



## The Fight to Counter Corruption in Haiti: a Targeted Combat

The brunt of the fight against corruption, announced with great ceremony by the government of Préval/Alexis, has hit the private businesses sector.

On May 18, 2007, the president of the Republic, René Garcia Préval, promised to fight corruption. This declaration was made a few months after an official delegation of donors to Haiti, led by Jacques Edouard Alexis, convened in Madrid. The delegation took part in a conference on November 30, 2006 where an injunction was made for Haiti to redouble its efforts against corruption, an indispensable condition for donor countries to continue allocating funds to Haiti. The President's declaration was considered opportune for Haiti. It was received with joy because an end to corruption implies better resource management for the country, better distribution of justice and the richness of the country, and, above all, the eradication of contraband and its corollaries (e.g., under-pricing, drug trafficking, etc.).



Businessman Franck Ciné

Several executive businessmen of the Public Administration were the subject of judicial enquiries. In fact, the President and General Director of the cell phone company Haïtel as well as the former majority shareholder of the Caribbean Society of Banks (SOCABANK) were arrested on June 6, 2007, and imprisoned in the National Penitentiary on allegations of corruption. Thereafter followed a highly publicized scandal revealing the payment of bribes to certain members of Parliament. Patrick Vieux, Patrick Poitevien, and Claudel Géhy were also arrested on the same date and under the same accusations.

On July 26, Fritz Brandt and David Brandt, father and son respectively, were arrested along with their driver, Jean Anthony Duponcy, for falsification of customs documents and misappropriation of civil servants within the framework of purchasing a vehicle. Their case was heard by the Public Prosecutor's Office before they were transferred to the National Penitentiary. A preliminary investigation followed and led to the arrest of 2 customs employees: the assistant-director of customs for Port-au-Prince, and another employee from the office of quality control of goods.

On Thursday, August 23, 2007, the owner and majority shareholder of several local companies such as Megamart, Delimart, Safari Motors, the newspaper Le Matin, and Radio Vision 2000, Réginald Boulos, convened with the Public Prosecutor's Office to address allega-

tions of corruption. After several hours of the hearing he returned to his home; but just the fact that the hearing took place caused a whole stir within the private businesses sector and Parliament. Following this convocation, the Parliament Justice and Safety Commissions made a point of meeting with the Minister for Justice, accompanied by Mr. Claudy Gassant, government commissioner for The Court of First Instance of Port-au-Prince.



Businessman Réginald Boulos

What are the results of the investigations conducted by l'ULCC and l'UCREF?

Let us take note that during these last 2 years, the Financial Control and Information Office (UCREF) and the Office for the Fight Against Corruption (ULCC) produced several administrative reports, sent to the Port-au-Prince Public Prosecutor's Office, for the prosecution of several persons having worked under the Aristide/ Neptune administration who have been implicated in acts of embezzlement and corruption,

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## Intensification of the Fight against Illicit Traffic of Narcotics in Haiti

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in liaison with the Office for the Fight against Narcotics Traffic (BLTS) has carried out several interventions in Haiti during these last months.

On July 16, 2007, DEA and BLTS agents launched a land and helicopter operation in an attempt to carry out the arrest of Guy Philippe in the district of Bergeau, located at the entry of the city Cayes. Guy Philippe—former military, former police chief, and disgruntled ex-candidate of the February 7, 2006 elections—was not at his home at the time of the operation. His wife, an Ecuadorian, was found on the premise and was initially detained but later released. That same day, a similar operation led to the arrest of François Lavaud, owner of the Chachou enterprise, in Gonaïves. He was extradited the following day.

The ex-lieutenant of the old Haitian Armed Forces, Raynald Saint Pierre, was arrested on November 11, 2006. Bernard Piquion, known as “Fusil Bois,” was arrested, too, on May 31, 2007. They were extradited on Tuesday, July 17, 2007 to the United States of America where they will face charges of engaging in the illicit traffic of narcotics.

On July 22 in Cap-Haïtien, agents from the Office for the Fight against Narcotics Traffic and the DEA arrested an ex-police officer named Frérot and a ship-owner known as Charlie.

