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Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution [2600 \(2021\)](#), by which the Council extended to 15 July 2022 the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), in accordance with Council resolution [2476 \(2019\)](#), by which it established BINUH and requested me to report on the implementation of the resolution every 120 days. The report includes significant developments that have occurred since my previous report ([S/2021/828](#)) and provides an update on the implementation of the BINUH mandate.

II. Political issues and good governance (benchmark 1)

2. Polarization continues to define Haitian politics, as differences over the country's current governance arrangements persist. Efforts to build greater unity around a common path proved fraught during the reporting period, while complex economic and security factors set off national fuel shortages and strikes by transport unions, which severely disrupted economic and social life across the country throughout most of October and November. Further progress is therefore still needed to enhance consensus on how to resolve the country's political crisis. Moreover, several stakeholders remain doubtful that the current political and security environments are conducive to the timely holding of elections. In his 1 January address to the nation, Prime Minister Ariel Henry asserted that the challenges the country continued to face were of a security, political and economic nature. He encouraged all Haitian stakeholders, "including those supporting alternative initiatives", to "enlarge the consensus" on the 11 September political agreement, set aside their differences and chart a common way forward.

3. After disbanding the Provisional Electoral Council on 27 September 2021, the Prime Minister made initial attempts to engage various sectors in forming a new body which did not gain much traction. Citing the continued deterioration in the security situation, several sectors declined to nominate candidates for the nine positions of electoral councillors. Acknowledging the need for the security situation to be addressed, and despite these setbacks, the Prime Minister continued outreach to national stakeholders, including by launching a dialogue with representatives of the Commission for a Haitian Solution to the Crisis (known as the Montana Group) on



27 October and repeatedly engaging other key political groups, trade unions, business sector associations and civil society actors.

4. As a result of these overtures, and in an effort to meet the terms of the 11 September political agreement, the Prime Minister unveiled a partially reshuffled Government on 24 November. The 18-member cabinet – with eight new ministers, including representatives from civil society, former members of the political opposition to late President Jovenel Moïse and technocrats from previous administrations – broadened ownership of the political road map and inclusion in the executive. However, the cabinet’s composition has elicited concerns among observers, as it is perceived as marginalizing more moderate elements of the Haitian polity. During the swearing-in ceremony on 25 November, Prime Minister Henry stated that the new Government’s top priorities would be security, constitutional reform based on a process of “popular consultation” and the holding of national and local elections.

5. As 7 February – the date of the end of President Moïse’s mandate – approached, several signatories of the 11 September political agreement voiced their discontent over the limited progress in its implementation and called upon the Prime Minister to accelerate the establishment of a new electoral council while further enhancing the Government’s inclusivity. Other stakeholders appeared to question the legitimacy of Prime Minister Henry’s executive mandate beyond 7 February and underscored the need for inclusive negotiations to be held in order to articulate a national consensus that would lead to the full restoration of democratic institutions through the holding of elections. Discussions on whether Haiti should maintain a prime minister-led executive to lead the transition, as proposed in the 11 September agreement, or opt for the kind of semi-presidential system enshrined in the 1987 Constitution remained at the forefront of the political debate.

6. In an initiative to advance an alternative governance model outside the scope of the efforts led by the Government, on 12 December, supporters of the Montana Group launched a 46-member national transitional council composed of representatives from the different economic, social and political sectors, including the diaspora, to designate an interim President and a new Prime Minister to lead a 24-month political transition. This act was followed, on 10 January, by the signing of a new agreement between the Montana Group and the signatories of the national memorandum of understanding, which provides for a dual executive, composed of a five-member joint presidency and a Prime Minister to be designated by the national transitional council. The new agreement also calls for the creation of a national conference to decide on a possible constitutional reform and projects that elections will be held in 2024. Six applications – two for the Montana representative in the five-member presidency and four for Prime Minister – were submitted to the national transitional council on 18 January. Prime Minister Henry reiterated his commitment to dialogue with all stakeholders, including the Montana Group, and indicated that the next Head of State would be chosen through democratic elections.

7. During a 21 January ministerial meeting on Haiti hosted virtually by the Government of Canada, the Prime Minister underscored that addressing insecurity and strengthening State authority throughout the national territory were essential conditions for holding elections. While acknowledging the need to further enlarge national consensus around a Haitian-led project aimed at restoring electoral democracy, the Prime Minister also announced that, in line with the 11 September agreement, academia, the private sector, rural community groups, women’s associations and other stakeholders would appoint their respective representatives to the transitional governance bodies. Of note, various participants in the conference indicated that the search for a viable political solution in Haiti should include peaceful

and constructive dialogue among all national stakeholders, including civil society representatives.

8. In early January, a debate arose over the duration of the terms of the 10 remaining members of the Senate, the only officials to currently hold elected positions in Haiti. While some stakeholders asserted that the senators' mandates expired on 10 January 2022, referring to the electoral cycle provided for in the Constitution, others held that their constitutional six-year terms were due to expire in 2023, given that the senators had taken office in 2017. The dispute was peacefully resolved on 10 January, allowing the remaining senators to continue serving their mandates and contributing to partially reducing political tensions. On the same day, the body's President called on national stakeholders to seize the opportunity to make 2022 "the year of national dialogue and consensus".

