



ICiSP
Initiative citoyenne
en faveur de la
sécurité et la paix

The CISP Manifesto

Citizens' Initiative for Security and Peace



Solving Insecurity In Haiti: A Call for Haitian-led Action
with the support of Trues Allies

A Call for Ideas and Actions to Confront the Crisis

May 2025

Introductory Note

This Manifesto is the fruit of long and thoughtful reflection, carried out on behalf of the silent majority by Haitian citizens from diverse backgrounds. These are committed patriots -living in Haiti and in the diaspora- who have come together to call on the Haitian people to rescue a homeland in peril. Their only motivation is to preserve the nation, assert the right to live in peace and dignity on this land passed down from our ancestors, and contribute to restoring the Haitian people's pride. Open to all individuals or legal entities who share this vision, the initiative is named:

Citizens' Initiative for Security and Peace (CISP)

*This Manifesto is also available in Creole,
French, and Spanish versions.
www.icisp-haiti.org*

Summary

Through the **Citizens' Initiative for Security and Peace (CISP)**, a collective of engaged patriots – both in Haiti and abroad – is mobilizing the Haitian people to come to the aid of their country and help it reclaim its dignity. The initiative arises from a stark reality: what is happening in Haiti today amounts to the total negation of democratic order and national sovereignty. Since the start of the decade, the country has been locked in a worsening cycle of violence –dramatically intensified over the past three years. The retreat of the state in the face of emboldened criminal gangs now raises the terrifying specter of mass atrocities. The solutions attempted so far have proven inadequate. To win this existential battle, we must find a unifying foundation to rally an initiative that can support the State, fill the void, and reverse the tide. This is the challenge that the CISP embraces.

The social and economic toll of this insecurity is immense:

- Middle-class families, who after decades of hard work, are being forced to flee and abandon everything they have built;
- Entrepreneurs, traders, and *Madan Sara* who are shutting down operations indefinitely, with no clear sense of return;
- The most vulnerable, surviving day to day, no longer free to move in search of food or livelihood;
- Peasant farmers and rural communities, whose slow decapitalization accelerates as roads remain blocked and production extorted;
- Schoolchildren and students, deprived of an education due to the exodus of teachers and the destruction of institutions;
- The diaspora, whose essential support is being undermined by restrictions on movement;
- Even the armed groups themselves, who are destroying the very society they must live in a scorched-earth path that leads only to ruin.

In this climate of despair, the population doesn't know where to turn. They seek refuge wherever they are welcomed, but at the very moment when foreign borders are closing. In this context, internal mobilization has become our only way forward. The civic service provision in the 1987 Constitution (Article 52.3), known as SCMO (*Service Civique Mixte Obligatoire*), offers a legal and moral foundation for this effort –a way to restore hope and direction, especially for a youth desperate to contribute meaningfully to their country's future. The State must urgently establish and implement the SCMO to shift the balance of power. A contingent of 200,000 individuals –primarily youth, but open to all citizens of good character– could be mobilized for 12 months. These «freedom and peace soldiers» would work under coordinated civilian authority to help retake the country, until a new legitimate government is in place to evaluate and carry the effort forward. A *Citizen Fund for Security and Peace* could be created to support this initiative alongside public contributions.

Haiti's insecurity stems from the collapse of governance and the State itself. The failure of the CPT (Presidential Transition Council) was bitter but foreseeable. To avoid a total breakdown, we must begin now to design an alternative that draws strength from competence, patriotism, and integrity –regardless of the institutional or social origins of those called to serve. Values of honesty, patriotism and competence should count far more than the institutional or social origins of the people called upon. Their dual mission would be explicit and exclusive: reduce insecurity and organize elections creatively and effectively, by region and by level (*CASEC, Mairies, Deputies, Senators, President*) to regain legitimacy step-by-step. Let us be clear: the destruction is being carried out by Haitians against Haitians. We are at war with ourselves.

Let us be clear: the destruction is being carried out by Haitians against Haitians, by killing, kidnapping, raping, looting, and laying waste to what remains of our common goods, our human and material heritage, built up through generations of sacrifice. The nation is at war with itself. We must return to the core principles that sustain any society capable of living together in peace –beginning with the very idea of citizenship. But for decades, our basic social rights have been systematically trampled by successive governments. The result is a country fractured into a thousand shards, where no social cohesion, no solidarity – whether natural or institutional – and no sense of national belonging remain. Time and time again, we have chosen shortcuts, and each time they have led us to the institutional, moral, political, and civic collapse we now face. The task before us is nothing less than to reconcile the nation with itself, and to build, at last, a lasting foundation for coexistence. This is the only way to ensure that what we are experiencing today never happens again. Here lies a narrow but vital path toward national salvation.

