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Seventy-eighth year

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Provisional

President: Mr. Ishikane/Mrs. Shino (Japan)

Members:

Albania	Mr. Hoxha
Brazil	Mr. Costa Filho
China	Mr. Zhang Jun
Ecuador	Mr. Pérez Loose
France	Mrs. Broadhurst Estival
Gabon	Mr. Biang
Ghana	Ms. Osei
Malta	Ms. Gatt
Mozambique	Mr. Afonso
Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
Switzerland	Mrs. Baeriswyl
United Arab Emirates	Mrs. Alhefeiti
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Ms. Jacobs
United States of America	Mr. Wood

Agenda

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti
(S/2023/41)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Expression of sympathy on the passing away of His Excellency Mr. Michael Moussa Adamo, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Gabon

The President: The members of the Security Council were deeply saddened to learn of the recent passing of His Excellency Mr. Michael Moussa Adamo, distinguished diplomat and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Gabon. They recall the skill with which Minister Adamo presided over several meetings of the Security Council in October 2022.

The members of the Security Council express their heartfelt condolences to Mr. Adamo's family, to the Permanent Mission and the Government of Gabon and to all the people touched by Minister Adamo, in Gabon and beyond.

On behalf of Council members, I would ask that we all stand and observe a minute of silence in memory of Foreign Minister Michael Moussa Adamo.

The members of the Security Council observed a minute of silence.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (S/2023/41)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Canada, the Dominican Republic and Haiti to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Roberto Álvarez Gil, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Helen La Lime, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti and Head of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2023/41, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti.

I now give the floor to Ms. La Lime.

Ms. La Lime: January is a bitter-sweet month for Haiti, as celebrations of independence are accompanied by painful remembrance of the devastating earthquake that on 12 January 2010 ravaged the capital, killed hundreds of thousands of people and displaced thousands more. Commemorations of the tragedy this year were muted, overshadowed by the protracted crisis the country is facing as years of hard-fought recovery gains are being undone and Haitians grapple with setting the country back on a path to democracy.

Gang-related violence has reached levels not seen in decades. Murders and kidnappings increased for a fourth consecutive year: 1,359 kidnappings were recorded in 2022, more than doubling the number recorded in 2021 and averaging roughly four per day. Murders are also up by a third over the previous year. A total of 2,183 were reported in 2022, touching nearly all segments of society, including a former presidential candidate and the director of the National Police Academy.

Forthcoming reporting by the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti, along with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, establishes that turf wars involving two gang coalitions — the G9 and the G-Pep — reached unprecedented levels in several neighbourhoods of Cité Soleil. The violence is part of well-defined strategies designed to subjugate populations and expand territorial control. Gangs have increasingly resorted to the deliberate killing of men, women and children — some of them as young as 10-years-old being brutally raped — as a tactic to spread fear and destroy the social fabric of communities under the control of rival gangs. Besieging and displacing whole populations already living in extreme poverty, gangs have intentionally blocked access to food, water and, amid a cholera outbreak, health services.

Approximately 5 million people are facing conditions of acute hunger across the country. While 90 per cent of schools are now operating, thousands of children, especially those living in gang-affected areas, have yet to start the school year. There are increasing reports of minors being recruited to serve in gangs. The humanitarian response plan will likely be almost

double that of 2022. I urge donors to continue to give generously in order to help to address the immediate needs, as well as the long-term development gaps that exist in the country.

The expiration of the mandate of the 10 senators holding office on 9 January means that there is not one elected official left in the country. While a profound challenge, that institutional vacuum presents an opportunity for Haiti to take stock, look at the root causes of the dysfunction and set the country on a course to address them. Two key developments, if properly supported, can help to chart a path back to accountability, the rule of law and the restoration of democratic institutions.

The first development was driven by the members of the Security Council, namely, the unanimous adoption of resolution 2653 (2022), establishing sanctions measures on those supporting criminal activities and violence involving armed groups. As I noted in my most recent briefing to the Council in December (see S/PV.9233), bilateral sanctions were also welcomed during that period. Such measures are creating space for additional political dialogue and necessary reforms. That has been reinforced by encouraging developments in the judiciary, with new steps being taken on both the vetting of judges and the reduction of pretrial detention levels.

The second development was taking shape as I briefed the Council on 21 December. It culminated later that day with the signing of the National Consensus for an Inclusive Transition and Transparent Elections by a broad spectrum of political figures, civil society organizations, religious authorities, trade unions and, for the first time ever, the private sector. The Consensus identifies a calendar for installing an elected Government by February 2024 and lists immediate steps to be taken for the promotion of fiscal reforms to increase State revenue collection and restore public services. A High Transitional Council has now been established and named. It will work with the Government to make nominations to the Court of Cassation — the country's highest court — and the Provisional Electoral Council, and it will appoint a committee to review the Constitution.

The agreement is by no means a done deal, and it remains fundamentally open. A series of round tables, which will include discussions on establishing an inclusive electoral road map and a national security

plan, provides opportunities for those who are interested in, but who have not yet committed to, engaging in the effort.

The agreement, the adherents to which are growing every day, is indeed the most promising sign to emerge from dialogue efforts until now. We are heartened by the positive reactions from major political leaders and international partners alike. But implementation will be essential to building confidence around the agreement. The country urgently needs to see those in positions of influence and leadership, whether at the national or local level, including the diaspora, put aside their differences and do their part for the restoration of legitimate State institutions.

The Haitian National Police (HNP) remains a priority for the Government, with an almost 50 per cent increase in the budget allocation for the current year to \$162 million. Last month, the thirty-second class of cadets — 714 additional officers, including 174 women — entered the force. I thank those partners who contribute to working with the basket fund in support of the HNP. The police are using the armoured vehicles that they purchased, and that continue to arrive in Haiti, to launch operations against gangs, some of which are more successful than others. But the challenge remains maintaining and consolidating the gains made after the operations.

As noted in the Secretary-General's report (S/2023/41), and as I referred to earlier, the National Consensus and sanctions are two important developments that can meaningfully contribute to overcoming the crisis and help to alleviate untold suffering. They offer a clear path to the restoration of democracy and legitimacy. The third element that will reinforce both the HNP and those developments is the deployment of an international specialized force, as requested by the Government in October. That has yet to materialize.

The reality is that, without that international deployment operating in an integrated way with the HNP, the very positive effects of the political process and the sanctions so far will remain fragile and vulnerable to being reversed. Haitians overwhelmingly want that assistance so that they can go about their daily lives in peace. The population is living in fear, and it is all too conscious of the limitations of the police force. In this month of remembrance, the people of

Haiti, whose suffering never ends, are counting on the Security Council.

The President: I thank Ms. La Lime for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General La Lime for her briefing.

The United States continues to work to address Haiti's humanitarian crisis, as well as its insecurity, and to support Haitian-led efforts to facilitate the political conditions that would lead to free and fair elections. We would also like to thank Ecuador for taking on the role of co-penholder of the Haiti file, and we look forward to working collaboratively, along with the rest of the Security Council, to address the ongoing situation in Haiti.

We are encouraged that a broad spectrum of political actors, the private sector, civil society groups, religious groups, trade associations and others were able to come together to agree on the necessary steps for Haiti to move towards free and fair elections. The adoption of the 21 December accord is an opportunity for Haitians to get back to restoring their country's stability and improving governance. It is vital that the political accord and its implementation remain inclusive. We value the role that civil society and the private sector played in helping to bring disparate parties together.

