



QUARTERLY REPORT ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN HAITI

January - March 2025



Main Takeaways

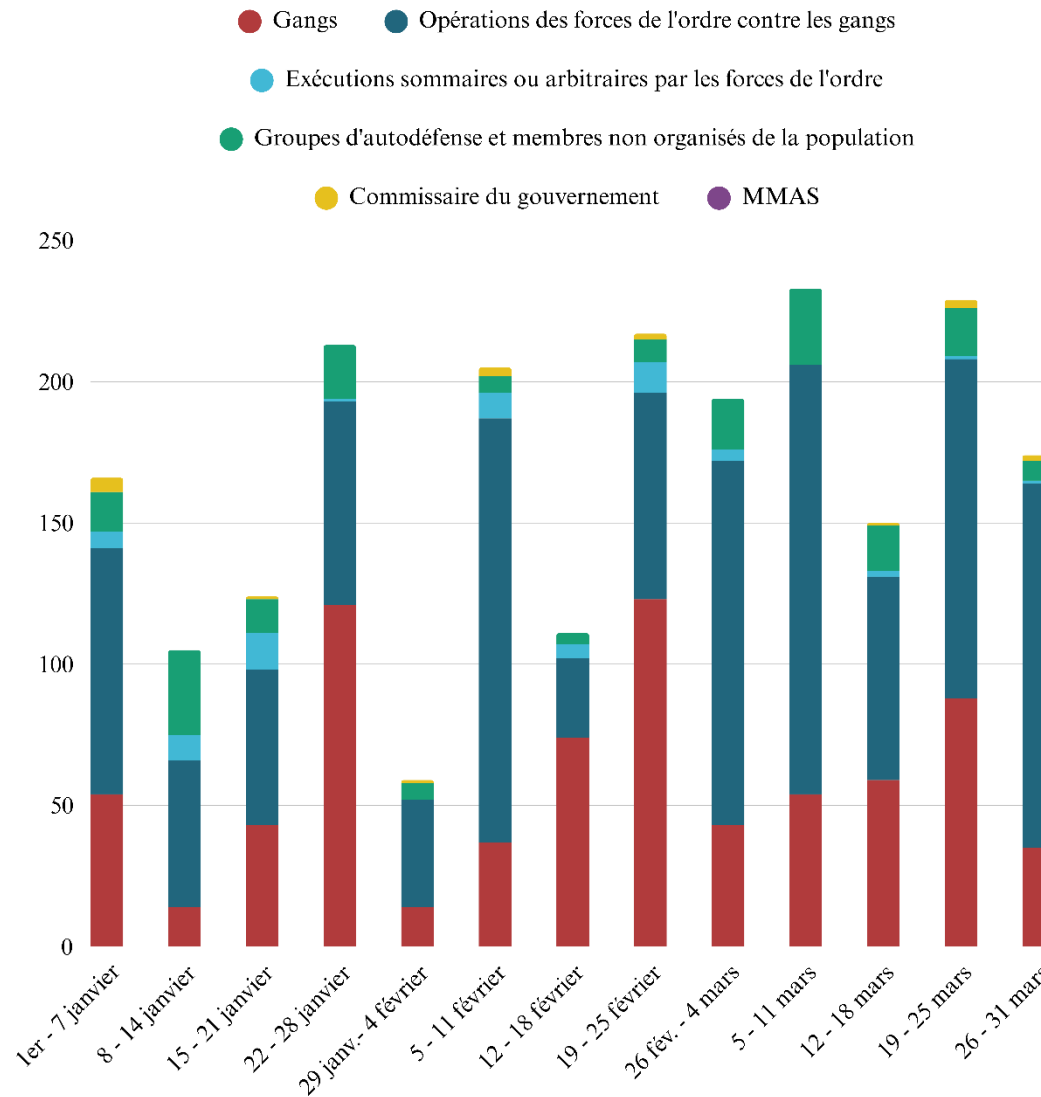
- 1,617 people were killed and 580 injured due to violence involving gangs, self-defence groups, non-organized members of the population, as well as during security force operations.
- 161 people were kidnapped.
- Expansion of territorial influence and human rights abuses committed by gangs in the Central Plateau region.
- 65 summary or arbitrary extrajudicial executions were allegedly committed by law enforcement officials (50 by members of the national police and 15 by the Government Commissioner of Miragoâne). Among the victims were two children.
- The violence perpetrated by self-defence groups and members of the population, known as *Bwa Kale*, remained a significant source of human rights abuses.
- As of March 31, 1,041,229 people were displaced in Haiti - an increase of 48% compared to the previous assessment conducted in September 2024.
- Twenty-five detainees died while in prison.
- 319 incidents of sexual violence were recorded, involving 333 survivors.
- Several local actors have continued to raise alarms about the increase in child trafficking and their exploitation by gangs.
- The Transitional Presidential Council and the Government established specialized judicial task forces to address mass crimes and sexual violence, as well as financial crimes.

Recommendations

- **To the international community:** maintain Haiti on the international agenda and accelerate the full deployment of the Multinational Security Support Mission (MSSM), in accordance with human rights standards and norms, as outlined in United Nations Security Council Resolution 2699 (2023).
- **To the countries of the region:** strengthen and increase the number of cargo inspections destined for Haiti within their territories, including at seaports and airports, in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolutions 2653 (2022) and 2752 (2024), which impose an arms embargo.
- **To the Haitian government:** Accelerate the establishment of specialized judicial task forces to combat mass crimes, including sexual violence, and financial crimes.
- **To the Haitian government:** with the support of the international community, accelerate the effective implementation of the vetting process within the police force and prosecute officers accused of being involved in serious human rights violations.
- **To the Haitian government:** with the support of the international community, establish a rehabilitation and reintegration program for minors involved in gangs.