The current violence is nothing short of terrorism –without ideology, without justification. It seeks to subjugate the population and strip away the last remnants of human dignity. We are facing an intolerable choice: submit to the rule of gangs, or accept international trusteeship. Haiti is alone in this experiment of stateless implosion, under siege from transnational criminal networks dealing in drugs, weapons, and even human organs. The silence or passivity of certain nations suggests they believe themselves shielded from the fallout of this unprecedented collapse.

And yet, no one will come to save us. It is up to Haitians to act, to resist, to rebuild, to protect. The survival of the nation depends on it.

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1. THE SITUATION

The most significant episodes of progress in the history of societies are fundamentally linked to periods of stability, often lasting for extended periods. At the heart of any stability that brings development, lies order. The nature of this order determines the quality of the progress it enables, particularly concerning the dual issues of equity and redistribution of wealth generated within the social fabric. The viability and longevity of this fabric rest on one irreducible fact: security – elevated to the status of the most essential public good – and guaranteed by the existence of the State. This holds true regardless of turbulence and irrespective of the type of political regime, whether at the authoritarian or democratic end of the spectrum.

What is currently happening in Haiti is a denial of the principles of democratic order and national sovereignty. For years now, the Haitian society has been trapped in a worsening cycle of violence that has steadily overwhelmed the forces of law and order. This crisis reached a shocking turning point in early 2023, when armed groups took control of the country's largest prison; right under the eyes of the national police and military. That event, highly symbolic of the collapse of state authority, resulted in the mass escape of over 5,000 inmates, many of them dangerous criminals. As of April 2025, the security situation has deteriorated further and now threatens the very survival of the Haitian state. Armed gangs continue their relentless wave of terrorist attacks into neighborhoods that were once relatively safe, while acts of terror and violence have become daily occurrences. The remaining state institutions are struggling to function, and entire areas of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan region are under *de facto* control of these armed groups. This is not just a crisis, it is a full-scale collapse of order, security, and legitimacy. And unless we act together as a nation, it will only get worse.

If there is one conclusion we can't avoid from recent events, it's that the advance of armed gangs is relentless, while the retreat of state authority becomes more glaring by the day. Between the triumphalist posturing of violent criminals and the staggering impotence of those entrusted with legal force, a dual threat looms over the population. On one side, the crimes of those who rape, burn, and kill with impunity; on the other, the crimes of those who capture the State and hollow out its institutions for their own benefit, weakening its ability to mobilize the nation in defense of the common good.

Today, the sheer brutality and randomness of terrorist violence has shattered any illusion of passive acceptance, any social equivalent of Stockholm syndrome¹. The horror is too widespread, too senseless, too complete. In this moment of existential peril, we must bind our personal survival to the survival of the nation itself. Only by standing together – committed, lucid, and resolute – can we overcome this descent into barbarism. Only by rebuilding collective strength can we begin to address the deeper causes of poverty and insecurity that fuel the crisis.

One of the most glaring realities of the current crisis is the collapse of law enforcement and the staggering cost of insecurity for any hope of restoring national stability. Despite various attempts to contain the violence, the results have been limited. Local self-defence initiatives – such as neighborhood vigilante brigades – have emerged in response to the state's paralysis, while the deployment of a multinational support mission seeks to bolster our weakened security forces. Yet, neither approach has proven sufficient to reverse the tide. This situation underscores the urgent need for a new path forward; one that brings together citizens, communities, institutions, and the diaspora in a broad, inclusive effort. Only by uniting and coordinating these fragmented responses can we achieve meaningful progress in restoring both public safety and national sovereignty.

Today, the collapse of the state apparatus –and the persistent inefficacy of those charged with managing it– demand the emergence of a unifying front upon which to build a credible national initiative. Such an initiative must be capable of supporting and ultimately rescuing the state in this existential struggle. This preamble is

1. *Stockholm syndrome* is defined as a bond of empathy that develops between the victim of a kidnapping and their captor.

both a call to conscience and a rallying point. It is the necessary prelude to the reflections and proposals that follow, whose sole purpose is to help chart a path toward recovery and national cohesion.

2. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COSTS

The economic and social costs of rampant insecurity are enormous, affecting every stratum of Haitian society. The middle class faces erosion of livelihoods and rising emigration pressures; entrepreneurs and business owners contend with extortion, looting, and halted operations; working-class communities in disadvantaged neighborhoods endure daily violence and displacement; regional producers and the rural population suffer from disrupted supply chains and market access; students and schoolchildren see their right to education extinguished; and finally the diaspora, though distant, bears the weight of emotional distress.