9. The country's political challenges were further compounded by the disruption of the national fuel supply in mid-October, when criminal gangs surrounded the country's main fuel terminals in Port-au-Prince (West Department). Gang members kidnapped truck drivers, diverted fuel tankers and drove police off with gunfire. In addition to stoking social and political tensions, the resulting blockade led to countrywide fuel shortages, had a severe impact on economic life and disrupted critical services (including banks, hospitals and ambulances), as well as humanitarian relief operations. Following the Government's adjustment of its security posture in critical areas and its engagement with key actors in the fuel supply chain, a gradual improvement in the situation was observed by mid-November, when gas stations resumed normal operations.

10. In the aftermath of the fuel crisis, the Prime Minister adopted a series of measures to reverse a decade-long fuel subsidy policy, which drove up the price of diesel, kerosene and gasoline. Proactive outreach to, and consultation with, trade unions and the business community in the preceding weeks mitigated public backlash against the higher prices and led to a more progressive lifting of the subsidies. Another apparent contributing factor was the Government's pledge to reinvest public resources in social services such as policing, education and health, while providing other incentives to the transportation industry to keep public transport prices affordable.

11. Given the absence of a reconstituted Provisional Electoral Council, and due to pervasive fuel scarcity, electoral preparations slowed. Nevertheless, with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and BINUH, National Electoral Council staff continued to work on improving their capacity to better manage data and prevent electoral violence. Registration for national identification cards also slowed during the reporting period. While there had been a progressive decrease in the number of registrations over the previous six months, the disruptions caused by the fuel crisis led to a sharp drop, to a low equalled only during the 2019 *peyi lok* period of protests. As at 21 January, and following the removal by the National Identification Office of duplicates from the list, the total number of registered citizens was 4,844,213, including 2,542,387 women. As at that same date, 4,154,546 identity cards had been issued. Of note, on 16 December, the Government appointed a new Director-General in charge of the National Identification Office.

12. Despite scant progress on the electoral front, the United Nations continued to support national institutions in increasing women's leadership and participation in political life. UN-Women helped a Women's Leadership Academy project complete a training cycle at the end of November, strengthening the capacities of around 80 women aspiring candidates for the next elections. Moreover, under the Peacebuilding Fund framework for the prevention of electoral violence, including violence against

women, discussions were held by UN-Women, with BINUH support, on mechanisms to address electoral and political violence against women and ways to mitigate gender-based stereotypes in media. The forums gathered stakeholders from national institutions, civil society organizations and the media, and contributed to enhancing coordination against gender-based violence and stigmatization, while raising awareness about barriers to women participating in public life.

III. Violence reduction (benchmark 2)

13. Since my previous report, gang-related violence has remained the predominant threat to security in Haiti, with armed groups continuing to attempt to expand their zones of influence, in particular in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area. Political instability triggered by the 7 July assassination of President Moïse further exacerbated inter-gang disputes, while also providing an opening for these groups to align themselves with political objectives and enabling spoilers to instrumentalize them to further their economic and political ends. As a result, gangs have strengthened their territorial and political foothold in strategic areas in and around Port-au-Prince, which effectively empowers them to obstruct the country's main supply routes and fuel terminals at will.

14. In a blatant challenge to State authority, members of the G9 alliance of gangs prevented Prime Minister Henry from holding an official ceremony in the Port-au-Prince neighbourhood of Pont-Rouge (West Department) on 17 October by occupying the area where the event was to have been held. Similarly, on 1 January, armed gangs in Gonaïves (Artibonite Department) reportedly opened fire on the Prime Minister during an Independence Day commemoration. The incident, which was characterized by several media outlets as an attempt on the Prime Minister's life, raised widespread concern and elicited stern international condemnation.

15. In the Port-au-Prince neighbourhood of Martissant (West Department), where an inter-gang conflict has been raging for over six months, civilians continued to be deliberately and indiscriminately targeted. Gang members attacked a bus transporting 38 passengers through the neighbourhood on 1 December, causing the death of four men and one woman and seriously wounding 11 others. In a more recent development, gangs have been documented using snipers to shoot indiscriminately at civilians in areas under dispute.

16. The reporting period saw a rise in both kidnappings for ransom and intentional homicides, which increased by 180 and 17 per cent, respectively, compared with 2020, to 655 kidnappings and 1,615 homicides reported by the police. The main perpetrators of kidnappings were gangs operating in the southern neighbourhoods of Port-au-Prince, including Martissant and Village de Dieu, and around the communes of Croix-des-Bouquets and Tabarre (West Department). Gangs in the latter area ramped up the scale and severity of attacks, some of which gained considerable international media attention. No social group was spared; among the victims were labourers, traders, religious leaders, professors, medical doctors, journalists, human rights defenders and foreign citizens.

