



Haiti PAPERS

Who Is Afraid of Democracy in Haiti? A Critical Reflection

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Once again Haiti finds itself at a critical turning point in its post-1986 history. A chorus of voices — ranging from Haitian business associations, religious organizations, opposition political parties, civil society groups, and popular organizations to former United States officials — has been calling on President Aristide to resign from office. The opposition coalition, known as the Convergence Democratique (CD), or Democratic Convergence, has issued its second call for Aristide to be replaced by a new government. That government would be headed by a provisional president chosen from Haiti's Supreme Court and a prime minister appointed in consultation with the opposition political parties and representatives of civil society. This demand is reminiscent of the provisional government headed by former Supreme Court Justice Ertha Pascal Trouillot after the fall of the government of ex-General Prosper Avril in 1990.²

The Organization of American States (OAS) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), on the other hand, continue to call for new parliamentary and local elections to resolve the political crisis. As usual when dealing with a government it dislikes, the U.S. has been sending mixed messages. On the one hand, Roger Noriega, while U.S. Ambassador to the

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² There are important differences between the situation in 1990 and the one in 2000, however. Whereas the Avril government came to power through a coup d'état in September 1988, Aristide was reelected president in November 2000 after a five-year hiatus. Even if some, like the CD, have never recognized the legitimacy of Aristide's election in 2000, or others in the opposition are now saying that Aristide has lost his legitimacy, the Avril government never had any legitimacy and was never recognized as legitimate by the international community. Even though the OAS did not supervise the 2000 presidential election, it, and the international community as a whole, still recognized Aristide as the duly elected president of Haiti. In 1990, by contrast, the international community and the domestic political class were united in demanding the removal of Avril. There is no such unity today against Aristide, who retains considerable, if diminishing, support among the poorer sectors of the population, and not all political and grassroots organizations who oppose Aristide support the Convergence coalition. Moreover, the OAS is trying to broker an agreement between Aristide and the opposition that will lead to new parliamentary and local elections with Aristide remaining as head of state.



OAS, maintained that the United States continues to support elections as the best way to resolve the political crisis. On the other hand, he and then Undersecretary of State for the Americas Otto Reich have charged that Aristide is becoming an illegitimate president of a pariah state, and the Bush administration supports the CD in its attempt to block a negotiated settlement of the crisis. For his part, Aristide vows to carry out his five-year mandate that ends in February 2006. The clash between Aristide's supporters and those of the opposition has escalated into a renewed spiral of violence since November with no clear signs of how it will end.

Since 1986, when a popular movement helped pressure Jean-Claude Duvalier into exile, the vast majority of Haitians have declared themselves opposed to any form of dictatorship.

To understand how this situation came about, it is necessary to go beyond the press headlines and analyze the conflicts that have been unfolding since the fall of the Duvalier dictatorship in February 1986. Basically I will argue that the crisis in Haiti is essentially the result of an unresolved struggle for power between different factions of the middle class to determine which faction or coalition of factions will control the state. Haitians, however, are not the only social actors involved in this power struggle. Important, and in many ways more powerful, external social actors, including foreign governments and international financial and political organizations, are also involved. They must be considered as part of the equation since their role in internal Haitian affairs was often decisive in the past and could well prove to be so now.

Since 1986, when a popular movement succeeded in convincing the administration of President Reagan to convince Jean-Claude Duvalier to go into exile in France, the vast majority of Haitians have declared themselves to be categorically opposed to any form of dictatorship. Therefore the subsequent struggle in Haiti has been to define what type of democracy would prevail and whose interests it would serve. Though the majority of Haitians favored democracy, other sectors, most notably the Haitian armed forces and the small but eco-

nomically powerful Haitian upper class, remained fearful of the resurgence of the masses onto the political stage and what democracy could bring. Consequently between 1986 and 1990 the neo-Duvalierists and the military engaged in a fierce struggle among themselves and to suppress the growing popular movement. Four military-dominated governments exchanged power during that time, and despite the direct or tacit support received from Washington, they could not defeat the pro-democratic forces and reimpose a lasting dictatorship. Finally a provisional civilian coalition government was formed in March 1990 and organized the elections of the following December that resulted in a landslide victory for the then liberation theologian, Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

The popular movement fought to rid the country of dictatorship, democratize the government, eliminate corruption in public office, reform the military and police, and create a more just society. Emerging as the leader who symbolized these aspirations, Aristide earned the enmity of the Duvalierists, the military, the tiny Haitian bourgeoisie, and the United States, which labeled him a "radical firebrand." The Duvalierists tried to prevent Aristide from taking office in February 1991 by staging a coup d'état in January, but the swift popular reaction forced the military to back down and arrest the coup leaders. Aristide assumed the presidency under foreboding conditions, and he and his government would never be given an opportunity to govern. The Duvalierists had sworn to overthrow him, and the bourgeoisie felt threatened by his radical rhetoric, his proposed reforms, and his encouragement of the popular organizations that supported him to agitate for change. Though the United States could not deny Aristide's legitimacy, it never trusted or supported him, and much of the aid monies promised by the international financial institutions was never delivered. No one was surprised, then, when the military, supported by the wealthy business class, overthrew Aristide and sent him into exile in September 1991. In contrast to January 1991, the military was prepared to consolidate its power. It moved swiftly to suppress the anticipated popular opposition to the coup. A three-year reign of terror followed that resulted in the killing of an estimated 5,000 people and the forcing of

hundreds of thousands more to flee Haiti or go into hiding. This climate of terror ended when U.S.-led international peacekeeping forces intervened in October 1994 to remove the junta from power and return Aristide to the presidency.