> FOR THE MIDDLE CLASSES

The middle classes are generally the cornerstone of any democratic society. The broader and more stable they are, the stronger a country's democracy tends to be. In this sense, the middle class embodies upward social mobility, representing the tangible outcome of working-class advancement through improved living conditions. In Haiti, access to the middle class has traditionally been rooted in education –providing the means to earn a decent living, purchase a home, and own a car– achievements often attained after decades of hard work and perseverance. However, the prolonged insecurity plaguing the country has pushed a significant portion of the middle class into poverty. The wave of kidnappings for ransom, the systematic looting and destruction of homes, professional offices, and small businesses have devastated this social group. Many professionals who invested the best years of their lives in building a better future have been stripped of their possessions, forced to pay exorbitant ransoms, or even murdered by armed gangs. Countless others have been driven into exile, abandoning the material and emotional investments they made in their homeland. These are not just economic losses, they represent profound human and social costs that will severely hinder the nation's capacity to recover.

> FOR ENTREPRENEURS AND PEOPLE

Entrepreneurs, businesspeople, and *Madan Sara* –the vital engines of Haiti's economic activity– have endured the worst of the multifaceted crisis triggered by rampant insecurity. Their businesses, supply chains, and livelihoods have been repeatedly targeted by armed gangs who loot, vandalize, and set fire to anything in their path. From small market stalls to large commercial operations, Haitian enterprises have quietly shuttered, some permanently, others temporarily but with no clear path to resumption.

High-profile closures underscore the scale of the crisis: the Marriott Hotel in Turgeau, one of the nation's most prominent, has suspended operations due to its inability to guarantee the safety of staff and guests. Major banks, including *Banque Nationale de Crédit*, *Sogebel*, and *Unibank*, have been forced to relocate branches, while uncertainty looms over *Digicel* and *Natcom* –Haiti's main telecommunications providers– whose headquarters are now in areas increasingly coveted by armed groups.

Since November 2024, Toussaint Louverture International Airport has been all but closed to international commercial flights, effectively cutting off the capital from the rest of the world. Most recently, Royal Caribbean suspended its stops at the port of Labadie near Cap-Haïtien², signaling the collapse of one of the few remaining links to international tourism. This economic paralysis, caused by unchecked violence, further erodes public confidence and deepens the already critical social and economic crisis.

2. <https://lenouvelliste.com/article/255556/insecurite-croissante-les-fermetures-jusqua-nouvel-ordre-se-multiplient>

The situation is equally dire for social institutions such as hospitals and health centers, many of which have been forced to suspend services indefinitely due to gang threats. The Mirebalais University Hospital –a flagship healthcare facility– has recently halted operations, following the earlier closure of the Haitian State University Hospital, now rendered inaccessible. *Médecins Sans Frontières* (Doctors Without Borders) has also announced a three-month suspension of activities at both its Emergency Center in Turgeau and its Trauma Hospital in Carrefour. These examples, far from isolated, reflect a broader collapse in public health infrastructure.

The cumulative impact of this destruction is profound: a dramatic rise in mass unemployment, a severe contraction of economic activity –particularly alarming in a country where GDP has declined for six consecutive years–, a sharp reduction in the availability of basic services, and the accelerated unraveling of the social fabric. These cascading effects not only deepen human suffering but also threaten the long-term viability of the Haitian state itself.

> FOR THE WORKING CLASSES IN DISADVANTAGED AREAS

Most of our fellow citizens living in underprivileged areas endure lives marked by meager and uncertain incomes, often in subhuman conditions. Many reside in makeshift dwellings, without access to water or electricity, surviving day to day on precarious means. Forced to leave their shantytowns regularly to gather food, they find themselves obstructed by the pervasive insecurity that hampers their freedom of movement, a basic necessity for survival. Even in these dire circumstances, their homes are looted and burned. More than a million people, once settled in these fragile communities, were displaced, forced to wander from one temporary shelter to another. These nomadic conditions expose vulnerable women and children to additional health risks.

In addition, merchants in these areas are being extorted by gangs, further crippling their ability to sustain any livelihood. Recently, hundreds of senior citizens were massacred under the false accusation of having placed a curse on a child belonging to gang leader Micanor Micanor Altès³. Shockingly, both the victims and the perpetrators belong to the same impoverished social class. Where is the ideology behind this violence? What are the true objectives of such a destructive and senseless model of existence?

