



Port-au-Prince, 19 June 2006

Mr. Jacques Édouard ALEXIS
Prime Minister of the Republic Government
President of the Supreme Counsel of the Haitian National Police

Open Letter

Mr. Prime Minister,

The Board of Directors of the Association for the Promotion of the Integral Health of the Family (APROSIFA) and the National Human Rights Defense Network (RNDDH) are honored to present our compliments; as well, take this opportunity to share with you our concerns regarding the deterioration of the security climate since the weekend of the 3 and 4 June 2006 in the areas of *Carrefour-Feuilles*, in particular *Fort-Mercredi*, *Savane Pistache* and *Décayette* where APROSIFA has intervened for the last 13 years. Furthermore, our concern extends to the violent activities that have resurfaced in Gran Ravin since the night of Friday, 16 June 2006.

The humanitarian institution for health, APROSIFA, daily provides for the basic needs to more than 200 people lacking provisions and awareness in the area of maternal-infant care, and prevention and responsibility related to STD's and HIV/AIDS¹.

APROSIFA and RNDDH anticipated the return of a period of calm after the completion of the February and April 2006 elections. However, far from attaining this climate of security which is so badly needed to accompany the already economically vulnerable population, the APROSIFA health team was astounded to notice leaders of armed groups secretly recommencing their operations since the weekend of the 3 and 4 June 2006.

¹ STD: Sexually Transmitted Diseases

The residents of *Décayette, Fort-Mercredi, Savane Pistache, Ti Bwa, Saurai*, and particularly *Gran Ravin*, continue to be persecuted by armed groups in these zones, which are continually reinforced by a criminal network that originated in the capital. This violent situation obstructs the daily activities of the population, including the childcare service provided in the Nutritional Recovery Center. As a result, APROSIFA patients who were recovering from the ***Kwashiorkor*** condition were absent for more than 10 days, as the mothers were forced to remain in their homes to protect their children from stray bullets. It seems as though the population has been taken hostage by these armed groups.

APROSIFA and RNDDH, along with several other organizations, have formed a ***Coordination*** which has been participating in a violence reduction campaign in Haiti since the end of 2005. This campaign focuses primarily on armed violence. The ***Coordination*** intends to intensify its awareness-raising activities during the world cup period. With the eruption of violence in the country since 3 and 4 June 2006, we would not want to witness the transformation of these conflicts into a war between zones, as seems to be the case with *Gran Ravin* since 16 June 2006. In no way do we want to assist in the further polarization of this conflict, given the precedent of previous conflicts between *Ti Bois*, the *Ti Manchette* army, *Martissant, Base Pilate* and *Gran Ravin*. All the same, the reality is that it is the population who suffers the consequences from these actions.

APROSIFE and RNDDH denounce the cruel intrigues of these armed groups who use their weapons of war against a defenseless and peaceful population.

The area of *Martissant*, which is geographically linked to the Morne Hospital and the *Fond Férrier* location, has become a hide out for armed groups who easily dismantle and conceal their weapons during the day.

It is true, we welcomed the presence of a fixed PNH patrol at the entrance of the Sanatorium Hospital several days ago. However, we deplore that no concrete or systematic action has been implemented by the UN forces in collaboration with the PNH, up to this date, to apprehend the leaders of these armed groups in order to bring them to justice.

Mr. Prime Minister, in face of the facts, APROSIFA and RNDDH believe it essential you consider the following recommendations:

- 1- Increase the number of fixed patrol units and implement a mobile police patrol unit in the area of Carrefour-Feuilles, and particularly in *Savane Pistache, Fort-Mercredi, Décayette, Gran Ravin* all the way to *Martissant*. This would help the residents and retailers trapped by the armed groups to reinvest in their activities as citizens;

- 2- Accelerate the disarmament process in these crisis areas. Elaborate on plans, implement unexpected police interventions, and use professional searches. These are just some measures that could be to restore peace and calm to the inflicted population;
- 3- Arrest and sentence the leaders of the armed groups, who kill, rape and steal without regard;
- 4- Do an in depth evaluation of the DDR process in these areas. We deplore all tactics taken to increase the capacity of the armed groups' leaders under the pretext of social appeasement. No 'Rule of Law' can grow in a country without the punishment of the lawless.

Due to the number of arterial hypertension cases recorded in the last couple of days at APROSIFA, we do not want to wait for the replication of the disasters that took place in Cité Soleil to occur in Carrefour-Feuilles.

APROSIFA and RNDDH hope you will take note of these recommendations and urge you, Mr. Prime Minister, to agree to take them into the highest consideration.

Rose-Anne AUGUSTE
Founder and Counselor
APROSIFA

Pierre ESPERANCE
Executive Director
RNDDH

C.C. : **Me René MAGLOIRE**, Minister of Justice;
Mr. Paul Antoine BIEN AIMÉ, Minister of the Interior Regional Affaires;
Mr. Mario ANDRESOL, General Director of the Haitian National Police;
Mrs. Jessy Cameau Coicou, Chief General Inspector of the PNH;
Mr. Youri LATORTUE, President of the Justice and Security of the Senate Commission;
Mr. Eloune DOREUS, President of the Justice and Security of the Lower Chamber Commission;
International people's rights defense networks