Furthermore, to facilitate progress on fulfilling the requirements of the political accord, Haiti must address its continued insecurity challenges. Gang-related violence has reached unprecedented levels, which has only exacerbated the ongoing humanitarian crisis and hampered the country's ability to address the cholera outbreak, which has had a disproportionate impact on children and young people. We continue to see children and young people being recruited by criminal gangs. We see human rights abuses, as those same criminal gangs use gender-based violence, including rape, to instil fear and expand their territorial control.

The international community must step up to address the increasing humanitarian needs while also helping Haiti to address insecurity, so that progress can be made on implementing the 21 December political accord. We applaud the efforts of the Haitian National Police to break the gang siege of the Varreux

fuel terminal this past fall, which had disrupted the life of countless Haitians and directly led to the shutdown of some hospitals and the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

We are encouraged that the establishment of a sanctions regime by the Security Council has deterred those who would carry out and finance the violence causing Haiti's instability. The United States is identifying additional targets involved in the unrest in Haiti to nominate at the United Nations.

We recognize the need to support institutional reforms, in addition to addressing Haiti's immediate security and humanitarian needs. Through the 10-year Global Fragility Act plan, the United States seeks to address root causes of instability, building on justice sector reform while addressing civic engagement and economic opportunity. We also urge partner nations to contribute to the United Nations basket fund given the dire need to change the security situation in Haiti.

Time is of the essence in order to turn the tide in Haiti's severe security environment. Without improved security, progress on the political, economic or humanitarian fronts will be impossible. We encourage the international community to continue focusing on supporting Haiti's efforts to address all these needs.

Mr. Zhang Jun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to begin by expressing my deep condolences for the tragic death of Foreign Minister Moussa Adamo. Throughout his life, he actively campaigned for the promotion of peace and security in Africa, making valuable contributions to the maintenance of world peace. His tragic passing is a great loss to the people of Gabon. My sincere condolences go to Ambassador Biang and our brothers and sisters in the Permanent Mission of Gabon to the United Nations.

Just now, Special Representative La Lime briefed us on the situation in Haiti, for which I am grateful. I also welcome the presence of the Dominican Foreign Minister and the Permanent Representatives of Haiti and Canada at today's meeting.

Over the past year, the situation in Haiti has not improved, with a political power vacuum and rampant gang violence weighing heavily on the Haitian people. The terms of the Haitian Chamber of Deputies and the President expired in 2020 and 2022, respectively, and the terms of the Senate President and the last 10 senators ended two weeks ago. That means that Haiti's

State institutions are completely devoid of legitimately elected representatives. The crisis of political legitimacy is the fundamental crisis in Haiti. The country's parties and factions must respond to the people's call for a return to constitutional order and take responsibility for advancing the political transition without delay.

Last month, the interim authorities reached the National Consensus for an Inclusive Transition and Transparent Elections, with some parties and civil society groups deciding to restore democratically elected institutions within an 18-month time frame. That is a step forward, but it still falls far short of the expectations of the Haitian people and the parties concerned. We note that some civil society groups, including the Montana Group, were explicitly against it. Parties in Haiti should continue to engage in inclusive dialogue, enhance the sense of urgency in political consultations and agree on a universally acceptable, credible and feasible transitional arrangement so as to create conditions for holding free and fair elections at an early date.

The United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti should build a platform for dialogue among all Haitian parties and factions and step up efforts to promote a Haitian-led and -owned political process that respects the choices of the Haitian people.

The Secretary-General's latest report (S/2023/41) notes that violent criminal activities by Haitian gangs have intensified. With more than 2,000 people killed last year, an increase of more than 30 per cent over the previous year, Haitians generally welcome the sanctions imposed by the United Nations on Haitian gangs and their supporters and expect the sanctions regime will be effective in curbing gang activities. Some people also expressed their hope that sanctions would be imposed on more gangsters who have undermined peace and stability in Haiti. Like many Security Council members, China supports efforts to help the Sanctions Committee become operational as soon as possible, to urgently review and update the sanctions list and to monitor and ensure the full implementation of the sanctions measures in order to create the necessary deterrent to gang violence. That should be one of the priorities of the work of the Security Council.

China acknowledges the efforts of the Haitian National Police to ensure law and order and supports Haiti in improving its law enforcement and judicial capabilities, strengthening control of illegal arms and

financial flows and bringing criminals to justice. China welcomes regional partners in providing capacity-building support to the Haitian National Police. When considering the deployment of troops, countries should take into full consideration the various views within Haiti and draw the appropriate lessons from failed external interventions so as to avoid repeating those mistakes.

Haiti is facing the most severe humanitarian and economic crisis in decades. In Haiti, the past year has been marked by rampant violence, cholera outbreaks, an economic slump, increased poverty and food insecurity. Particularly distressing is the vulnerability of women and children.

A certain country recently adopted new deportation measures against migrants crossing the borders from Haiti and other countries seeking asylum. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights expressed concerns about those measures, which risk undermining the basic foundations of international human rights and international refugee law. We believe that the human rights and dignity of Haitian migrants should be protected and that no country should deport migrants at the expense of their human rights. China supports the efforts of the United Nations and regional partners to increase humanitarian resources to Haiti and to play a constructive role in improving the humanitarian situation on the ground in order to overcome economic and livelihood difficulties. Together with the international community, we will continue to play a constructive role to support the Haitian people in their pursuit of peace and stability.

Mrs. Alhefeiti (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to express our condolences and sympathy to the Government and the people of Gabon as well as to our colleagues in the Permanent Mission of Gabon to the United Nations on the passing of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Mr. Michael Moussa Adamo.

I would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Helen La Lime for her valuable briefing and her efforts in Haiti. I also welcome the participation of Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Canada in today's meeting.

In the context of today's discussion, I would like to focus on four issues relevant to Haiti's path towards achieving stability and prosperity.

First, we are encouraged by some of the progress made on the political track with the signing of the 21 December accord. We hope that the accord will enhance political dialogue, which remains essential for a shared vision among Haitian political actors. That would also contribute to improving the humanitarian, economic and security situations and ensuring Haiti's long-term stability. We therefore reiterate our previous calls to all stakeholders to put aside their differences and engage in a constructive and inclusive dialogue in order to create the conditions necessary for holding successful elections.

Secondly, violence will remain a threat to the stability in Haiti as long as the security institutions, law enforcement and judicial authorities are not able to address it effectively. In that regard, we commend the efforts of the Haitian National Police to promote security, which must be strengthened, especially in response to the persistent and alarming rise in the levels of sexual and gender-based violence. Addressing the security situation in a comprehensive and sustainable manner also entails combating corruption, the illicit trafficking and proliferation of arms, and illicit financial flows. We commend the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for cooperating with the Haitian authorities and assisting them in capacity-building in order to address the illicit trafficking of arms and illicit financial flows. We also recognize the important role and continued engagement of regional actors in that regard.

Thirdly, we are deeply concerned about the worsening humanitarian crisis in Haiti, which must remain at the top of the Council's list of priorities. The people of Haiti suffer from poverty, water scarcity and severe food insecurity, in addition to the negative consequences of climate change. Those circumstances have been compounded by the rapid spread of cholera throughout the country and insufficient humanitarian aid. We condemn in that context the closure of main roads by gangs and their obstruction of access to necessary aid and services, which have only exacerbated the already dire situation.

