

Why Did the UN Security Council Visit Haiti?

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On Jan. 23, a delegation of the United Nations Security Council arrived in Haiti for a three day visit. The delegation, consisting of representatives of 15 member states currently on the Security Council, was co-chaired by Chilean ambassador Cristian Barros Melet, who holds the rotating Security Council presidency for January, and Samantha Power, the U.S. Ambassador to the UN.

During its visit, the delegation met with President Michel Martelly and de facto Prime Minister Evans Paul, as well as the de facto president of the Senate, Andris Riché. It also met with “civil society” representatives and political parties such as the Lavalas Family (FL), as highlighted an by FL Executive Board member, Dr. Schiller Loudior during a Jan. 25 interview on Radio Panou’s program “Haïti en Ondes.”

Many are questioning the purpose of this visit, which comes on the heels of Martelly carrying out a virtual coup d’état in Haiti. Because Martelly managed to hold no elections for over three years, Parliament expired on Jan. 12, and he now rules by decree. Meanwhile, several huge demonstrations take place every week in the capital and across Haiti demanding that Martelly resign and the UN military occupation, known as MINUSTAH, leave.



U.S. Ambassador to the UN Samantha Power shakes hands with Haitian police officers.

Haiti is the UN’s only military mission in the Western Hemisphere, and clearly the Security Council sees the situation in Haiti as critical. As a cover, the Security Council said they came to Haiti to “assess the pre-election political situation.”

Does Haiti have a mere “electoral crisis” ? No, Haiti has a much deeper political crisis where the Haitian masses are mobilized to demand Martelly’s resignation, a new provisional government to hold free, fair, and sovereign elections, and an immediate end to UN military occupation of Haiti by some 7,500 troops.

It would have been more honest if the Security Council delegation said that it came to “assess” the utter failure over the past almost 11 years of MINUSTAH, which has been deployed in Haiti since Jun. 1, 2004. Although called the UN Mission to Stabilize Haiti, the occupation force has never done that. On the contrary, the MINUSTAH helped to unconstitutionally overrule Haiti’s electoral council in 2011 to place Martelly in power and then has backed him up as he has engaged in flagrant corruption, arbitrary repression, political arrests, and the dismantling and abuse of Haitian democratic institutions, including the judiciary and the Parliament. Then these foreign patrons have the gall to present themselves as the watchdogs of representative democracy and of human rights.

Clearly, the UN delegation had no other purpose than to reinforce Martelly’s crumbling regime. As the Miami Herald said in its Jan. 26 editorial: “UN diplomats did their best to put a smiley face on the grim picture in Haiti during a weekend visit, but no amount of diplomatic artistry can conceal the ugly truth: Haiti is back to one-man rule, and no one can say how long it will last.”

Samantha Power articulated this cynicism when she stated that “we informed President Martelly and his ministers of our disappointment that he was not able to find a compromise and avoid the departure of parliamentarians.” How absurd! Over more than three years, he couldn’t find a compromise?

The Chilean Ambassador Cristian Barros Melet added to the charade by expressing “our appreciation for the efforts he made to find a consensus to keep the Parliament functional and to facilitate the voting of the electoral law.”



At the Haitian Police Academy on Jan. 25, the UN Security Council delegation watches a demonstration of how a rolling water cannon breaks up Haitian protests

But the Chilean Ambassador acknowledged the fluidity of the political situation when he added that “we are now trying to maintain our support for the Haitian government with the aim of organizing elections with the features already mentioned, but it is too early to tell if it is necessary to continue with the same configuration or not. We will have time for that. Not to mention that it is a complex process politically. But I assure you that we take this very seriously and that the Security Council is very attached to the situation in Haiti.” It is shocking that he finds it normal that the UN should meddle in Haitian elections and suggest what the proper electoral “configuration” should be. On Jan. 25, the delegation visited the Police Academy off the Frères Road in Port-au-Prince, during which the new de facto Justice Minister Pierre Richard Casimir unabashedly asked for MINUSTAH to increase its forces.” On behalf of the President, the Head of Government, and myself, I reiterate to the United Nations Security Council our request not to reduce the number of troops of MINUSTAH during the electoral process,”

Casimir said. “Rather, it is necessary to increase the quotas of the UN mission in Haiti, since the election period is sometimes marked by tensions and unrest.”

Martelly, Paul, and Casimir are the kind of officials the imperialists want to see running Haiti, mercenaries and “legal bandits,” as the old Sweet Micky song says. The current de facto government is made up mostly of retreads from the government of Martelly’s former prime minister Laurent Lamothe. One understands why Bill Clinton said of Lamothe’s government in the days before popular demonstrations forced its departure on Dec. 13: “This is the most consistent and decisive government I’ve ever worked with across a broad range of issues.”

In short, the UN Security Council did not come to evaluate a decade of failure, the massacres of our fellow citizens, or the unleashing of cholera in Haiti by MINUSTAH troops, which has claimed more than 9,000 lives. Instead it came to reinforce a neo-Duvalierist regime, which has now become a patent dictatorship.

Unfortunately, no political party criticized the arrogance of Ambassador Samantha Power when she lectured us about compromise. “We are even more convinced of the importance of compromise,” she said. “It is sure that everybody in Haiti will not get exactly what he or she wants in the coming days or in the years to come. It is important that all the actors put Haiti and the general welfare ahead of their personal interests.”

Sandra Honoré, MINUSTAH’s chief and the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, along with other members of the so-called “Core Group” (the ambassadors of Brazil, Canada, Spain, France, the United States, the European Union, and the Special Representative of the Organization of American States) welcomed the installation of Prime Minister Paul Evans, the formation of a new government, and the establishment of a new Provisional Electoral Council (CEP). They encouraged the new government to create the political and security conditions “necessary to ensure the holding of fair, credible and inclusive elections.”

It is not surprising that the UN Security Council, like the Organization of American States, both of which are simply instruments of Washington’s foreign police, are supporting the unacceptable in Haiti. To top it off, the Club of Madrid, an imperialist pressure group of former world leaders, will send its fourth delegation to Haiti from Jan. 27 to 29, 2015. This delegation will be led by former Mexican President Felipe Calderón and former Bolivian President and Club of Madrid Vice-President, Jorge Kiroga. Like the UN Security Council, the Club of Madrid will be asking for elections under the aegis of President Martelly and the MINUSTAH.

The Haitian people, however, have made and continue to make their demands clear: that free, fair, and sovereign elections will only be possible without Martelly or MINUSTAH.

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