> FOR PRODUCERS IN THE REGIONS AND THE RURAL WORLD

The widespread establishment of roadblocks by armed gangs, which severely restrict the free movement of goods and people, is inflicting significant damage on the peasantry, the rural population, and traders alike. Many farmers now face tremendous challenges in transporting their agricultural products to markets in the West, Artibonite, and Plateau Central. These products, often perishable, are difficult to preserve once removed from the fields. Consequently, the rural economy has suffered a rapid decapitalization, worsened by the extortion and ransom demands imposed by gangs, who charge peasants for the right to farm and raise livestock. This insecurity is rapidly undermining the agricultural sector and further impoverishing those who depend on it for their livelihoods.

> FOR SCHOOLCHILDREN AND STUDENTS

As a result of this crippling insecurity, many schools in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area have been forced to close, while others are being occupied by gangs or displaced families who have fled their homes due to gang violence. Some schools have attempted to continue providing education through distance learning, albeit on a reduced timetable. However, many students have left the country, further straining private schools' revenues and leaving school administrations unable to pay the few teachers who remain. Universities face similar challenges: several have been forced to close under gang pressure, while others have been vandalized.

3. <https://lenouvelliste.com/article/251889/le-deroulement-du-massacre-de-wharf-jeremie>

The consequences are far-reaching –an exodus of students, teachers, and university professors, coupled with internal migration to provincial towns, many of which offer no higher education.

This exodus has severely diminished the capacity of schools and universities to provide quality education in the short term. It also jeopardizes the country's future, depriving it of an entire generation of skilled individuals who could contribute to its recovery.

> FOR THE DIASPORA

Even in the most challenging times, the Haitian diaspora has remained a steadfast and unconditional support for the country. With annual remittances exceeding US\$4 billion –without counterpart-, Haiti's diaspora is the nation's largest financial contributor, surpassing all other so-called "friends of Haiti" combined. Beyond financial support, the diaspora contributes through visits, entrepreneurial activities, and by helping sustain the tourism industry. Many members own homes in Haiti and regularly return to spend vacations, attend funerals, contribute to social and regional development, engage in religious or cultural events, and participate in festivals. These activities also bring much-needed foreign currency into the country.

However, the ongoing insecurity has significantly reduced the flow of diaspora visitors. This is compounded by the suspension or reduction of commercial flights from Port-au-Prince and the blockages of interdepartmental roads enforced by gangs. This disruption has inflicted a severe blow to the country's economy, as the restrictions on the mobility of goods and people exacerbate poverty and hinder development.

> EVEN GANGS WILL PAY THE PRICE SOONER OR LATER

The scorched earth policy, while seemingly beneficial to its promoters, has its inherent contradictions. Once the gangs have ravaged everything –schools, hospitals, homes-, what will be left for them to control? Despite the immense wealth they've extorted through criminal activities, they too will eventually require basic services: schools for their children, health centers for treatment, leisure spaces for recreation, and public services for their comfort. But where will these be found? Perhaps they will attempt to enjoy their ill-gotten fortunes abroad, but this will prove impossible. As members of international terrorist groups⁴, they will be pursued and prosecuted the moment they attempt to leave the country. Haiti, the very land they seek to destroy, will be their only prison, their only country. What a tragic paradox!

3. SOCIAL MOBILIZATION IN THE FACE OF INSECURITY

The country is slowly crumbling, and the population is at a loss, not knowing where to turn. Many are fleeing or seeking to leave, while those who cannot afford to are relocating to other cities, hoping to find areas less affected by gang violence. But there is a limit to how much can be done. Even foreign countries, once welcoming, are becoming increasingly closed to new Haitian migrants; places like the United States, the Dominican Republic, and Canada are all tightening their borders. Have we become outcasts?

In the face of this denial of our humanity, what can we do? We must mobilize to resist this assault on our lives, our families, our heritage, and our country – the only land passed down to us by our ancestors –, a place that truly belongs to us. But to do this, we must get organized, just as those who seek to destroy Haiti have done. They have united their forces under misleadingly benign names, like "*Viv ansanm*," to push forward their destructive agenda.

4. <https://www.state.gov/translations/french/designation-de-viv-ansanm-et-gran-grif-comme-organisations-terroristes/>

However, this mobilization must be guided, structured, and aligned with the provisions of the 1987 Constitution. In this context, it's crucial to highlight that the Constitution, in article 52.3⁵ states, "A compulsory mixed civic service is established, the operating conditions of which are laid down by law." This is the SCMO (*Service Civique Mixte Obligatoire*), a concept that could be instrumental in rallying 100,000 to 200,000 patriots –of all ages, both in Haiti and the diaspora– to "defend" Haiti against its adversaries. The constitutional provision is already in place, young people are stepping up to defend themselves, and many others are eager to contribute and feel useful to their country. Therefore, this presents a golden opportunity to reignite pride, hope, and a sense of purpose among a youth generation searching for direction and career opportunities.