Fourthly, we cannot ignore the repercussions of the humanitarian, health and security situation on children and their right to education. According to UNICEF, in the past year alone more than 500,000 children in Haiti were denied education across the country and were also targeted for recruitment by gangs. Such restrictions prevent children from gaining the skills that enable them to work in the labour market and

build their communities, and they also undermine development efforts. Any harm that young Haitians are subjected to in Haiti will have severe effects on the country's succeeding generations. It is therefore critical for Haiti and other relevant actors to explore ways to safely reopen schools and ensure children's access to education in a sustainable manner.

In conclusion, the United Arab Emirates reaffirms its solidarity with the Haitian people. We support the work of the United Nations in Haiti, including the work of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti, to achieve security and stability in the country. We will also continue to cooperate constructively with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2653 (2022) concerning Haiti, which is an important tool for addressing violence in Haiti, and will participate in any future discussions on the proposals of the Special Representative.

Mr. Costa Filho (Brazil): Let me begin by joining previous speakers in reiterating to Ambassador Biang our deepest condolences for the untimely passing of Foreign Minister Moussa Adamo, and I ask Mr. Biang to convey our country's sentiments to the Government and the people of Gabon.

I would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Helen La Lime for her comprehensive briefing, which as always was of great concern, although on this occasion it contained a glimpse of optimism. I also welcome the presence of Mr. Roberto Álvarez Gil, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic, and the Permanent Representative of Haiti.

Since our last meeting on this subject, held in December 2022, there has been little progress on the security situation in Haiti, which remains as challenging and worrisome as before. Gangs continue to control and paralyse a large part of Port-au-Prince, significantly worsening the dire multidimensional crisis in which the country remains plunged. In addition, the current outbreak of cholera continues to pose significant risks for Haiti's population. As we have pointed out before, the current political stalemate and the humanitarian and security crises in Haiti reinforce each other. As the 10 remaining senators in Haiti's Parliament officially left office this month, the country is currently without a single democratically elected Government official. Brazil is concerned that such a legitimacy vacuum, if not addressed, will trigger an even deeper crisis.

A breakthrough in the political dialogue between the Government and the opposition is therefore fundamental to break the current perverse cycle. We took positive note of the political initiative launched on 21 December to build a National Consensus for an Inclusive Transition and Transparent Elections. We are encouraged by that initiative and hope it will represent the beginning of a comprehensive process to achieve national unity. There is an urgent need to enlarge that Consensus so that institutional normalcy can be re-established in Haiti and elections organized. Political and economic groups willing to foment the humanitarian crisis for their narrow goals should not prevail in Haiti. In that context, we hope that the sanctions regime adopted in October will effectively establish targeted sanctions against those engaging in or supporting violence, irrespective of how powerful those individuals may be. As some members have already imposed unilateral sanctions against some Haitian individuals, we consider that it is high time for the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2653 (2022) concerning Haiti to start its own deliberations so that sanctions can be considered and imposed with the full force of the international community.

With regard to the options, conveyed by the Secretary-General in his letter of 8 October (S/2022/747), to increase the security in Haiti and the appeal by the Government of Haiti to receive specialized armed support to help control the humanitarian crisis in the country, we look forward to engaging with Council members on ways to move that concept forward. We all know that Haiti needs change that goes well beyond the control of criminal activities. Besides security measures, socioeconomic progress in Haiti is essential for addressing the current crisis in an effective and sustainable way. Haiti remains a top priority for Brazilian international cooperation projects, and we urge the donor community to step up its efforts towards effectively fostering economic and social development so that the country will not relapse into violence once the current crisis is curbed.

In conclusion, Brazil would like to once again exhort all Haitian political actors to deepen the current dialogue, which will hopefully pave the way for safe and fair elections. Brazil believes in Haitian-led solutions, which will materialize only if Haitian stakeholders accept to talk to each other and compromise. For our part, I would like to underline that Haiti has been a priority for Brazil and will remain so. Brazil has a long-

standing contribution to peace and stability in Haiti and continues to be fully committed to supporting the country, particularly in these challenging times.

Mr. Afonso (Mozambique): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council (A3), namely, Gabon, Ghana and my own country, Mozambique.

The A3 would like to collectively pay our fond tribute to the late Foreign Minister of the Republic of Gabon, Mr. Moussa Adamo, who devoted his entire life to the service of Africans, the international community and the cause of peace and security. We join other colleagues in expressing our deepest heartfelt condolences to the people of our sister country of Gabon for their loss.

We thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Helen La Lime, for her rich briefing on the developments in Haiti over the past few months. We welcome the presence of Mr. Roberto Álvarez Gil, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic, as well as the representatives of Haiti and Canada, at today's meeting.

Today's briefing by Special Representative La Lime touched on several familiar notes about the situation in Haiti and the grim realities ordinary Haitians continue to face. A Haitian-led political agreement that can restore democratic and institutional governance is yet to be reached. Violence perpetrated by gangs has reached unprecedented levels. Food insecurity is on the rise. The increasing levels of insecurity continue to put the existence of an already fragile country in grave jeopardy.

As the A3 has consistently emphasized, the prevailing situation in Haiti demands urgent action. In keeping with our responsibilities as the Security Council, we have sought to accompany Haiti in that process over the past years. However, much work remains to be done to match the scale and dimension of the present crises and to help Haiti build the much-needed resilience to forestall recurrence. The engagement of the international community in Haiti must drive results for the people of Haiti. The A3 trusts that more ambitious action that factors in the needs of Haiti and that can help address the root causes of the country's crises will continue to be explored.

To that end, the A3 would like to welcome the ongoing consultations and the intensive efforts to

broaden support for the National Consensus document and the consequent establishment of the High Council for the Transition. We are cautiously optimistic about those developments on the political landscape. We recognize that an inclusive and credible political process, based on constructive dialogue, can create the conditions necessary for compromises and an agreement on the country's political future. We therefore encourage all segments of the Haitian society to deepen their engagement in support of the national consensus agreement.

Clarity about the political process is necessary in rebuilding Haiti's democratically elected institutions, in strengthening its governance institutions and criminal justice systems and in putting the country back on the path of recovery. We see the agreement as an important step in establishing the needed confidence and creating conditions conducive to addressing the insecurity and political instability Haiti has been going through for so many years.

With respect to the security situation, the A3 remains deeply concerned about the aggravation of the security situation in the country. Gang violence and other criminal activities, including sexual and gender-based violence, kidnappings and homicides, as well as the impunity of the perpetrators of those acts, undermine the peace, stability and security of Haiti and worsen the already dire economic situation of the Haitian people. The disproportionate impact of gang violence on women and girls is particularly disturbing. We join the Secretary-General in condemning in the strongest terms the use of sexual violence by armed gangs as a weapon to instil fear in communities.

In reiterating our concern about gangs and their activities in Haiti, we cannot help but recall the interrelated nature of Haiti's multidimensional and complex challenges. The lack of economic opportunities for young people in the neighbourhoods of Haiti serves as a significant factor for gang membership. It is apparent that, unless we intensify our bilateral and multilateral efforts to improve livelihoods in Haiti, extreme poverty and unemployment will continue to drive young people into gangs and, with it, the recurrent cycle of insecurity the country has been witnessing.

In addition, it is vital for us to continue to support the Haitian National Police in their quest to counter the gang phenomenon. We must not relent in our ongoing efforts to reinforce the operational capacity

of the Haitian National Police through training and the provision of equipment. In that regard, we commend Haiti's international partners for their generous contributions in support of the Haitian police. We encourage further contributions in support of Haiti.