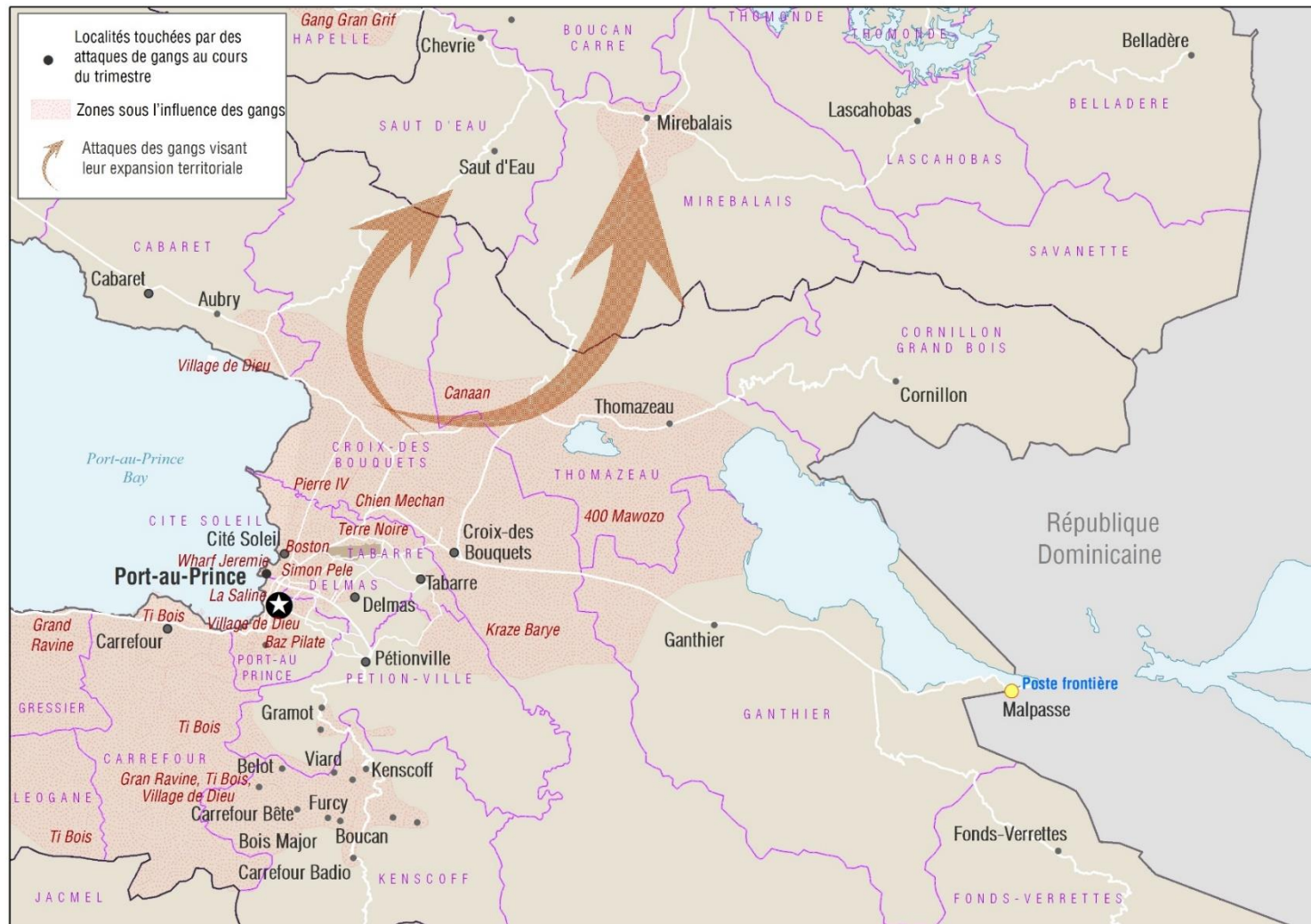


People killed and injured by perpetrator and/or context January - March 2025





Map 1: Localities in the area impacted by gang violence





I. Violence and human rights violations

According to the Human Rights Service (HRS) of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), between 1 January 1 and 31 March 2025, at least 1,617 people were killed and 580 injured as a result of violence involving gangs, self-defence groups, unorganized members of the population, and operations by the Haitian National Police (PNH). Men represent 85 per cent of the victims, women 13 per cent, and children two per cent. The majority of these incidents were documented in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, followed by the Artibonite department and the Central and Northern departments¹.

At the same time, during this period, at least 161² were kidnapped for ransom by gangs, with 63 per cent of the cases occurring in the Artibonite department, 35 per cent in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, and the remaining two per cent in the Central department.

Sexual violence targeting women and girls has persisted. All documented cases were recorded in neighbourhoods of the capital under gang control, with the exception of one incident that occurred in the Artibonite department.

Three dynamics of violence and abuses against the population, which had clearly emerged during the second half of 2024, have consolidated. First, there is the violence linked to the criminal activities of gangs, responsible for 35 per cent of the deaths and injuries. Second, police operations against gangs, as well as executions involving police members, accounted for 56 per cent of the documented deaths and injuries. Finally, third, violent actions by self-defence groups and the “popular justice” movement, known as “Bwa Kalé,” represent 9 per cent of the recorded incidents (deaths and injuries).

¹ The Port-au-Prince metropolitan area continues to account for the highest number of victims (85 percent), followed by the Artibonite (10 percent), the Central department (3 percent), and the Southern department (1 percent).

1.1. Dynamics of gang-related violence and its impact on human rights

Between January and March 2025, despite numerous casualties within their ranks (936 individuals), gangs intensified their efforts to expand their territorial control in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area and its surroundings. They particularly targeted neighbourhoods such as Delmas 30 and Carrefour Feuilles, whose capture would facilitate their passage into the commune of Pétion-Ville, a residential area housing banks, institutions, supermarkets, and embassies, and one of the last areas not yet affected by gang control. Families of police officers and individuals suspected of collaborating with law enforcement were also specifically targeted in several areas of the capital, including Cité Soleil, Croix-des-Bouquets, Delmas, and Tabarre.

Traversed by the two roads connecting Port-au-Prince to the southern region of the country, the communes of Kenscoff (to the south) and Léogâne (to the southwest) have also faced repeated assaults by gangs.

Violent attacks on the cities of Mirebalais and Saut d’Eau (Central department) at the end of March were aimed at controlling access to the border with the Dominican Republic along a nearly 70 km stretch. It is important to note that gangs already control access to the Malpasse border point (Western department) on National Route 8.

² 105 men, 52 women, and four children.



Main gang attacks		
Location	Number of people killed and injured	Duration of the attacks
Carrefour Badio, Carrefour Tête Belot, Bois Major, Bongard, Boucan, Depanse, Furcy, Gramot, Godet and Viard (Kenscoff)	262 people killed and 66 injured	27 January - 27 March
Delmas 30 (Delmas)	21 people killed and 8 injured	25 February
Cottard, Duval, Michaud, Morne à Cabrit and downtown Croix-des-Bouquets (Croix-des-Bouquets)	42 people killed and 5 injured	11-22 February
Tabarre 27 (Tabarre)	22 people killed	24 February
Mirebalais	15 people killed and 1 injured	21 and 31 March

³ As a result of the attacks carried out by gangs between February 14 and 25 in several areas of Delmas and Port-au-Prince, including Delmas 30, over 13,000 people were forced to flee. International Organization for Migration (IOM) (February 26, 2025). "Haiti — Emergency Tracking 57.1 — Update

Western Department: Port-au-Prince metropolitan area

Neighbourhoods between Delmas 17 and Delmas 30 (Delmas)

During the quarter, gangs carried out several attacks in the commune of Delmas to expand their control and move toward the commune of Pétiön-Ville. On 6 February, the gang from *Delmas 6*, which already controls the areas between Delmas 1 and Delmas 6, launched the first attack on Delmas 17. Although law enforcement operations, supported by self-defence groups, hindered their progress, they were unable to prevent the attacks at the end of February and throughout March.