17. In reaction to these trends, the Haitian National Police undertook enhanced anti-gang operations, which yielded limited, though occasionally noteworthy, results, including the arrest of several known gang leaders. Gangs then retaliated with violent, coordinated attacks on police stations in Pernier (Pétionville, West Department) on 15 November and in Martissant on 6 December. A resurgence in protests, with 1,116 instances of civil unrest in 2021, an increase of 83.3 per cent compared with 612 in 2020, and additional post-earthquake tasks, including securing government facilities and escorting humanitarian aid and fuel deliveries between mid-August and

November, overwhelmed national police capacity to address other forms of criminality. In the meantime, concerted action by national authorities led to the reopening of some schools in gang-ridden neighbourhoods, such as in La Saline on 10 January and Cité Soleil on 17 January.

18. Prime Minister Henry has underlined the need to strengthen the Haitian National Police and improve the effectiveness of anti-gang operations through more balanced approaches to prevention and law enforcement. However, despite several changes in the leadership of the institution, including the appointment of another interim Director-General on 21 October, the third in the past 30 months, efforts to operationalize new police strategies – such as those deriving from recent assessments of the police anti-kidnapping cell and anti-gang unit conducted by bilateral partners – continue to face numerous operational, logistical and resource impediments. The Prime Minister has pledged to improve the working conditions of the police while appealing to the international community for additional support to bolster operational capacity and skill set training and equipment. In addition, he announced that various ministries would undertake further community violence reduction measures in coordination with the national police, including cash-for-work, vocational training and microcredit loan programmes.

19. Several government initiatives to improve community security advanced during the reporting period, despite being initially stalled due to the political situation. The dissemination of the national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration strategy which had been endorsed in July, the finalization of the draft law on weapons and ammunition and United Nations efforts to assist the Haitian authorities in the establishment of a comprehensive weapons and ammunition framework, in collaboration with UNDP, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, were all re-energized with the appointment of the new cabinet in late November. Likewise, the appointment of a national coordinator at the Prime Minister's Office to lead a "whole-of-government" integrated approach on security reform and on reducing community violence is a welcome development. Prime Minister Henry also sat down with the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission for the first time on 3 December and urged the commissioners to continue their work in addressing gang violence through engagement with local communities.

20. In support of national efforts to reduce community violence, the United Nations continued to implement several projects financed through the Peacebuilding Fund. In September, the country team briefed police leadership on the results of an assessment of police arms and ammunition management needs, including a proposed set of guidelines, standard operating procedures and management tools. On 29 September, the police asked that the project move forward, with an initial focus on strengthening the central armoury and enhancing the management of arms permits for civilians. In the gang-controlled Port-au-Prince neighbourhoods of Martissant and La Saline, 13 community-based platforms, now comprising 274 community leaders (40 per cent of whom are women and 30 per cent youth) have been established to strengthen local-level engagement on socioeconomic development. In La Saline, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) carried out high-intensity labour activities that provided 15 days of wages to nearly 1,000 beneficiaries (including some 380 women) by year's end. Support was provided to mediation efforts in gang-affected areas, where the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission and civil society organization Lakou Lapè held several meetings with local community leaders to discuss ceasefire initiatives. Mediation experts also launched a dialogue in Village de Dieu to discuss the feasibility of returns for those displaced by gang violence.

21. The Spotlight Initiative continued to support civil society organizations and government institutions in improving access to care for survivors of violence. So far, 7,194 women and girl survivors of violence have been provided integrated essential services in the Grande-Anse, North-East, South and West Departments. Further, 42,025 adolescent girls and boys were reached with gender-based violence prevention interventions. The completion of an analysis of the legal environment in December helped identify discriminatory provisions in current laws that contribute to violence against women and girls. The United Nations continues to support national authorities in strengthening the legal framework, in line with international recommendations to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.

IV. Security and the rule of law (benchmark 3)

22. More than seven months after the 7 July assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, the investigation and prosecution of this case remain challenging. New allegations and rumours feed public disquiet and the continuing controversy over the circumstances of the killing. Despite persistent security issues in the vicinity of the Port-au-Prince Court of First Instance, compounded by the general disruption of business due to the October–November acute fuel crisis, the investigating judge managed to conduct hearings with some 30 suspects and witnesses, including the former First Lady, Martine Moïse, on 6 October 2021. Four key suspects have been apprehended outside of Haiti since October. Two of them have been charged by and are currently being held in the United States, while the other two are awaiting extradition from Turkey and the Dominican Republic, respectively. However, on 22 January, the judge in charge of the investigation announced he would be withdrawing from the case amid corruption allegations, which led the Superior Council of the Judiciary to open an investigation into him.

23. Public expectations remain high for the Government to swiftly address the country's deteriorating security situation, which was marked by a dramatic rise in homicide and kidnapping for ransom in 2021. Haitian authorities and international partners remain mobilized in supporting police efforts to combat gangs and implement internal reforms. On 21 October, the Prime Minister, in addition to appointing a new interim head of the Haitian National Police, allocated a further \$1 million to the institution to support its anti-gang and intelligence-led operations. Meanwhile, several specialized units have continued to receive training and logistical support from bilateral partners, and the implementation of several administrative measures contributed to resolving issues related to discontent within the ranks of the police force reported in 2020 and the first half of 2021.