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Aristide returned as a weakened president, however. As a condition for his return, Aristide agreed not to reclaim the three years he spent in exile and to serve out the remaining eighteen months of his five-year mandate. He also accepted the economic policies advocated by the United States, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank that came to be known post-1989 as the Washington Consensus or the neoliberal structural adjustment reforms. Though Aristide endorsed the reforms, his commitment to implementing them remained half-hearted at best. Aristide carried out some provisions, such as reducing or eliminating tariffs, and also compromised on a lower minimum wage. But strong opposition from his mass base led him to stall the privatization of public enterprises.

Once again Aristide found himself balancing between conflicting interests. By now he had abandoned his hostility to capitalism, which he no longer equated with a mortal sin, and talked more of a partnership between the state and the private sector to promote the interests of the latter. At the same time, he understood that to maintain the support of his mass base he had to offer them some hope that his government would defend their interests and satisfy their needs. Thus he railed against what he calls the worship of the market and its invisible hand by the advanced industrial societies, and proposed to counterbalance the market by creating public employment and extending human and social services. These are hardly what one would call radical propositions, and except for the question of privatization of public enterprises his proposals are not much different from those advocated by the World Bank.

There is yet another reason for Aristide's caginess with regard to the privatization of public enterprises. Doing so would reduce

significantly the ability of his government to preserve some of the key pillars of the patronage and prebendary state system that have historically served as the means of wealth appropriation and social promotion for state and public officials and administrators. Although control of the government and the institutions of the state to promote the interests of its leaders was an objective of the Lavalas movement from the start, that tendency was muted and counterbalanced by the more progressive agenda of the popular organizations and cadres of intellectuals who were then influential in the movement. Today, by contrast, the latter agenda and tendency have been jettisoned, and the former has become dominant and transparent. The intellectuals who once articulated a progressive platform for the movement have been sidelined or have left Lavalas. And though many grassroots organizations continue to support Aristide, others have become increasingly critical of and opposed to him and the mutation that has occurred within Lavalas. Aristide has always sought to co-opt his critics among the popular organizations by filling state jobs with their leaders, whatever their qualifications, and by helping them become ward captains in the patronage chain. That same patronage system is also used today to pay off the armed gangs of *chimères* to do the government's dirty work and intimidate the opposition.

Although many grassroots organizations support Aristide, others have become increasingly critical of him.

In short, Aristide and his revamped Lavalas party have abandoned the progressive tendencies of the popular movement that led him to power in 1990 and fought for his return in 1994. Aristide has even recruited former Duvalierists in his government, and the primary goal of his Fanmi Lavalas party now is to control power at the local and national levels to promote the interests of its leaders and officials. In this respect, one of the most important achievements of Aristide's first term in office — disbandment of the Haitian armed forces to end its monopoly over the use of force and thereby protect electoral government — has also removed the one institution that could challenge

excesses by him and his government during a second term.

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Nineteen ninety-five also marked another important change in Haiti's political landscape. The Plateforme Politique Lavalas, or Lavalas Political Platform coalition, within which Organisation Politique Lavalas (OPL), or the Lavalas Political Organization, was dominant, won control of most local administrations and the majority of seats in parliament. And René Préval, Aristide's former prime minister in 1991, won the December 1995 presidential election and assumed the presidency in February 1996. It is important to note here that international monitors, including those from the UN, the OAS, and the U.S., reported widespread fraud in the 1995 parliamentary elections. Nonetheless, and despite a boycott of the second round by many opposition parties (some of which would join with the OPL in 2000 to form the CD to oppose Aristide), the U.S. and the UN accepted these elections as valid. They did so largely because to reject them would have been a major embarrassment and setback for the Clinton administration, which reluctantly had returned Aristide to office for the remainder of his term despite strong opposition from Republicans who would have preferred to see General Cedras remain in power. There was also no meaningful alternative to the Lavalas coalition at the time, and it was hoped that the U.S. could prevail on the new parliament and government to push the neoliberal reforms ahead. Aristide, as previously noted, proved to be an unreliable partner upon his return, and he once again fell out of favor with Washington. The issue for the U.S., then, has never been whether a government is elected in free and fair elections, but rather whether that government is willing to defend its policies.

It did not take long for the Lavalas coalition in power to fall apart. Tensions between the OPL and Aristide increased in 1996 over creating a more structured and institutionalized political party and implementing the neoliberal

reforms. Always distrustful of organizations he could not control, Aristide resisted the transformation of the Lavalas movement into a structured party. Consequently he broke from the broad coalition in November and formed his own party, Fanmi Lavalas (FL), or Lavalas Family. One of the dangers of creating an unstructured political organization, however, is the tendency for rival factions to emerge within it and to operate autonomously from the presumed central authority. This is exactly what has happened within the FL. Internecine conflicts among rival factions of the leadership and grassroots organizations have led to the balkanization of the party and to a struggle for power and money over everything else.