On 25 February, after infiltrating some displaced persons' sites, the gangs from *Delmas 6* and *Les Argentins* resumed their attacks in the Delmas 30 area. They indiscriminately fired on the population in the neighbourhood, killing 21 men and injuring eight others (four men and four women). Most of the victims were hit while inside their homes or in the streets, fleeing the violence. Two members of the Haitian Armed Forces (FAd'H), who were also part of the Delmas 30 self-defence group, were dragged out of their homes by gang members and shot dead. To further instil panic, the gangs also set fire to several homes and forced hundreds of people to flee³. The attacks in the commune of Delmas clearly highlighted the gangs' tactic of using forced displacement and displacement sites as tools of destabilization.

Carrefour Feuilles and other neighbourhoods of Port-au-Prince

No significant attacks were carried out by gangs in the commune of Port-au-Prince during the month of January. However, in February and March, the gangs from *Grand Ravine* and *Village de Dieu* launched at least four offensives on the locality of Carrefour Feuilles, particularly targeting the neighbourhoods of Campêche, Morne Marie, and Sicot, with the aim of taking control of the area⁴. Control of these

on Displacements due to Armed Violence in the Port-au-Prince Metropolitan Area (February 14 - 25, 2025)," available at <https://dtm.iom.int/node/49666>

⁴ Most of the locality of Carrefour Feuilles, in the southern part of the commune of Port-au-Prince, fell under the control of the gangs from *Grand*



neighbourhoods would provide them with a strategic base to access residential and commercial areas such as Turgeau and Canapé Vert (commune of Port-au-Prince) and the commune of Pétion-Ville.

During the same period, the gangs of *Grand Ravine*, *Les Argentins* and *Village de Dieu* targeted the neighbourhoods of Christ Roi, Nazon, Fort National, Saint Michel, and downtown Port-au-Prince, where important state institutions and the French Embassy are located. Already heavily influenced by the gangs, these areas were likely targeted to disperse law enforcement resources. During these attacks, at least 30 members of the population were killed, and 14 others were injured by these gangs. The majority of the victims were killed while traveling in collective transportation vehicles (“tap taps”) in downtown Port-au-Prince. Others were targeted in the streets as they attempted to flee. In March, at least three victims were raped before being killed by several members of the *Grand Ravine* gang who had broken into their homes. These attacks also had a significant humanitarian impact, with at least 80 homes set on fire and over 23,000 people displaced⁵.

Communes of Croix-des-Bouquets and Tabarre

In January, the attacks by gangs operating in Croix-des-Bouquets and Tabarre, particularly the *400 Mawozo*, *Kraze Baryè*, and *Chen Mechan* gangs, remained relatively limited.

However, in February and March, violence significantly intensified following police operations. On 8 February, in Cité Doudoune (Croix-des-Bouquets), specialized police units, including the Research and Intervention Brigade (BRI), the Departmental Unit for Maintaining

Ravine and *Village de Dieu* in 2023. Only a small section of the neighbourhood, near the Saint-Gérald Church, remains outside of their control.

⁵ International Organization for Migration (IOM), “Haiti — Emergency Tracking Tool 60 — Displacement following armed violence in several neighbourhoods of the municipality of Port-au-Prince (11 - 17 March 2025)”, 18 March, available at <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/haiti-emergency-tracking-tool-60-displacement-following-armed-violence-several>

Order (UDMO) and the Temporary Anti-Gang Unit (UTAG), equipped with armoured vehicles and bulldozers, demolished carnival stands set up by the *400 Mawozo* gang. Since the end of January, the gangs had organized several carnival celebrations in the areas under their control to showcase their ability to offer social and cultural activities, while the government had cancelled its own celebrations due to security concerns.

Following this operation, the leader of the *400 Mawozo* gang, Joseph Wilson⁶, publicly announced reprisals against police officers, their families, and anyone suspected of collaborating with law enforcement. Between 11 and 22 February, in the areas of Cottard, Duval, Michaud, Morne à Cabrit, and downtown Croix-des-Bouquets, his gang killed 42 people⁷ and injured five other men. Most of the victims were shot in the street because they were suspected of collaborating with the police or of reporting the gang’s activities on social media.

On 24 February, the *400 Mawozo* gang launched a new wave of reprisals, this time against the population of Tabarre 27 (Tabarre). Gang members entered more than ten homes, forcing more than 22 residents out and shot them dead in the street.⁸ At least 15 of the victims were family members of police officers. The following day, the leader of the gang claimed responsibility for the murders on the Tit-Tok social network.

⁶ Joseph Wilson, known as “Lanmo San Jou”, has been sanctioned by the United Nations for his role as the leader of the *400 Mawozo* gang and for his responsibility, either directly or through orders given to members of his gang, in committing serious human rights violations.

⁷ 42 people killed (38 men and 4 women)

⁸ 11 men, eight women and three children



Cité Soleil commune

In Cité Soleil, between January and March, 14 members of the local population were killed and five injured⁹ by the *Belekou* and *Terre Noire* gangs. Most of the victims were accused of collaborating with the police.

One of the most striking incidents occurred on 16 March, in Ruelle La Paix (Belekou), where 11 people were killed by the leader of the gang controlling the area. The victims, accused of collaborating with the police, were shot several times inside their homes as they slept.

During the quarter, further people were killed in the commune of Cité Soleil during police operations against gangs (see page 11, section “Dynamics of violence linked to police operations and excessive use of force”).

Communes of Carrefour and Gressier

In the communes of Carrefour and Gressier, under gang control since the beginning of 2024, the *Grand Ravine* cell known as *103 Zombies* and the *Ti Bois* gang continued to target individuals suspected of collaborating with the police or self-defence groups. Others were shot dead for not respecting the rules imposed by the gangs in these areas.

In order to consolidate its criminal governance, the *Ti Bois* gang has set up a base in the residence of one of its leaders, at Lamentin 54 (Carrefour). This residence is used as a place to “try” individuals accused of having “broken” the rules imposed by the gang. After being found “guilty”, several people were “sentenced” and “executed” in nearby bushes.

⁹ 14 members of the population killed (nine men and five women) and five others injured (two men and three women)

¹⁰ 104 members of the population killed (71 men, 29 women and four boys) and 35 injured (21 men, 13 women and one boy).

Between 1 January and 31 March, 104 members of the public were killed and 35 injured¹⁰ by gang members in these two communes.

Faced with this gang violence, on 13 and 20 March, several hundred members of the public, accompanied by members of the Protected Areas Security Brigade (BSAP), armed with machetes and sticks, set out to dislodge the gangs’ bases in La Colline and Santo. In the first incident, the population succeeded in expelling a group of 103 members who had occupied the school of the Salesian Fathers of Don Bosco, in La Colline. During the attack, four members of the gang were killed with machetes inside the school. A security guard stationed in a nearby building on Route Nationale 2 in La Colline, and suspected of collaborating with the gang, was shot dead by a BSAP officer. The school had been occupied by the gang since February 2025. In contrast, during the incident on 20 March, when gang members saw the crowd approaching their base in Santo, they opened fire in the direction of the protesters, killing one member of the public and seriously wounding four others¹¹.