24. Building on this momentum, the Haitian National Police are in the process of identifying other urgent needs that will be incorporated into a short-term rapid response strategy to launch reforms that will address operational and administrative capacity gaps in the force. These actions could be supported through the establishment of a basket fund administered by UNDP. Initiatives are also being crafted to address the findings of the 2021 audit report by the General Inspectorate of the Ministry of Economy and Finance on police administrative and financial management. Some of them will be reflected in the development of the next national police multi-year strategic development plan. During the 21 January virtual ministerial meeting on Haiti hosted by Canada, partners agreed to strengthen their current and future support to the security sector, including the Haitian National Police, in order to tackle insecurity in the country.

25. Indications of progress notwithstanding, the Haitian National Police continue to suffer from staffing losses. The gradual attrition of the police force, estimated at 1,692

officers since 2017, represents a major challenge for the force, which stood at 15,497 officers, including 1,711 policewomen, as at 5 January 2022, of whom around 10 per cent were suspended or inactive. The graduation on 17 December of 631 new police officers, including 132 policewomen, as the thirty-first police academy class partially offset the losses. To boost the number of women being recruited, capacity-building sessions for female applicants were held in several Departments in 2021 as part of a gender mainstreaming project supported by Canada. Following the 17 December graduation, the police-to-population ratio per 1,000 inhabitants increased slightly to 1.3 but remains far below the international standard of 2.2 officers per 1,000 inhabitants.

26. Despite the swearing-in of the new members of the Superior Council of the Judiciary on 1 October, the Haitian judicial system continues to exhibit grave structural weaknesses. The slow pace at which judges' mandates are renewed – only 10 in December and January, following the expiration of the terms of roughly 70 per cent of the nation's investigative judges in December 2021 – continues to hamper the capacity of the courts to process and try cases. Moreover, little action has been taken to prepare for the entry into force of the penal and criminal procedure codes in June 2022 or to engage national stakeholders on pending divisive issues which impede the progress of judicial reform.

27. Having reiterated that reducing pretrial detention would remain a top priority of the executive, the new Government instructed public prosecutors to take measures to increase the number of hearings and execute judicial decisions promptly. The resumption of correctional hearings in the Port-au-Prince jurisdiction resulted in the release of 284 individuals, including 22 women and 2 minors, from the country's most overcrowded prisons during the reporting period. Nonetheless, the rate of arbitrary and illegal detention in prisons remained extremely high, at 81 per cent.

28. Against this backdrop, the United Nations continued supporting the work of the National Legal Aid Council and the implementation of key legislation on legal assistance. In 2021, the seven functioning decentralized legal aid offices took on 622 cases, leading to 504 releases and 118 convictions. To build on this, on 21 December, BINUH and UNDP co-organized a forum on the legal aid needs of vulnerable segments of the population. The event, which was partially funded through extrabudgetary funds from the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, provided a crucial opportunity for stakeholders to strengthen their collaboration and communication and make recommendations to improve access to legal aid.

29. As at 19 January, Haitian prisons held a total of 11,003 inmates, including 387 women, 237 boys and 18 girls, and had an estimated overall occupancy rate of 322 per cent, with 9,005 inmates awaiting trial. The issue of prison overcrowding, with some prisons currently housing five times as many inmates as they were designed to hold, was further exacerbated by the relocation of hundreds of individuals detained in three southern region prisons which suffered extensive damage during the 14 August earthquake. Due notably to the fuel crisis, detention conditions deteriorated in the final quarter of 2021. Throughout the fuel crisis, the country's 18 prisons struggled to provide meals to prisoners and to meet their basic needs, resulting in several cases of severe malnutrition. In addition, the 17 November death of a National Penitentiary inmate, reportedly from complications related to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), has raised questions about the adequacy of medical equipment and personnel in a prison which houses one third of the country's entire inmate population but has only 11 medical workers on staff (1 for every 334 inmates). On 31 December, an attempted escape from the Croix-des-Bouquets prison led to the death of 10 inmates and one police officer.

30. In an effort to address detention conditions, the acting Director-General of the Haitian National Police on 10 November appointed a new director of prison administration – the fifth in 11 months – who promptly worked with the Ministry of Economy and Finance, as well as other stakeholders, to urgently restore the supply of food to prisons. The Ministry of Public Health and Population successfully averted a serious outbreak of COVID-19 in the National Penitentiary by disinfecting prison cells and applying isolation measures. However, efforts to launch a comprehensive vaccination campaign in prisons have yet to get under way. Technical and financial partners continued to support prison authorities with the development of a custodial management data centre – a key tool to accelerate the processing of pretrial detainees – and the rehabilitation of the Petit-Goâve prison (West Department), a critical prison infrastructure project aimed at relieving overcrowding which was delayed due to the 14 August earthquake.