As soon as Aristide formed his own party, it became evident that the OPL would be hard pressed to maintain its status as the majority party in parliament. That test came in the April 1997 elections, which the OPL claimed were rigged in favor of Aristide's FL by the Conseil Électoral Provisoire (CEP), or Provisional Electoral Council. Though the Clinton administration initially considered the elections "free and fair," it soon changed its mind when it realized that the FL had fared well in the first round and was poised to win enough seats in the second round to have veto power in the Senate. That would permit the FL to block the implementation of the structural adjustment reforms supported by the OPL and Prime Minister Rosny Smarth. The OPL demanded the resignation of the CEP and boycotted the second round, which President Préval eventually cancelled. Prime Minister Smarth resigned in June in protest over the elections and the stalled privatization reforms. The OPL then severed its ties with the Lavalas movement altogether and changed its name to Organisation du Peuple en Lutte, preserving its OPL acronym but now meaning Organization of the People in Struggle. The renamed OPL, which still retained a slight majority in parliament, blocked several attempts to replace Smarth with a new prime minister until President Préval refused to renew parliament's term when it ended in January 1999. That allowed him to form a new government and rule by decree until the election of a new parliament and a new president in 2000.

By that time, the clash between FL and OPL had turned into permanent warfare. As expected, with Aristide assured of winning the

presidential election in November, the candidates for his FL party swept the May parliamentary elections and relegated the OPL to minority status. Well before the elections, the OPL and other non-Lavalas parties had denounced them as rigged in favor of FL. It came as no surprise, then, when the newly formed Convergence Democratique coalition issued a list of unsubstantiated charges of widespread fraud and declared the elections null and void. If the CD's exaggerated allegations lacked credibility and hence could be dismissed as the expected complaints of sore losers, it was far more difficult to ignore the charges enumerated by the OAS of irregularities and other malpractices in the electoral process. The OAS itself divided these irregularities into two categories. Despite noting problems in some local and municipal contests, the OAS declared these elections to have been a major success. It also did not challenge electoral results for the Chamber of Deputies, the lower house of parliament, in which Aristide's FL eventually won 72 of 83 seats in the second round. However the OAS soon discovered that the CEP had used an illegal method to calculate returns in the senatorial polling that granted a first round victory to 10 FL candidates who in fact had received less than the 50 percent-plus-one-vote majority necessary to avoid a second round. If allowed to stand, that outcome would have given the FL 18 of the 19 seats contested out of the 27 seats in the Senate. The OAS insisted on a recount and a second-round runoff for the 10 seats, and when the CEP refused, the OAS in turn refused to monitor all second-round parliamentary elections in July as well as the presidential election in November. The United States and the international financial institutions followed suit in July by suspending approximately \$600 million in foreign aid and debt relief to Haiti. The European Union also suspended its aid.

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In my view, the only reason the OAS and the U.S. did not allow the CEP to get away with malpractices in 2000 that had been ignored in 1995, was because Aristide's party won the

2000 elections and hence would have had overwhelming control of both houses of parliament. To underline the double standard, take the example of Peru, where the OAS also observed widespread fraud in the May 2000 presidential elections. There the opposition candidate Alejandro Toledo was denied an outright victory against incumbent President Alberto Fujimori amid charges of widespread irregularities. Yet, despite withdrawing its observer mission for the second round in Peru, as it did in Haiti, the OAS, with U.S. approval, still validated Fujimori as the winner. The difference in the responses is that Peru had a president with autocratic tendencies who supported Washington's free-trade policies and war on drugs, whereas Haiti elected a president with autocratic tendencies who was deemed inimical to U.S. interests. The former could get away with fraud; the latter didn't have a chance.

Moreover by 2000 Washington had found an alternative to Aristide in the Convergence Democratique. The problem, however, is that CD cannot win power through elections, at least not with Aristide around. It is a coalition of 22 or so parties and groups of diverse and seemingly incompatible ideologies, ranging from neo-Duvalierist, centrist, religious, and social democratic interests to former members of the Lavalas coalition and close allies of Aristide. Of these parties, the most significant in terms of relatively modest followings are the OPL, the five parties regrouped under the umbrella EC (Joint Space, in English), and MOCHRENA (the Christian Movement for a New Haiti, in English). Most of the others are relatively insignificant. The parties are united only in their opposition to Aristide and have not proposed a common platform or program of government that could attract popular support. The CD is supported by the Haitian upper class, the Bush administration, the National Endowment for Democracy, especially the International Republican Institute, and conservative members of the U.S. Congress. Some others in the coalition receive support from European and Latin American social democratic parties. Despite all the admonitions of the International Republican Institute to the Convergence to build a national electoral constituency, CD has so far not been up to the challenge. The only reason Convergence now has significant weight in and even

veto power over the political process is because Washington has made it clear that no solution to the crisis is possible without it.

