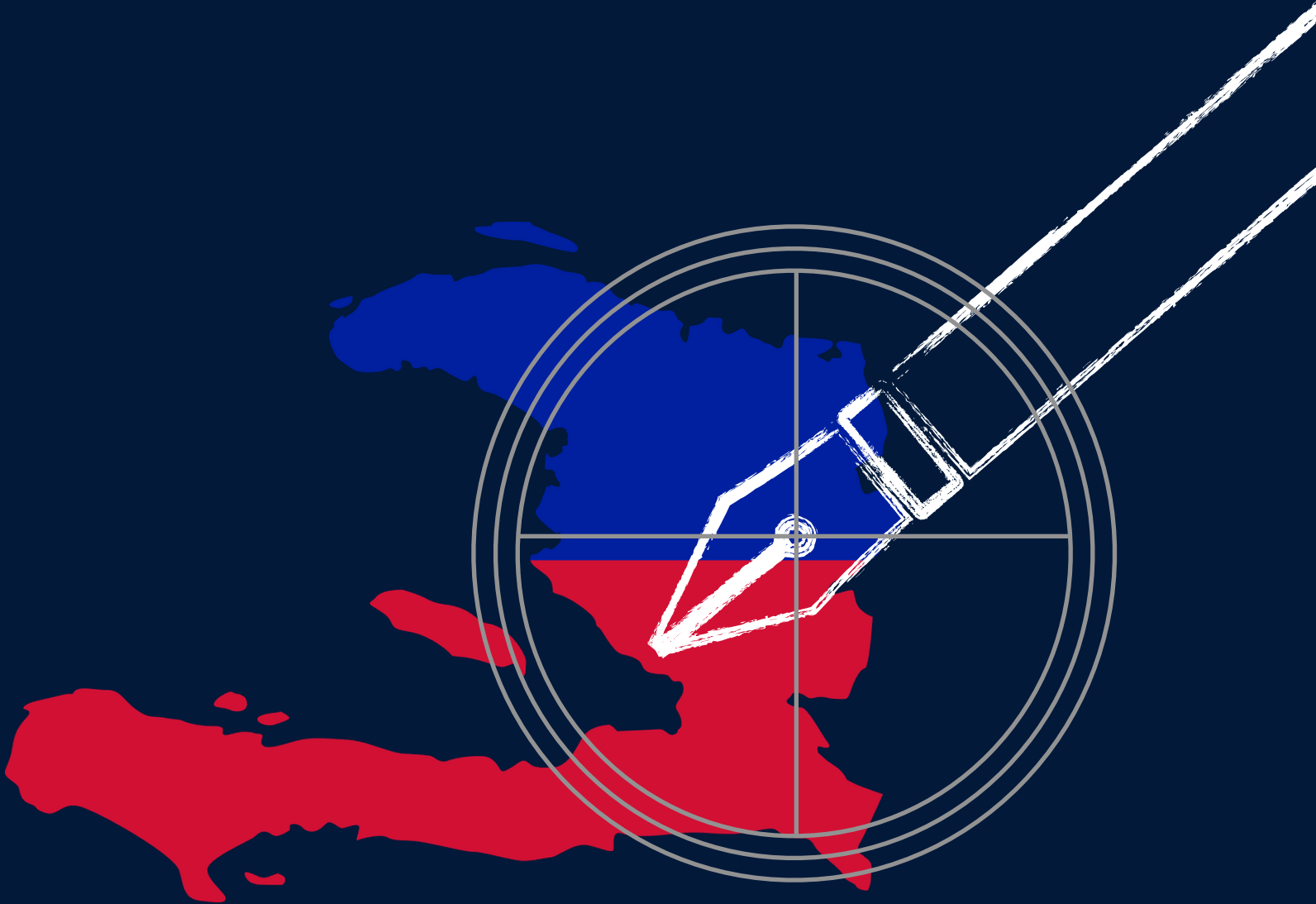


Special report on the situation of press freedom in Haiti



OEA/Ser.L/V/II
CIDH/RELE/INF.31/25
May 2025
Original in Spanish

Special report on the situation of press freedom in Haiti

Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the
Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

Pedro Vaca Villarreal
Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression

OAS CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA

Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression.

Informe especial sobre la libertad de prensa en Haití / Relatoría Especial para la Libertad de Expresión de la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos.

v. ; cm. (OAS. Documentos oficiales ; OEA/Ser.L/V/II)

ISBN 978-0-8270-7995-3

1. Freedom of expression--Haiti 2. Freedom of the press--Haiti. 3. Journalists--Crimes against--Haiti. 4. Human rights--Haiti. I. Vaca Villareal, Pedro. II. Title. III. Series. OEA/Ser.L/V/II CIDH/RELE/INF.31/25

OEA/Ser.L/V/II CIDH/RELE/INF.31/25

This report was made possible with financial support from Sweden and Switzerland.



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

Members

José Luis Caballero Ochoa
Andrea Pochak
Arif Bulkan
Roberta Clarke
Carlos Bernal Pulido
Edgar Stuardo Ralón Orellana
Gloria Monique de Mees

Executive Secretary

Tania Renaum Panszi

Chief of Staff

Patricia Colchero Aragonés

Assistant Executive Secretary for Monitoring, Promotion and Technical Cooperation

María Claudia Pulido Escobar

Assistant Executive Secretary for the Petitions and Cases System

Jorge Meza Flores

Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression

Pedro Vaca Villarreal

Special Rapporteur on Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights

Javier Palummo Lantes

On December 24, 2024, the report was approved by absolute majority.

Contents

I.	Introduction	1
A.	Background and purpose	1
B.	Methodology and structure	2
II.	Multidimensional crisis	3
A.	First cycle: Political tensions and the legitimacy crisis of government branches (2018-2021)	4
B.	Second cycle: The assassination of President Jovenel Moïse and the institutional challenges of Ariel Henry's interim government (2021-2024)	7
C.	End of Ariel Henry's interim government and installation of the Presidential Transitional Council (2024-)	10
III.	Multinational Security Support Mission to Haiti	13
A.	Context	13
B.	Request	13
C.	Mandate	14
D.	Deployment	14
E.	Preliminary results	16
IV.	The importance of press freedom in overcoming the multidimensional crisis	18
V.	Press freedom situation	19
A.	Murder of journalists	19
B.	Armed attacks against journalists and media outlets	25
C.	Enforced disappearance and kidnapping	32
D.	Forced internal displacement and exile	38
E.	Violence in the context of social protests	43
VI.	Conclusions	51
VII.	Recommendations	52

Institutional acronyms

Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM)

Haitian National Police [*Police Nationale D'haïti*] (PNH)

Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)

Inter-American Human Rights System (IAHRS)

Multinational Security Support Mission in Haiti (MSSM)

Office Of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE)

Organization of American States (OAS)

Presidential Transitional Council [*Conseil Présidentiel De Transition*] (CPT)

Provisional Electoral Council [*Conseil Électoral Provisoire*] (CEP)

United Nations (UN)

United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti [*Bureau Intégré des Nations Unies en Haïti*] (BINUH)

United Nations Mission for the Support of Justice in Haiti (MINUJUSTH)

United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH)

I. Introduction

A. Background and purpose

1. The Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE) of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) has followed the press freedom situation in Haiti through the mechanisms of the Inter-American Human Rights System (IAHRS). The SRFOE has recorded the most relevant events in the country in each annual report since 2000¹; has participated in at least five IACHR public hearings during its regular sessions²; has issued 26 press releases³; and has published two chapter reports on the situation of freedom of expression in the country after conducting and/or accompanying official visits⁴. In addition to these mechanisms, there have been multiple listening sessions with members of civil society and the media, as well as continuous exchange of information with the State through institutional channels.
2. Over the past 24 years, the SRFOE has documented dozens of crimes against the press in Haiti: murders, armed attacks, kidnappings, threats, harassment and instances of violence in the framework of the coverage of social protests. The annual monitoring conducted by this Office has allowed it to conclude that the frequency of these crimes has accelerated since 2018 as a result of the country's multidimensional crisis. This crisis, in turn, has led to higher rates of impunity due to the low operability of the police and judicial system, with a serious inhibiting effect on journalism.
3. In view of the intensification of the political, economic and security crisis in the country and the sustained deterioration of the guarantees and conditions for the exercise of freedom of the press, the SRFOE has decided to prepare this report, resuming the analysis carried out until mid 2022 and updating the facts on the ground as of May 2025⁵. The report aims to (i) analyze the evolution of the guarantees and conditions to practice journalism in the country; (ii) highlight its importance to overcome the multidimensional crisis that the State is going through, which includes the holding of elections before February 7, 2026; and (iii) formulate recommendations for the parties involved to safeguard press freedom. This report was announced in a press release from the Office on the occasion of World Freedom of Expression Day, commemorated on May 3, 2024⁶.
4. Since the approval of the last country report, two new bodies have been formed in Haiti: the Presidential Transitional Council (CPT), sworn in April 2024, and the Multinational Security Support Mission (MSSM), authorized by the United Nations (UN) in October 2023, and whose

¹ IACHR, Annual Report 2000, Report of the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, pars. 184-191; IACHR, Annual Reports of the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (1998-2023), May 3, 2024 [see country chapters].

