



Eglise Methodiste d' Haiti Situation in Haiti October 2022

The situation in Haiti has deteriorated dramatically. I cannot emphasize more clearly, Haiti is in a humanitarian crisis more critical than anyone can remember.

The gangs now control at least 40% of the city of Port au Prince and have serious influence over the rest of the city as well as the provinces. This has been a problem for at least the past four years but is reaching proportions beyond comprehension.

For the past four weeks, the gangs have controlled the main fuel terminal at Varreux. No fuel trucks can access the terminal to make deliveries to the gas stations. All stations are closed, and most are out of fuel. In addition to a lack of fuel, the transportation driver's union has called a general strike and there is no public transportation.

The entire Haitian economy is dependent on fuel for production and transportation. Without fuel, locally produced produce cannot be transported to markets. As a result, severe food shortages have developed. Imported rice, beans, flour and cooking oil are in short supply. Grocery stores and street vendors have used all their available inventories. Factories have shut down their operation. School openings that were scheduled to open October 1 have been postponed indefinitely.

October 1, Culligan Water shut down their water processing plant in Port au Prince due to a lack of fuel to process water or make deliveries. This is a major source of potable water for the 4.5 million metropolitan area. Bottled water is in very short supply. Many Haitians depend on the delivery of raw water by tank truck. These deliveries have ceased, and the local population is running out of water for cooking, bathing and general sanitation as well as drinking water.

General hunger and malnutrition are rampant. The number of deaths due to starvation are unknown but undoubtedly are increasing. The Federal Prison in Port au Prince reports prisoners dying in their cells from starvation and thirst.

An outbreak of Cholera has been reported in Cite Soleil with several deaths already being reported. With no functioning government, the number of deaths is not being reported. The cause of death from cholera is severe dehydration. Cholera is spread from fecal contamination of drinking water. As the sources of potable water are compromised, the people turn to alternate sources of drinking water which further exacerbates the problem.

The political situation is the root cause of all of Haiti's current problems. Politics in Haiti have always been tumultuous but for the past decades has been degrading. The presidential term of President Moïse Jovenel was troubled from its beginning in 2017. It culminated with his assassination July 2021. Since the assassination, Prime Minister Ariel Henry has led a provisional government. To date, no presidential elections have been scheduled.

The political situation has continued to deteriorate. The situation has now reached the point of political anarchy. The gangs are heavily armed and outnumber the police and the police have thus far been unable to control the gangs. Violence, including gunfire, murders, and kidnappings continue and are increasing. It is highly dangerous to travel in many parts of the country. The gangs routinely place roadblocks throughout Port au Prince and at times have roadblocks on the major highways throughout the country. The transportation of humanitarian aid is severely hampered because of gang related activities.

The gangs continue to receive financial aid from unknown sources. Whether the gang support is from within Haiti or originates from foreign entities is unknown, but the gangs continue to grow with impunity. The only solution to Haiti's short-term problems with violence and unrest is to the gangs to lose their power.

The only solution to Haiti's long term social, political and economic problem is for there to be a stable government and a stable economy. This is something that Haiti has not seen in her more than 200-year history. There are many voices calling for foreign intervention to establish stability. Foreign intervention may work in the short-term but unless an internal Haitian driven solution is found, it will only be short-term.

Pray for the country of Haiti and the people of Haiti. The situation here is desperate and people are dying.

David Draeger

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