This explains why, from the very beginning of the postelection debacle, the strategy of the CD has been either to force Aristide to resign or to block any democratic resolution to the crisis that relegitimizes Aristide and Fanmi Lavalas. In June 2000 the CD proposed a power-sharing arrangement with Aristide, which the latter immediately rejected. The CD then adopted its “zero-option” strategy by declaring Gérard Gourgue “provisional president” and conducting a parallel inauguration ceremony with Aristide’s on February 7, 2001. During his “inaugural address,” Gourgue called for the reinstatement of the armed forces that Aristide disbanded in 1994, and even the return to Haiti of the exiled leaders of the military junta. Few in Haiti or in the international community gave much significance to that event, but it was the starting salvo in the CD’s calculated strategy of destabilizing the Aristide government. The failed OAS-CARICOM mediations throughout 2001 and 2002 made it clear that the CD was the main obstacle to a successful resolution of the conflict. At every turn in the process, the CD either refused to endorse agreements that were arrived at or issued new demands that it insisted had to be met before it could agree to endorse any proposed resolution.

Because Washington has made it essential to the crisis, the CD’s strategy is to force Aristide to resign or to block any democratic resolution that relegitimizes him.

For example, in 2001 Aristide and FL obtained the resignation of the senators who had been contested in the May 2000 elections. They agreed to reduce the terms of the senators elected in May 2000 and the terms of the entire Chamber of Deputies by two years, hold elections for those senators elected in May 2000 and for the entire Chamber of Deputies in November 2002, and reconstitute the CEP in line with OAS recommendations. The CD and its allies rejected these concessions and introduced new demands that would have required Aristide and FL to reject the legitimacy of the entire legislative and local elections of May 2000. In its January 8, 2002, “Fifth Report of the Mission of the Orga-

nization of the American States to Haiti,” the OAS appended the “Elements of a Compromise Proposal” that Aristide and FL endorsed. The “Compromise Proposal” included the following main points:

1. Convergence Democratique recognizes and accepts the results of the 2000 elections for one-third of the Senate and the presidency.
2. A new CEP will organize elections in January 2003 for the Chamber of Deputies, two-thirds of the Senate, and the territorial divisions.
3. Local officials who had engaged in abusive behavior would be removed from office after the agreement was signed.³

The OAS believed that its proposal could lead to resolution of the crisis, but only if the opposition showed greater flexibility. The CD refused to sign, and matters stood there until early December 2001 when new acts of politically motivated violence rekindled the distrust between the CD and the FL and gave the former new reasons to walk away from the negotiations and add new demands.

To be sure, Aristide and his government made things easy for the Convergence by engaging in widespread abuses of power and egregious human rights violations throughout the period in question. The armed attack on the National Palace in December 2001 and the violence that followed were the latest incidents that gave the CD a new reason to break negotiations with Aristide. A report issued by the OAS in July 2002 on the December 2001 palace attack invalidated the government’s claim that the attack was an attempted coup d’état against it, or that Convergence leaders were behind it. At the same time, the report confirmed that former members of the Haitian army carried out the attack in complicity with some officers from different police units, in an apparent attempt to test the ability of other units to defend the government. This suggests that as much as he may have tried, Aristide is not in complete control of the national police. This also suggests that another, and more targeted, attack could

³ The full text of “Initial Draft Accord,” Rev. 8, July 15, 2001, is appended in OEA/Ser. G, CP/doc.3541/02, 8 January 2002, *Fifth Report of the Mission of the Organization of American States to Haiti* (<http://www.oas.org/OASpage/press2002/en/Press98/Press2000/june2000/haiti5e.htm>).

come later. That may explain why, despite his promise to do so, Aristide finds it difficult to crack down seriously on the gangs of *chimères* and the more violent popular organizations that defend him. Though the report does not make the point, I believe it is important to distinguish between *chimères* and popular organizations. Unlike popular organizations, some of which may be prone to violence and are increasingly becoming *chimère*-like, the *chimères* are primarily hired thugs with no ideological commitment or political objectives, and they are willing to do anyone's bidding. Thus they can and have been used by both the government and the opposition, and they can switch allegiance whenever circumstances warrant. Gang leader Amiot (Cubain) Métayer's on-and-off support for Aristide illustrates this point.

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The OAS report held the government responsible for the acts of violence committed against the opposition after the December 17 attack and ordered it to pay reparations to the victims of these acts, crack down on and disarm the gangs of *chimères*, bring those responsible for the acts of violence to justice, and ensure a climate of security conducive to the holding of new elections. Aristide has committed his government to doing so and has begun implementing some of these demands, such as paying reparations to victims of the post-palace-attack violence, but has been slow in carrying out the others. In recognition of these seemingly good-faith efforts, the OAS adopted Resolution 822 in September 2002 that outlined the steps needed to resolve the political impasse. The central components of the resolution include the following:

1. To restore a climate of security by implementing a comprehensive disarmament program and bringing to justice all those who engaged in the acts of violence of December 21, 2001;
2. To pay reparations to the individuals and organizations who were the victims of the violence of the December 2001 palace attack and its aftermath;

3. To create a new CEP to be comprised of nine representatives from various sectors of Haitian society in accordance with the agreement reached in July 2001 in the Draft Initial Accord appended in the May 2001 Report of the Secretary General on the situation in Haiti.

4. For the new CEP to organize free and fair legislative and local elections in March 2003;

5. To offer support and technical assistance to the Government of Haiti, political parties, and civil society to facilitate the creation of the new CEP, and to encourage all parties to participate in this process and in the elections organized by the CEP; and

6. To support the normalization of economic cooperation between the Haitian government and the international financial institutions.⁴

The Resolution set November 4, 2002, as the deadline for the formation of the new CEP. By mid-November, eight of the nine sectors had submitted the names of their representatives, though the Group of Five — representing the Catholic, Protestant, and Episcopal Churches, the Chamber of Commerce, and human rights groups — instructed its representatives not to assume their functions in the CEP until the government took concrete steps to ensure a climate of security conducive to elections.

