed a formal declaration of independence, and took a solemn oath to renounce France forever, pledging themselves to each other, to their posterity, and to the universe, to die rather than submit again to her dominion.».

Dessalines published a proclamation, offering to the captains of American vessels the sum of forty dollars for each individual native or black man of colour, whom they should convey back to Hayti.

### **CONSTITUTION OF HAITI (1805)**

Art. 1. The people inhabiting the island formerly called St. Domingo, hereby agree to form themselves into a free state sovereign and independent of any other power in the universe, under the name of empire of Hayti. 2. Slavery is forever abolished.

### **ORDINANCE OF CHARLES X (APRIL 1825)**

In 1825, Charles X accepted to recognize Haiti's independence on the condition that the new republic pay 150 million francs to France — the annual budget of the French government at the time — and cut its customs taxes in half.

### **TWELVE POINTS IN FAVOR OF THE RESTITUTION OF THE FRENCH DEBT TO HAITI**

« such a demand was illegal with regard to the French law. Indeed, the French ultimatum came with explicit threats to use force and to reestablish slavery. But France had already signed a treaty (Treaty of Vienna, 1815) in which, even though slavery was not abolished in places where it already existed, it was expressly forbidden to establish it on new territories or to reintroduce it where it had been abolished, like in Haiti. And so the threat that had

presided in the negotiations was completely outside of the law.».

## **WHY FRANCE MUST RETURN THE CHARLES X RANSOM TO HAITI**

« It was collected by violent means with an official ordinance of French monarch Charles X »

1853: French Admiral Duquesne threatens to bombard Port-au-Prince to restart payments on the French ransom which had been stopped in 1852 by Haitian Emperor Faustin Soulouque. The latter replied: Je repousserai la force par la force (I will meet force with force), and Duquesne let the matter rest. (Written in Blood, Heiln p199)

March 1877: French gun-boat aggression against Haiti. At issue: resumption of payments on the 1825 ransom balance then re-estimated at 20 million Francs-or. ..

## **HOW FRANCE CAME UP WITH THE 150 MILLION FRANCS VALUE**

« Alexandre Delaborde, former colonist in Saint-Domingue, admitted in 1833 that these 150 million francs represented three times the value of the entire colony.. » (Farmer, 2003).

## **HOW AND TO WHOM DID FRANCE DISTRIBUTE THE RANSOMED FUNDS**

Papers of William Conrad Schutte (1737-1806), a Haitian planter who emigrated to Portsmouth, Va., ca.1793, including eight family letters exchanged between France and the West Indies, 1741-1753; Schutte's bills, accounts, deeds, miscellaneous legal papers, and correspondence in Haiti, 1769-1789; and papers, 1825-1832, of Schutte's widow, chiefly concerning her attempt to secure compensation from France for property losses in the Haitian revolt in the 1790s. Manuscripts Department, Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, SOUTHERN HISTORICAL COLLECTION #M-3066, WILLIAM CONRAD SCHUTTE PAPERS Inventory

## **UNTIL WHAT DATE AND BY WHAT MEANS DID HAITI PAY THE RANSOM**

French as well as American citizens have found clever strategies to amass fortunes on the back of Haiti's « debt »?

In 1825 Haiti was forced to borrow 24 million francs from private French banks to begin paying off the crippling indemnity debt?

These indemnity payments caused continual financial emergencies and political upheavals?

Irregardless, Haiti always made the indemnity payments (completed in 1883), and following those, the bank loan payments, on time. The 1915 intervention in Haiti by the Marines on behalf of U.S. financial interests changed all of that, however?

« Some of the white descendants of the former plantation owners, who now live New Orleans, still have the indemnity coupons issued by France. So in fact, at least part of the reparations paid by Haiti went toward the development of the United States?

the National City Bank of New York, exclusive monopoly upon the right of importing and exporting American and other foreign money to and from Haiti, a monopoly which would carry unprecedented and extraordinarily lucrative privileges.

U.S. financial administrators continued to dominate the Haitian economy until the final debt on the earlier loans was retired in 1947.

### **THE CODE NOIR (MARCH 1685)**

Article XII. Children born from marriages between slaves shall be slaves, and if the husband and wife have different masters, they shall belong to the masters of the female slave, not to the master of her husband.

### [PETITION](#)

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