Agents from the Office for the Fight against Narcotics Traffic (BLTS) intervened in Jacmel and searched the funerary company “Clé du Paradis” on Wednesday, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007. Two (2) guns were seized and the owner of the company, Mr. Frantz Cadet, was arrested in Port-au-Prince the same day.

The president of the Roulado de la Gonave Football club, Mr. Savil Dessaint, was arrested on Sunday August 5, 2007 in Tabarre by agents of BLTS and the DEA while he attended an impromptu football

match.

After a stay in Haiti, 3 Dominican nationals and 1 Haitian were on their way to Santo Domingo, when they were apprehended in Jimani on August 21, 2007 by agents of the Dominican National Drug Control Agency (CNDCCD) with, in their possession, a package of Marijuana.

**Despite efforts...Haiti is in 3<sup>rd</sup> place for countries with drug trafficking that do not make strong enough efforts to fight this plague.**

On September 2, a boat shipwrecked in the Tiburon bay. The ship’s crew had the role of recovering the drug cargo which probably would have then been transported by 2 small planes. Senator Lambert, the owner of the ship, will be implicated in the case. He allegedly approached the Haitian Coast Guard and MINUSTAH in hopes of assisting the crew that had to go toward Gonaïves (Artibonite, North) to carryout the unloading. A dozen people were arrested in connection with this affair; following is a list of some of those: Baronnette Pouchon, Fransisque Tracyl, Jordanie Tracyl, Grand Pierre Gardy, Marjorie Eloicis, Acéji Eloicis, Ronald Philistin, Joseph Jean Pierre, Dieuseul Bélizaire, Francklin Dorcély, Jean Félix Désir, and Miguel Pierre. These individuals were in permanent liaison with at least one member of the Haitian National Police in Jacmel (Southeast).

During the weekend of September 7 – 9, 2007, the police force in Anse à Galets carried out the arrest of Mercurieu Pierre, alias “Papoute,” in possession of marijuana.

On September 17, Carlton White, an American, was arrested in the Northwest

of the country following an international mandate launched against him.

On September 20 in Asile in the department of Nippes, Gesner Delva, against whom an international mandate for his supposed implication in the traffic of narcotics was launched, was arrested. While searching his residence, \$10,000 US, an UZI machine-gun, a 12-gauge rifle, and a pistol were found. A Nissan Patrol and two generators were also confiscated during the operation.

Other operations were also carried out during the beginning of the year in the effort to fight against narcotics traffic. The most notable are as follows.

On May 31, 2007, 5 agents of the PNH were arrested with, in their possession, 420 kilos of cocaine.

They were accompanied by 2 Colombian nationals. The police officers arrested include:

- Clergé Gilbert
- Delisca Bruny
- Jean Charles Rosemond
- Lambert André
- Plantin Robert

In Malpasse, Zétrenne Jean Johnny and a person known as Wilbert were arrested on June 6, 2007 during the seizure of one kilo of cocaine in Malpasse.

In Chardonnière, 10 individuals, of whom 2 were police officers assigned to the police station at Coteaux and 4 were Jamaican nationals, were arrested on Tuesday, June 19, 2007.

Despite the efforts of the BLTS and the possibilities offered with the DEA through an agreement signed between Haiti and the United States to work in Haiti to arrest individuals involved in drug trafficking, Haiti is in 3<sup>rd</sup> place for countries with drug trafficking that do not make strong enough efforts to fight this plague.

## Current Events

The topic of Current Events in Haiti is dominated by the realization of the elections for the renewal of one-third of the Senate. These elections, which were to take place in November or December, are in a deadlock. This can be explained by the absence of the assemblies which give rise to the Permanent Electoral Council, as stipulated by the Constitution of 1987 in article 192. The current provisional electoral council seems unable to find support from the powers that be. In fact, three of the advisers—the president Max Mathurin, François Benoit, and Rosemond Pradel—have been hit with travel bans and are in the hands of justice for

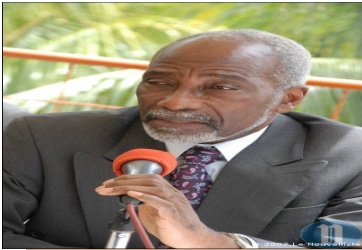
their supposed implication in acts of corruption and embezzlement.