Not surprisingly, Convergence was the lone holdout. It justified its decision on the ground that the government had not fully implemented all the commitments to which it had agreed in OAS Resolution 822. That resolution, however, does not make such a requirement for participation in the process and calls instead on all parties to take consensus-building measures toward reaching a peaceful and democratic solution. In a further attempt to sabotage the process, CD instigated several antigovernment demonstrations in different parts of the country in mid-November. These demonstrations gave yet another sign of the rapprochement between Convergence and former members of the defunct army. In a November 17 demonstration in Cap Haitien, CD leaders joined with ex-army Col. Himmler Rébu in calling for a popular uprising against Aristide. Rébu has since become a member of the inner sanctum of CD and

⁴ See the full text of OAS Resolution 822 in Appendix I at the end of this paper.

signed its December 17, 2002, resolution calling on Aristide to step down.

The response of the Bush administration to these latest events is also revealing. In his address to the OAS on December 9, Ambassador Noriega blamed the Aristide government for the recent wave of violence and for the failure to complete the formation of the CEP. Rather than distancing the Bush administration from the Convergence for its advocacy of unconstitutional means to overthrow a legitimately elected president, Noriega openly encouraged CD in its intransigence by reaffirming that its participation in the CEP is critical. He also supported CD's withholding the naming of its representative until the government has fully implemented the stipulations of Resolution 822. The strategy, by both Convergence and the Bush administration that supports and directs it, then, is clear: to achieve by means of political and economic strangulation what they cannot achieve through the ballot box and then to call that a victory for democracy.

There is no doubt that Aristide has failed to create the social and political conditions necessary for the further development and consolidation of democracy in Haiti. As such he no longer represents the interests of the majority of Haitians even though they may not yet see a clear alternative to him. It is also clear that while it does not represent the entire opposition to Aristide and FL, the CD has emerged as the key power broker in the political conjuncture primarily because it is a willing servant of domestic and foreign interests that seek to impose an agenda on the Haitian people that is not of their choosing.

Were those who are calling for the removal of Aristide to succeed, the country could well find itself plunged into a civil war or become even more destabilized than it is now. In that event, this could provoke a military intervention, perhaps by the U.S. or a U.S.-Dominican force, to occupy the country and restore order. Such an occupation force could then install a government headed by Convergence leaders and others allied with it. As the CD's December 17 resolution points out, a new provisional government would have as its top priority the restoration of order and security in the country before elections could be held. Accomplishing that task would require a massive and bloody crackdown on the popular organizations that support

Aristide, including those that no longer do but who remain committed to the ideals he once espoused, to complete the failed mission of the military junta that toppled Aristide in 1991. Since there is no organized force in Haiti capable of carrying out that task, only an intervention force could do so. Thus, though it does not dare spell this out, such a scenario could well be read between the lines of the Convergence resolution.

Were those calling for Aristide's removal to succeed, the country could be plunged into a civil war or become even more destabilized than it is now.

I believe that a peaceful and democratic alternative must be found, and there are signs, albeit contradictory ones, that it could be. On December 26, 184 institutions, groups, and organizations from many different sectors of society issued a document that calls for an end to all violence, a consensual and peaceful resolution of the crisis, and for the government to implement OAS Resolution 822. Opponents of Aristide are presenting the group of 184 as a new voice representing different sectors of Haitian society that favors a peaceful and democratic resolution of the crisis. Yet many of the organizations, groups, and individuals who signed the document of the group of 184 are also part of or allied with the Convergence. The document also gave the government a short deadline of January 15 to show that it is taking clear steps toward that end. This raises questions about who is really behind this document and what its real objective is, especially in light of the renewed and deadly acts of violence of recent days.

As could have been expected, the government failed to implement the group's demands by the deadline. On January 16, the group of 184 condemned the government for its contemptuous disregard of their earlier declaration and for its lack of good will. On January 20 the group issued its second communiqué, which while "not yet" calling for Aristide's resignation nonetheless arrived at the same position as the Convergence, namely that it is not possible to put in place the structures and mechanisms to hold free, fair, and transparent elections under current circumstances.

For its part, Convergence rejected an apparent offer of a power-sharing arrangement by Aristide in a meeting he held with two CD leaders on January 12. Alluding to a failed attempt by President Préval to woo sectors of the opposition for a power-sharing arrangement to resolve the impasse with parliament in 1999, the CD claimed that Aristide's offer was a similar ruse to use the opposition to slip out of the crisis he had created.⁵ The opposition, then, seems to be engaged in a two-pronged strategy against the government. On the one hand, the media, the Bush administration, and opponents of Aristide in general are portraying the group of 184 as a new, broad-based voice of reason that is seeking a peaceful and consensual end to the crisis, while on the other hand Convergence continues to take an uncompromising hard line. In reality, however, the goal of the group of 184 and CD, both backed by the Bush administration, remains the same: to blame Aristide for the unresolved crisis and justify his removal from office by whatever means. As Carol Fuller,

⁵ When the term of parliament dominated by the OPL ended in January 1999, President Préval tried to form a coalition with the EC (Joint Space) coalition — which includes political parties that are now part of the Convergence Democratique along with the OPL — to obtain a majority in parliament and form a new government. But that attempt failed and plunged Haiti into the political paralysis that has remained unresolved since.

counselor and alternate U.S. representative to the OAS (replacing Ambassador Noriega who at the time of publication was awaiting Senate confirmation to replace Otto Reich as assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere affairs), said in her address at the OAS Permanent Council Meeting of January 16, 2003, “time is running out” for Aristide, though, she added, “it’s not too late” if the government acts now to implement fully Resolution 822.