The A3 encourages the ongoing consultations for the establishment and deployment of an international force to fight the gangs that sow terror in Haiti. We recognize that such actions must continue to be complemented by measures to address the proliferation of illegal arms and ammunition to gangs in Haiti. In that regard, the progress made by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime over the reporting period is noteworthy. The international community's commitment to support Haiti in the implementation of its national action plan pertaining to the Caribbean Community Road Map on the Illicit Proliferation of Firearms and Ammunition will also be instrumental.

Concerning sanctions, we are encouraged by the generally positive reaction of the Haitian public to the Council's adoption of targeted sanctions measures, which have contributed to positive developments on the ground. The sanctions regime must serve the purpose for which it was established, including depriving criminal networks of sources of funding. It must therefore target those whose links with gang networks are clearly established and avoid creating a climate of suspicion.

The humanitarian situation in Haiti is also deeply concerning for the A3, with worsening food insecurity, compounded by a cholera outbreak, and millions of people without access to basic needs. We wish to echo the call for urgent assistance to respond to the growing humanitarian needs and help stem the cholera outbreak. We call on other donors to increase support during this critical period for Haiti and urge the countries of the region to show a greater sense of solidarity. Haiti needs help from the international community and even more so from its immediate neighbours.

We cannot conclude without reaffirming our support for the work of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti under the leadership of Special Representative La Lime. We will continue to do our best to act in the interests of the Haitian people at this difficult and challenging time. As the first Black nation to gain independence from colonialism and slavery, Haitians — whom we consider as Africa's sixth region — have, despite the recurring challenges of violence, demonstrated their remarkable resilience

as a people. We call on them to manifest that resilience even now, in this period of crisis, as we know that with the support of the international community, they will advance on the path to stability, sustainable development and unity.

Mr. Hoxha (Albania): I join other colleagues in reiterating our deepest sympathies to Gabon following the premature loss of its Foreign Minister.

I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General La Lime for her briefing and welcome her back to the Council.

We reiterate our deep concern at the persistent lawlessness, deepening humanitarian crisis and continued political impasse in Haiti. Criminal gangs continue to lay siege to the country, which is marred by chaos, destruction and violence. We deplore the severe violation of human rights, especially those of children, and the dreadful humanitarian crisis, as a result of which half of the population now faces acute hunger. Haiti's multifaceted problems have multiple causes that are exacerbated by a complex of factors, including a lack of real capacity and ideas, as well as accumulated acute structural problems. Only urgent, decisive and bold measures will be able to disrupt that downward spiral.

First, gang rule and violence must be uprooted. The use of legitimate force to restore law and order is a must. Haiti urgently needs all the help it can get in that regard.

Secondly, there will be no *deus ex machina* solution and no miracle imported from outside. The solution to the country's problems must come from Haitians themselves and can only be Haitian-born and Haitian-led. We welcome and support all efforts to bring together political actors and civil society to create a national critical mass in favour of a process of dialogue to address the country's ills together. As we know, building democracy requires citizens' involvement, strong institutions, legitimacy and continued political dialogue. All of that is currently missing in Haiti. In the face of such an acute crisis, Haiti cannot afford an irresponsible political class that continues to put its narrow interests before the common public good. Haiti needs responsible political dialogue, unity of purpose and honest commitment, not a cacophony of divergent views when the country is burning. Otherwise, the only working coalition in the country will be that of the gangs, which is currently the case. In that respect, the

establishment of a National Consensus for an Inclusive Transition and Transparent Elections constitutes the first and welcome basis for putting the country on the right path, towards restoring legitimacy in order to take the decisions that will lead to restoring the rule of law and bringing back democracy and development.

Thirdly, the sanctions regime enacted by resolution 2653 (2022) was an important step to help Haiti fight corruption, crime and gang violence. Its full and swift implementation is a matter of priority. Haitians have welcomed it. We must stand ready to strengthen and broaden targeted sanctions against perpetrators. Those responsible for the breakdown of law and order must know that they will not be allowed to act with impunity.

Fourthly, we reaffirm our full support for the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti and the critical work it delivers amid the heightened violence and insecurity. But more is needed, and the Council can and should do more to assist the people of Haiti in regaining control over their country. That is why we support the call for the creation of an international security assistance mission.

In conclusion, let us remind ourselves that only gangs, criminals and those directly or indirectly affiliated with them have an interest in a failed State in order to rule over a weak and vulnerable society. They have made democracy an empty word, human rights an illusion and normal life impossible. The 12 million desperate Haitians deserve better. We know that they are capable of the best and the marks they have made on history are indelible. They need help and they need it now.

Ms. Gatt (Malta): Malta would like to extend its sincere condolences on the untimely passing of Foreign Minister Michael Moussa Adamo to Ambassador Biang, the Gabonese delegation and the people of Gabon.

I thank Special Representative La Lime for her comprehensive and sobering briefing today.

It is deeply regrettable and tragic that Haiti continues to suffer in the grip of numerous crises, with the worst human rights and humanitarian emergency in decades. In gang-controlled areas, people are deprived of their most fundamental rights, including their rights to life, water, food and health care. Throughout the past year, we have continued to witness an ongoing downward spiral. According to the Secretary-General's report (S/2023/41), homicides have increased by more

than 35 per cent, and kidnappings have more than doubled compared to 2021. Turf battles between heavily armed gangs in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince, Artibonite and the northern regions have made the lives of local populations unbearable, with deliberate killings and maimings and coordinated acts of sexual violence. The violence has forced children out of school and left more than 150,000 Haitians internally displaced.

The harrowing accounts of the widespread instances of sexual violence and collective rape perpetrated by armed gangs as a strategy for extending their control over communities are shocking and reprehensible. We condemn such acts without reservation and call for an accountable justice system to take immediate action against the current state of impunity for the perpetrators of those crimes. We also underline the need to strengthen the availability, accessibility and quality of medical and psychosocial care for the survivors of sexual violence and the need to strengthen coordination efforts among relevant units within the Haitian National Police.

The humanitarian situation in Haiti continues to deteriorate, particularly with regard to food and nutrition, with 4.7 million people acutely food insecure and nearly 20,000 people estimated to be living in famine-like conditions. Cholera has also spread rapidly throughout all 10 regions of the country, with 40 per cent of all suspected cases being children. Those numbers are likely to rise unless the level of humanitarian assistance increases quickly. Armed gangs continue to attack ports and block roads, restricting the delivery of humanitarian assistance and jeopardizing the safety of aid workers. Malta commends the national and international humanitarian partners who risk their own safety to deliver life-saving assistance to people in desperate need. More must be done to enable humanitarian access and ensure that adequate resources are made available for the humanitarian response.

Security and stability in Haiti can be brought about only through an inclusive, Haitian-owned political solution. The National Consensus for an Inclusive Transition and Transparent Elections, signed by the Government and other stakeholders in December 2022, is reflective of a possible opening for progress on the political front. We welcome that opportunity and urge all political actors in Haiti to set aside their differences and come together in compromise for the sake of the Haitian people. It is apparent in the briefing of Special Representative La Lime and the report of the Secretary-General that, in order to make progress

towards a political solution, the Haitian Government needs urgent support from the United Nations and the international community.

The unanimous adoption of resolution 2653 (2022), which established targeted sanctions measures for those engaging in, or supporting, criminal networks and gang violence has been seen to have had positive effects. The sanctions should continue to be used as a tool to impede those seeking to perpetuate chaos and hold the Haitian people ransom for their own gain. We call on the international community to enhance support for the Haitian National Police, including those outlined in the Secretary-General's recommendations.

The people of Haiti need urgent action now. There is no more time to lose. Let the Council lead by example, and let 2023 be a year of progress towards the peaceful and prosperous future that Haiti's people deserve.