31. Deeply rooted corruption remains a significant obstacle to governance and social cohesion in Haiti. The United Nations country team developed a twofold response through the Peacebuilding Fund and a larger initiative with other key international partners. The first component is a \$3 million project led by UNDP and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in coordination with Government entities and civil society. Launched in December 2021 for a period of two years, the project focuses on strengthening social cohesion and State-society relations through anti-corruption mechanisms. The second component consists of a process led by UNDP, UNODC, UNOPS and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to diagnose adverse impacts of corruption on peace and development, establish a common understanding of corruption and lay out the basis for a joint comprehensive anti-corruption strategy.

V. Human rights (benchmark 4)

32. Accompanying the expansion of gang influence, human rights violations associated with armed violence increased in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince. More than 500 individuals, including 40 women and children as young as 5 years of age, were killed between 1 September and 31 December. Sexual violence, rape and sexual slavery have also reportedly been used by gangs as a weapon to terrorize and assert control over the local population. Dozens of rapes, attacks and kidnappings are reported to be occurring each month against girls and women returning from school or using public transportation. The sexual abuse of young men is also often an initiation ritual for some gangs. Given the coercive environment that predominates in poor communities, where fear is a frequent factor of life, human rights experts believe the true extent of sexual violence remains largely underreported.

33. In this grim context, State institutions continue to struggle to implement approaches to ensure the safety of persons and uphold international human rights norms. Further undermining the protection of human rights, law enforcement has been hampered by gangs that occasionally use Haitian National Police uniforms and equipment to commit crimes – such as during the 6 December looting and burning of the police substation in Martissant – with the goal of sowing confusion within the population and perpetuating mistrust of authorities. Furthermore, the State continues to lack adequate measures to protect independent human rights defenders, journalists and other public voices who are subject to threats and intimidation. During the reporting period, two journalists were executed by alleged gang elements while investigating incidents of armed violence on the outskirts of the commune of Pétionville. Additionally, four human rights defenders, four journalists, one judge, one lawyer, one doctor and one police officer were kidnapped, threatened or intimidated. Little action has been taken by national authorities regarding these cases.

34. Meanwhile, the General Inspectorate of the Haitian National Police registered complaints regarding 36 police officers involved in human rights violations, of which at least 15 concerned alleged illegal killings of individuals. Of those investigations, seven were closed and subsequently submitted to the Director-General for disciplinary measures. The low number of completed investigations can be partly explained by insecurity affecting the area around the Inspectorate's headquarters in downtown Port-au-Prince, which keeps victims and officers away from the premises. Insufficient operational means to conduct inspections, low salaries for officers and an inability to offer protection also affect the Inspectorate's oversight capacity. During the reporting period, at least 10 police officers were murdered in targeted killings, including 3 officers who were on duty. In addition, 28 officers were injured, including 15 who were on duty.

35. The Haitian judiciary continued to face significant barriers to meaningfully delivering justice for victims of human rights violations. Despite advocacy efforts led by civil society and BINUH, no significant progress was recorded in the emblematic cases of the Grande Ravine (2017), La Saline (2018) and Bel-Air (2019) massacres. Prime suspects in some of these killings, including the leader of the G9 gang alliance, continued to evade justice despite their presence in public marches and appearances in the media. In addition, during a 27 October burglary at the Port-au-Prince court of first instance, sensitive documents pertaining to the investigation into the August 2020 assassination of Monferrier Dorval were reportedly stolen.

36. Populations affected by gang violence continued to be displaced. As at the end of January 2022, more than 16,500 persons, including some 11,850 women and children, were still in situations of violence-induced displacement from areas such as lower Delmas, Martissant and downtown Port-au-Prince and living in makeshift sites or public buildings or among relatives. In addition to these urban displaced, more than 30,100 people remained displaced in the three most earthquake-affected departments (Grande-Anse, Nippes and South). Through a concerted and participatory post-disaster needs assessment process, supported by the United Nations under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator and partners, the State took stock of the rights and protection needs of vulnerable groups, in particular people living with disabilities, who are most at risk of being left behind during the recovery phase.

37. During the reporting period, Haitian authorities, assisted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and non-governmental humanitarian organizations, continued to register high numbers of Haitians being repatriated from other countries in the region. Overall, more than 16,390 migrants of Haitian origin were deported by air and sea. Since September, the repatriation of Haitian migrants has attracted much international attention, prompting United Nations agencies to issue a joint communiqué calling for protection measures and a comprehensive regional approach to the issue. The migration situation triggered several high-level visits by United States authorities to Haiti and the region, generating additional opportunities for dialogue on a common approach to the Haitian crisis.

38. Furthermore, at least 10,700 Haitian nationals were deported by land from the Dominican Republic, among them hundreds of pregnant and nursing women. From 8 to 13 November, Prime Minister Henry dispatched a special envoy to the Dominican Republic to meet with a broad range of senior Dominican officials and stakeholders, including Haitian migrants, civil society groups, diplomats, the Catholic clergy and the United Nations country team, and to reaffirm strong relations between the two countries at all levels.

39. In December, the Government of Haiti submitted its national report to the Human Rights Council as part of the upcoming third cycle of the universal periodic review, which will review the human rights situation in Haiti in early 2022.

Representatives from the national human rights institutions, civil society and the diplomatic community were invited to participate in a pre-session meeting to discuss the situation in advance of the review.

