



**Haiti: UPR Adoption
March 2017**

Mr President, thank you for this opportunity to address the Human Rights Council.

First, we wish to congratulate Haiti on the inauguration of President Jovenel Moïse in February of this year. We hope that President Moïse and his administration will make human rights a priority.

Human Rights Watch for decades has worked on human rights issues in Haiti, including on issues related to impunity for grave human rights abuses, promoting the rights of women and girls in Haiti, and the rights of victims of the Dominican Republic's abusive and cruel migration policies.

We continue to have deep concerns related to dire public health conditions in Haiti among the most marginalized and vulnerable individuals—including those affected by or at risk of outbreaks of cholera. Despite accepting recommendations during the 2011 UPR to take measures to ensure access to basic services such as water, housing and health for the population in vulnerable situation, many instances remain where Haiti can improve water and sanitation coverage. When tracked in 2012, school-aged children had the highest incidence of cholera in the country, at least partly because the water and sanitation in schools did not comply with hygienic guidelines. The government's commitment to adopting, supporting, and enforcing guidelines for water and sanitation in all schools is crucial.

Furthermore, Haiti should address the tragic impacts of neighboring Dominican Republic's disastrous migration policies. At least 150,000 Haitian migrants and Dominicans of Haitian descent have entered Haiti since the law in the DR was implemented in 2015. Thousands in displacement camps, like those in Anse-a-Pitres, receive little aid from the government or anyone else. During our September 2016 visit, many of those interviewed reported high levels of food insecurity, especially pregnant women and children who also suffer from lack of basic medical care. It should be remembered that in 2011 Haiti accepted UPR recommendations to ensure that food security be one its national priorities. While the DR should address the arbitrary deprivation of citizenship of Dominicans of Haitian descent, Haiti can help stateless people residing in its own borders by establishing information desks to offer advice about how they can try to reclaim their rights.

Haiti's new administration inherits many human rights challenges, including overcrowding and poor health in prisons, of the need to improve protection of child laborers women and human rights defenders, and the imperative to secure justice for victims of the Duvalier administration. It is important for the government to protect strong advocates for human rights because they are fundamental to addressing Haiti's long-term human rights challenges. We are concerned of reports of threats against high profile human rights defenders. This must stop.

We thank you for this opportunity.