² IACHR, Thematic Hearing, "Situation of Human Rights in Haiti in the Context of the Humanitarian and Citizen Security Crisis," 187th regular session, virtual, July 13, 2023; IACHR, Thematic Hearing, "Violence and Security in the Context of Social Protests in Haiti," 173rd regular session, Washington D.C., United States, September 23, 2019; IACHR, Thematic Hearing, "Situation of the Right to Access to Information in Haiti," 154th regular session, Washington D.C., United States, March 17, 2015; IACHR, Thematic Hearing, "Situation of the Right to Freedom of Expression in Haiti," 147th session, Washington D.C., United States, March 16, 2013; IACHR, Thematic Hearing, "Situation of Freedom of Expression in Haiti," 119th regular session, March 2, 2004.

³ IACHR, Press Releases on Haiti from the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), May 3, 2024

⁴ IACHR, Report on the Situation of Freedom of Expression in Haiti by the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, OEA/Ser.L/V/II.117, Doc. 48, July 15, 2003; IACHR, Situation of Human Rights in Haiti, OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 385, August 30, 2022, pars. 166-210.

⁵ The last IACHR report on the Situation of Human Rights in Haiti was approved by the plenary of the Commission on August 30, 2022.

⁶ SRFOE, Press Release No. R089/24, "SRFOE alerts on the situation of press freedom in Haiti and urges the Presidential Transitional Council and the States of the region to adopt assistance measures in favor of journalists," May 3, 2024.

initial deployment began on June 25, 2024. The CPT appointed and installed an interim prime minister in May 2024, who in turn formed a cabinet in June 2024. In November 2024, the CPT appointed a new interim prime minister. In parallel, the CPT has requested the UN Security Council to transform the MSSM into a peacekeeping mission to ensure adequate funding, personnel and equipment to combat criminal structures on the national territory.

5. This report is addressed especially to the new actors in the country, urging them to contribute to the establishment of safe conditions for the practice of journalism. Freedom of the press must be conceived as a key tool for overcoming the multidimensional crisis in Haiti due to its role in the visibility of human rights violations and the high levels of impunity; the accountability of national and international authorities; the promotion of informed public debate; and the guarantee of free, fair and transparent elections that allow the return to democratic institutionalality and the full functioning of the State.

B. Methodology and structure

6. The SRFOE prepared this report based on the collection, analysis and systematization of information related to the country's current multidimensional crisis (ongoing since 2018), the installation of the CPT, the authorization and deployment of the MSSM, and the crimes against the media in the last seven years. The Special Rapporteurship focused its efforts on updating the most relevant facts between August 2022 and May 2025 in order to provide a detailed and timely assessment of the situation of press freedom in Haiti, as well as to formulate priority recommendations.
7. The Rapporteurship used a mixed methodology for the preparation of this report, based on primary and secondary sources. Regarding primary sources, the SRFOE relied on information presented during confidential listening sessions with journalists in Haiti, including international correspondents, as well as working sessions and meetings convened by the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the OAS Secretariat for the Strengthening of Democracy, in which the Special Representative of the OAS Secretary General in Haiti, the IACHR's Assistant Executive Secretariat for Monitoring, Promotion and Technical Cooperation in Human Rights, and the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe also participated. Regarding secondary sources, the Rapporteurship compiled information contained in: (i) official State sources; (ii) reports, resolutions and pronouncements of the UN, the OAS and the IACHR; (iii) studies by non-governmental organizations, both national and international; (iv) information from national and international media; and (v) content gathered via social media.
8. The report consists of four sections. The first section addresses democratic institutionalality in Haiti, including an account of the two cycles of destabilization identified by the IACHR in its August 2022 report on the "Situation of Human Rights in Haiti," as well as the end of the interim government of Ariel Henry (2021-2024) and the installation of the CPT (in 2024). The second section deals with the request, authorization, mandate, deployment and preliminary results of the MSSM. In these first two sections, the SRFOE emphasizes the importance of journalism in navigating and overcoming the country's multidimensional crisis, and paving the way for elections to be held before the first quarter of 2026. The third section analyzes the press freedom situation in Haiti light of the relevant Inter-American standards, consolidating the monitoring conducted by the SRFOE from 2018 to May 2025. Finally, the fourth section formulates recommendations for the State, headed by the interim government formed by the CPT and the interim Prime Minister, and national and international security forces, including the MSSM and/or a future UN peacekeeping mission.

II. Multidimensional crisis

9. The IACHR has published eight reports on the human rights situation in Haiti⁷. The most recent, approved on August 30, 2022, and published on January 5, 2023, addresses the multidimensional crisis that still plagues the country. It encompasses:
 - a) a weak democratic institutional framework with little operability in the three branches of government (executive, legislative and judicial)⁸;
 - b) high levels of citizen insecurity, as reflected in the number of homicides, kidnappings, forced displacements, sexual violence, and threats, especially due to the increased territorial control of organized armed groups and the lack of State security institutions and forces⁹;
 - c) the persistence of the highest multidimensional poverty rate in the Western Hemisphere, which in turn hinders the enjoyment of economic, social, cultural and environmental rights¹⁰;
 - d) the increase of people in conditions of human mobility inside and outside the country, without sufficient protection and without lasting solutions to return to their usual places of residence¹¹;
 - e) and constant violations of the freedom of expression of citizens and the press as a result of repression by the Haitian National Police (HNP) and the violent incursion of armed groups in the context of social mobilizations, the assassination of journalists in the course of their work, armed attacks against the media, kidnappings by organized armed groups, and little progress in the administration of justice¹²;
10. In this latest country report, the first to exclusively address the situation of freedom of expression, the Commission identified two interconnected cycles that explain its emergence and deepening¹³. The first cycle, running from 2018 to mid-2021, was marked by the growth of social discontent in the face of adverse political, economic, and security circumstances, as well as failed efforts to hold free, fair, and transparent elections¹⁴. The absence of elections led to a severe alteration in the constitutional attributions of the three branches of government. Amidst the abnormal functioning of the three branches of government, President Jovenel Moïse chose to rule by decree, fueling criticism of his government and questions about his legitimacy due to disagreements over the expiration date of his mandate¹⁵;
11. The second cycle, according to the Commission's analysis, began on July 7, 2021, when President Moïse¹⁶ was assassinated. Prime Minister Ariel Henry took over as head of the executive and formed an interim government after reaching a partial political agreement with other actors in the country. However, the interim postponed elections indefinitely by dismissing the members of the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP), previously appointed by President Moïse, and continued to govern through decrees¹⁷.

⁷ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 385, August 30, 2022, par. 22.

⁸ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, pars. 5-6.

⁹ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, pars. 7-8.

¹⁰ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, pars. 9-10.

¹¹ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, pars. 14-17.

¹² IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, pars. 11-13.

¹³ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 48.

¹⁴ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 48.

¹⁵ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 53.

¹⁶ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 68.

¹⁷ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 50.

12. As the State and its three branches became more dysfunctional, organized armed groups expanded their territorial control¹⁸. Their expansion and brutality through frequent, coordinated and massive attacks against the civilian population and security forces eventually forced the Henry interim to withdraw from power in March 2024¹⁹. This decision allowed the country's main actors to reach a new political agreement for the governance of the country through a Presidential Transitional Council. The agreement reached determined that the CPT, in exercise of its presidential powers, should constitute a transitional government, form the CEP to hold elections before February 2026, and coordinate joint actions with MSSM to reestablish security in the country²⁰.
13. The assassination of President Moïse and its impact on the reorganization of democratic governance functions and the worsening of the functioning of State institutions has resulted in the worsening of the multidimensional crisis, as the IACHR concluded in its last country report²¹. The Commission observed repeated difficulties in recovering democratic institutionalization, worsening citizen security indices, increases in multidimensional poverty, high levels of forced displacement, and crimes against the press with unprecedented frequency and severity²².
14. In October 2024, and after six months since its formation, the CPT offered an assessment of its management, noting that it has failed to meet the expectations of the citizenry, especially with respect to the reestablishment of citizen security and transparency following allegations of corruption against members of the new political body²³. Nevertheless, the CPT highlighted the appointment of the nine members of the CEP as a significant step towards holding elections before February 7, 2026, when the mandate of the transitional government will expire²⁴.