On the evening of July 26, 2007, the Varreux power station, located to the north of Port-au-Prince, was damaged by a fire, the origin of which is still not known. The cable system which relies on distribution networks was also affected. Because of this incident, the power station was temporarily out of commission. Friday, August 3, a fire damaged the electric system of the transport company Service Plus and the contiguous installations in the National Equipment Center (CNE) in Drouillard (North of the capital). To date, the cause of the fire, which began mid-day in old

tires stored in the company's courtyard, are unknown. The buildings of the National Equipment Center (CNE) and the Pilot Vocational Training Center (CPFP) were also affected by the fire. The director of Service Plus, Montès Joseph, had received threats which he shared with the PNH, but they were never taken seriously. The night of August 6 – 7, 2007, at the corner of the streets Magasins de l'Etat and Fronts Forts in the center of Port-au-Prince another fire, whose causes still remain unknown, caused considerable losses in the store Aux Bons Prix and destroyed the merchandise of the small shopkeepers in front of the store.

## Gassant Subjects His Superior to Embarrassment

Once again, the chief of the Public Prosecutor's Office embarrassed his supervising minister, Mr. René Magloire.



*The Minister of Justice, Mr. René Magloire*

On August 22, 2007, the chief of the Port-au-Prince Public Prosecutor's Office expressed his refusal to answer the invitation by the Senate Justice and Safety Commission. The Commission, concerned about the turn the fight against

corruption has taken and the increase in the number of people in prolonged custody, judged it its duty to speak with the Minister of Justice accompanied by one by his subordinates, the government commissioner from The Court of First Instance of Port-au-Prince.

After eight hours of waiting, René Magloire and Joseph Jean Jasmin received permission to return home.

Following this incident, there was a fight during which the President of the Senate, Joseph Lambert, made an injunction for the chief of the Public Prosecutor's Office to present himself without delay at the Upper House, directly blaming President René Préval and the Prime Minister Jacques-Edouard Alexis in this affair. There was talk of the dismissal of Claudy Gassant, considered by many to be a civil servant in rebellion. Finally, the Executive branch convened the members of Parliament in order to find a way out of the crisis, and Gassant was

presented on August 30, 2007 before the Parliament Justice and Safety Commission after several negotiation meetings between the senators, the deputies, and the Executive branch.



*The government commissioner of the Port-au-Prince Civil Tribunal, Mr. Claudy Gassant*

These publicized duels, likely to undermine the balance of the rule of law, prove only one thing: There is a problem of governance.

## The Fight Against Corruption...

*(Continued from page 1)*

money laundering, illicit business, etc. With the opening of the judicial enquiries, banking accounts were blocked and travel prohibitions were pronounced against the people cited in the reports. However, the legal instructions sat around for several months with no closure ordinances being emitted.

On April 24, 2006, the examining magistrate, Jean Ostrick Hercules, ordered the release, without any form of process, of the funds of these Lavalas persons. Additionally, the travel prohibition orders were lifted.

The Port-au-Prince Public Prosecutor's Office under the direction of Mr. Claudy Gassant said, like the government, it is determined to prosecute anyone involved in cor-

ruption. However, it must be noted that no action has been taken to address the UCREF and ULCC reports.

The actions posed by this government in its fight against corruption are selective and those presumed guilty are treated inequitably according to their political affiliation. Let us remember that a fight of this magnitude cannot be sectoral, but must be widespread.

## Regressions and Advances by the PNH in the Department of the West

One of the missions of RNDDH is to observe the operation of the key Haitian State institutions. To accomplish this, visits to police stations and sub-stations in the Department of the West were recently conducted. The objective of these activities is to produce an inventory of the situation in order to better define the *modus operandi* of these stations, the working conditions of police officers, and the conditions of detention, and legal status of detainees. This allows the organization to analyze the evolution (positive or negative) of State institutions on the human, infrastructural, and legal level, and to bring them to take appropriate measures to resolve the issues raised.