Commune of Léogâne

Between January and March, the *103 Zombies* cell stepped up its attacks on the populations of Boilassal, Flon, Laferronay, La Saline, Nan Geffrard, Mélier and Sousson, in the commune of Léogâne. At least 30 members of the population were killed, and 14 others were injured¹². This commune, located to the south of Carrefour and Gressier, is an exit route to the south of the country.

The indiscriminate and brutal nature of some of these attacks shows the gang’s strategy to spread panic and reduce the resistance of the local population. For example, on 10 March, members of the *103 Zombies* gang grabbed a 16-year-old boy who was with his friends in a square in Laferronay. They then killed him with machetes in full

¹¹ Three men and a woman

¹² 30 members of the population killed (20 men, nine women and one boy) and 14 injured (11 men, two women and one girl)



view of passers-by, in retaliation for the lynching of three members of the gang by local residents in the Nan-Boy neighbourhood of Léogâne earlier that day. Other people were shot dead in the streets as they tried to flee gang attacks or in retaliation for police operations, as was the case in the neighbourhoods of Boilassal, Laferronay, Nan Geffrard and Sousson in February and March.

At the end of March, the efforts of the police, supported by self-defence groups, succeeded in slowing the advance of the *103 Zombies* gang towards Léogâne. However, the situation remains extremely tense. If security operations are not stepped up, Léogâne could soon fall under the control of the gang.

Commune of Pétion Ville

In the commune of Pétion-Ville, criminal activity by gangs remained relatively limited, although at least 24 members of the population were killed and five others injured¹³ by the *Kraze Baryè* gang in the area of Route des Frères and the locality of Chateaublond.

The most serious incident occurred on 16 February, when members of this gang attacked the population of Chateaublond, near the police academy, in retaliation for the death of one of their own during a police operation the previous day. The gangs broke into several houses in the area and killed 19 people.

Another major incident took place on 27 February when they deliberately opened fire on a site for displaced persons, also close to

the Police Academy. In this attack, at least one man and one woman were killed, and five other men were wounded.

Commune of Kenscoff

Between 27 January and the end of March, gangs from *Grand Ravine*, *Ti Bois* and *Village de Dieu* launched several attacks against various localities in the commune of Kenscoff, including Carrefour Badio, Carrefour Tête Belot, Bois Major, Bongard, Boucan, Depanse, Furcy, Gramot, Godet and Viard¹⁴. To carry out some of these attacks, these gangs were reinforced by members of the *Kraze Baryè* and 400 *Mawozo* gangs.

During these attacks, at least 262 people were killed and 66 others were injured.¹⁵ Four members of the security forces were also killed and four others injured.

Gang members used extreme brutality, killing men, women and children inside their homes, and shooting others, including an infant, on roads and paths as they tried to flee the violence. The bodies of the victims were then burnt. In addition, at least seven women and girls were raped during the planning and execution of the attacks. The gangs also stole hundreds of houses and set fire to more than 190 of them. More than 3,000 people have been forced to flee the commune¹⁶.

With limited human and logistical resources, already deployed in several areas of the capital and the Artibonite department, the specialised police units, supported by the Haitian Armed Forces (FAd'H) and the Multinational Security Support Mission (MSS), managed to repel the gangs during most of the attacks. However, by

¹³ 26 members of the local population killed (ten men, five women and nine children) and five injured (all men).

¹⁴ BINUH and OHCHR (April 2025). Haiti – Flash Report: “At least 262 people were killed and 66 others injured, with a heavy humanitarian toll, during gang attacks aimed at expanding their territorial control over Kenscoff and Carrefour”, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2025-04/events-Kenscoff-unofficial-translation-1-fr.pdf>

¹⁵ 262 people were killed (115 members of the population and 147 gang members) and 66 others were injured (59 members of the population and seven gang members).

¹⁶ International Organization for Migration (IOM), “Haïti - Suivi des urgences 55.1 - Mise à jour sur les déplacements suite aux attaques armées dans la commune de Kenscoff”, available in French at: <https://dtm.iom.int/fr/reports/haïti-suivi-des-urgences-551-mise-jour-sur-les-deplacements-suite-aux-attaques-armees-dans>



the end of March, they had still not been able to restore security or prevent the resumption of attacks. Since 31 March, new offensives have been documented and messages circulating on social networks have alerted people to the fact that a large number of gang members are circulating in the localities of Boucan, Depanse, Fermathe, Nan Croupi and Thomassin.

Located to the south-east of the capital, the mountainous commune of Kenscoff is of major strategic importance, as it overlooks Pétion-Ville, which is home to banking institutions, commercial areas and embassies. The gangs are also believed to have carried out these attacks to take control of the recently rehabilitated road linking Kenscoff to Jacmel, which is the only relatively safe route to the south of Haiti. It is also possible that these attacks are aimed at destabilizing the authorities in place, by highlighting the difficulties they are experiencing in protecting one of the capital's most residential areas.

Artibonite department

In Artibonite department, the first three months of the year were marked by relative calm, continuing the trend observed since mid-December 2024, even though gang attacks continued to be recorded.

The populations of the communes of Montrouis, Petite Rivière de l'Artibonite, followed by Gros Morne and Saint Marc were particularly affected by the criminal activities of the *Gran Grif* and *Kokorat Sans Ras* gangs. At least 52 people were killed and 20 injured in these attacks¹⁷. Most of the victims were killed indiscriminately, in shootings targeting homes or vehicles on the roads, while others were targeted because of their alleged collaboration with the police or self-defence groups.

Central department: communes of Mirebalais and Saut d'Eau

Between 21 and 31 March, the *400 Mawozo* and *Canaan* gangs launched several attacks against the towns of Trianon, Terre Rouge

and the centre of Mirebalais (Mirebalais), as well as the commune of Saut d'Eau, located around 45 kilometres north of their strongholds in the commune of Croix-des-Bouquets.

Despite several calls from residents on social networks for the security forces to be deployed, no specialist police units were sent until 31 March, when a major attack was launched against the town of Mirebalais. Only units from the Departmental Maintenance of Order Unit (UDMO) and police officers assigned to the Mirebalais police station were present.

The main aim of this attack was to weaken the Trianon self-defence group, known as “Back-up Feray”, which had been erecting a barricade of concrete blocks and abandoned vehicles on Route Nationale 3 since 19 April. According to local sources, the barricade was intended to block deliveries of arms and drugs, presumably from the Dominican Republic to Port-au-Prince, and to prevent any incursion by gangs into downtown Mirebalais. In response to this situation, on 20 March, Jeff Larose, the leader of the *Canaan* gang, posted a video on social networks announcing an imminent attack on the commune of Mirebalais. An initial attack was launched on 21 March in Trianon, from where they advanced towards Terre Rouge and downtown Mirebalais.