Mr. Pérez Loose (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Before proceeding with my statement, I would like to express Ecuador's heartfelt condolences to the Government of Gabon on the death of the country's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Michael Moussa Adamo.

In first 24 days of Ecuador's fourth term in the Security Council, we have addressed core issues related to peace and security in the world and have even adopted needed measures related to various items on the Council's agenda. We have come to this meeting today aware of the solemn responsibility of the United Nations to support the efforts of the Republic of Haiti to overcome the security, peace, development and human rights challenges facing its people.

I am grateful for the briefing and the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Ms. Helen La Lime. I also acknowledge the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic and the representatives of Haiti and Canada.

Ecuador, Latin America and the Caribbean will always be mindful of Haiti's historical contribution to achieving freedom in our countries and our region, as well as throughout the world. Therefore, the most meaningful tribute that we can pay to the Haitian people is to effectively show the solidarity and unity of the international community. I am specifically highlighting the unity demonstrated in the Council over the final quarter of 2022, which was reflected in the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Office in

Haiti through the adoption of resolution 2645 (2022) in July 2022 and the series of specific measures set out in resolution 2653 (2022) of October 2022, including the establishment of the Sanctions Committee targeting individuals and entities responsible for, or complicit in, the commission of acts threatening the peace and security of Haiti.

I am grateful for the report of the Secretary-General (S/2023/41) on the increasingly complex situation despite the fact that the main fuel terminal at Varreux was liberated on 3 November. I acknowledge the work of the Haitian National Police, which continues to improve, and I also acknowledge its limitations and needs in confronting powerful criminal groups and gangs. In addition, the Council, in synergy with the other entities of the United Nations system, must contribute to combating transnational organized crime. For that reason, the Council must continue to support the technical work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in shoring up border and port control and countering tracking illicit financial flows. The selective arms embargo pursuant to resolution 2653 (2022) is a starting point that must be strengthened through comprehensive efforts to combat illicit arms trafficking. In that regard, I would like to reiterate that same point, which is underscored in the most recent report of the Secretary-General.

During its two-year term, Ecuador will seek to strengthen the support of the Council and the United Nations system for Haiti within a framework that above all respects and is committed to its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and unity. We will support all efforts to end human rights abuses, sexual and gender-based violence, human trafficking, the smuggling of migrants and the recruitment of children to carry out armed violence. Advancing an inclusive transition towards the holding of transparent elections is critical, and the 21 December 2022 signing of the National Consensus document is encouraging. We call on all stakeholders to encourage building the broadest possible consensus around it. At the same time, it is clear that, in order to guarantee the stability of any process, minimum security conditions are required.

When Ecuador held a non-permanent seat on the Council in 1991, my country and the United States addressed a joint letter, dated 3 October 1991, to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/23109) transmitting the resolution of the Foreign Ministers of the Organization of American States, in

which we demanded the restoration of constitutional order in Haiti, following the coup d'état of 29 September that same year. In acknowledging the leadership of Mexico, which concluded its term on the Council in December 2022, and the United States in the progress achieved by the Security Council on Haiti in 2022, I would like today to reaffirm Ecuador's commitment to work closely with the United States as a co-penholder on this critical issue, in close consultation with all delegations.

Ms. Jacobs (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom would like to join others today in extending its sincere condolences to the people of Gabon on the passing of Foreign Minister Michael Moussa Adamo.

I would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General La Lime for her briefing and the continued work of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti. We also welcome the participation of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic and the Permanent Representatives of Haiti and Canada at this meeting.

The United Kingdom remains deeply concerned about the dire humanitarian and security situation in Haiti. The statistics speak for themselves, with 58 per cent of the population under the poverty line, 4.7 million acutely food insecure and an increase in kidnappings in 2022 of more than 100 per cent as compared to the previous year. We have also heard chilling accounts of the widespread use of sexual violence by armed gangs as a weapon to instil fear in communities. It is in that context that we recognize the need for an urgent response to Haiti's request for international assistance, and we look forward to further Security Council discussion on the authorization of an international security assistance mission, as proposed by the Secretary-General. Such a mission would have to be led by Haitian needs and should be aimed at contributing to the restoration of effective governance through combating endemic gang violence.

We also recognize the role of targeted sanctions in this regard. Following the establishment of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2653 (2022) concerning Haiti, we stand ready to consider further designations against those involved in criminal gang activity and the human rights violations that continue to threaten the peace, stability and security of Haiti.

However, sanctions alone do not offer a solution. Now is the time for Haitians to come together to find a solution to the political impasse — one that tackles the deep-rooted economic, humanitarian and security challenges blighting the daily lives of the Haitian people. The United Kingdom welcomes recent moves towards a broader dialogue and efforts aimed at reaching a consensus. We renew our call for all actors to take part in political dialogue and work together to identify and implement a consensus route towards democratic elections.

Mrs. Baeriswyl (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Let me first join others in expressing our deepest condolences to our dear colleague the Ambassador and to the people and the Government of Gabon on the sad passing of their Foreign Minister.

I thank Special Representative Helen La Lime for her briefing. Her words illustrate the very difficult situation experienced by Haitians. Following the expiration on 9 January 2023 of the terms of the last 10 senators in office, as was mentioned by others, the country no longer has any elected officials. The political, socioeconomic, humanitarian and security crises are mutually reinforcing. In addition, there has been a resurgence of cholera and lack of access to basic services. We would like to express our solidarity with the Haitian people, whose youth are deprived of prospects.

Switzerland has been present in Haiti for a long time. It has remained there through every crisis and will continue to support efforts aimed at improving the situation. We also support a national inter-Haitian dialogue that is as inclusive and consensual as possible.

Let me highlight the following three points.

First, the security situation in Haiti is alarming because of the steady increase in gang activity that translates into violence against the population. Rapes, sexual violence, murders, robberies, armed attacks and kidnappings are committed on a daily basis. We condemn the brutality of this violence, including against children. Furthermore, we condemn the abduction and recruitment of children by criminal gangs.

As the report of the Secretary-General (S/2023/41) points out, prevention and protection measures are insufficient. Switzerland would like to reiterate the importance of documenting cases, as Haitian human rights organizations, the United Nations Integrated

Office in Haiti and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights are doing. Perpetrators of violence must be held accountable, and medical and psychological support for survivors must be reinforced. In the coming months, Switzerland will increase its support to local and international organizations that provide psychosocial services in certain gang-controlled neighbourhoods.

Secondly, Switzerland welcomes the unity shown by the Security Council in establishing a sanctions regime as well as the momentum that has recently developed as a result of its implementation. These measures can contribute to the stabilization of the country, respect for the rule of law and especially to the fight against impunity and corruption. They must be implemented effectively. To this end, we hope that the panel of experts will be able to begin its work on the ground quickly. The Council has recognized the need for fair and clear procedures and expressed its intention to authorize the Ombudsperson for this purpose.

Thirdly, more than half of the Haitian population lives below the poverty line, and an estimated 4.7 million people are acutely food insecure. As a donor, Switzerland supports the World Food Programme and the Peacebuilding Fund. It also contributes directly to organizations in the southern provinces. We are working with authorities at all levels and with local organizations to strengthen social protections and food security and to reduce disaster risks, which are often exacerbated by climate change, while improving access to water and local governance. We note with concern that access to humanitarian assistance and the safety of humanitarian personnel are severely compromised by gang violence, reducing the impact of our efforts and those of our partners.