The idea of compulsory mixed civic service is not a new concept. It has already been implemented in several countries. In Haiti, various initiatives have been taken to put it into practice, including a bill tabled in Parliament in 2017, which outlined the legal framework for regulating this civic service. The justification for this compulsory civic service was based on several key points. It was argued that "the proposed law would contribute to organizing elections with minimal reliance on external financial support, thus enabling the country to reclaim its national sovereignty, as the cost of elections is often cited as a reason for foreign interference in Haiti's affairs. Additionally, the law would address other critical areas, such as disaster relief, reforestation, literacy, and the management of vocational training centers. The core principle of the law is rooted in reciprocity between the State and its citizens."⁶

The SCMO would not function as a parallel structure to the existing security system, but rather as a reinforcement, providing new energy, substantial human resources, and a commitment to active patriotism. It would instill a sense of duty among participants, empowering them to serve their country. The primary role of the SCMO would be to carry out civilian surveillance and control tasks across Haiti: at sea, at border crossings, at ports and airports, within neighborhoods, and across communes. It is crucial to recognize that the ongoing insecurity stems from a coordinated effort between organized crime within Haiti and transnational trafficking networks. SCMO's mission would be to counter this by fostering national solidarity and strengthening the country's security capabilities from within.

"There is an undeniable link between crime in Haiti and the trafficking of arms and drugs. Without robust measures to control the flow of weapons and ammunition, progress in combating criminal gangs will remain elusive. These gangs are currently operating in a more organized manner, with more sophisticated weapons than the police or the Multinational Security Support Mission in Haiti (MMAS in French). With criminal organizations now controlling private ports in the capital, Port-au-Prince, they can freely receive arms and ammunition. In addition, they engage in piracy, hijacking ships on the high seas to further their illicit trade. Sailors are sometimes kidnapped as part of these operations. The coordination between these criminal activities is staggering and indicates the involvement of transnational criminal networks. It is imperative to implement sanction measures targeting both the individuals and institutions that finance and protect these criminal organizations," stated Roberto Alvarez, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic⁷.

From a purely quantitative standpoint, the current security apparatus lacks the necessary capacity to carry out the critical task of territorial control. This task does not require armed personnel, but rather a significant number of individuals deployed throughout the territory. In addition to this essential function of surveillance and territorial control, the responsibilities of the Civic Service could include a range of complementary tasks. These could involve providing aid to populations affected by natural disasters, accidents, or fires, safeguarding national heritage, supporting the organization of national and local elections, managing risks and disasters, combating corruption, and maintaining public hygiene in neighborhoods.

5. <https://www.ifrc.org/docs/IDRL/Haiti/Constitution%201987.pdf>

6. http://www.lenational.org/post_free.php?elif=1_CONTENTUE/sports&rebmun=2066

7. <https://lenouvelliste.com/article/255497/la-crise-securitaire-en-haiti-peut-se-transformer-en-conflit-international-alerte-le-chancelier-dominicain-roberto-alvarez>

Given the current state of emergency and the growing desire among the nation's youth to form vigilance brigades to protect their neighborhoods, the establishment of the SCMO could offer a constitutional and coordinated solution to this urgent need for protection. It is our collective duty to support these young patriots, many of whom have already sacrificed their lives in defense of their country and their future⁸.

In response to the alarming rise of gang control over vast territories, the Haitian state must act swiftly to implement the SCMO in an effort to shift the balance of power. Specifically, the state could decree the mobilization of a contingent of 200,000 citizens of good standing –primarily young people, but not exclusively– serving as “freedom and peace soldiers” for a period of 12 months. This initiative would seek to regain control of the country until the establishment of a new legitimate government, which could then evaluate whether to continue or suspend the program. Participants should receive symbolic financial compensation to cover basic needs such as food and transportation expenses.

Funding for this initiative would primarily come from the public treasury, with more efficient management by a state committed to frugality, a less expenditure driven presidency, and a government focused on addressing the nation's most pressing priorities. However, given that this is a social mobilization, Haitian civil society –together with the diaspora– could establish and manage a Citizen Security and Peace Support Fund to further support this initiative.

4. NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

One of the greatest challenges Haiti faces today is the crisis of governance. The state has decayed to such an extent that the very survival of the nation is now in question. Power is concentrated in an oversized capital city, while more than 80% of the national territory – along with entire communes and communal sections in the Ouest, Artibonite, and Centre departments – has slipped out of state control. In this climate of despair, a pressing question echoes across the country: *Is the Transitional Presidential Council still capable of restoring security and organizing elections to finally bring an end, by February 7, 2026, to this endless transition that weakens the nation more and more each passing day?*

*In less than two centuries –between February 27, 1846, and February 7, 1988– Haiti has seen no fewer than seven collegiate executive bodies lasting more than four months, not counting those that barely lasted two weeks⁹. The results have been, at best, uneven and marked by deep instability, particularly around the organization of presidential elections, which have often been disputed. These figures reveal the erratic, almost compulsive use of a model that has never truly proven its worth; one driven more by clan interests than by the national good. This speaks to a glaring lack of political wisdom and foresight, especially in a culture more accustomed to vertical, hierarchical power than to shared leadership and collective responsibility. Doesn't our own proverb say “*chak koukouy klere pou je yo*” (every firefly lights its own path)? A sharp expression of the kind of unchecked, antisocial individualism that continues to undermine the public interest.*

Some have described the way the current Transitional Presidential Council (CPT) operates as a form of “predatory governance” where the hunger for personal privilege has completely overshadowed the promises made to the Haitian people: reform, security, and free elections.¹⁰ According to economist Énomy Germain, the CPT's lifestyle and approach “raise serious questions about ethics and transparency in the management of public

8. <https://lenouvelliste.com/article/255872/canape-vert-rend-hommage-a-ses-heros-tues-en-affrontant-des-groupes-criminels-a-pacot>

9. <https://lenouvelliste.com/article/247734/haiti-a-deja-experimente-plus-de-7-colleges-presidentiels-et-23-constitutions-selon-lune-roc-pierre-louis>

10. <https://metropole.ht/plus-dun-milliard-de-gourdes-dilapidees-par-le-cpt-en-un-an-selon-le-rnnddh-2/>

funds¹¹. In truth, the Council's failure was predictable, and the entire nation is now paying the price, and will continue to do so for years to come. It's time to change course and get the country back on track.

Some troubling questions remain: Why does the problem of insecurity persist, unresolved? Could it be that the true purpose of this violence is to block the path to credible elections; prolonging chaos and preserving a climate where criminal networks can thrive? What will become of the country if the elections, scheduled to restore constitutional order by February 7, 2026, turn out to be impossible? And what should we do in the face of the CPT's likely failure; one that risks becoming yet another national setback?

Well then, the Nation –or what remains of it– must rise and take responsibility to steer away from shipwreck in these stormy waters, and safeguard the collective wealth now in danger. The time for saving ourselves one by one has passed. Haiti is full of talent, men and women with both knowledge and conscience, honest, patriotic, competent, and brave. They must now come together, reflect as one, and act with unity to chart a path out of this endless crisis, which is eating away at the very foundations of the Republic and draining hope across every level of society.

What will happen on February 7, 2026 if the elections never take place? True to our national reflex, we'll likely wake up in January 2026 demanding the immediate departure of the CPT, a classic "*rache manyòk*" response we know too well. But history has shown us that this kind of last-minute overthrow often ends up being worse than the very problem it tries to fix. That's why we must start thinking now about a credible alternative to the CPT; out of foresight, not panic. Because with armed gangs tightening their grip and the State dangerously weakened, any sudden power vacuum would be catastrophic. It would open the floodgates to total anarchy and accelerate the complete collapse of the Haitian state.

Even though the current Constitution offers no clear path for managing a vacuum in transitional executive power in the absence of a functioning Parliament, now is the time to build a national consensus around a way forward; one that could involve legitimate state institutions or credible voices from civil society. This solution must rest on a clear and focused two-part mandate: first, to drastically reduce insecurity in the regions hardest hit by violence and second, to organize elections that are as credible and inclusive as the situation allows, even if this means holding them in phases; by region, by office, over time (from local councils and mayors to deputies, senators, and ultimately, the presidency).

Some will object that such a plan would be unconstitutional. Perhaps; **but so was the CPT**. It came from a political compromise, and one that has failed to meet its own commitments. So why shouldn't we dare to imagine a new one? One that includes stronger accountability and better safeguards against failure. If we are to escape this ongoing crisis, we must be bold and inventive, guided at every step by the defense of the public interest and the preservation of what remains of our shared national legacy. Let's never forget: Haiti's independence belongs to all of us.