A. First cycle: Political tensions and the legitimacy crisis of government branches (2018-2021)

15. In 2018, the IACHR warned about the beginning of a breakdown of trust among various sectors of the population towards the political class, driven by multiple allegations of corruption, embezzlement and fraud, as well as by the increase in the cost of living due to the rise in fuel prices²⁵. In this context, a series of protests were documented starting in the second half of that year, when repeated clashes between the PNH and demonstrators resulted in dozens of injuries and more than 40 deaths²⁶.
16. The following year, in 2019, the obstacles of Jovenel Moïse's government in getting the National Assembly to approve a candidacy for the post of Prime Minister, who was to share the functions of the executive branch, as stipulated by the Haitian Constitution²⁷. It was also warned about the lack of approval of the Electoral Law, which prevented the holding of

¹⁸ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 8.

¹⁹ BBC, *Haiti's prime minister Ariel Henry resigns as law and order collapses*, March 12, 2024; CNN, *Haiti's prime minister resigns as council sworn in to lead political transition in violence-ravaged nation*, April 25, 2024.

²⁰ Reuters, *Haiti decrees long-awaited transition council, but questions remain*, April 12, 2024; CNN, *Haiti establishes transitional ruling council amid crisis*, April 12, 2024.

²¹ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 55.

²² IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, paras 5-17.

²³ Le Nouvelliste, *Le président Voltaire fait le bilan des six mois du CPT*, October 25, 2024; AP, *New leader takes over Haiti's transitional presidential council marred by corruption allegations*, October 7, 2024.

²⁴ Reuters, *Haiti creates council tasked with holding first election in a decade*, September 18, 2024; BBC, *Haiti takes step towards first elections since 2016*, September 19, 2024; The Haitian Times, *Haiti's Provisional Electoral Council finally complete after contentious process*, December 14, 2024; BINUH, *Report of the Secretary-General*, January 15, 2025.

²⁵ IACHR, *Annual Report 2018*, Chap IV-A, par. 268.

²⁶ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2018*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 30, March 17, 2019, pars. 655-658.

²⁷ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 55.

legislative elections on October 29, 2019²⁸. As in 2018, new protests demanding the resignation of the President were organized, marked by episodes of violence due to the excessive use of force by the security forces and the meddling of armed actors outside the law. In February 2019, at least 34 people were killed and more than 100 injured²⁹. Between September and October, at least 30 people died, including one journalist, and more than 200 were injured, including nine reporters³⁰.

17. In January 2020, as a consequence of the absence of elections, the mandates of the 119 members of the Chamber of Deputies and two thirds of the Senate expired, leaving only 10 in office³¹. This legislative anomaly affected democratic institutionalism by making it impossible to approve the national budget, the confirmation of a new prime minister, and the formation of a government cabinet, among other elementary constitutional responsibilities³².
18. Faced with this scenario, the President, as the highest authority of the executive branch, began to approve measures, including those requiring legislative approval, through presidential decrees³³. Governance by decree aggravated the already existing tensions, prompting the IACHR to reiterate the need to resume political dialogue as a key element to preserve democratic institutionalism and avoid the risk of paralysis in the civil service³⁴.
19. In the course of 2020, and despite more than 65 legal challenges, the government of President Moïse promulgated multiple norms with the character of law through decrees³⁵. Among the measures adopted, the following stand out: i) the issuance of a new Penal Code; ii) the reorganization of the public administration; iii) the criminalization of actions in the framework of protests; and iv) the creation of a new biometric national identity card, to be used as an electoral identity card. Additionally, the members of the 140 municipal commissions in the country, whose mandates had also expired after the refusal to hold local elections in the country, were unilaterally appointed through presidential decrees³⁶.
20. In the absence of elections, there were attempts to form a new nine-member CEP to organize and supervise the pending elections³⁷. In this regard, President Moïse unilaterally appointed a new composition and charged it with holding a constitutional referendum, the content of which was subsequently contested by sectors of society³⁸.
21. In the remaining months of 2020 and the first half of 2021, there were protests questioning the length of President Moïse's presidential term and demanding that the end of his term be recognized on February 7, 2021³⁹. Sectors of the opposition argued that the presidential mandate should be counted from the scheduled date of the annulled electoral process, which

²⁸ IACHR, Annual Report 2019, Chapter IV.A, Human Rights Developments in the Region: Haiti, p. 369.

²⁹ Human Rights Watch, [Haiti: Investigate Protest Deaths](#), March 22, 2019; Amnesty International, [Haiti: Amnesty International verifies evidence of excessive use of force against protesters](#), October 31, 2019.

³⁰ United Nations - Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, [Press briefing note on Haiti unrest](#), November 1, 2019; IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), [Annual Report 2019](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 5, February 24, 2020, pars. 769-780; Amnesty International, [Haiti: Amnesty International verifies evidence of excessive use of force against protesters](#), October 31, 2019.

³¹ IACHR, [Situation of Human Rights in Haiti](#), par. 56.

³² IACHR, [Situation of Human Rights in Haiti](#), par. 56.

³³ IACHR, [Situation of Human Rights in Haiti](#), par. 57.

³⁴ IACHR, Press Release No. 011/20, [IACHR accompanies the political and institutional situation in Haiti](#), January 22, 2020; IACHR, Press Release No. 038/21, [The IACHR accompanies with concern the political and institutional situation in Haiti, and calls for dialogue with respect for human rights and the rule of law](#), February 23, 2021.

³⁵ IACHR, [Situation of Human Rights in Haiti](#), par. 58.

³⁶ IACHR, [Situation of Human Rights in Haiti](#), par. 58.

³⁷ IACHR, [Situation of Human Rights in Haiti](#), par. 57.

³⁸ IACHR, [Situation of Human Rights in Haiti](#), pars. 57, 60.

³⁹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), [Annual Report 2021](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 64, Rev. 1, May 26, 2022, pars. 525-532.

took place in October 2015, and not from the date of the elections held in November 2016⁴⁰. Likewise, the Superior Council of the Judiciary issued a resolution stating that the mandate of the then president should end in 2021⁴¹. For their part, Moïse and his political associates claimed that the presidential term began when he took office in February 2017 and should therefore be extended until February 2022⁴². In the midst of this public debate, there were calls from civil society for a transitional government to take over the conduct of the electoral process⁴³.

22. On February 6, 2021, at the end of Moïse's presidential term as determined by the judiciary, a Supreme Court judge appointed himself interim President⁴⁴. In response, through a presidential act two days later, the head of State granted retirement to three judges of the highest court, including the one who would succeed him as head of State, and replaced them unilaterally by decree⁴⁵. The PNH then took control of the Supreme Court and the Magistrate School, paralyzing their operations⁴⁶. The President called the efforts to remove him from power a "coup d'état" and ordered the arrest of at least 23 people allegedly involved⁴⁷.
23. In light of the facts presented in this first cycle, the IACHR urged the Haitian authorities to engage in a genuine dialogue with all stakeholders in order to (i) restore the full functioning of the institutions of the rule of law and the representative bodies of the country through free and fair elections; (ii) put an end to the stagnation of State functions; and (iii) fully restore the independence of the branches of government⁴⁸.
24. With respect to the serious violations of press freedom in this first cycle, the Office of the Special Rapporteur recorded in its annual reports⁴⁹ the murder of four journalists; the disappearance of one journalist; attacks against 12 reporters carrying out their work in the context of social protests; armed attacks against six members of the press for their investigations and reports on corruption and the worsening of public safety; and three threats against media facilities.
25. Therefore, the SRFOE urged the Haitian authorities to investigate each of these events, punish the intellectual and material perpetrators, and ensure adequate reparations to the victims⁵⁰. In this regard, the Rapporteurship emphasized the need for the investigations to be complete, effective and impartial, recalling that crimes against the press have a chilling effect on freedom of expression, which increases with impunity⁵¹. Finally, it called on the State to implement preventive measures and guarantees for journalists at risk, as well as to publicly and

⁴⁰ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 59.

⁴¹ IACHR, Press Release No. 038/21, *La CIDH acompaña con preocupación la situación política e institucional en Haití, y llama al diálogo con apego a los derechos humanos y el Estado de Derecho*, February 23, 2021; IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 60.