***It is undeniable that the working conditions of the police officers in the Department of the West are sometimes very precarious and their work very complicated.***

Thus, from September 4 – 18, 2007, RNDDH visited 28 of the 39 police stations and sub-stations in the Department of the West. These observations revealed that the principal concerns of the stations revolve around two axes: the working conditions of police officers and the legal situation of detainees.

Concerning the first aspect, it is obvious that police officers lack the means to carry out their mission, and this condition is present in a quasi-systematic way. The difficulties they encounter in covering the whole of their jurisdiction result from the fact that the zones are generally very large. Adding to this obstacle are transportation difficulties: frequently the police officers do not have enough cars or motorcycles to cover the often considerable distances. Moreover, time and again the rare vehicles assigned to these police stations break

down and are not repaired for several weeks. Other recurring problems are a lack of office equipment, defective means of communication, a lack of drinking water and electricity, as well as the outdatedness of the buildings occupied by the police force. Let us mention, too, the problem of insufficient manpower and the deficiencies of essential tools such as shields, handcuffs, batons, etc. Two examples among others are those of the police station in Gressier in which candles are used as the only source of light once evening falls, and in Grand Goâve where the buildings are in a state such that even the doors and windows are broken.

In the 28 visited establishments, the delegations indexed 197 detainees. In regards to their legal situation, the data available to RNDDH attests to an improvement in regards to respecting the 48-hour deadline for bringing detainees before a judge. Nevertheless, exceptions to this rule are still frequent. The reasons explaining the lack of respect for this legal deadline are varied and do not inevitably result from the unwillingness of the police officers to follow the law. The dysfunction of the Petit Goâve prison since February 29, 2007 involved legal authorities using the temporary cells of the city's sub-station and the police station as detention centers. Of a total of 37 people present in the temporary cells, 21 had had their cases heard by a judge and been ordered to remain in prison, and one person had already been condemned. In other words, the presence of only 15 people in the temporary cells was in conformity with the law.

The attention of the RNDDH was also held by 2 serious cases: a suicide and an attempted suicide by 2 people then retained in the sub-station of Gressier. RNDDH believes that an investigation must be opened on these events in order to determine whether the facts corroborate with the version told by the person in charge of the station concerned.

All in all, it is undeniable that the working conditions of the police officers in the

Department of the West are sometimes very precarious and their work very complicated. Generally speaking, every location cannot profit from the presence of the police force all the time. In certain cases, the decision was even made to delegate tasks like the execution of court decisions to the persons in charge of CASEC. Even if relative progress is recorded, the situation remains very alarming—in particular if we consider that the Department of the West, a center for major decisions, is a privileged area as compared with the remainder of the country.

***...materials, though necessary, are not sufficient to render the police force effective and trustworthy.***

However, it should also be considered that materials, though necessary, are not sufficient to render the police force effective and trustworthy. The proper treatment of victims, integrity, determination, dedication to work, professionalism, and willingness to serve as an example for society as a whole are personal qualities that any good police officer should strive to attain. Whether they want it or not, the police are now crucial players in constructing the new society that Haiti is working to build. As such, they should realize that they bear a heavy responsibility on their shoulders. To really make a difference, it is not only materials that they need, but above all of humanity, honesty, and goodwill. And, fortunately, there is no need to wait for large expenditures to put these essential principles into practice.

## The Case of Fonds-Verrettes

**F**onds Verrettes was initially a communal section dependant on the town of Ganthier. Promoted to the level of town in 1980, it is now a town in the district Croix des Bouquets in the Department of the West. It has an area of 249.5 km<sup>2</sup> (that is, 7 times that of Port-au-Prince), is made of only one communal section, and gathers together about sixty localities.

On May 23, 2004 the town suffered pouring rain, resulting in more than 2000 victims in the civil population. Approximately 500 houses were carried away by the water.

Three (3) years after the floods, the provincial civil society organizations regrouped in a central platform of 23 organizations called the Fonds-Verette Plaint Organization Platform (Platfòm Revandikasyon Oganizasyon Fonvèrèt, or PROF) to condemn the difficulties encountered by the town. The various

promises made by authorities for the rebuilding of this town were never carried out.