The Security Council has been united in its commitment to Haiti and must support improvement of the situation on the ground. Switzerland is committed to working with the Haitian people to strengthen good governance at all levels, the rule of law, security, stability and the protection of human rights. It is also committed to improving the coordination of the response to the many existing needs. We hope that the international community will continue to maintain a presence in Haiti. Switzerland stands ready to support all efforts in this regard.

Mrs. Broadhurst Estival (France) (*spoke in French*): Like my colleagues, I also wish to extend

my deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Gabon and to the entire Permanent Mission in New York on the passing of their Foreign Minister, Mr. Michael Moussa Adamo.

I would like to thank Ms. La Lime for her briefing and welcome the presence among us of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic and the representatives of Haiti and Canada.

We met just one month ago to make an alarming assessment of situation in Haiti (see S/PV.9233), and it is clear that the situation has continued to deteriorate. It is with a sense of great urgency that France calls on the international community to redouble its efforts.

Allow me to reiterate several priorities.

First, we welcomed with interest the signing on 21 December 21 of the National Consensus document, and we encourage the Haitian actors to pursue an inclusive dialogue, which should lead to the organization of democratic elections when the security conditions are met. In this regard, we hope that a Provisional Electoral Committee will swiftly be appointed and a timetable set. I recall, as the Special Representative also pointed out, that there are no longer any elected officials in the entire country since the terms of the last 10 senators in office expired on 9 January. The political class must show responsibility in order to overcome the current impasse.

Secondly, the security situation remains extremely difficult, and the objective must be to support more effectively the Haitian National Police, whose personnel is on the front line. As we all know, they need equipment, funding and training. To restore security, the Haitian authorities have also appealed to the international community. We stand ready with our partners to do more to redress the situation on the ground.

Thirdly, France welcomes the establishment of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2653 (2022) and its panel of experts. We hope that this Committee will get quickly to work to make proposals. Sanctions are a dissuasive signal for criminals and their political and financial backers.

But we also know that sanctions alone will not solve every problem. It is imperative to rebuild justice in Haiti. The fight against impunity and the strengthening of the entire criminal justice system must be a priority if we wish to eventually put an end to the violence.

Finally, France will remain committed to facilitating humanitarian aid, particularly in the areas of health and food, because we cannot accept the current situation.

France will continue to support the efforts of the United Nations and of all organizations working for Haiti, including the International Organization of la Francophonie. We will continue, as much as necessary, to stand by the Haitian people.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, we would like to express our heartfelt condolences to the delegation of Gabon and the people of Gabon on the passing of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of their country. We too are mourning with our friends from Gabon.

We thank Ms. Helen La Lime for her briefing.

According to statistics for 2022 provided in the Secretary-General's report (S/2023/41), the situation continues to deteriorate in Haiti, with an increasing number of murders, abductions and cases of sexual violence. The number of internally displaced persons and refugees is also on the rise. Recent reports of increased violence on the streets of Port-au-Prince leave no doubt that the issue of crime will remain at the top of Haiti's agenda this year. We are very concerned about the humanitarian issues, which have been compounded by the cholera epidemic. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the number of cases of cholera rose by 57 per cent over the past month. It is clear that without a full-fledged resumption of the work of State institutions and inclusive dialogue among political forces, there will be no way out of the situation. We are monitoring efforts on that track and note the signing on 21 December 2022 of the National Consensus for an Inclusive Transition and Transparent Elections. Any steps that could help to overcome the divisions and restore constitutional order in Haiti should be supported. However, it is important that all major opposition actors be included in that dialogue.

Meanwhile, we must acknowledge that there are no legitimate elected authorities in the country. The final third segment of the senators elected on the basis of statutory procedures recently completed their term of office. We have repeatedly stated that the legitimacy crisis is one of the key obstacles to breaking the country's vicious cycle of lawlessness, violence and socioeconomic degradation. The crisis of statehood in Haiti is largely the result of external political engineering and neocolonial policies, which have

prevented several colleagues in the Security Council from speaking frankly. The goal of the international community is to send a clear message to Port-au-Prince about the need to create legitimate institutions based on international and regional instruments, such as the 2001 Inter-American Democratic Charter. We believe that issue should be more clearly reflected in the Secretary-General's reporting.

We support the Secretary-General's call to investigate the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse. In the year and a half since the tragedy, which had clear traces of external interference, no progress has been made in the investigation. All those responsible, especially those who ordered the assassination, must be brought to justice and punished. We are also very disappointed with a document signed by the head of the Secretariat, in which unilateral coercive measures are basically equated with Security Council sanctions, while those two very different instruments are covered in the same section of the report. Everyone knows that in other countries, unilateral sanctions have already led to dire humanitarian and economic consequences. In several cases, they have undermined efforts made by the international community to assist a given State.

In the context of Haiti, we view such measures as an attempt by the United States and Canada to steer internal processes in the country in their preferred direction. But such measures cannot by any means be considered an expression of the will of the international community, which can be expressed only through the decisions of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2653 (2022) concerning Haiti. We expect the Committee to intensify its work, including with a view to determining the true sources of funding of the gangs in Haiti and routes used for supplying illegal weapons to the island.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Japan.

I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General La Lime for her briefing and efforts in Haiti, and I also welcome the participation in today's meeting of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic and the Permanent Representatives of Haiti and Canada.

Haiti faces increasing insecurity and humanitarian turmoil and an economic downturn. The Security Council and the international community must renew their solidarity with the people of Haiti. We also need

to increase support for their efforts to overcome the multifaceted crisis, restore the rule of law and achieve long-term stability. Japan is particularly concerned about the widespread gang violence and criminal activities, which have also exacerbated humanitarian and economic difficulties. Therefore, the restoration of a minimum level of order is a top priority. In that context, we express support for the sanctions introduced by resolution 2653 (2022) as a means to help to bring security and stability to Haiti, and we encourage the Panel of Experts to visit the country as soon as possible. We also take note of the Secretary-General's call for the deployment of an international specialized armed force (see S/2023/41), and we are ready to engage in the Council's discussions to find a way to support relevant initiatives.

The primary responsibility to restore and maintain security, however, rests with the Haitian authorities. The Haitian National Police (HNP) must be further empowered and equipped to carry out its duties with the support of the international community. For its part, Japan has contributed to the United Nations basket fund, which has been spearheaded by Canada and the United States in support of the HNP.

Japan is also gravely concerned about the rapid spread of cholera over the past few months, which has affected vulnerable people, especially children. To help address the crisis, Japan decided earlier this month to extend emergency grant aid of \$3 million through international humanitarian organizations. It is also imperative to enhance Haiti's socioeconomic resilience in order to achieve immediate and mid- to long-term stability in the country and its communities. It is critical to ensure human security by protecting and empowering populations, including women, young people and people in vulnerable situations. In particular, efforts should centre around building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions to deliver basic services.

Over the years, Japan has invested in people and institutions in Haiti in order to enhance its self-reliance, including its long-term support for the build-up of medical facilities since the devastating earthquake in 2010. However, all such efforts need to be underpinned by political unity in the country. Japan supports the efforts of the Haitian Government to forge an inclusive agreement among all political and civil sectors in Haiti, in particular the signing of the 21 December 2022 agreement. We expect that endeavour to make further progress towards achieving a broader consensus. Japan

calls upon all Haitian stakeholders to join the process and promote dialogue in order to restore law and order and find a path for restoring democratic institutions through free, fair and transparent elections. We reaffirm the growing importance of the good offices of the United Nations, including the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti, and expect it to make further efforts to encourage constructive dialogue. In conclusion, Japan reiterates its commitment to continuing to support Haiti's efforts to overcome its unprecedented challenges.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Haiti.