⁴² IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 60.

⁴³ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 58.

⁴⁴ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 61.

⁴⁵ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 61.

⁴⁶ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 61.

⁴⁷ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 61.

⁴⁸ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 67.

⁴⁹ See IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2018*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 30, March 17, 2019, pars. 650-8; IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2019*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 5, Feb. 24, 2020, pars. 761-784; IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2020*, OEA/Ser.L/Doc.28, March 30, 2021, pars. 816-832; IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2021*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 64, Rev. 1, May 26, 2022, pars. 512-538.

⁵⁰ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2018*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 30, March 17, 2019, par. 654.

⁵¹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2019*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 5, February 24, 2020, pars. 766 and 768; IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2020*, OEA/Ser.L/Doc.28, March 30, 2021, pars. 524.

emphatically repudiate the escalation of violence against the press as a strong institutional reaction measure⁵².

B. Second cycle: The assassination of President Jovenel Moïse and the institutional challenges of Ariel Henry's interim government (2021-2024)

26. The multidimensional crisis in Haiti was deepened by the assassination of President Moïse on July 7, 2021, a crime condemned by the Commission⁵³. In its subsequent analysis, the IACHR identified two consequences of the assassination of the head of State: (i) the reorganization of democratic governance functions; and (ii) the worsening of the functioning of State institutions amid low expectations of operability and protection⁵⁴.
27. In relation to the reorganization of democratic governance, the IACHR noted that the initial uncertainty over the succession of President Moïse extended until July 20, 2021, when Prime Minister Ariel Henry was confirmed in an interim capacity, albeit without legislative approval and therefore without constitutional basis⁵⁵. From the beginning of this interim, the intention was announced to seek inclusive and consensual political agreements, with the objective of creating the necessary conditions to hold the postponed elections before the end of 2022⁵⁶. This agreement sought to consolidate a governance mechanism with more than 150 political and civil society organizations, which could shape a new CEP and at the same time establish a roadmap for the preparation and approval of a new constitutional text by the citizenry⁵⁷.
28. With respect to the functioning of State institutions, the Commission noted with concern the sustained expiration of the constitutional mandates of popularly elected officials in the legislative and executive branches⁵⁸. The non-renewal of mandates severely affected the regular functioning of these two branches, in addition to the judiciary, whose highest organs required the nomination and cross-approval of judges⁵⁹.
29. The political negotiation and stabilization processes in the interim were hindered by the resurgence of social protests; the worsening of citizen security due to the expansion of armed groups; the lack of justice for the most severe crimes; and continuous questioning of the legitimacy and popular support for the interim of Prime Minister Henry⁶⁰. On November 27, 2021, based on negotiations with different political platforms, social sectors and civil society organizations, the Prime Minister was able to form a new government whose priorities would be security, constitutional reform based on a process of popular consultation, and the holding of legislative and departmental elections⁶¹.
30. Like President Moïse, Prime Minister Henry continued to govern by executive decrees⁶². In July 2022, one year after the assassination of the Head of State, Henry announced his intention to pave the way for elections, although he did not appoint any member of the CEP after dissolving its composition on September 27, 2021. This resulted in the indefinite

⁵² IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2019*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 5, February 24, 2020, par. 766.

⁵³ IACHR, Press Release No. 172/21, *The IACHR condemns the assassination of Haitian President Jovenel Moïse, and urges the State to guarantee democratic institutional and human rights*, July 9, 2021.

⁵⁴ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 70.

⁵⁵ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 71.

⁵⁶ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 71.

⁵⁷ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 71.

⁵⁸ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 75.

⁵⁹ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 76.

⁶⁰ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 74.

⁶¹ IACHR, *Situation of Human Rights in Haiti*, par. 74.

⁶² Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2022: Haiti*, 2022; Freedom House, *Freedom in the World 2022: Haiti*, 2022

postponement of the elections necessary for the proper constitutional functioning of the three branches of the State⁶³.

31. In addition to the interim in the executive and the absence of legislators in the National Assembly, previously warned by the IACHR, civil society organizations and the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) documented the judiciary's dysfunctionality. In particular, they expressed concern about delays in the appointment of judges, leaving most judicial bodies without a quorum to hear cases and issue rulings⁶⁴; attacks by criminal gangs against justice facilities in which evidence and records were allegedly stolen or destroyed and cannot be recovered due to the lack of digital copies⁶⁵; and strikes by justice operators to demand better working conditions, including security guarantees⁶⁶.
32. Following the power vacuum generated after the assassination of President Moïse and Henry's interim, the violence of criminal structures increased exponentially, reaching historic levels and becoming the main threat to citizen security⁶⁷. It is estimated that between 150 and 200 armed groups are currently operating in Haiti, of which at least 23 operate in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area⁶⁸. According to available information and expert analysis, these groups have divided into two major coalitions: "G-Pèp" and the "G9 Fanmi e Alye" (G9 Family and Allies)⁶⁹. Since 2021, criminal gangs have taken over strategic areas of the capital, as well as the main roads connecting Port-au-Prince to the country's ports, coastal areas, and land borders⁷⁰.
33. According to BINUH, the number of homicides in 2022 increased by 35.2% compared to 2021, registering 2,183 victims compared to 1,615 the previous year⁷¹. Of the total homicides, about 82% occurred in the West Department, where criminal gangs exercise significant territorial control⁷². In 2023, homicides experienced an even greater increase of 120% over 2022, with a total of 4,789 victims reported⁷³. Other crimes, such as kidnapping, also skyrocketed, from 1,359 reported cases in 2022 to 2,490 in 2023, representing an 83% increase in a single year⁷⁴.
34. Clashes between criminal structures have led to the forced displacement of more than 700,000 people, who have been forced to live in spontaneous camps with precarious sanitary conditions⁷⁵. Internally displaced persons have also been victims of repeated attacks as part of the illegal actors' strategy of intimidation to consolidate their territorial control⁷⁶. Although more than 312,000 people have managed to go into exile, another 216,000 have been forcibly

⁶³ BBC, [Haiti polls postponed after electoral body is dissolved](#), September 28, 2021; Reuters, [Haiti's elections postponed after electoral council dismissed](#), September 28, 2021.

⁶⁴ Cite HRW and Freedom House but year 2023.

⁶⁵ [Dysfunction of the judicial and penal systems: RNDHH calls for respect for rights to a judicial guarantee](#), November 11, 2022, pages 19-22; InSight Crime, [Haiti Gang Has Occupied Supreme Court for Almost a Week](#), June 16, 2022; Miami Herald, [Armed bandits now control Haiti's largest courthouse after violent takeover](#), June 16, 2022.

⁶⁶ BINUH, [Quarterly Report on the Human Rights Situation in Haiti \(April-June 2024\)](#), 2024, pg. 9; BINUH, [Quarterly Report on the Human Rights Situation in Haiti \(January-March 2024\)](#), 2024, pg. 9-10; BINUH, [Human Rights Situation: Main Trends \(July-September 2023\)](#), 2023, pg. 6.

⁶⁷ BINUH, [Report of the Secretary-General](#), January 17, 2023, par. 3; RNDHH, [The reign of Prime Minister Ariel Henry or the fury of the armed gangs](#), May 9, 2023, pp. 3-4.

⁶⁸ BINUH, [Report of the Secretary-General](#), April 14, 2023, par. 27.

⁶⁹ United Nations, [Haiti: Gangs have 'more firepower than the police.'](#) April 4, 2024.

⁷⁰ United Nations, [Haiti: Gangs have 'more firepower than the police.'](#) April 4, 2024.

⁷¹ BINUH, [Report of the Secretary-General](#), January 17, 2023, par. 13.

⁷² BINUH, [Report of the Secretary-General](#), January 17, 2023, par. 13.

⁷³ BINUH, [Report of the Secretary-General](#), 15 January 2024, par. 11.

⁷⁴ BINUH, [Report of the Secretary-General](#), 15 January 2024, par. 11.

⁷⁵ BINUH, [Report of the Secretary-General](#), January 17, 2023, pars. 50, 61.

⁷⁶ United Nations, [9757th Meeting: Rising Displacement, Criminal Gangs and Corruption Continue to Plague Haitian Life. Slowing Democratic Reform, Speakers Tell Security Council](#), 22 October 2024; BINUH, [Report of the Secretary-General](#), 17 January 2023, par. 3.

returned by countries in the region, putting them at risk amidst serious obstacles to their local reintegration⁷⁷.