During the attacks on the three localities, the gangs killed at least 15 members of the local population, wounded one man and kidnapped two individuals¹⁸. Most of the victims were shot inside their homes, where gang members had entered in search of residents, or in the streets as they tried to flee the violence. Among the victims were two Catholic nuns who taught at the École Nationale in Mirebalais.

¹⁷ 52 members of the population killed (45 men and seven women) and 20 injured (all men).

¹⁸ Fifteen people killed (11 men and four women) and two abducted (a man and a woman).



According to local sources, the number of victims was not higher because large numbers of people fled before the gangs arrived¹⁹.

The gangs also ransacked and destroyed around 70 houses, as well as two police stations in the towns of Terre Rouge and downtown Mirebalais. The prison in downtown Mirebalais was also attacked and set on fire on 31 March, leading to the escape of 515 inmates, including gang members and individuals held in connection with an arms trafficking case in Belladère. The violence forced the Mirebalais University Hospital to suspend its activities and evacuate its patients and staff²⁰.

On the morning of 31 March, specialist police units, including the Research and Intervention Brigade (BRI), the Departmental Law and Order Unit (UDMO), the Temporary Anti-Gang Unit (UTAG) and the Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT), from Port-au-Prince, as well as UDMO agents from Hinche, were deployed to Mirebalais, where they were supported by the Protected Area Security Brigade (BSAP) and the Mirebalais self-defence group. The security forces immediately carried out operations, killing at least 54 gang members. However, by the end of the day, the order had not been restored, and the presence of gang members in downtown Mirebalais remained a threat.

On 31 March, the *Canaan* gang launched an attack on the commune of Saut d'Eau (18km from downtown Mirebalais). Repelled by the police, with the support of the local self-defence group, the gang retreated to Canaan (Croix-des-Bouquets). No injuries were reported among the public, police or gang members.

¹⁹ As of 31 March, no official figures were available for forced displacements following these attacks.

²⁰ Mirebalais University Hospital is the largest health facility in the Central department and one of the largest in Haiti. It plays a vital role for hundreds

1.2. Dynamics of violence linked to the “Bwa Kalé” movement and self-defence groups and their impact on human rights

The actions of self-defence groups and unorganized members of the population, perpetrated as part of the “popular justice” movement, commonly known as “Bwa Kalé,” remained a major source of human rights abuses. During the period under review, at least 189 people were killed,²¹ accused of belonging to gangs or committing ordinary crimes. However, these figures represent a decrease of 29% compared to the last quarter of 2024.

These incidents took place mainly in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince (with 67 per cent of cases, particularly in the municipality of Port-au-Prince, followed by Léogâne, Carrefour, Gressier and Pétion-Ville). Thirty-one per cent of the cases were documented in the department of Artibonite, mostly in the commune of Petite-Rivière de l'Artibonite.

These episodes of “mob justice” have often responded to attacks or threats of imminent attacks by gangs. For example, on 18 March, after taking control of abandoned houses in the Christ Roi area (Port-au-Prince), 13 men belonging to the *Delmas 6* gang were taken by surprise and killed by members of the self-defence brigades. In other circumstances, vigilante groups have targeted the families of gang members or their close ones. Thus, on 25 March, in the locality of Hatte Cheveau (Dessalines), the Laporte self-defence brigade killed six relatives of the leader of a small gang operating in this area, in retaliation for the murders of two residents of the area by the same gang leader.

of thousands of people, providing essential medical care, including emergencies, maternity care, treatment of infectious diseases and surgery.

²¹ 171 men and 18 women



These self-defence groups commit serious human rights abuses and contribute to the escalation of violence. However, in the absence of security forces, they are also the last security entities present in many neighbourhoods to face the threat of gangs.

1.3. Dynamics of violence linked to police operations and excessive use of force

During the first quarter of 2025, the number of people killed and injured during security forces' operations against gangs remained extremely high.

During these operations, at least 802 people were killed and 368 others injured, mainly in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince (West Department). According to data from the HRS, 82 per cent of the casualties were associated with gangs, while the remaining 18 per cent were members of the population that were struck by stray bullets while on the streets or in their homes. Among the latter casualties were at least eight children.

Police operations carried out in Cité Soleil were particularly concerning due to the large number of casualties among the population. During these operations, involving specialized units of the Departmental Unit for the Maintenance of Order (UDMO) and the Temporary Anti-Gang Unit (UTAG), at least 76 members of the population were killed and 43 others injured²². The victims were hit by stray bullets while they were in their residence or while walking through the areas of Carrefour Drouillard, Carrefour Vincent and Sarthe.

²² 76 members of the population killed (47 men, 28 women and one child) and 43 others injured (28 men and 15 women)

²³ Didier Fils-Aimé, A. [@citoyendidier] (1 March 2025). Tweet on X, available on <https://x.com/citoyendidier/status/1895950453797761508>

²⁴ Le Nouvelliste (6 March 2025). "Lutte contre l'insécurité : une nouvelle task force frappe le fief de "Barbecue" à Delmas", available in French at: <https://lenouvelliste.com/article/253843/lutte-contre-linsecurite-une-nouvelle-task-force-frappe-le-fief-de-barbecue-a-delmas>

Since 1 March, the authorities have reportedly established a "Task Force," using "explosive" drones to respond to gang violence²³. During the month of March, more than 15 such operations were reportedly carried out, targeting the strongholds of several gangs. They reportedly killed at least 115 gang members and wounded 119 others. Two members of the population were also injured. While the composition of this cell has not been officially made public²⁴, according to journalistic sources, it is composed of elements of the Prime Minister's Security Unit (USPM) and the General Security Unit of the National Palace (USGPN).

Outside the security forces' operations, at least 50 people suspected of being gang members or collaborating with gangs were reportedly summarily executed by police elements. At the time of the incident, the victims were neither armed nor involved in acts of violence. Among them, there were at least two boys, aged 16 and 17, who were reportedly killed in the communes of Petite Rivière de l'Artibonite and Delmas. Details of these executions have been forwarded to the General Inspectorate of the National Police for investigation.

1.4. Public Prosecutor of Miragoâne

The HRS documented 15 cases of extrajudicial executions committed by the Miragoâne government commissioner, Jean Ernest Muscadin, against individuals accused of being gang members or committing misdemeanours or common crimes. Since the beginning of 2022, this magistrate has executed at least 57 people in the communes of Nippes and Les Cayes²⁵.

²⁵ On 8 October 2024, the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, as well as the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, sent a communication to the Government of Haiti regarding Mr. Muscadin's involvement in extrajudicial and summary executions, requesting it to take all necessary measures to put an immediate end to it. Communication ALHTI2/2024 2/2024, available in French at: <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=29378>



1.5. Kidnappings

The first quarter of the year saw a clear decrease in kidnappings (161 people), compared to the last three months of 2024 (431 people). Sixty-three per cent of the cases were documented in the Artibonite department, while 35 per cent were documented in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince and the remaining two per cent in the Centre department in the Centre department.