The official institutions present in this community are poorly represented and others are quasi-non-existent. This is the case for the Justice of the Peace, the town hall, and the Office of Civil Affairs, which are all in dilapidated buildings. The PNH and immigration services are not present in the community.

According to the persons in charge of the platform, since the end of 2003 there has not been even one PNH agent in this town of more than 45,000 inhabitants. The security situation in this border area is precarious. The inhabitants wish for the immediate presence of the PNH in order to slow smuggling and the trafficking of the weapons and drugs. In areas like Bwanèg and Boucan Ferdinand, people live and circulate freely in the streets

with high caliber weapons.

In addition, civilians using the title “Informants” assist the Justice of the Peace in his work. It is these people who carry out the execution of judicial mandates and who play the part of jailer. Those arrested are put in a temporary cell comparable to a dungeon, depriving them of light, food, water, visits from relatives, etc.

The situation of people living in the area of Fonds-Verrettes is very alarming and deserves the attention everyone, especially the authorities responsible for public administration. It is necessary to provide for all levels of need of the inhabitants—medical services and basic infrastructures like a road, water, electricity, education, communication services, immigration services, and so on.

## The Essence of All Human Rights

***“To deal with its obligations and engagements, the Haitian State must improve, must increase in a substantial way, the public and free offer of quality education as a policy of the State. It is necessary to work for the democratization of education.”***

**T**his is the vision of Coordination Haiti-Europe (COHE), an organization which recently published a detailed report entitled “Another Haiti is Possible: The way toward an exit of the crisis.” This initiative—representing NGOs and Haitian grass-roots organizations—aims to root development and democracy in the country. Obviously, this is easier said than done; after all, there is no other field where the challenges faced are as colossal as in that of education.

The problems associated with the education system in Haiti are well-known. Here, the

rate of literacy is the weakest of the whole northern hemisphere. The majority of public school buildings are barely functional; teachers seldom have received adequate training; and, often, teachers are not paid for several months. Only 57% of girls and 52% of boys in Haiti attend primary school, and the inscription rate in the secondary schools reaches just 20%. Private schools, in turn, require additional expenses and, although their classes are generally smaller, nothing guarantees that their quality of education is better.

The report “Another Haiti” highlights the evils of the system: “There is a direct relation between the development model in Haiti based on the neoliberal capitalist system and deficiencies of the education system which reproduce poverty, exclusion, and discrimination.” It is specifically shown in this report that the status quo of the Haitian education system causes inequalities that work against women, students from the rural areas, and handicapped people. As is often the case, education in Haiti nourishes elitism by further anchoring antagonism between the interests of the powerful and those of the poor,

rendering those who are least advantaged incapable of acting to improve their own living conditions.

These deplorable truths deserve to be denounced while rejecting any education plan that does not put at the center of its priorities the construction of a public school system guaranteeing free and quality education and for all, independently of class, sex, or ability. This situation is not only a violation of basic rights—that of education as recognized in the 1987 Constitution—but it is, moreover, an open door to other abuses. In reality, it is not erroneous to say that a failing public education system is the base of all human rights abuses insofar as a poorly educated population is not apt to be organized and to defend its members. RNDDH is in agreement with the COHE on the statement that “With conventional subjects, the content of the programs should be directed towards the care of everyday realities, production, the environment, socio-economic development for people, the integration of technical and manual work, citizenship, the promotion and development of the values of solidarity, and mutual aid.”

## Training Session for Police Officers of Grand Anse



*Police officers in a working-session, during the training lead by RNDDH in Jérémie*

The 17th and 18th of August 2007, the National Human Rights Defense Network (RNDDH) organized a 2-day seminar for members of the Haitian National Police force (PNH) in the Department of the Grande Anse. This seminar was organized in partnership with the Directorate-General of the Haitian National Police (DGPNH) and brought together police officers, agents of the Prison Authority, agents of the Specialized Unit (UDMO), as well as representatives of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). The objective of this training was to reinforce the officers' theoretical knowledge of human rights and to bring the PNH closer to the public from the point of view of reducing human rights violations.