Sounding a different note, about a week before the group of 184 issued its declaration of December 26, several popular organizations that once supported Aristide proposed a different course of action. Rejecting Aristide and FL for having betrayed the aspirations and interests of the people, they called for the mobilization of the population to address the fundamental problems of Haitian society and formulate a democratic and popular alternative to the so-called “solutions” offered by the traditional political parties and dictated by the international community.

The question posed by these two contrasting positions is whether a genuine democracy that is not hijacked by false prophets or false democrats, or what I would rather call *chimères* democrats, can emerge in the tensely polarized context of Haitian society? As the old saying goes, the struggle continues.

Appendix I*

OEA/Ser.G, CP/RES. 822 (1331/02), 4 September 2002

SUPPORT FOR STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY IN HAITI

THE PERMANENT COUNCIL OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES,

DEEPLY CONCERNED by the continuing political crisis in Haiti resulting from the elections of May 21, 2000;

HAVING CONSIDERED the extensive efforts by the OAS and CARICOM to contribute to resolution of that crisis and the numerous missions that these two organizations have dispatched to Haiti to facilitate agreement on a political accord, without having reached a satisfactory solution;

HAVING SEEN the Sixth Report of the Mission of the Organization of American States to Haiti on the OAS-CARICOM mission to Haiti from July 5 to 10, 2002 (CP/doc. 3625/02 corr. 3), headed by the Assistant Secretary General, Ambassador Luigi Einaudi, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saint Lucia, the Honorable Julian Hunte, in his capacity as CARICOM representative, and the Report of the Secretary General In Response to CP/INF. 4724/02 (CP/doc.3643/02 corr. 1);

HAVING NOTED in those documents the respective positions of the Government of Haiti and Convergence Democratique with regard to the Draft Initial Accord submitted by the OAS and CARICOM negotiators on June 12, 2002;

RECOGNIZING that Fanmi Lavalas and Convergence Democratique have agreed on the need for elections in 2003 and on the formation of the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP), as well as on its composition and on arrangements for appointment of its members, as set forth in the OAS Draft Initial Accord (Rev. 9) of June 12, 2002;

RECALLING resolutions CP/RES. 772 (1247/02) of August 4, 2000; CP/RES. 786 (1267/01) corr. 2, of March 19, 2001; AG/RES. 1831 (XXXI-O/01) of June 5, 2001; CP/RES. 806 (1303/02), corr. 1, of January 15, 2002; and AG/RES. 1841 (XXXII-O/01), of June 4, 2002;

TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION the steps the Government of Haiti has taken to comply with these resolutions, as stated in the Report of the Secretary General In Response to CP/INF. 4724/02 (CP/doc.3643/02 corr. 1);

BEARING IN MIND:

That the Special Mission of the Organization of American States to Strengthen Democracy in Haiti has been deployed and is pursuing its activities in accordance with resolution CP/RES. 806 (1303/02) corr. 1;

That the independent Commission of Inquiry has submitted its report on the events of December 17, 2001, and that the Government of Haiti has committed to implement the recommendations made in this report;

That on July 10, 2002, the Government of Haiti and the victims of the events of December 17, 2001, signed a protocol of agreement on the payment of reparations and that the Government of Haiti has committed itself to make payment to each victim based on procedures established by the OAS Advisory Council on Reparations;

That the Government of Haiti has proposed that free, fair and technically feasible legislative and local elections be held in the first half of 2003;

CONVINCED:

Of the need to normalize the functioning of democratic institutions in Haiti and to strengthen them, in keeping with the spirit and principles of the Charter of the OAS and the Inter-American Democratic Charter, and that for this purpose the OAS will continue to use its good offices and resources;

That preparations must begin soon for free, fair and technically feasible legislative and local elections in 2003;

That dialogue and consensus-building measures are necessary to help guarantee a peaceful and democratic solution to the political crisis in Haiti;

REAFFIRMING:

That the Inter-American Democratic Charter proclaims that “the peoples of the Americas have a right to democracy and that their governments have an obligation to promote and defend it;” and that “essential elements of representative democracy include, inter alia, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, access to and the exercise of power in accordance with the rule of law, the holding of periodic, free, and fair elections based on secret balloting and universal suffrage as an expression of the sovereignty of the people, the pluralistic system of political parties and organizations, and the separation of powers and independence of the branches of government”;

That the Inter-American Democratic Charter also states that “democracy and social and economic development are interdependent and are mutually reinforcing” and that the “promotion and observance of economic, social, and cultural rights are inherently linked to integral development, equitable economic growth, and to the consolidation of democracy in the states of the Hemisphere”; and

DEEPLY CONCERNED by the continuing deterioration of the socioeconomic situation in Haiti, the ongoing suffering of the people, and its potential for humanitarian disaster and convinced that efforts must be made, as a matter of urgency, to alleviate these conditions;

RESOLVES:

1. To take note of the Sixth Report of the Mission of the Organization of American States to Haiti (CP/doc. 3625/02 corr. 3) concerning the joint OAS/CARICOM efforts to facilitate a solution to the political crisis in Haiti, and to thank the OAS Secretary General, the Assistant Secretary General and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saint Lucia in his capacity as Representative of CARICOM for their initiatives in this regard.