35. In addition to massacres, selective homicides and kidnappings as a method of extortion, BINUH has documented instances of sexual violence, including mass rapes of girls and women, forced recruitment, exploitation and trafficking of children and adolescents, as well as the destruction of social service facilities⁷⁸. Criminal gang violence has left thousands of people dead, orphaned, injured, displaced, food insecure, without access to education, unemployed or with severe mental health problems, according to organizations with a presence in the country⁷⁹.
36. The HNP, and especially the anti-gang unit, has lacked sufficient resources and personnel to combat armed groups and contain their expansion, while demonstrating notable deficiencies in operational planning and management of available resources⁸⁰. This has led to the proliferation of “vigilante” or “self-defense” groups⁸¹. Hundreds of people allegedly associated with criminal gangs have been killed by these groups in at least seven of Haiti’s ten departments (Artibonite, Centre, Grand-Anse, Nord, Nord-Ouest, Ouest and Sud)⁸². Although the presence of self-defense groups may have reduced attacks by armed groups in some sectors of the country, humanitarian actors have also reported serious human rights violations due to the arbitrariness and brutality that characterize these groups⁸³.
37. The pursuit of justice for the crimes identified in this second cycle, most of which constitute serious human rights violations, has been extremely limited⁸⁴. To date, there has been no progress in investigating and sanctioning the perpetrators of any massacres, including those that took place before 2021 (Grand Ravine in 2017, La Saline in 2018 and Bel Air in 2019)⁸⁵. Corruption and political interference undue, in addition to the lack of legitimate justice operators and recurrent strikes of those who could still exercise their functions, explain the dysfunctionality of the judicial branch⁸⁶.
38. The deepening multidimensional crisis prompted new waves of protests against Henry’s interim administration. In this context, law enforcement agents were implicated in dozens of human rights violations as a result of the excessive use of force against protesters, including the use of live ammunition and tear gas canisters to disperse them⁸⁷. Several of the recorded protests paralyzed the country’s political, social and economic activities⁸⁸.
39. In this second cycle of instability, the Office of the Special Rapporteur took note in its annual reports⁸⁹ the murder of 12 journalists, most of them in the context of their coverage of clashes between criminal gangs for territorial control; the kidnapping of a dozen members of the press

⁷⁷ UNHCR, UNHCR issues new guidance on international refugee protection for Haitians, March 20, 2024; IOM, Haitians forcibly returned to Haiti, March 2024, p. 5.

⁷⁸ BINUH, Report of the Secretary-General, January 17, 2023, par. 78.

⁷⁹ BINUH, Report of the Secretary-General, January 17, 2023, par. 33.

⁸⁰ BINUH, Report of the Secretary-General, 15 January 2024, par. 16.

⁸¹ BINUH, Report of the Secretary-General, 27 June 2024, par. 16; BINUH, Report of the Secretary-General, 15 January 2024, par. 33.

⁸² BINUH, Report of the Secretary-General, 15 January 2024, par. 33.

⁸³ AP, vigilantes in Haiti strike back at gangsters with brutal street justice, 4 June 2023; Reuters, UN says over 350 killed by Haiti vigilante groups as thousands flee gang warfare, 18 August 2023.

⁸⁴ BINUH, Report of the Secretary-General, 27 June 2024, par. 41.

⁸⁵ BINUH, Report of the Secretary-General, 27 June 2024, par. 41.

⁸⁶ BINUH, Human Rights Situation in Haiti: Main Trends (April-June 2023), 2023, p. 6.

⁸⁷ BINUH, Quarterly report on the Human Rights Situation in Haiti (January-March 2024), p. 5.

⁸⁸ BINUH, Quarterly report on the Human Rights Situation in Haiti (January-March 2023), p. 3.

⁸⁹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2021, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 64 rev. 1, May 26, 2022, pars. 512-538; IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2022, OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, pars. 813-841; IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2023, OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, Dec. 6, 2023, pars. 944-985.

as a strategy of intimidation and extortion by armed groups; the forced internal displacement of nine journalists and their families, as well as the exile of at least three more reporters; the forced internal displacement of nine journalists and their families, as well as the exile of at least three more reporters; aggressions against a dozen journalists who were attacked by demonstrators and the forces of law and order while carrying out their informative work in multiple protests; as well as armed attacks against the surroundings of two media outlets.

40. In view of these facts, the Rapporteurship reiterated the calls made during the first cycle of the multidimensional crisis, emphasizing that the practice of journalism can only be carried out freely when the persons who carry it out are not victims of threats or physical, psychological or moral aggression or other acts of harassment⁹⁰. It also recalled the triple effect of violence against journalists, namely, the violation of the right of victims to express and disseminate their ideas, opinions and information; the generation of a chilling and silencing effect on their peers; and the violation of the rights of citizens to seek and receive information of any kind⁹¹. In this context, the Rapporteurship warned of the negative consequences for Haitian democracy, which requires a free, open and dynamic exchange of ideas and information to overcome the multidimensional crisis⁹².

C. End of Ariel Henry's interim government and installation of the Presidential Transitional Council (2024-)

41. Violence reached a peak between January and May 2024, when more than 3,250 homicides and nearly 1,000 kidnappings attributable to criminal gangs were recorded⁹³. In addition, self-defense groups carried out 140 executions of suspected gang members⁹⁴. This substantial increase in violence rates coincided with a non-aggression pact between the main criminal structures, known as "Viv Ansanm", to attack Henry's interim presidency while he was out of the country, requesting the support of the international community for the deployment of an international mission to support security in the country⁹⁵. Through this pact, criminal groups launched a series of coordinated attacks against government buildings and critical infrastructure⁹⁶.
42. In this way, the illegal actors previously organized in two rival coalitions, "G9" and "Gpèp", proceeded to storm dozens of police stations; the two largest penitentiaries in the country, from which at least 3,500 prisoners have reportedly escaped, including the National Penitentiary of Port-au-Prince, beneficiary of precautionary measures through IACHR Resolution No. 13/17; the main seaports; and the international airport of Port-au-Prince⁹⁷.

⁹⁰ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2022*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, par. 828.

⁹¹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2023*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 951.

⁹² IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2023*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 951.

⁹³ BINUH, *Report of the Secretary-General*, 27 June 2024, par. 16.

⁹⁴ BINUH, *Report of the Secretary-General*, 27 June 2024, par. 16.

⁹⁵ Crisis Group, *Haiti: A New Government Faces Up to the Gangs*, 23 May 2024; ACLED, *Viv Ansanm: Living together, fighting united - the alliance reshaping Haiti's gangland*, 16 October 2024.

⁹⁶ Crisis Group, *Haiti: A New Government Faces Up to the Gangs*, 23 May 2024; ACLED, *Viv Ansanm: Living together, fighting united - the alliance reshaping Haiti's gangland*, 16 October 2024.

⁹⁷ IACHR, Press Release No. 039/24, *IACHR expresses concern over significant upsurge in violence in Haiti*, February 21, 2024; IACHR, Press Release No. 048/24, *IACHR condemns escalation of violence and attacks by armed groups in Haiti*, March 7, 2024; United Nations, *Deadly Violence in Haiti at Record High. Some Worst Scenarios Now Realities. Special Representative Tells Security Council. Urging Deployment of Support Mission*, April 22, 2024.

According to public information, this united front of criminal gangs has also been looting and burning schools, health centers, businesses and private residences⁹⁸.