40. Efforts to establish an OHCHR country office continued, receiving positive reactions from national and international partners. The opening of a country office would enable continued support to national authorities, civil society and local populations to ensure respect for, and the protection and fulfilment of, human rights in Haiti.

VI. Unemployment, youth and other vulnerable groups (benchmark 5)

41. The economic situation of Haiti remains distressing. While poverty levels were already high, continued insecurity, political instability and governance challenges, recently exacerbated by worldwide supply shortages, have put severe additional strains on the population.

42. The country's overall macroeconomic situation remains challenging. Real gross domestic product (GDP) for 2021 is estimated to have contracted for a third consecutive year, by 0.9 per cent (following contractions of 3.3 per cent in 2020 and 1.7 per cent in 2019). The Government's significant use of borrowing, which accounts for some 80 per cent of the fiscal gap between revenue and expenditure, coupled with supply chain disruptions, had the combined effect of releasing more money into the economy while constricting spending opportunities. Haitians therefore experienced higher prices as year-over-year inflation rose to around 19 per cent by October 2021. However, a current account deficit of 0.3 per cent of GDP is estimated for 2021, compared with a surplus of 3.4 per cent in 2020.

43. The authorities sought to address dwindling tax revenues and contain the fiscal deficit, estimated at 2.7 per cent of GDP in 2021. As an indication of State financial stress, the Government amended the 2020/21 national budget in late September, potentially negatively affecting the State's ability to fund the implementation of the post-COVID recovery plan. The Government's fuel price reforms enacted on 10 December – a further measure aimed at helping to address the State's weak fiscal position – are expected to save an estimated \$300 million in subsidies. This represents 2 per cent of GDP and almost one third of collected revenues.

44. On 23 August, the International Monetary Fund provided Haitian authorities access to special drawing rights in the amount of approximately \$224 million. This initiative provided financing relief to the Government and helped maintain net and gross international reserves at 4.9 months of projected imports. However, hampered by a lack of governance reform and the absence of a longer-term programme supported by the Fund, external financial support has dried up since 2019. While the country's percentage of non-performing loans (or loans in default) remained broadly stable at around 7.5 per cent as at December 2021, more information is needed for a fully fledged assessment of the underlying credit, operational, market and liquidity risks faced by potential lender banks.

45. After the former Government's 2020 interventions in the foreign exchange market, which resulted in a sharp appreciation of the gourde, the currency has gradually depreciated in value. Consequently, the International Monetary Fund has been working with authorities to encourage greater exchange rate flexibility, as well as to support reforms that will strengthen governance related to public procurement. In that regard, progress was recently achieved with the publication of a new decree

on procurement transparency, which includes a requirement to disclose the names of company owners who will benefit from selection for government contracts.

46. The United Nations country team continued, during the reporting period, to implement its new approach focused on enhancing the capacity of national institutions to develop and effectively implement integrated public policies aimed at addressing persistent development challenges. Under the leadership of the Deputy Special Representative, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, seven agencies joined forces to support the Government task force in operationalizing the national policy for social protection and promotion, which is aimed at reducing economic, social and institutional inequalities and thus contributing to fostering a more just and inclusive society. Engagement between key ministries and international financial institutions on the financing aspect of this undertaking is also under way. Under the overall coordination of the National Commission for Food Security, a similar process has been initiated by the country team to support the operationalization of the national policy for food sovereignty, food security and nutrition.

47. In addition, to promote a more effective and inclusive economic model in Haiti, the United Nations country team has initiated consultations with relevant governmental partners and resource persons from academia, the private sector and civil society regarding an economic transformation agenda. The overall objective is to formulate and jointly implement a road map for economic reforms to contribute to reduced horizontal socioeconomic inequalities while supporting peace consolidation.

48. Targeted support for the economic empowerment of women, the combating of discrimination and the removal of barriers to social mobility remain key country team priorities to ensure that Haiti continues to advance on the path towards sustainable development. As of January, beneficiaries of the entrepreneurship programme of the United Nations-supported National Vocational Training Institute included 650 girls from the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, as well as 50 women-owned businesses. Nevertheless, gender-based discrimination remains a concern. A survey fielded as part of the integrated national financing framework for sustainable development, published in October, revealed that 38 per cent of women had reported discrimination when looking for employment.

VII. Basic social service delivery and resilience (benchmark 6)

49. Development deficits, the longer-term effects of natural disasters and the deteriorating security environment have exacerbated the country's pressing humanitarian needs. In the three months following the 14 August earthquake, which is estimated to have caused damage and losses equivalent to 11 per cent of the country's GDP, the Government and humanitarian partners assisted some 450,000 people in three affected areas, despite the negative impact of fuel scarcity and gang violence on humanitarian access from October to mid-November. Indeed, during this period, an estimated two thirds of humanitarian actors were forced to curtail their operations, hindering the provision of humanitarian assistance to around 700,000 people throughout the country. To date, large segments of the population trapped in gang-held territories continue to remain out of reach of humanitarian workers.