According to local sources, this overall downward trend, already observed throughout the previous year, is partly explained by the fact that gangs in the capital have turned to more lucrative criminal activities, such as extortion or drug and arms trafficking. Nevertheless, during the period under review, 57 kidnappings were recorded in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince, particularly in the surroundings of the commune of Pétion-Ville.

The gangs' modus operandi shows that 35 per cent of victims were abducted while on roads or in boats, 30 per cent while at home, and 17 per cent on farmland. The other kidnappings took place at the exit of churches or markets.

The gangs do not seem to target a specific profile of victims, since the elderly and children have not been spared.

1.6. Sexual violence

Despite persistent under-reporting of sexual violence due to fear of reprisals, social stigma and lack of trust in police and judicial institutions, the Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Mechanism (MARA), established in Haiti by BINUH and OHCHR since August 2024, recorded 319 incidents during the quarter involving 333

survivors of sexual violence (294 women, 38 girls and one man). This represents an increase of 254 per cent from the previous quarter²⁶.

Ninety-six per cent of the incidents were related to rape or gang rape, while the rest involved various forms of sexual violence.

Some victims were raped while being exploited to perform tasks for the benefit of gangs. For example, during the preparations for the attacks on Kenscoff in February and March (see page 8, section I "Violence and human rights violations – Kenscoff commune"), a young girl, a resident of the area, was abducted in the area by members of the *Grand Ravine* gang and forced to serve as a guide through this mountainous commune. She spent two days, on 17 and 18 February, walking with her attackers, during which she was raped several times by several individuals. She eventually managed to escape and, with the help of a local organization, was able to benefit from temporary accommodation, medical care and psychosocial support.

The level of physical violence accompanying rape and gang rape remains significantly high. For example, in six cases, women were attacked and gang-raped by members of the *400 Mawozo* and *Canaan* gangs while using public transport vehicles. In one case, a woman, in addition to being raped, reported being blinded and severely beaten by several gang members and then left unconscious.

The main perpetrators of sexual violence during the first quarter were *Argentiniens* (79 cases), *Grand Ravine* (42), *Brooklyn* (33), *Canaan* (25), *Delmas 6* (18), *Village de Dieu* (14) and *Krazè Barye* (14). It should be noted that three incidents were allegedly perpetrated by members of the Haitian National Police.

²⁶ This increase is partly due to the rise in the number of United Nations entities providing data during the reporting period. In addition, as of this quarter, all incidents reported to the United Nations during the reporting period are taken into account, even if they occurred before – a methodology

that had not been applied in previous months. For the first quarter of 2025, 195 incidents involving 202 casualties occurred before the reporting period, but were reported to service providers and the United Nations in the first quarter.



1.7. Impact of violence on children

Between 1 January and 31 March, at least 35 children were killed and ten others injured²⁷ in gang attacks, police operations against gangs, and "mob justice" actions carried out by vigilante groups and unorganized members of the population. In addition, at least four other children have been kidnapped for ransom²⁸.

UN agencies continue to sound the alarm about the increase in trafficking and exploitation of children by gangs. This is largely due to the lack of social services and socio-economic opportunities for families, who struggle to provide for their children's basic needs.

In an increasingly violent environment, many children and youth who lack role models perceive gang members as examples of social and economic success in their neighbourhoods. It is therefore imperative to improve the economic and social situation of families, while developing initiatives that allow children to benefit from positive benchmarks, to project themselves into a constructive future, and to strengthen their sense of inclusion within society. It is also important to establish reintegration programmes for children in conflict with the law, especially those incarcerated for criminal activities related to their gang membership.

1.8. Impact of gang violence on economic, social and cultural rights

Gang activities continued to restrict access to basic services for members of the population, including health care and education, while hampering local economic dynamics and freedom of movement.

These abuses are part of the gangs' deliberate strategy to consolidate their criminal governance, gradually taking control of essential social services, and regulating their functioning, as is the case with schools in areas under their control.

In the first quarter, at least 936 homes and other public and private buildings, including a hospital and three schools, were ransacked, vandalized, or burned by gangs. For example, the State University of Haiti Hospital, located in downtown Port-au-Prince, was partially burned down on 13 February by *the Base Pilate, Grand Ravine, and Village de Dieu* gangs, due to rumours, falsely spread by unknown sources on social media, about the installation of a Multinational Security Support Mission (MMAS) base in the building²⁹.

Gang violence has not been the only factor limiting access to health care. On 15 March, four Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) vehicles, duly identified and evacuating their staff, were reportedly targeted by police gunfire in Turgeau (Port-au-Prince). Although the incident did not result in any deaths, some MSF staff members were slightly injured. The vehicles reportedly received at least 15 bullet holes. Following this incident, MSF also announced the suspension, for the second time in less than two months, of its activities at its Turgeau centre to protect its staff and patients³⁰.

In addition to private residences and establishments providing services to the population, the gangs have also attacked historical infrastructure or housing the media. On 10 March, the *Grand Ravine* and *Village de Dieu* gangs ransacked the Oloffson Hotel, located on Cadet Jérémie Street (Port-au-Prince), a historic inn dating back to the 19th century and renowned for its architecture. This building had long been a popular gathering place for artists, writers, and musicians. In addition,

²⁷ 35 children killed (27 boys and eight girls) and ten wounded (six boys and four girls)

²⁸ Two boys and two girls

²⁹ The State University of Haiti Hospital has been closed since February 2024 due to gang violence, which also carried out another attack on the building in December 2024 during the ceremony scheduled for its reopening.

³⁰ Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) (8 April 2025). "Haiti: MSF suspends its activities in Turgeau and Carrefour in a context of intense and widespread violence", available at: <https://www.msf.fr/communiqués-presse/haiti-msf-suspend-ses-activités-a-turgeau-et-carrefour-dans-un-contexte-de-violence-intense-et-généralisée>.



on the night of 12 to 13 March, the premises of the Radiotélévision Caraïbes (RTVC), located on the Chavannes alley, were set on fire by the Village de Dieu gang. Fearing this type of attack, the RTVC had moved part of its activities to Pétion-Ville several months ago.

II. Justice system

Despite the persistent dysfunction of the justice system, linked to a lack of resources and other structural challenges, some progress has been made in addressing impunity. This includes the adoption of a decree creating specialised judicial units to deal with mass crimes and sexual violence on the one hand, and financial crimes on the other. Nevertheless, progress on emblematic cases remains slow, particularly in cases related to arms trafficking and human rights violations.