46 police officers, including 2 women, and 2 representatives of the United Nations from the human rights section of MINUSTAH took part in this training.

The formation was articulated around the central topic: The role of the police force in a democratic society. Two sub-topics were discussed:

1. The legal framework of the operation of the Haitian National Police force

2. The role of the police force in the protection of human rights within a democratic society and what constitutes protected rights

The first sub-topic was presented by the Municipal Police Commissioner Darius VENUS who, after giving a brief history of the police force from its creation to present day, reviewed with the participants all of the tools of the legal framework for the operation of the PNH, namely:

- The law allowing the creation, organization, and operation of the PNH;

- General rules of discipline;

- Code of ethics of the PNH;
- Internal rules for the establishment of prisons;
- Rules of the Specialized Units; and
- The personnel handbook of the PNH.

Mr. Simon SAINT HUBERT, for his part, spoke on the "role of the police force in the protection of human rights within a democratic society and what constitutes protected rights in a democratic society, and the right to life and the maintenance of public order." He developed these concepts within the framework of the Haitian context and through national, regional, and international instruments such as: The 1987 Haitian Constitution, The American Convention on Human Rights, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and international pacts relating to civil and political laws, socio-economic and cultural laws, and so on.

The speakers both used participatory methods during their presentations, which made it possible for participants to be actively involved in the debates, questions, and recommendations. In addition to these general topics, a short speech on marital

violence was prepared at the request of the Department Director of Grande Anse. The Division Commissioner, Hervé Julien, considered it important because several police officers from this department have, unfortunately, earned the reputation of being involved in cases of marital violence. Commissioner Venus tackled this problem with full force while reminding the officers that it is part of their responsibility to put an end to this violence and that, as long as this is not done, they will not earn any credibility in their role as protector of society.

An evaluation form addressing the organization of the seminar, the quality of the sessions, and the comprehension of the covered subjects was given to the participants in order to gather their impressions and recommendations. The evaluation revealed a general satisfaction with the seminar and the relevance of the subjects undertaken. The participants also insisted on the fact that a lack of resources and corruption within the legal system disturb the work of the police force. Commissioner Venus, though in agreement with this state of affairs, clarified that the police as an institution is relatively young (12 years). However, he also emphasized that there is no excuse for the violation of the human rights.

At the close of the seminar, certificates of participation were duly signed by the Director General of the Haitian National Police and the Executive Director of RNDDH and given to the participants.

This training course for officers of the Haitian National Police is the third in a series that RNDDH works to organize at a rate of one per Department. The first was held in Jacmel, in the Department of the Southeast in August 2006 and the second in Mirebalais in the Central Department in April 2007.

RNDDH thanks the Director General of PNH, the speakers, the press, and all of the participants who contributed to the success of this seminar.

## National Coalition to Stop EPA



*Cultural activities organized by the Coalition to Stop EPA*

**O**n September 27, 2007, the international day against the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA), a great mobilization took place to protest against signing the EPA. Several African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries, and even some European countries, took action to express their point of view on these economic agreements that are likely to come into effect on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008.

### *What is EPA?*

The Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) are free-trade agreements that the European Union has been negotiating since 2002 with 79 African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries. Of these 79 ACP countries, 39 are regarded as Less-Developed Countries (LDC), a category that includes Haiti.

These agreements principally treat all of the involved countries as equal, a significant difference as compared with previous economic agreements that established distinctions in economic relations according to the level of development of the countries concerned. This leveling of countries borders on World Trade Organization agreements for the liberalization of markets on a world-wide level, and will thus treat lower-income countries in the same

manner as industrialized Western countries.

The EPA have as their objective the elimination of border tariffs on imported products. The products of ACP countries will thus be able to enter the European market more easily, and the same will be true for access of European products into the ACP countries' markets.

### *Effects of EPA on human rights*

The ACP countries have not really had the occasion to put forth their opinions on the negotiations that have been in progress since 2002. Participation by the civil society and the populations concerned was completely rejected. And yet, the signing of these agreements is planned for December 31, 2007.