50. As at 21 January, the \$187.3 million flash appeal launched to provide vital relief assistance to the most vulnerable people identified as needing assistance in the affected areas was 43.4 per cent funded, while the 2021 humanitarian response plan had received only 28 per cent of required funds. This year, the number of Haitians in need of humanitarian assistance is forecast to reach 4.9 million (43 per cent of the population), an increase of 11 per cent compared with 2021.

51. In the aftermath of the August earthquake, the United Nations country team moved quickly to support the Government in restoring essential services. On 4 October, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training initiated symbolic “back-to-school” efforts to help about 300,000 children gradually resume schooling in the three earthquake-affected Departments. Joint efforts by United Nations agencies enabled the construction of temporary learning spaces, the supply of school kits and the provision of psychosocial support and cash transfers. At least 230 schools in these departments received support, yet 1,019 other schools are still in need. To address the protection needs of those displaced by the earthquake, more than 10,000 individuals benefited from awareness-raising about preventing child separation and child exploitation and trafficking.

52. Under the leadership of the Prime Minister’s Office and the technical lead of the Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation, and with the support of the United Nations, the European Union, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, a post-disaster needs assessment report was delivered within six weeks of the earthquake, with recovery needs estimated at almost \$2 billion: 76 per cent was attributed social sectors, including housing, followed by the productive sectors (10 per cent) and the infrastructure sector (9 per cent). Based on the assessment, and with partner support, a recovery framework was developed under the Ministry’s leadership. The Government of Haiti, with the support of the United Nations, will host a high-level international event on the reconstruction of Haiti on 16 February 2022 in Port-au-Prince to garner support for implementation of the integrated post-earthquake recovery plan over the next four years. The Government has requested the United Nations to establish a multi-partner trust fund as part of the post-earthquake reconstruction process.

53. The United Nations country team, in close coordination with the Government, continued to support the provision of basic social services across the country, in particular to children and women. Reproductive health services were provided to 320,141 women during the reporting period, including family planning, prenatal and postnatal care, assisted deliveries, post-abortion care and management of patients living with HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. As at the end of December, these interventions had aided in more than 29,535 births, resulted in 55,193 first trimester prenatal consultations and helped decrease the number of preventable maternal deaths. A maternal health centre with full surgical capacity was opened in Anse-à-Pitres (South-East Department), along the border with the Dominican Republic. As at 31 December, more than 6,328 people, including 3,737 women and girls and 1,412 children under 10 years of age, had received medical consultation and treatment in integrated mobile clinics supported by the United Nations.

54. In line with national priorities, the United Nations country team supported the Ministry of Public Health and Population in developing operational plans for its 2021–2031 community health strategy to improve the provision of care in vulnerable communities. A priority of the plan is midwifery, since only 15 per cent of the country’s current midwifery needs are met, even as demand for midwives increases. In partnership with the State University of Haiti and the Ministry of Public Health and Population, the country team supported the capacity-building, deployment and regulation of midwives, including the recruitment of personnel for the Faculty of Midwifery. Three regional training centres will be opened in Port-au-Prince, Les Cayes (South Department) and Limonade (North Department), with the goal of training approximately 120 midwives per year to respond to growing needs.

55. The COVID-19 situation in Haiti continues to be of concern. During the reporting period, the country exited a fourth wave of cases while preparing for a potential new wave due to the omicron variant. The fuel crisis affected access to, and provision of, hospital care, including oxygen therapy for patients with severe

infections. Despite these challenges, COVID-19 surveillance, testing and response efforts continued. From 1 October 2021 to 14 January 2022, a total of 38,785 lab tests were conducted, resulting in 5,700 confirmed cases. In addition, 151 deaths were reported. COVID-19 vaccination also continued, albeit slowly, due to operational issues and low demand. As at 14 January, the overall COVID-19 vaccine coverage of the eligible population was only 1.7 per cent for the first dose and 1.1 per cent for a complete series. An increase in vaccinations is expected in February and March, as communication efforts ramp up to address vaccine hesitancy and stimulate demand.

56. Finally, ongoing surveillance indicates that no confirmed cholera cases have been reported in Haiti since January 2019. The Government of Haiti is organizing a scientific conference later in February to mark the three-year anniversary of the last confirmed case. The conference will showcase progress and lessons learned in Haiti in controlling the 2010–2019 outbreak and present a medium-term plan for sustained cholera elimination.

VIII. Update on the assessment of the Mission mandate

57. On 29 December, the Secretary-General appointed Mourad Wahba of Egypt as the independent expert to lead the assessment of the mandate of BINUH, as requested by the Security Council in its resolution [2600 \(2021\)](#). The assessment team undertook its first visit to Haiti from 21 to 27 January. The findings of the assessment are expected to be conveyed to the Security Council by mid-April.

IX. Sexual exploitation and abuse

58. During the period from 1 September to 31 January, BINUH registered one new allegation of sexual exploitation and abuse, dating from the deployment of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) in the country.

59. Mindful of the increased risks of sexual exploitation and abuse arising in the context of a large humanitarian response, the network on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse, under the leadership of the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, has implemented a multi-faceted prevention campaign. The work of the network remains critical, but insufficient funding has been received to finance a coordinator for the network, putting at risk the gains made.