43. Faced with the new wave of violence, the unpopularity of the interim Prime Minister and his inability to return to the country, various political groups and representatives of the Haitian private sector agreed, at a meeting convened on March 11, 2024, by CARICOM, to establish a CPT as a new governance mechanism⁹⁹. It was decided that the Council should be composed of seven voting members and two civil society observers, and that its non-renewable mandate should extend until February 7, 2026, the deadline for the installation of democratically elected persons to fill vacant executive and legislative positions¹⁰⁰.
44. Among the provisions of the March 11, 2024 agreement are the responsibility to promptly appoint an interim prime minister and a council of ministers; exercise the powers of the Haitian presidency during the transition period, until a democratically elected government is in place; establish essential criteria for the selection of the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) to pave the way for general elections; facilitate a peaceful transition of power; ensure continuity of governance and re-establish national security; and continue to collaborate with the Haitian government to ensure a peaceful transition of power; establish essential criteria for the selection of the CEP to pave the way for general elections; facilitate a peaceful transition of power; ensure continuity of governance and re-establish national security; and continue collaboration with all members of the international community for the accelerated deployment of a multinational security support mission to Haiti¹⁰¹.
45. The CPT was sworn in on April 25, 2024, after weeks of negotiations between country's political, social and economic actors. In turn, interim Prime Minister Henry submitted his resignation along with that of his cabinet¹⁰². The Council, according to public reports, has been subject to internal divisions, delays and alleged attempts to impose nominations for top-level positions¹⁰³. After appointing an interim prime minister and reversing this decision following a rift within the new political body, members opted to appoint Garry Conille, former UNICEF regional director for Latin America and the Caribbean, as the new interim Prime Minister. Conille has served as interim prime minister since 28 May 2024¹⁰⁴. However, after a series of disagreements and friction, the CPT removed Conille from office on November 11, 2024, and appointed businessman Alix Didier Fils-Aime as his replacement¹⁰⁵.
46. In the context of this transition process, the IACHR reiterated the urgency of seeking permanent solutions to overcome the multidimensional crisis with the support of the international community, emphasizing the leadership that Haitian citizens must exercise¹⁰⁶. The Commission encouraged OAS Member States to contribute to multilateral efforts to curb violence and insecurity in Haiti, prioritizing the protection of human rights, the strengthening

⁹⁸ IACHR, Press Release No. 039/24, [IACHR expresses concern over significant upsurge in violence in Haiti](#), February 21, 2024; IACHR, [Press Release No. 048/24, IACHR condemns escalation of violence and attacks by armed groups in Haiti](#), March 7, 2024; United Nations, [Deadly Violence in Haiti at Record High. Some Worst Scenarios Now Realities. Special Representative Tells Security Council, Urging Deployment of Support Mission](#), April 22, 2024.

⁹⁹ CARICOM, [Outcome declaration of CARICOM, international partners, and Haitian leaders](#), March 11, 2024.

¹⁰⁰ CARICOM, [Outcome declaration of CARICOM, international partners, and Haitian leaders](#), March 11, 2024.

¹⁰¹ CARICOM, [Outcome declaration of CARICOM, international partners, and Haitian leaders](#), March 11, 2024.

¹⁰² BBC, [Haiti PM Henry resigns as transitional council is sworn in](#), April 25, 2024; CNN, [Haiti's prime minister resigns as council sworn in to lead political transition in violence-ravaged nation](#), April 25, 2024.

¹⁰³ AP News, [Haiti's transitional council names a new prime minister in the hopes of quelling stifling violence](#), 30 April 2024; Reuters, [Haiti transition council walks back PM nomination, exposing divide](#), 2 May 2024.

¹⁰⁴ AP News, [Transitional council in Haiti selects new prime minister for a country under siege by gangs](#), May 28, 2024; Reuters, [Haiti transition council taps PM Conille to again lead country](#), May 29, 2024.

¹⁰⁵ BBC, [Haiti's prime minister ousted after six months](#), November 11, 2024; The Guardian, [Haiti appoints new prime minister as security crisis mounts](#), November 11, 2024.

¹⁰⁶ IACHR, Press Release No. 055/24, [IACHR welcomes the support of the international community and calls on Haiti to ensure a peaceful transition](#), March 21, 2024.

of the capacities of the State and civil society, as well as the recovery of citizen confidence¹⁰⁷. To this end, the IACHR argued that it is essential that this transition process involve the participation of all sectors of civil society, without discrimination and ensuring transparency and accountability¹⁰⁸.

47. On September 18, 2024, the CPT installed seven of the nine members of the CEP, charged with overseeing the pending elections in the country¹⁰⁹. The CEP members, according to public information, represent farmers' groups, journalists, human rights activists and the voodoo community¹¹⁰. Journalist Jacques Desrosiers, former president of the Association of Journalists in Haiti (AJH), serves as the press representative on this body¹¹¹. It is central to note that, as mentioned in previous sections, the last election was held in 2016; that since 2021 the country has lacked a democratically elected president; and that since January 2023 it has not had legislators elected by popular vote.
48. In October 2024, and after six months since its formation, the CPT offered a balance sheet on its management, noting that it has failed to meet the expectations of citizens, especially with regard to the restoration of citizen security and transparency following allegations of corruption against members of the new political body¹¹². Regarding the aforementioned allegations, the Unit for Combating Corruption (ULCC) published a report accusing three members of the CPT of demanding more than US\$750,000 in bribes, which would have undermined public confidence in the new political body¹¹³.
49. In November 2024, sectors of the international community and civil society expressed concern over the dismissal of Prime Minister Garry Conille, warning that the decision could destabilize the transitional government and further undermine the confidence of all actors in it¹¹⁴.
50. The dismissal of Prime Minister Conille coincided with a new wave of violence due to clashes between criminal gangs and the HNP, backed by MSSM. According to information gathered and disseminated by the UN, criminal gangs have launched new coordinated attacks in areas never before penetrated, so that they now control an estimated 85% of the Haitian capital¹¹⁵. In addition, the scale and intensity of hostilities has resulted in the displacement of more than 40,000 people in less than two weeks¹¹⁶, as well as the temporary suspension of operations of

¹⁰⁷ IACHR, Press Release No. 055/24, [IACHR welcomes the support of the international community and calls on Haiti to ensure a peaceful transition](#), March 21, 2024.

¹⁰⁸ IACHR, Press Release No. 055/24, [IACHR welcomes the support of the international community and calls on Haiti to ensure a peaceful transition](#), March 21, 2024.

¹⁰⁹ PBS, [Haiti forms provisional electoral council to prepare for its first elections since 2016](#), September 18, 2024; BBC, [Haiti edges towards holding first elections since 2016](#), September 19, 2024.

¹¹⁰ PBS, [Haiti forms provisional electoral council to prepare for its first elections since 2016](#), September 18, 2024; BBC, [Haiti edges towards holding first elections since 2016](#), September 19, 2024.

¹¹¹ Vant Bèf Info, [Jacques Desrosiers représentera la presse au Conseil électoral provisoire](#), July 25, 2024; AlterPresse, [Nomination de 7 membres du Conseil électoral provisoire et de ceux de la Commission vérité, justice et réparation](#), September 18, 2024.

¹¹² Le Nouvelliste, [Le président Voltaire fait le bilan des six mois du CPT](#), October 25, 2024; AP, [New leader takes over Haiti's transitional presidential council marred by corruption allegations](#), October 7, 2024.

¹¹³ France 24, [Top Haiti officials guilty of corruption, anti-graft agency says](#), October 3, 2024; AlterPresse, [Haïti-Corruption : Le fil de l'affaire de pots-de-vin impliquant 3 membres du Conseil présidentiel de transition](#), October 3, 2024; Haitian Times, [Haiti's costly presidential council on brink of collapse amid deepening corruption scandal](#), October 15, 2024.

¹¹⁴ Miami Herald, [Haiti's ruling presidential body fires Prime Minister](#), November 10, 2024; NPR, [Haiti replaces its prime minister, marking more turmoil in transition process](#), November 11, 2024.

¹¹⁵ United Nations News, [As violent gangs extend control in Haiti, UN commits to staying the course](#), November 21, 2024; AP, [Haiti wonders what's next as gang violence surges and the push for a UN peacekeeping mission flops](#), November 24, 2024.

¹¹⁶ IOM, [Over 20,000 Flee as Rising Gang Violence Spurs Mass Displacement in Haiti](#), November 17, 2024; The New York Times, [Surge of Gang Violence in Haiti Leads U.N. Workers to Flee](#), November 25, 2024; Al Jazeera, [UN evacuation in Haiti, police assault stronghold of gang leader 'Barbecue'](#), November 25, 2024.

humanitarian actors in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, who claim to be under attack by both criminal outlaw groups and security forces¹¹⁷.

III. Multinational Security Support Mission to Haiti

A. Context

51. The HNP, with the support of the Armed Forces, has sought to protect citizens and critical infrastructure from violence by criminal structures. However, both forces have faced chronic operational, logistical, resource and personnel limitations, which in turn have hindered their ability to effectively prevent, contain and repel all criminal gang attacks and regain authority over gang-controlled sectors¹¹⁸.
52. Despite national and international efforts to strengthen the capacities of police forces, retain personnel, and improve their conduct and discipline, the police force has declined during each year of the multidimensional crisis plaguing the country¹¹⁹. According to available information, this pattern is attributed to the murder of hundreds of officers by criminal gangs; coordinated attacks on police patrols and stations, leading to numerous resignations, early retirements, and high levels of absenteeism due to lack of security guarantees; and dismissals and suspensions following investigations for corruption, links to criminal gangs, and human rights violations¹²⁰.