2.1. Functioning of the judiciary

During the month of March, the Haitian government announced measures to strengthen justice and the fight against impunity in the country. Among these measures is the creation of two specialised judicial units, competent to try the perpetrators and accomplices of mass crimes against the population, including sexual violence, and to prosecute financial crimes. The High Council of the Judiciary (CSPJ) also adopted a resolution allowing magistrates not certified by the CSPJ's Technical Certification Commission (CTC) to challenge their non-certification. This measure was taken in response to criticism made in 2023 by magistrates and other judicial actors about the lack of possibility of appeal against non-certification decisions. However, despite the establishment of this appeal mechanism, controversy has emerged over the legitimacy of the CSPJ to reconsider its own decisions of non-certification, highlighting the absence of an independent body in charge of this review.

³¹ For more details on this incident, see BINUH and HDCH (December 2024). "Haiti – Flash Report: 207 people executed by the Wharf Jérémie gang", available at:

On 31 March, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP) announced the reopening of the Court of First Instance of Port-au-Prince, which will now be located in Delmas 75. On 10 June 2022, the Palais de Justice, then located in the Bicentenaire district, was attacked and ransacked by gangs. Subsequently, the Court had temporarily sat in the premises of the Labour Court located in Lalue (Port-au-Prince).

2.2. Judicial proceedings on massacres and other serious human rights violations

No progress was made in criminal cases related to the massacres in Grand Ravine (2017), La Saline (2018), and Bel Air (2019), as well as the murder of Monferrier Dorval (2020), the former president of the Bar Association of Port-au-Prince.

As part of the investigation into the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse in January, the Court of Appeals in Port-au-Prince heard the 17 former members of the Colombian army accused of involvement in the assassination. Dimitri Hérard and Jean Laguel Civil, former head and coordinator of the National Palace Security Unit (USGPN) under the presidency of Jovenel Moïse, respectively, and on the run since March 2024, were represented by their lawyers. In March, the court also questioned Joseph Félix Badio, a former judicial official, who reportedly made new revelations about his alleged links to several people involved in the murder.

The HRS continued to monitor the investigation conducted by the Criminal Affairs Bureau (BAC) of the Central Directorate of the Judicial Police (DCPJ) into the Wharf de Jérémie massacre, which occurred in December 2024, and in which at least 207 people were killed³¹. As of March 31, investigators had received about a hundred complaints from victims' families. However, to date, no suspects have been arrested.

https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/haiti/flash_report_20241223_wharf_jeremie_en.pdf



Very little progress has been noted following the attacks on the municipality of Kenscoff that occurred between January and March 2025. Only one individual was arrested by the police as of 30 March. This individual, presumed to be a member of the *Grand Ravine* gang, is suspected of having facilitated the infiltration of gangs in the commune. On the other hand, no action has been taken by the Port-au-Prince prosecutor's office to investigate these attacks and identify their perpetrators.

2.3. Court proceedings related to gang support and arms trafficking

As part of the fight against the financing and support of armed gangs, in January 2025, Magalie Habitant, former director general of the National Solid Waste Management Service, and Propane Victor³², former Member of Parliament for Petite-Rivière de l'Artibonite, were arrested in Pétion Ville for alleged financing of armed gangs. As of 30 March, they were still being held at the DCPJ pending judicial action.

On 18 February, the DCPJ issued a wanted notice against former Senator Nenel Cassy because of his alleged ties with gangs. In March, he appeared before the Court of First Instance in Port-au-Prince, where he was placed under judicial supervision and ordered to be at the disposal of justice.

Legal proceedings related to arms trafficking in Haiti are progressing slowly³³. In July 2022, a police operation in Port-de-Paix led to the seizure of weapons, but also triggered a political and judicial crisis, after the arrest of three senior officials, including the Government

Commissioner, accused of releasing two suspects without following legal procedures. As of March 2025, the case was still pending before the Court of Appeal in Port-au-Prince. Meanwhile, the investigation into a shipment of arms and 15,000 rounds of ammunition sent from Florida to the Episcopal Church of Haiti is making little progress, although six people are in custody in connection with the case. More recently, in March 2025, containers suspected of containing weapons disappeared at the Belladère customs office. Shortly afterwards, several people were arrested and detained in Mirebalais prison, but they fled following the gang attack (see pages 8 and 9, section I "Violence and human rights violations – Mirebalais and Saut d'Eau communes").

2.4. Sexual violence investigations

Between January and February, investigating judges from 11 jurisdictions examined 114 rape cases, of which 39 were referred to the competent prosecutor's office and one case to the juvenile court. This is in part a result of the creation in 2023 by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP) of a three-member commission to prioritize all pending sexual violence cases in courts across the country.

In early February, following allegations of sexual violence involving specialized units of the Haitian National Police (PNH) in the neighbourhoods of Cité Soleil, the PNH's Coordination of Women's Affairs and Gender Issues (CNAFQG)³⁴ and the General Inspectorate of the Haitian National Police (IGPNH) established a protocol to address the reported cases. A monitoring committee, composed of the

³² In September 2024, Victor Propane was sanctioned by the United Nations, the United States, and Canada for his role in training, supporting, and arming gangs.

³³ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) (27 March 2025). A/HRC/58/76: Situation of human rights in Haiti: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/fr/documents/country-reports/ahrc5876-situation-human-rights-haiti-report-united-nations-high>

³⁴ With the support of BINUH and Cowater International, the CNAFQG was created in February 2025 to replace the CNAF-GBV and continue its mandate to promote gender equity and combat gender-based violence, including all forms of discrimination within the Haitian National Police. The CNAFQG now benefits from a strengthened administrative and legislative base, adapted to the changes in Haitian society.



head of the CNAFQG, the Sexual Crimes Unit (ULCS) of the PNH and the GBV focal point of the Tabarre police station, was responsible for coordinating the confidential care of victims, facilitating hearings, monitoring investigations and ensuring the transmission of files to the competent authorities for legal proceedings and disciplinary sanctions. At the same time, victims were referred to service providers to meet their needs.

2.5. Fight against corruption

In January, investigating judge Benjamin Felismé issued a referral order against three members of the Transitional Presidential Council (CPT), accused of having solicited 100 million gourdes in exchange for the renewal of the mandate of the chairman of the board of directors of the Banque Nationale de Crédit (BNC). However, on 19 February, the Court of Appeal in Port-au-Prince quashed the summonses against the three members, finding that they enjoyed immunity linked to their position within the CPT and that they could not be prosecuted before an ordinary court for the time being.

Between January and March, several public administration officials or former officials were prosecuted for alleged acts of corruption. On 7 February, the investigating judge, Loubens Élysée, ordered the arrest of a former director general of the National Office for Old-Age Insurance (ONA). A report published by the ULCC in September 2024 implicated him in the embezzlement of public funds. The same investigation also revealed serious irregularities in the management of public funds by a former minister of social affairs and labour under the government of Ariel Henry. On 24 February, the investigating judge, Jean Loubens Élysée, also ordered new judicial measures against a former Minister of Planning and External Cooperation, including a travel ban and the freezing of his assets.