60. With the support of the Resident Coordinator, IOM and UNDP, BINUH and the Senior Victims' Rights Officer implemented assistance programmes for 36 children born of sexual exploitation and abuse by MINUSTAH personnel, and their mothers. The Officer also intensified her advocacy with Member States to help expedite the resolution of outstanding paternity and child support claims.

61. BINUH took note of reports that there were victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by former MINUSTAH personnel who might not have come forward because they reportedly lacked confidence in United Nations accountability and assistance mechanisms. BINUH is committed to a culture of accountability, including for past wrongs, and has continued its external outreach to encourage victims to report. The trust fund in support of victims of sexual exploitation and abuse is critical to providing long-term assistance to victims in Haiti.

X. Observations

62. The persistently polarized nature of Haitian politics continues to prevent the development of the climate of trust, tolerance and dialogue necessary for the organization of a peaceful, credible and transparent electoral process. In that regard, I welcome Prime Minister Henry's continued commitment to fostering dialogue to further broaden consensus and a common vision. I urge all Haitians to agree on a national project that will facilitate the restoration of national democratic institutions and return the country to a path of political stability, good governance and inclusive development.

63. I condemn in the strongest terms the alarming surge in violence in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, which epitomizes the scourge that gangs represent for Haitian society. The actions of these armed criminal groups have had a catastrophic impact on the economy of Haiti and threaten the fundamental rights of all Haitian citizens, especially their rights to life, freedom of movement, work, health care and education.

64. The primary institution responsible for the security of all Haitians, the Haitian National Police, is hampered by development gaps, a chronic lack of equipment and a dearth of logistical and financial support. It is essential that Haitian authorities, bilateral partners and multilateral institutions urgently devise an effective, collaborative approach to ensure the continued professionalization of the national police and the promotion of women within its ranks. To that end, the expressions of support at the 21 January international ministerial meeting on Haiti are encouraging, and I look forward to the momentum it generated in support of strengthening this important institution bearing fruit.

65. The security problems of Haiti cannot be effectively tackled through policing alone. A law enforcement approach needs to be complemented by clear political will, socioeconomic transformation and reintegration activities aimed at generating employment and revenue across the country, and in particular in the neighbourhoods most affected by gang violence. Haitian authorities have adopted a national community violence reduction strategy premised on such a holistic approach, and they must now ensure that it is swiftly and thoroughly implemented through a whole-of-government effort. In this respect, I welcome the Government's actions to re-energize community violence reduction initiatives, including through the appointment of a national coordinator to oversee the effort. Through the provision of advice and technical expertise, as well as through the strategic use of financing provided by the Peacebuilding Fund, the United Nations stands ready to support the furthering of this process.

66. Sustained efforts are also required to tackle the chronic challenges affecting the Haitian justice system. I encourage national authorities to continue prioritizing the fight against prolonged pretrial detention and fully implementing the legal aid legislation with the establishment of legal aid offices in all of the country's 18 jurisdictions. I further urge the Government to overcome the stalemate in the implementation of key justice sector reforms, and in particular to revitalize efforts to facilitate and support the timely entry into force of the penal code and the code of criminal procedure.

67. At the same time, it remains crucial that Haitian institutions become more transparent and accountable. To this end, I strongly encourage the Government of Haiti to continue its efforts to ensure that oversight mechanisms and judicial institutions effectively address corruption, challenge impunity and see to it that those responsible for the perpetration of emblematic crimes, as well as for the assassination of President Moïse, be swiftly brought to justice.

68. Supported by a strong One United Nations approach, gradual progress is being observed in addressing the systemic challenges and structural obstacles that prevent the country's progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Traction is slowly being gained in the struggle against corruption, the effort towards economic transformation and the institutionalization of integrated public policies which benefit the most vulnerable and advance the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. For greater impact, I call on the international partners of Haiti to support these initiatives, and I am encouraged by discussions between the Government, the United Nations and development partners on approaches to enhance development effectiveness and revitalize aid coordination. I welcome the upcoming action dialogue with the country's development partners to enhance the effectiveness of aid delivery.

69. I urge Member States and development partners to strongly support post-earthquake recovery needs, including at the upcoming high-level donor conference organized by the Government of Haiti, with United Nations support. I hope the world will show solidarity with the Haitian people as they strive to recover better.

70. This year, more than 40 per cent of Haitians will require humanitarian assistance. With some 4.4 million people facing food insecurity, humanitarian needs related to the 14 August 2021 earthquake and more than 19,000 displaced by gang violence in West Department, it is critical that adequate humanitarian funding be provided to respond to all needs, including those that existed prior to the latest natural disaster to befall Haiti. I therefore urge Member States to close the humanitarian funding gap. I further call upon national authorities to fulfil their protection responsibilities towards those in need, including by continually ensuring that aid workers have unfettered access to them.

71. I take this opportunity to thank my Special Representative for Haiti, Helen Meagher La Lime, my Deputy Special Representative, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, Bruno Lemarquis, and all United Nations personnel in the country for their tireless work and dedication.