To make this possible, we must first acknowledge that the *status quo* is not just stagnant, it is socially and individually suffocating. We must prove ourselves capable of thinking beyond old formulas, of trying new approaches, and of breaking free from the rigid mental frameworks that keep us paralyzed and ineffective. But this can only be done with a deep sense of duty to the country and to the common good. What's needed is a national rescue effort rooted in responsibility and honesty.

We must therefore call upon women and men –whether from public institutions or civil society– who truly embody these values. Not to form another collective transitional body, but to designate a provisional president: a single pilot, answerable to the Nation, responsible for leading the two essential missions: restoring security and organizing elections. This leader would work closely with a small, focused ministerial cabinet dedicated solely to these goals.

11. <https://lenouvelliste.com/article/255762/salaires-avantages-et-privileges-le-cpt-mieux-entretenu-que-les-autres-executifs>

Our recent history shows that this model can work. On three separate occasions, an individual transitional presidency helped guide the country forward: under Madame Ertha Pascal Trouillot, and Messrs. Boniface Alexandre and Jocelerme Privert. Each, in their own way, delivered on their mandate. The role of pilot today would carry a heavy historical burden, not an opportunity for personal gain or political patronage. That's why the values a person stands by should matter far more than where they come from –whether institutionally or socially– when choosing who will guide us through this transition.

It must be said that every time the country attempts to form a provisional executive and government, the selection criteria remain vague and seldom based on merit; especially the crucial trio of honesty, patriotism, and competence, in that order. Too often, choices are driven by nepotism, cronyism, and influence peddling, leading to harmful consequences: the return of the same individuals who have not always proven themselves, persistent bad governance, worsening insecurity, mass exodus of skilled citizens, impoverishment of the State, and the overall decline of the country's socio-economic conditions. *You peyi tèt anba, san direksyon.*

5. THE NEED TO RECONCILE THE NATION WITH ITSELF

What makes the situation in Haiti so tragic is that it is the country's own sons and daughters – especially its sons – who are turning violently against their own society. They attack indiscriminately: babies, children, adults, the elderly, homes, schools, universities, hospitals, churches, media outlets, and cultural centers. In short, they assault the little common ground the country still has. Lured largely by easy gain and without any guiding ideology, they have allied themselves with both national and international forces of destruction to dismantle the one national territory left; this very country they claim to belong to, even as nearly every other nation has declared them *persona non grata* beyond Haiti's borders. The nation is, in essence, at war with itself

This scorched-earth policy, pursued by a minority of Haitians (yes, they are still our own people!), against many fellow Haitians and against the country itself, stems from a nihilism that erases any sense of values or hierarchy. The burning question is: how did our compatriots –our men, our women, our former comrades and students, our children, our brothers and sisters, our neighbors– have become bandits, with ties or *sapat*, promoters of violence in all its forms, determined to destroy the human and built heritage painstakingly built over decades of sacrifice?

To answer this thorny question, we need to revisit the very foundations of any modern society – built on living together and the notion of citizenship – two principles that have been sorely lacking in Haiti since our independence. Our education system, which has never aimed for universality, has excluded most of our compatriots, whom we have effectively abandoned. Left to their fate, they face no schools, no healthcare, no jobs, no housing, no electricity, and no prospects for social mobility. So many social rights that form the basis of citizenship and condition living together have been systematically ignored by successive governments!

Children abandoned by their parents from birth grow up as unschooled street children. Having been raised on the margins of any family affection, forced to fend for themselves on the streets, without anyone teaching them to distinguish right from wrong, they adopt the obsession with easy money as their only value. These abandoned children become adults who have received nothing from society, living in the harshest indignity and destitution. Hence their deep-rooted determination to destroy everything in their path –including places of culture, worship, knowledge, and health; which were never accessible to them and which they never frequented. The result today is a society shattered into a thousand pieces, with no social cohesion, no natural or constructed solidarity, and no national allegiance, replaced instead by loyalty to gangs with ties or *sapat*.

Unfortunately, we cannot simply get rid of this category of compatriots. Whether we like it or not, they are part of us and reflect a certain image of ourselves. Certainly, the justice system must first do its part and fulfill its role of delivering justice; the State must absolutely assume its sovereign duty to ensure the security of life

and property across the entire national territory. But beyond that, we need to address the root of the problem and work to reconcile the Nation with itself in a lasting way, so that what we are living through today never happens again. We must lay the foundations for a new society that is less unequal, based on the rule of law and social justice, and that reduces social, economic, geographic, and gender disparities throughout the country. In short, we need to reconcile the nation with itself by making space for everyone, integrating all people, offering equal opportunities, promoting merit, and showing responsibility, empathy, and social solidarity towards those who have less. This is a social project we have failed to achieve since independence, and for which we are now paying a heavy price. We will not be saved unless we have the courage to take this path. The shortcuts we have taken throughout our history –our all too frequent urge to act in haste–have led us nowhere. In fact, they have brought us to the institutional, state, moral, and political void in which we find ourselves today.