2. To take note of the report of the Commission of Inquiry and to thank the Commission and the Advisory Council on Reparations for their diligent efforts in contributing to a peaceful resolution of the political crisis in Haiti.
3. To welcome the Government of Haiti's expressed commitment to implement the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry as well as the recommendations of the Advisory Council on Reparations, as reflected in the Accord signed by the Minister of Justice, Claimants and their Representatives on July 9, 2002, and to call on the Government of Haiti to do so as soon as possible.
4. To further welcome the Government of Haiti's pledge to undertake additional confidence building measures, bearing in mind that some elements can be implemented more expeditiously than others and that additional financial and technical assistance may be necessary. These measures include:
 - a. To publish within 60 days of receipt of the Commission of Inquiry Report a report by the Minister of Justice on actions taken with respect to persons found to be implicated in the events of December 17, 2001 and subsequent days;
 - b. To strengthen its disarmament policies and programs and, in this regard, invite the active cooperation of the International Community, through the OAS Special Mission, in the development and implementation of a comprehensive disarmament program;
 - c. To implement, to the fullest extent of its lawful authority, all the Recommendations on Human Rights and the Press set forth in the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Events of December 17, 2001, and all other Recommendations in the Report that are, in whole or in part, directed to it.
5. To recognize, as noted in the report of the Secretary General of August 20, 2002 (CP/doc. 3643/02 corr. 1), the positive steps that the Government of Haiti has taken to date to implement Permanent Council resolution CP/RES. 806 (1303/02) corr. 1 and to support and urge it to implement fully all pending elements of that resolution as soon as possible, bearing in mind that some elements can be implemented more expeditiously than others and that additional financial and technical assistance may be necessary. These include in particular:
 - a. The restoration of a climate of security;
 - b. The effective prosecution of any person, and dismissal, when appropriate, of any person found to be author of or accomplice in the violence of December 17, 2001, and subsequent days;
 - c. The completion of a thorough inquiry into all politically-motivated crimes;
 - d. Prompt reparation for organizations and individuals who suffered damages as a direct result of the violence of December 17, 2001.
6. To urge the Government of Haiti that, with a view to establishing the conditions for elections to be held in 2003, it renew efforts to ensure a climate of security and confidence within the parameters established in operative paragraph 5 of AG/RES. 1841 (XXXII-O/02), bearing in mind the need to strengthen independent police

and judicial institutions as part of its renewed efforts to combat impunity as called for in paragraph 6 of AG/RES. 1841 (XXXII-O/02).

7. To reaffirm the importance of holding free, fair, and technically feasible legislative and local elections — on a date in 2003 to be established by the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) — in which all political parties can participate freely and securely. The conduct of these elections shall take into consideration the Government of Haiti's constitutional electoral prerogatives and shall be in accordance with the process proposed by the OAS in the Draft Initial Accord (Rev. 9) of June 12, 2002, which includes:
 - a. The formation of an autonomous, independent, credible and neutral CEP) no later than two months after adoption of this resolution;
 - b. The establishment by the CEP, within the parameters of Haitian law and no later than 30 days after the formation of the CEP, of a Electoral Guarantees Commission (CGE), which shall be comprised of, *inter alia*, representatives of a national coordination body formed on the basis of experience of coordinating electoral observation in Haiti and of civil society organizations, and witnessed by representatives of electoral observation missions and the OAS Special Mission to Strengthen Democracy in Haiti ;
 - c. The monitoring by the CEP of the activities of the police in connection with the electoral process.
8. To further recognize the urgency of forming the CEP, in accordance with the process proposed by the OAS in the Draft Initial Accord (Rev. 9) of June 12, 2002, no later than two months after adoption of this resolution.
9. To offer the Government of Haiti, political parties, and civil society the support and technical assistance of the Organization of American States that is required to facilitate the process of forming the CEP and preparing for and holding these elections.
10. To encourage all Haitian parties to participate in all relevant aspects of those elections and in the electoral process leading up to it.
11. To support normalization of economic cooperation between the Government of Haiti and the international financial institutions and urge those parties to resolve the technical and financial obstacles that preclude such normalization.
12. To reaffirm the mandates of the Secretary General and the OAS Special Mission in accordance with AG/RES. 1841 (XXXII-O/02), AG/RES. 1831 (XXXI-O/01), and CP/RES. 806 (1303/02 corr. 1) and to instruct the Secretary General to strengthen further the Special OAS Mission to Haiti in order for it to support, monitor, and report on implementation of this and all other pertinent OAS reso-