2.6. Conditions of detention in Haitian prisons

As of 31 March 2025, 7,613 people were detained in Haiti's prisons (7,496 in December 2024).³⁵ Eighty-three per cent of detainees were in pre-trial detention (the same per centage compared to the last two quarters of 2024). Detention conditions in Haiti remain inhumane and degrading due to overcrowding and a lack of adequate food, drinking water and medical care. In the first quarter of 2025, 25 detainees died, most due to lack of care, unsanitary conditions, insufficient nutrition, and lack of access to clean water.

On 24 March, the MJSP issued a statement announcing a reform to decentralize the supply of food to prisons. This measure requires companies (service providers) to deliver food directly to prisons, without going through the Directorate of Prison Administration in Port-au-Prince. The minister explained that the decision was taken following a field mission by the HRS, which informed him of the inhumane conditions in which the detainees were in Les Cayes prison.

2.7. International sanctions and legal proceedings abroad

In March 2024, Canada imposed sanctions against three individuals for acts that undermine peace, security, and stability in Haiti: Dimitri Hérard, head of the General Security Unit of the National Palace under Jovenel Moïse from February 2017 to July 2021; Jeantel Joseph, Director General of the National Agency for Protected Areas from 2017 to 2024; and Jeff Larose, leader of the Canaan gang. As of 30 March 2025, 35 individuals have been sanctioned by Canada, 15 by the United States, nine by the United Kingdom, and four by the European Union (EU). In addition, seven individuals have been sanctioned by the United Nations Security Council for threats to peace and security in Haiti, as well as for serious human rights violations, including sexual violence.

³⁵ This figure does not include the 515 inmates who escaped from Mirebalais prison during a gang attack on March 31.



On 18 March, a complaint was filed in the District of Columbia, United States, against Johnson André, alias "Izo", leader of the Village de Dieu gang, for his alleged role in the kidnapping and confinement of a U.S. citizen, for nine days, in March 2023. If convicted, André faces a maximum sentence of life imprisonment³⁶.

2.8. Investigations into human rights violations committed by police officers

During the quarter, the IGPNH opened 67 investigations into the 96 incidents, potentially involving potentially unlawful use of force by the police, which had been referred by the HRS in the last quarter of 2024. At least 201 people were killed and injured in the incidents. No investigation has been finalized as of 31 March.

III. Support to national institutions and civil society

During the first quarter of 2025, despite the persistence of insecurity and violence, the HRS continued its technical support to public institutions and civil society organizations to strengthen their capacities in several areas, including the respect, protection and promotion of human rights, the fight against corruption and the promotion of a culture of peace.

3.1. Support for public authorities and civil society organisations in the field of protection

Fight against sexual violence

Between January and March, the HRS, in collaboration with the PNH's Coordination of Women's Affairs and UN Women, developed a communication campaign to combat sexual violence. As part of this initiative, supported by the Government of Canada, between 3 and 7 March, a test of the "Guide to the Management of Sexual Violence",

available in Creole and French, was carried out among police officers deployed within the Pétion-Ville police station, in order to evaluate its effectiveness. This guide is a practical and comprehensive resource designed to meet the needs of police officers in a number of areas, including investigation, induction of survivors, and referrals to appropriate services. The evaluation showed that the guide improves the reception and assistance of victims, thus proving its relevance and effectiveness in offering a more adequate and comprehensive response. An awareness-raising strategy against sexual violence has also been developed with the PNH, aimed at informing the public through videos, television and radio messages, and posters.

Citizenship and electoral process

The HRS supported 18 peace clubs in schools and high schools across Haiti, including two in the capital. More than 700 students participate on a regular basis. This project, funded by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), and implemented in partnership with civil society organizations, such as *Gouvernance Groupe* and *Combite pour la Paix et le Développement*, enabled young people to strengthen their understanding and engagement on themes such as citizen participation, human rights and justice.

In March, the HRS supported the Haitian Institute of Human Rights (IHDH) in organizing a consultation on the role of human rights in the constitutional review process. The workshop enabled 34 participants – including journalists, judges, lawyers and representatives of political parties – to make ten recommendations on this process.

The HRS also launched a three-month training for 24 civil society organizations and human rights institutions. Twenty-eight human rights defenders (17 men and 11 women) are participating. The aim of this training is to strengthen their capacities to independently and

³⁶ United States Attorney's Office (18 March 2025). "Haitian Gang Leader 'Izo' Charged with Hostage Taking of a U.S. Citizen in Haiti in March 2023",

available at: <https://www.justice.gov/usao-dc/pr/haitian-gang-leader-izo-charged-hostage-taking-us-citizen-haiti-march-2023>



effectively monitor, document, investigate and report on human rights abuses and violations.

3.2. Support to national security forces

In February, the HRS supported the organization of a round table aimed at strengthening dialogue between security forces and human rights organizations. The participants had the opportunity to exchange on cooperation mechanisms between the police and civil society, particularly in the fight against gang violence, as well as to discuss the "Bwa kalé" phenomenon.

3.3 Technical cooperation with judicial authorities

As part of efforts to reduce prolonged pretrial detention in Haiti (83 per cent as of March 31), the HRS provided technical and financial support for a series of non-jury correctional and criminal hearings at the Croix-des-Bouquets Court of First Instance. This initiative, held from 12 to 28 March, concerned 25 adult defendants prosecuted for serious criminal offences.

Likewise, with the aim of reducing prolonged pre-trial detention and prison overcrowding, between 28 January and 4 February, the HRS organised a visit to the jurisdictions of Les Cayes (South Department) and Jérémie (Grand'Anse Department). Following several meetings with the authorities, on 25 February, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security issued directives directing government commissioners from the country's 18 jurisdictions to conduct weekly visits to prisons and police cells under their jurisdiction. Magistrates are also required to report their findings to the Ministry.

3.4. Visit to Haiti by the United Nations Designated Expert on the situation of human rights in Haiti

In March, during a week-long visit to Haiti, William O'Neill, the designated expert on the situation of human rights in Haiti, expressed his concern about the rapidly deteriorating situation in the country. He called on Haitian authorities to intensify their efforts to fight corruption and impunity, while encouraging the international

community to act without delay and to respect its commitments, particularly in terms of sanctions and arms embargo.

3.5. OHCHR support to the MMAS on human rights compliance

With the support of the United Kingdom, Norway, the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and the United Nations Trust Fund (MPTF), the Multinational Security Support Mission (MMAS) Complaints and Reporting Mechanism, developed with the support of the HRS, was launched in January 2025. Twenty-eight focal points from civil society (17 men and 11 women) have been trained on this mechanism.

The HRS also provided technical support to the MMAS in the development of a standard operating procedure for conducting fact-finding missions into potential human rights violations involving its staff and determining appropriate administrative and disciplinary actions.

As part of its monitoring mandate, the HRS monitored 19 operations against gangs carried out by security forces with the support of the MMAS. The results were shared and discussed with the management of the MMAS through a review mechanism set up between the HRS and MMAS.