Mr. Rodrigue (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): First of all, allow me to extend our heartfelt condolences to the Ambassador of the Gabonese Republic in the wake of the sudden demise of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of that brotherly country.

I would like to congratulate the Japanese presidency of the Council and thank the members of the Security Council for their ongoing interest in the multidimensional crisis in Haiti. I welcome the participation in today's meeting of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic and the Permanent Representative of Canada. I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General La Lime for her insightful briefing on recent developments in Haiti and for introducing the Secretary-General's report (S/2023/41), which provides us with a comprehensive diagnosis of the social, political, economic and security situation in Haiti and several apt observations.

We are at the midpoint of the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti, which was renewed on 15 July 2022 for a year. For us, this meeting is therefore an assessment to see the progress made, the gaps to be filled and the challenges to be overcome in implementing its mandate. It comes only one month after the meeting of 21 December last year (see S/PV.9233) at which the Minister for Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Mr. Jean Victor Génésus, was present to report on the most recent developments in the overall situation in the country. He took the opportunity to reiterate the Government's request to the Secretary-General for robust support to assist the national police in addressing the security and humanitarian challenges facing the country.

We welcome the fact that the Secretary-General's report highlights some important progress made by the Government despite the multidimensional crisis. In that regard, at the political level, the signing on 21 December 2022 of the agreement entitled the National Consensus for an Inclusive Transition and Transparent Elections is clearly a major achievement. That document, which was adopted by the Council of Ministers and published in the official newspaper *Le Moniteur* on 3 January, represents a road map to guide the country out of the serious crisis that it is experiencing. It provides for the establishment of political structures, namely, the High Transitional Council, comprising three members from the private business sector, the civil society sector and the political sector, and a Government oversight body, comprising 21 members, to which the Government will be accountable. In addition, a provisional electoral council to organize the elections will soon be established.

The road map of the High Transitional Council and the Government oversight body sets out a clear timetable leading to elections and the restoration of State institutions in 2023. The focus is on the elections, and the Prime Minister, His Excellency Mr. Ariel Henry, made the announcement in order to reassure participants in the upcoming polls. It should also be noted that, under the terms of the agreement, the Government will be open to new sectors.

The Government is pleased that its efforts were successful and were recognized by many sectors, both nationally and internationally. The private business sector, the civil society sector and the political sector all commended the Government's efforts to build a national consensus to put the country back on the path to constitutional order. The same is true at the international level, with the European Union and the State Department of the United States welcoming the 21 December 2022 agreement. The international community encourages political actors to continue that inclusive dialogue, which should lead to restoring democratic institutions.

With regard to the rule of law, two significant facts should be highlighted. The first concerns the appointment of the President of the Court of Cassation — the highest judicial body in the country — chosen from among the most senior judges. Other judges will be appointed to complete the composition of that important body and make it functional again after having been inoperative for more than 18 months. The second important fact,

a historic decision in terms of its scope, concerns the recommendation of the Superior Council of the Judiciary to remove a certain number of judges criticized by the public from the judiciary.

Despite all those significant achievements, the situation in Haiti remains very worrisome and fragile, as the Minister for Foreign Affairs clearly emphasized at the meeting on 21 December 2022. There should therefore be no misunderstanding. The country continues to face many challenges, particularly in terms of security and humanitarian issues. Cases of kidnapping in the capital and violence by armed gangs persist; even the police are not exempt. In the past week, several police officers were assassinated. The movement of people and goods continues to be disrupted at the northern and southern access points to the capital. That contributes to a further crippling of the country's economy, which is falling into recession, stuck in a slump with a negative growth rate for more than three years and an inflation rate of nearly 47 per cent. That is a catastrophic economic situation with serious consequences for the physical living conditions of the population, which has no purchasing power and is already living in precarious conditions. The situation has been exacerbated by the humanitarian crisis and food insecurity affecting more than half the population. In addition, the resurgence and spread of cholera is a genuine public health threat for the country.

Restoring a secure situation in the country remains an urgent priority for the Government. It is now more necessary and urgent than ever to adopt robust short-term solutions to re-establish a secure and stable security climate as a prerequisite for creating the conditions to move forward with the process under way. Without security, there can be no hope of fair, transparent and democratic elections or of restoring the normal functioning of institutions in the country.

We support the appeal made by the Secretary-General in his report:

“Despite the end of the siege of the Varreux oil terminal, I reiterate the urgent need for the deployment of an international specialized armed force, as articulated in my letter dated 8 October addressed to the President of the Security Council.” (S/2023/41, para. 75)

With regard to sanctions, the Government welcomes the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2653 (2022) concerning Haiti

and the Panel of Experts, which, moreover, was due to visit Haiti very soon. We hope that they will work effectively to punish the real culprits.

We have said over and over again in this Chamber that this is a critical time. We need much more action. There is no room for complacency. We have an obligation to act rapidly. We welcome the efforts of Council members on the situation in Haiti, and we take this opportunity to encourage them to work harder to reach agreement on the Government's 7 October 2022 appeal to the international community for the immediate deployment of a specialized international force to bolster the efforts of the Haitian National Police to fight gangs. That is an urgent need, for it is a matter of controlling the armed gangs and restoring order and peace by implementing a national security plan. There is no more time. The security situation threatens to deteriorate every day, to the dismay of a people in need, who are suffering bitterly. The failure to act means a failure to understand the severity of the crisis.

The final goal set by Prime Minister Ariel Henry is to return power to elected officials who are capable of addressing the major political and socioeconomic challenges facing the country. The Government of Haiti reiterates its appeal for the international community's effective support in helping it to overcome the gang problem and enabling it to complete the process of restoring democratic order in the country.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic.

Mr. Álvarez Gil (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): I take this opportunity to express to the representative of Gabon our condolences for the regrettable passing of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Michael Moussa Adamo, and we ask him to convey our condolences to his family.

We thank all of the briefers for their presentations this morning. In particular, we thank Special Representative Helen La Lime for her tireless work. We also thank and congratulate Ecuador, who is taking on the role of co-penholder on this important issue, alongside the United States — they can count on our support.

In this new year, it is our hope that the many outstanding issues can find definitive answers. The case before us today, the Haitian crisis, is now a recurring theme since its emergence last year and, despite the

attention given to it, is still awaiting a positive outcome in terms of peace and harmony in Haiti.

On 21 October 2022, the Council adopted resolution 2653 (2022), which established a Sanctions Committee for those who finance the criminal organizations that sow violence and chaos in Haiti (see S/PV.9159). However, the main demand of the Haitian authorities, endorsed by the Secretary-General, the deployment of a robust force to assist the Haitian National Police in putting an end to the appalling violence affecting that country, remains without a road map.

What are the real prospects that the Security Council will finally take action on the protracted Haitian crisis on the basis of the concrete proposals in the hands of this organ? The Dominican Government is aware of the questionable legacy of previous United Nations missions in Haiti and understands the legitimate need to consider and adequately plan any response in order to avoid past mistakes and, above all, to avoid a solution that ignores the will of the Haitians. But, as direct witnesses of the human tragedy in the neighbouring country, we also know that every minute of waiting means further disruption of the situation and suffering for innocent citizens.

We have always recognized that a national pact leading to fair, free and transparent elections is an essential element to restore stability in Haiti through the legitimacy of its authorities. However, we must emphasize that this national pact and these elections must be accompanied by an urgent process of pacification, something that is not in sight today.