The measures imposed on the ACP countries will have terrible consequences on these countries' economies, and so will have repercussions on employment, health, education, social rights, local economies, and culture in general.

Considering lower-income countries as capable of entering a competitive system with industrialized countries is a trap: Western countries are more than just one step ahead and will be able to offer their products in Haiti at prices much lower than those of local products. National production in countries such as Haiti will be overcome by this invasion of foreign products which will cause considerable job losses; it is estimated that 600,000 to 700,000 jobs in the Haitian agricultural sector will be threatened by these agreements.

These fears also apply to access to basic services such as water, health care, and education, which will no longer be considered rights except for those who are able to pay, an idea that is altogether contrary to what human rights advocate.

### *National Coalition to Stop EPA*

Vis-à-vis with the injustices that will rise from these agreements, several civil soci-

ety organizations such as: PAPDA, CHANDÈL, GARR, MODEP, RAJES, RNDDH, SOFA, TÈT KOLE, along with OXFAM, ACTION AID, BRODERLIJK DELEN, and MCC decided to carry out mobilizations and publicity campaigns to say "No" to the Haitian government signing the EPA. With this goal, a training workshop for journalists took place on September 26 in conjunction with a Conference-Debate and exposition which took place on September 27, the international day against EPA. Meetings with various national and international authorities to inform them of the negative impacts of signing these agreements and proposed recommendations were held through October 13. Activities such as a non-violent march, collecting petitions, and a declaration of recommendations took place through October 15 and concluded with the arrival of the Ministers of CARIFORUM in Haiti to discuss the EPA.



*A non-violent march organized by the Coalition to Stop EPA*



## RNDDH Available for Everyone

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### *Institutionalizing Human Rights in Haiti*

The National Human Rights Defense Network (RNDDH) is composed of seven (7) nation-wide regionalized human rights networks and is an institutional member of the Platform of Haitian Human Rights Organizations (POHDH). RNDDH has also established partnerships with other local organizations and participates in various working groups dealing with specific human rights issues, such as the Working Group for Civil State Reform in Haiti. It is with years of commitment to the human rights struggle in Haiti and constant work, RNDDH has grown in its capacity, strength, and independence.

RNDDH's programs and activities – based on its global objective of contributing to the establishment of the Rule of Law in Haiti where all Haitians know their rights and responsibilities and where these rights and responsibilities are respected by one and all – revolve around two (2) areas: The **Human Rights Training Program** focuses on the provision of human rights education for the purposes of building the capacity of civil society, and the **Human Rights Monitoring Program** focuses on the monitoring of key State institutions in respect to their obligations to protect rights and uphold the rule of law.

Today, RNDDH is the leading human rights organization in Haiti because of its commitment to providing crucial, accurate, impartial, and on-the ground information from its networks that represent the ten (10) geographic departments throughout the country.

RNDDH is devoted to Haiti's human rights struggle and is available to any person who is in need of or can provide, support or information on related human rights issues in Haiti.

## Training and Capacity Building for RNDDH

In the four corners of the world, questions of the human rights plague billions human beings and occupy thousands of organizations. To adapt to the constant evolutions of this sector, the members of RNDDH regularly attend training seminars.

To this effect, Mr. Jean Joseph Alfred Gibbs attended a 3-week training session in Canada in June 2007. This international seminar, focused on the question of the human rights, was organized by Equitas and brought together 129 participants of 60 different nationalities, including 7 Haitians. Emphasis was put on participation and cultural diversity.

Through many activities such group discussions, conferences, visits, films (one of which was Haitian)—and, thanks to the support of the organiz-



*Mr. Gibbs with other participants working during a session*

ers—Mr. Gibbs was able to familiarize himself with new training techniques such as: flip-charts, maps, continuum, simulations, etc. These techniques will enable him to improve his personal daily work and very like that of the whole organization.

In the future, it is not out of the question that RNDDH would take part in this seminar as a facilitator, that is, as an advisor for participants in the development of their own work strategies.

By allowing the participants to share their knowledge and know-how in order to profit from the experiences of other participants in other countries, these sessions guarantee that the knowledge of a few will profit all. When it comes to human rights, as elsewhere, unity is strength.