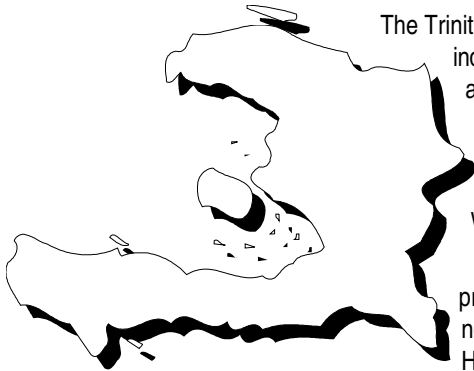
lutions and on commitments of the Government of Haiti, as set forth in these resolutions and in accordance with the agreement between the Government of Haiti and the OAS on the Special Mission to Strengthen Democracy in Haiti. These commitments include:

- a. Strengthening of democratic institutions, including political parties, in order to guarantee a pluralistic political party system;
 - b. Formation of a new Provisional Electoral Council (CEP), in accordance with the process proposed by the OAS in the Draft Initial Accord (Rev. 9) of June 12, 2002, and all of the CEP's activities;
 - c. Establishment by the CEP of an Electoral Guarantees Commission (CGE);
 - d. Development and implementation of a comprehensive disarmament program;
 - e. Promotion of a National Dialogue and Consensus Building between the Government of Haiti, all political parties, and Haitian civil society;
 - f. Professional development of an independent police institution, development of a security plan and creation of a climate of security for the 2003 elections;
13. The OAS Special Mission will also:
 - a. Support, monitor, and report on provision by the international community and the OAS of technical electoral assistance prior to and following the 2003 elections and on deployment of an electoral observation mission to observe all aspects of the electoral process;
 - b. Coordinate efforts of the international community to provide technical and financial electoral assistance, including electoral planning, technical assistance, security, and observation of the elections in 2003.
 14. To call on the Secretary General to remain engaged in efforts to resolve the political crisis in Haiti, to follow the evolution of the situation, and to submit to the Permanent Council every two months detailed reports regarding the implementation of the present resolution.
 15. To call on the international community to provide as a matter of urgency additional funds to the OAS Special Mission in order to help finance its economic, social and institutional strengthening programs for Haiti, with a view to discharging its additional responsibilities under this resolution.
 16. To further call on the international community to provide technical and financial support for the elections in 2003, particularly by observing the pre-electoral formation and operation of the CEP and post-electoral operations, as well as the elections themselves.

*Source: (<http://www.oas.org/OASpage/press2002/en/Press98/Press2000/june2000/haiti5e.htm>).

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Information on the Haiti Program



The Trinity College Haiti Program seeks to provide accurate, up-to-date, and insightful information and analysis to individuals and organizations involved in current Haitian political, economic and social issues. The Haiti Program also seeks to raise awareness of the forthcoming 200th anniversary of Haiti's independence in 2004 by providing a forum for the exchange and dissemination of information on the contributions made over space and time by Haiti and the U.S.-based Haitian Diaspora population to the well being of the United States. The Trinity College Haiti Program is a continuation and expansion of the Georgetown University Haiti Program, which was founded in 1994 in collaboration with Johns Hopkins University.

The Haiti Program works with two core constituencies. One constituency is composed of policy makers and program planners in agencies and branches of the U.S. government as well as representatives of academic, non-governmental and international organizations. The second constituency is composed of members of the Haitian-American population actively involved in Haiti and US-Haiti issues. Members of both constituencies are convened periodically under the auspices of the *Haiti Study Group* to participate in seminars and symposia on topical issues.

The Haiti Program achieves its objectives through seminars and symposia, publications, and the development of educational materials. Seminars, usually off-the-record and by invitation only for members of the Haiti Study Group (HSG), last for two hours and involve specially invited guest speakers. The full-day symposia, also by invitation for members of the HSG and other guests, address issues related to Haiti's political and economic development; the significance of its independence to the United States; and the contemporary contribution of Haitian-Americans to U.S. political, economic, and social vitality.

To complement its seminars and symposia, the Haiti Program also publishes occasional Briefing Papers on current issues, along with Haiti Info Circulars. The latter, in addition to containing reports and articles written by program collaborators, include symposium reports. All published materials are posted on the Haiti Program's web site.

In addition to its Internet home at www.trinitydc.edu, the Haiti Program has created an educational web site, www.Haiti-USA.org. The website features information on historical linkages between Haiti and the U.S., and on today's growing communities of Haitians in the United States. It serves as an educational tool for all individuals and organizations.

The Haiti Program also sponsors occasional briefings for Congressional Staff members and others, and participates in meetings, consultations and conferences on issues linked to its work. The Trinity College Haiti Program is directed by Dr. Robert Maguire.

The Trinity College Haiti Papers are designed to serve the needs of decision makers and analysts interested in Haiti and the Haitian Diaspora in the United States. The Papers are an occasional publication of the Haiti Program, a unit of Programs in International Affairs at Trinity College, Washington, D.C. The opinions expressed herein are those of the author, and not the Haiti Program or the College. Copies of this and other Haiti-relevant publications can be obtained by writing to the Haiti Program, Trinity College, 125 Michigan Ave. NE, Washington, DC 20017 or by visiting the Project's website at: http://www.trinitydc.edu/academics/depts/Interdisc/International/Haiti_Program.htm

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