B. Request

53. In October 2022, as State law enforcement was outnumbered and outgunned by criminal gangs, Henry's interim government asked the international community to deploy a specialized international armed force to address insecurity¹²¹.
54. Prime Minister Henry's request was initially met with skepticism within sectors of the citizenry because of the negative consequences of previous foreign military interventions¹²². Since the early 20th century, Haiti has witnessed at least three direct interventions involving widespread human rights violations¹²³. The UN approved peacekeeping deployments between 1993 and 2000, eventually replaced by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) between 2004 and 2017, the United Nations Justice Support Mission in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) between 2017 and 2019, and since then by BINUH¹²⁴. Despite being tasked with improving security and democratic institutionalization, the blue helmets faced accusations of committing atrocities against civilians, in particular gender-based violence, and introducing cholera, claiming the lives of nearly 10,000 people¹²⁵.

¹¹⁷ Doctors Without Borders, [Haiti: Violence and threats by police force MSF to suspend activities in Port-au-Prince area](#), November 19, 2024.

¹¹⁸ BINUH, [Report of the Secretary-General](#), 13 June 2022 par. 14; BINUH, [Report of the Secretary-General](#), 27 June 2024, par. 22.

¹¹⁹ BINUH, [Report of the Secretary-General](#), 11 June 2021, par. 33; BINUH, [Report of the Secretary-General](#), 17 January 2023, par. 24.

¹²⁰ BINUH, [Report of the Secretary-General](#), June 27, 2024, pars. 22-24.

¹²¹ United Nations Security Council, [Letter dated 8 October 2022 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council](#), 10 October 2022; BINUH, [Report of the Secretary-General](#), 17 January 2023, par. 7.

¹²² The Guardian, [Haiti government prepares to ask for 'specialized armed force' from abroad](#), October 7, 2024; Foreign Policy, [Haiti's crisis escalates](#), October 14, 2022; Al Jazeera, [What is the history of foreign interventions in Haiti?](#), March 14, 2024.

¹²³ The Guardian, [Haiti government prepares to ask for 'specialized armed force' from abroad](#), Oct. 7, 2024; Foreign Policy, [Haiti's crisis escalates](#), Oct. 14, 2022; Al Jazeera, [What is the history of foreign interventions in Haiti?](#), March 14, 2024.

¹²⁴ IACHR, [Situation of Human Rights in Haiti](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 385, August 30, 2022, par. 34.

¹²⁵ NPR, [U.N. Admits Role In Haiti Cholera Outbreak That Has Killed Thousands](#), Aug. 16, 2016; The Guardian, [UN admits for the first time that peacekeepers brought Cholera to Haiti](#), Dec. 1, 2016; Reuters, [Haitians say underaged girls were abused by U.N.](#)

55. Despite the negative track record of previous international interventions, the Haitian population's perception would have changed in the face of worsening security in 2023. A series of polls found that more than two-thirds of citizens would support the deployment of a foreign force to combat armed groups, hand in hand with the HNP¹²⁶.

C. Mandate

56. One year after Prime Minister Henry's request, the UN Security Council, through Resolution 2699/2023, authorized the MSSM in October 2023¹²⁷. According to the resolution, MSSM is to have a lead country and work in close cooperation and coordination with the Haitian government for an initial 12-month period to assist the HNP in "restoring security and creating conditions conducive to free and fair elections"¹²⁸.
57. Although MSSM was authorized by the UN Security Council and has been endorsed by it ever since, it is not a peacekeeping mission. The Security Council therefore called upon UN Member States and regional organizations, such as the OAS, to provide personnel, equipment and the necessary financial and logistical resources for the Mission¹²⁹. It also urged Member States participating in the Mission to take the necessary measures to carry out its mandate and to use force in coordination with the Haitian authorities and in strict compliance with all provisions of international law, including international human rights law¹³⁰.
58. In addition, the Resolution urged Member States participating in the Mission to "ensure the highest standards of transparency, conduct and discipline of their troops," and to establish "a robust compliance mechanism to prevent, investigate, resolve and publicly report human rights violations and abuses related to the mission in Haiti"¹³¹.
59. The cost of implementing this temporary operation should, according to the resolution, be covered by voluntary contributions and the support of individual States and regional organizations¹³². The Security Council therefore requested the UN Secretary-General to establish a trust fund as a mechanism to facilitate voluntary contributions to enable and operationalize the MSSM mandate¹³³.
60. In September 2024, the UN Security Council unanimously extended the Mission's mandate until October 2, 2025, encouraging it to accelerate its deployment and the international community to increase its voluntary contributions¹³⁴.

D. Deployment

61. In 2023, the Kenyan government expressed its readiness to lead the MSSM and pledged to deploy up to 1,000 police officers¹³⁵. Since the adoption of the MSSM, other States, including the Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Chad and Jamaica, have expressed their

peacekeepers, December 18, 2019; Human Rights Watch, *UN Peacekeeping has a Sexual Abuse Problem*, January 11, 2020; National Health Institute, *Cholera in the Time of MINUSTAH: Experiences of Community Members Affected by Cholera in Haiti*, April 20, 2022.

¹²⁶ BINUH, *Report of the Secretary-General*, April 14, 2023, par. 12.

¹²⁷ United Nations Security Council (UNSC), *Resolution 2699 (2023)*, October 2, 2023.

¹²⁸ UNSC, *Resolution 2699 (2023)*, October 2, 2023, par. 1.

¹²⁹ UNSC, *Resolution 2699 (2023)*, October 2, 2023, par. 4.

¹³⁰ UNSC, *Resolution 2699 (2023)*, October 2, 2023, par. 5.

¹³¹ UNSC, *Resolution 2699 (2023)*, October 2, 2023, par. 10.

¹³² UNSC, *Resolution 2699 (2023)*, October 2, 2023, par. 1.

¹³³ UNSC, *Resolution 2699 (2023)*, October 2, 2023, par. 16.

¹³⁴ UNSC, *Resolution 2751 (2024)*, September 30, 2024.

¹³⁵ UNSC, *Resolution 2699 (2023)*, October 2, 2023, preamble; Al Jazeera, *Why Kenya volunteered to lead UN-approved forces to Haiti*, October 3, 2023; BBC, *Kenya to send 600 more police officers to Haiti*, September 22, 2024.

intention to contribute personnel to the Mission, committing to deploy around 1,500 police officers¹³⁶.

62. Despite the expression of interest by eight States to participate in the Mission under Kenya's leadership, including four from the OAS, difficulties have been identified in the deployment of their forces leading to a delay of eight months since the approval of the MSSM.
63. On the one hand, the Kenyan Supreme Court ruled that the deployment of forces in Haiti would be "illegal and invalid" until a bilateral security agreement was concluded¹³⁷. Opposition sectors also questioned the constitutionality of the deployment of Kenyan agents, filing petitions against them¹³⁸. These legal obstacles were compounded by the announcement of the unilateral suspension of any deployment until a new government was formed in Haiti following the events presented in the first quarter of 2024¹³⁹.
64. Moreover, the deployment was delayed by the lack of financial resources to pay for the transfer of police units from their home country, the provision of necessary supplies such as armored vehicles, and the construction of the base of operations¹⁴⁰.
65. Once the CPT was in place, the initial deployment of approximately 200 Kenyan police officers was delayed until the end of June 2024 due to lack of adequate equipment¹⁴¹. In mid-July, about 200 additional officers arrived in the country¹⁴². At the time of their arrival, basic aspects of the Mission, such as the location and manning of their base, the rules of engagement, the strategy for combating the criminal groups, and the terms of coordination and cooperation with the HNP and the transitional government were unknown¹⁴³.
66. As of December 31, 2024, MSSM was estimated to have a contingent of approximately 430 police, mostly from Kenya, as well as Jamaica, the Bahamas and Belize¹⁴⁴. The size of the current deployment is significantly lower than that pledged by States (2,500 units) and that considered necessary by UN experts (5,000 units)¹⁴⁵. With respect to MSSM funding, approximately US\$380 million of the US\$600 million required for the Mission's first year of operation has been raised¹⁴⁶.

¹³⁶ UN News, [Haiti: Multinational mission and the 'inexorable requirement to restore security conditions'](#), 20 May 2024; Reuters, [Five countries pledge personnel for Haiti security mission, UN says](#), 29 February 2024; InSight Crime, [Haiti's Disorganized Organized Crime Strategy](#), 27 May 2024.