We reiterate, without flippancy and with the utmost firmness, that our neighbour's situation represents not only a source of consternation for us, but a national security threat to the Dominican Republic. We are the only country that shares a land border with Haiti, on a relatively small island. Our economies and trade are intertwined. Haitians are the main immigrants to the Dominican Republic.

As formalizing adequate border management systems with shared responsibility has become impossible, the border has become a source of problems, such as human trafficking, trafficking in arms and illicit substances, as well as the smuggling of goods — scourges that our Government fights tooth and nail, with the help of our international partners, but under increasingly difficult conditions. The governance of such a border is virtually unmanageable when one

side is unable to guarantee the rule of law. There is also the challenge of providing basic services to the irregular migrant population and its impact on the social policies of the Dominican State.

This reality is not motivated by an anti-immigrant attitude. The Dominican Republic is a net emitter of migrants, and our history is marked by human movements in both directions. But when the flow of people does not occur within legal channels, in an orderly and safe manner, it implies political, social, economic and security risks, and it is difficult to guarantee the corresponding rights. Many of the Governments represented here, particularly the permanent five members of the Council, even as high-income countries, have also shown deep concern about the difficulty of adequately managing growing waves of irregular migration. Imagine that challenge in the Dominican-Haitian context, given Haiti's humanitarian and institutional crisis.

We therefore clarify once again that the Dominican Government is compelled to take the necessary measures to curb any impact that Haiti's violence and institutional deterioration might have on our territory. Our country is supportive and respectful of international law, especially as Haiti is a friendly country with which we are bound by a treaty of peace and perpetual friendship. As we have repeated countless times, we are willing to continue to play a good-neighbourly role.

But our involvement would be very different if there were concrete support from the international community to restoring peace and security in Haiti. Since 2019, as a member of this organ, the Dominican Republic has expressed and reiterated its concern that the scope of the mission in Haiti could be reduced, and we insisted that a strong mission with broad capabilities and sufficient funding was necessary to truly bring peace and lasting stability to Haiti. Today the situation in our brother country, far from improving, is worsening. That is why we continue to warn of its constant deterioration.

If we agree that humankind is facing a turning point — a “tectonic shift of the times”, a *Zeitenwende*, as the German Chancellor Olaf Scholz put it, referring to the crisis of multilateralism, which no longer responds to the current reality — then this Organization needs to be modernized so that it can serve as a tool for safeguarding universal security and upholding the values of its founding document, the Charter of the

United Nations. That is a vision shared by President Xi Jinping and the recent United States National Security Strategy.

Given this striking commonality of global leadership, it is clear that the future calls for a more empowered Organization, one that will resolve with equal vigour and perseverance the smaller-scale armed conflicts that generate so much suffering today while continuing to strive to rid humankind of weapons of mass destruction. But that is possible only if world Governments and citizens have a high degree of confidence in this venerable institution.

The President of the General Assembly asserted in this Chamber last month that deadlock in our task of maintaining international peace and security “translates to a dead end for the millions of children, women, men and families who are all suffering the consequences” and “are putting their trust in us to step beyond power dynamics” (*S/PV.9220, p. 5*).

How can we hope to forge that trust if we fail to act in a timely manner in the face of a crisis as unique as that of Haiti? Until there is firm action against the criminals who impede Haiti’s sovereign future, I do not believe, with all due respect, that we can ask the Haitian people and the other peoples who are witnessing this tragedy to place their trust in the United Nations.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. Rae (Canada): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for giving us the opportunity to join in today’s discussion.

(spoke in French)

I hope that my colleague from Gabon understands how very saddened each and every one of us was to hear the news of Minister Adamo’s passing, and I want to assure him that our thoughts are with him during this very difficult time, both for him personally and for his country.

(spoke in English)

As we heard from Ms. La Lime, whose ongoing work and briefing today we very much appreciate, the multifaceted crisis that is facing Haiti remains serious. As others said, the situation is still very fragile. Many children are out of school and are being recruited by gangs. There are many young women who live in daily fear of being sexually assaulted. Workers who leave

their homes in the morning do not necessarily know whether they will be kidnapped during the day. And there are communities facing famine-like conditions. That is the reality being lived by Haitians every day. It is clear that we need to do more, and I think it is equally clear that we need to do things differently than in the past. I would therefore like to make four points.

First, we need to learn from the history of large outside military interventions in Haiti because they actually failed to bring about long-term stability for Haitians. Canada believes profoundly that all the solutions we look to must be led by Haitians and Haitian institutions. That is the only way we are going to be able to create an impact on the current violence that will be sustainable and will actually last. I think we all share the common view that achieving security in Haiti is a priority not only for the people of Haiti but also for the region. As we heard today, it is also clearly a priority for Haiti’s neighbours. I did not hear any statement today that did not refer to it as a priority.

From Canada’s perspective, we are not simply thinking about what to do. We are actually doing some things that we think need to be done. Over the past several months, we have been working with the Haitian National Police (HNP) to understand the crisis better and how additional help will actually make a difference in solving the problem. We are committed to working with other partners to make progress in that regard. We look forward to working with the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) and the Security Council. As I speak, we are deepening our ties and assistance to the HNP. We are continuing to work with them in providing training — and we are not merely talking about training and financing, we are doing it. We are also providing better equipment, because that is required, and we must make sure that the police force has the capacity to deal with the level of violence being experienced in the country. We will continue to work with the Council to see what else must be done, and we look forward to that.

We are also pleased that a number of countries have joined us in contributing to the security basket fund, whose purpose is to increase the capacity and the professionalization of the Haitian National Police, and we encourage others to do the same. Many have done so but not everyone has, and it is still very necessary. We believe that all of us need to walk the talk. In addition, it is critical to support Haitian actors to rebuild the country’s justice and correctional systems in order

to strengthen the rule of law and combat corruption and impunity.

(spoke in French)

Secondly, we need to continue to exert pressure on the gangs and the elite that supports them. We understand — and in listening to Ms. La Lime's words earlier I was pleased to hear — that the sanctions the Council moved swiftly to establish are having an effect. Canada has imposed autonomous sanctions against 15 members of the Haitian elite to date in response to acts of significant corruption and other egregious conduct, including providing illicit financial and operational support to armed gangs. Canada will continue to engage with the Council and with other countries to explore how we can do more. We also look forward to reports from experts that can specifically tell us what else we can do.

Thirdly, to break the cycle of crises, we need to support Haiti to revitalize its economy and undertake genuinely sustainable socioeconomic development. That is what is missing right now. We believe that Haiti deserves our solidarity and predictable support. Young Haitians need to have hope that there is a future for them in their home country. And as many members of the Council said, we will of course continue to work to address the ongoing humanitarian crisis, especially in the context of the cholera pandemic.

Fourthly, Canada encourages Haitian stakeholders to broaden their consensus even further — because disagreement will always exist. For example, there are days when we do not always quite agree with the Government of China, but I think the statement today by my colleague Ambassador Zhang Jun was important, in that he spoke about the need to have all civil society groups in Haiti involved in the discussions and for them to play an important part in the national consensus. Much remains to be done in that regard. Moreover, it is very important for women and young people to play an integral role in shaping Haiti's future.

I would like to assure you, Mr. President, that Canada will remain absolutely committed to addressing the current crisis in a positive way and providing suggestions so that the necessary decisions can be reached, both for the Council and, especially, for the people of Haiti. I continue to express my solidarity with my colleague the Ambassador of Haiti. We will do everything possible to respond to the ongoing crisis and will continue to put forward positive proposals to find better solutions.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at noon.