

Brussels, 3 February 2016

Statement

Towards a Haitian solution of the current political crisis

The Coordination Europe-Haiti has taken note of the decision taken by the Electoral Council on Friday 22 January to, again, postpone the second round for the presidential elections in Haiti. This decision did not come as a surprise, given the continued and mounting criticism at the validity of the results of rounds on 9 August and 25 October, as formulated by Haitian observation missions. Because of serious and widespread irregularities brought to light by the *Commission d'Évaluation Électorale Indépendante*, the Haitian people has lost faith in the possibility of organising transparent and fair elections.

In this regard, the Coordination Europe-Haiti observes that the European Union's Electoral Observation Mission, has taken the position to defend the legitimacy of the 25 October election outcome, even after the Government of Haiti's decision to postpone the second round indefinitely. The EU's observation mission was the only international mission to do so explicitly.¹

The current situation gives reason for concern, not only from a political point of view, but also in social and economic terms, Note the climbing rate of the local currency against the US dollar, the impact of cholera and the Zika virus, and the food security situation (see the latest analyses of of Haiti's *Coordination Nationale de la Sécurité Alimentaire*.) A response to the most basic needs of the Haitian population will only be possible through the election of responsible politicians, whose legitimacy would not be contested by broad segments of Haitian society.

For that reason the Coordination Europe-Haiti stresses that **the international community should respect the autonomy of the country**. In the past months we have witnessed examples that verge on interference in the Haitian election process. There was international diplomatic pressure on candidate Jude Celestin to reconsider his decision to withdraw from the second round for the presidential elections. And while Haiti's own *Bureau du Contentieux Electoral National* was strict in applying the prescriptions of the *Conseil Electoral Provisoire*, the EU's observation mission has chosen to give its own interpretation of the 'proces verbaux' of the polling stations.²

At this very moment, the Coordination Europe-Haiti expresses the hope that political parties and well established civil society organisations will start a constructive dialogue in order to come to the democratic election of the president, the parliament and local government. It is also up to Haitians to find a way out of the crisis, a crisis for which there is actually no constitutional proviso.

The International Community, and particularly the EU, should be aware that criticism voiced by Haitian actors, organisations and individuals against international interference in internal

¹ <http://www.eueom.eu/files/pressreleases/english/CommuniquepresseMOEUEHati.23-01-2016.pdf>

² <http://www.alterpresse.org/spip.php?article19565>

matters has reached a historic height. It is urgent to leave Haiti in the hands of its own population. The Coordination Europe-Haiti therefore invites the European Union to adopt a stance and take decisions in that spirit.

The CoEH appeals to the EU Electoral Observation Mission to :

- Stop minimising the 'serious' irregularities, verging on fraud, as observed by the BCEN and the CEEI during their verifications, and denounced by a large majority of civil society and the political opposition;
- Stop categorically sticking to the election results of 2015, which were fraught by serious irregularities and sometimes very violent incidents;
- Prove its independence and professionalism, not only in its observations, but also in its public communication about the observation results.

All this with reference to the Protocol d'Accord with the Haitian government: 'We have not come to interfere in the electoral process but to ensure that the will of the Haitian people is reflected as closely as possible in the electoral results, in all transparency.'³

The CoEH reminds the EU and its Delegation in Port-au-Prince of the following:

- The continuation of subsidising local authorities through the Agents Exécutifs Intérimaires, appointed by the President (not elected) has been a signal which contradicts democratic principles and also the guidelines of the LA-NSA program.⁴
- The need to significantly improve the taking into account of analyses, opinions and proposals of Haitian civil society as expressed in consultations.
- The importance of giving a more important role to civil society organisations in the political dialogue and in decision making about the EU's aid policy in Haiti.

On behalf of the Coordination Europe-Haiti,



Evert-Jan Brouwer, coordinator

³ http://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/haiti/press_corner/all_news/news/2015/2015_07_15_fr.htm

⁴ https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1444835707599&do=publi.detPUB&searchtype=RS&aofr=150424&d_ebpub=&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&nbPubliList=15&page=1&aoref=150424