The reconciliation we speak of requires an ethic of means and a social morality that are sorely lacking at the highest levels of the state apparatus and across all strata of Haitian society. Too many state officials have plundered the country with complete indifference, leaving the vast majority in abject poverty. It must also be noted that this illicit enrichment no longer shocks a large part of the population, who have become resigned to a low standard of morality and accept being the butt of the joke. We therefore need a moral revival at all levels as a social benchmark for judging those in power, who must rise to become true defenders of the general interest. This moral renewal concerns every segment of Haitian society and is the responsibility of all: our leaders, state institutions, schools and universities, churches of all faiths, socio-professional associations, families, and the media. They must all lead by example, acting transparently, everywhere and at all times. **Here then lies a way out for the salvation of the Nation; though this door remains very narrow!**

6. THE OUTLOOK

Since we must call things by their proper name, what is happening in Haiti today is pure terrorism; without any ideology behind it. It is a terrorism with no social foundation, whose sole aim is the destruction of what remains of the State in this country. A terrorism that seeks to subjugate an entire nation and reduce its citizens to exploitable slaves. It expresses itself through theft, rape, kidnapping for ransom, predation, dispossession, destruction of homes and buildings, and even the effective imprisonment of people in their own homes. These deprivations of all kinds could drive any well-constituted human being to madness. All this is happening in the face of the dubious, even complicit, impotence of the country's leaders. In the face of the incomprehensible near passivity of international bodies, unable to fulfill their commitments to aid populations in danger. In the face of so-called friendly countries; powerful nations that remain incapable of stemming the flow of arms and munitions, of which they are the largest manufacturers.

The whole world is witnessing the hideous spectacle of massacred citizens, destroyed property and human lives, the death of a nation, and the systematic dismantling of a state. All this, it seems, because of a supposed shortage of money, while billions are spent elsewhere to support further massacres of populations and the destruction of territories.

As far as we can foresee, what looms on Haiti's horizon is a grim dilemma; society will be trapped between two choices: surrendering to the gangs' takeover or accepting the heavy responsibility of guardianship to free us from this despicable power. It is a Racinean dilemma, captured in this excerpt: "Since after so much effort my resistance is in vain, I blindly surrender to the fate that drags me along"¹². A capitulation born of sheer weariness.

Haiti has long stood at the forefront of major social transformations around the world. The very first of these was its own independence; a historic victory achieved against the French army, then the most powerful military

12. Jean Racine, *Andromache* (1667), I, 1, Orestes
<https://citations.ouest-france.fr/citation-jean-racine/puisquapres-efforts-resistance-vaine-livre-126157.html>

force on the planet. This singular act of liberation from slavery through armed resistance not only forged Haiti's national identity but also affirmed its deep commitment to the values of freedom. In doing so, Haiti blazed a trail for other peoples to follow in their own pursuit of emancipation.

Today, Haiti appears to be fighting a battle on its own. But what battle exactly? It is the battle against the deliberate dismantling of a state, targeted by globalized criminal networks engaged in drug trafficking, arms and ammunition sales, and even the trafficking of human organs. This is a highly profitable and inherently expansive enterprise, whose tentacles are spreading far beyond Haiti's borders. If the international community continues to stand by in silence, the unprecedented collapse currently unfolding in Haiti will inevitably reach other shores; including those of the world's most affluent nations. France itself is already witnessing the encroachment of drug trafficking, a scourge now affecting not only its prisons but also the heart of its cities¹³.

Prison attacks have become all too common in Haiti. If we fail to help Haiti confront this crisis, which clearly exceeds its current capacities, the threat may spread and become global. This could mark the beginning of a systematic strategy to weaken states, paving the way for the expansion of the criminal economy through international drug trafficking.

That said, the primary responsibility for addressing insecurity lies with Haitians themselves. It begins with the urgent development of a national security plan –short-, medium-, and long-term– aimed at restoring and sustaining peace. This must include the rigorous coordination of all existing law enforcement bodies, the creation of an effective intelligence service to support planning and execution, and a robust system to monitor and sanction misconduct within the security forces, in order to root out corruption.

In the immediate term, the national security framework must also be strengthened by mobilizing the country's youth and dynamic civic forces through the implementation of the Mixed Compulsory Civic Service (SCMO). The survival of the nation depends on it.

13. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0d9FxlLb_KM