¹³⁷ CBC, [Kenya High Court ruling throws planned deployment of police to gang-plagued Haiti in doubt](#), 26 January 2024; Al Jazeera, ['Illegal and invalid': Kenya court halts deployment of police to Haiti](#), 26 January 2024; Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, [May 24, 2024. Delays and new court challenge threaten Kenya's police deployment in Haiti](#).

¹³⁸ AP, [Kenya court temporarily bars security forces deployment to Haiti for two weeks](#), October 9, 2023; InSight Crime, [Haiti's Disorganized Organized Crime Strategy](#), May 27, 2024.

¹³⁹ The New York Times, [Kenya Hits Pause on Police Deployment to Haiti](#), March 12, 2024; Reuters, [Kenya's pause to Haiti deployment follows growing doubts about mission](#), March 13, 2024.

¹⁴⁰ The New Humanitarian, [US Releases funding for Kenya-led Haiti police mission](#), June 20, 2024; Congressional Research Center, [Haiti in Crisis: What Role for a Multinational Security Support Mission?](#), October 2, 2024; Better World Campaign, [Haiti: A Year in Review](#), October 2, 2024.

¹⁴¹ The New York Times, [Foreign Police Officers Land in Haiti](#), June 25, 2024; AP, [UN-backed contingent of foreign police arrives in Haiti as Kenya-led force prepares to face gangs](#), June 25, 2024.

¹⁴² France 24, [Hundreds more Kenyan police deployed to Haiti for UN-backed security mission](#), July 16, 2024; AP, [More Kenyan police arrive in Haiti with UN-backed mission to fight violent gangs](#), July 16, 2024.

¹⁴³ The New Humanitarian, [Haiti in-depth: Ten key questions as Kenyan police deploy to restore order](#), June 26, 2024; AP, [UN-backed contingent of foreign police arrives in Haiti as Kenya-led force prepares to face gangs](#), June 25, 2024.

¹⁴⁴ Congressional Research Center, [Haiti in Crisis: What Role for a Multinational Security Support Mission?](#), 2 October 2024; AP, [Jamaican soldiers and police arrive in Haiti](#), 12 September 2024; Reuters, [Belize army sends officers for long-delayed Haiti mission to Jamaica](#), 9 September 2024; Haiti Libre, [A team of Bahamian soldiers has arrived in Haiti](#), 19 October 2024; BINUH, [Report of the Secretary-General](#), 16 January 2025, par. 28.

¹⁴⁵ AP, [Haiti now needs up to 5,000 police to help tackle 'catastrophic' gang violence, UN expert say](#), 28 March 2024; Crisis Group, [Weighing the Case for a New Peacekeeping Mission to Haiti](#), 1 November 2024.

¹⁴⁶ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, [Can the International Community Do More to Help Haiti?](#), 12 September 2024; Crisis Group, [Weighing the Case for a New Peacekeeping Mission to Haiti](#), 1 November 2024.

67. Kenyan police have been criticized for alleged human rights violations during social protests. Civil society organizations have reported that Kenyan police have used live ammunition against protesters, resulting in injuries and deaths¹⁴⁷. They have also pointed out the allegedly disproportionate use of tear gas, as well as the practice of massive and irregular arrests and detentions¹⁴⁸.
68. The IACHR has reiterated, both in its annual and country reports, as well as in its public hearings and press releases, that the multidimensional crisis in Haiti requires immediate attention and assistance from the international community¹⁴⁹. Following the approval of the MSSM in October 2023, the difficulties in its deployment and operational limitations, the Commission urged Member States to provide political and economic support, and to consider contributing police units¹⁵⁰.
69. For its part, the OAS Permanent Council, in two resolutions, has urged Member States and permanent observers to “redouble their efforts to prioritize, integrate, facilitate, provide and coordinate assistance to Haiti”¹⁵¹. It has also urged Member States and permanent observers, through MSSM, to contribute, within their means, “personnel, equipment, training, and the necessary financial and logistical resources”¹⁵².

E. Preliminary results

70. Since the deployment of the MSSM, some preliminary progress has been made in overcoming the multidimensional crisis, including the reopening of the capital’s international airport and the country’s main seaport, essential for the arrival of more humanitarian aid¹⁵³; the partial and temporary retreat of some criminal gangs to their strongholds in Port-au-Prince, which allowed the patrolling of vulnerable areas by the national police and the MSSM¹⁵⁴; the liberation of the country’s main hospital, which facilitated medical care to the population¹⁵⁵; and the beginning of preparations for the holding of elections¹⁵⁶.

¹⁴⁷ Human Rights Watch, [Kenya: End Abusive Policing of Protests](#), May 31, 2023; Amnesty International, [Haiti: Open Letter to all Members of the Security Council regarding the Development of an International Security Force in Haiti](#), August 18, 2023.

¹⁴⁸ Human Rights Watch, [Kenya: End Abusive Policing of Protests](#), May 31, 2023; Amnesty International, [Haiti: Open Letter to all Members of the Security Council regarding the Development of an International Security Force in Haiti](#), August 18, 2023.

¹⁴⁹ IACHR, Press Release No. 146/24, [Haiti: IACHR Calls to Guarantee Transition Process with the Support of the International Community](#), June 24, 2024; IACHR, Thematic Hearing, “[Situation of Human Rights in Haiti in the Framework of the Humanitarian and Citizen Security Crisis](#),” 187th Regular Session, virtual, July 13, 2023; IACHR, [Situation of Human Rights in Haiti](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 385, August 30, 2022.

¹⁵⁰ IACHR, Press Release No. 146/24, [Haiti: IACHR Calls to Guarantee Transition Process with the Support of the International Community](#), June 24, 2024.

¹⁵¹ OAS, Permanent Council, [Resolution CP/RES.1237 \(2469/23\) rev. 1. \(2469/23\) rev. 1](#), Provision of integrated assistance to Haiti in humanitarian and electoral matters and for the strengthening of democracy, the protection of human rights, and integral development in collaboration with the multinational security support mission and the CARICOM group of eminent persons, approved by the Permanent Council at the special session held on November 17, 2023; OAS, Permanent Council, [Resolution CP/RES. 1251 \(2492/24\)](#), Support for the democratic transition in Haiti, approved by the Permanent Council at its regular session held on April 3, 2024.

¹⁵² OAS, Permanent Council, [Resolution CP/RES.1237 \(2469/23\) rev. 1](#); OAS, Permanent Council, [Resolution CP/RES. 1251 \(2492/24\)](#).

¹⁵³ BBC, [Haiti airport reopens after weeks of gang violence](#), May 20, 2024; Al Jazeera, [Haiti could be ‘completely isolated’ as gunfire closes main airport again](#), Nov. 12, 2024; BBC, [Haiti’s main port closes as gang violence spirals](#), March 7, 2024; Miami Herald, [Reopening of seaport, airport allow more aid to get to Haitians, UN food agency says](#), June 5, 2024.

¹⁵⁴ Congressional Research Center, [Haiti in Crisis: What Role for a Multinational Security Support Mission?](#), 2 October 2024; Crisis Group, [Weighing the Case for a New Peacekeeping Mission to Haiti](#), 1 November 2024.

¹⁵⁵ The Hill, [Haitian prime minister tours Port au Prince hospital after police take back from gang control](#), July 9, 2024; Haiti Libre, [The PM visits the General Hospital liberated from bandits by elite units](#), July 10, 2024.

¹⁵⁶ PBS, [Haiti forms provisional electoral council to prepare for its first elections since 2016](#), September 18, 2024; Caribbean Loop News, [Haiti appoints council to oversee electoral process](#), September 20, 2024.

71. Despite these preliminary advances, criminal gangs have intensified their attacks since October 2024, resulting in at least one massacre in Pont-Sondé¹⁵⁷; coordinated attacks in the neighborhoods of Solino, Tabarre and Champ de Mars in the capital¹⁵⁸; assaults in the towns of Arcahaie, Estère and Cabaret, located north of Port-au-Prince¹⁵⁹; and a new closure of Port-au-Prince's international airport as shootings by illegal actors resumed¹⁶⁰. Following the increase in violence, civil society has expressed doubts about the improvement in security conditions¹⁶¹.
72. The funding and personnel shortfalls of MSSM, in part due to its voluntary nature for States in the Americas and other regions, have hindered its full operation to counter the violence of criminal structures¹⁶². Given this reality, the transitional government has formally expressed its interest in transforming the MSSM into a UN peacekeeping operation from the second half of 2024¹⁶³. Such a transformation, if approved by the UN Security Council, would allow the State to access a substantial peacekeeping fund, financed through mandatory contributions from all UN Member States¹⁶⁴. It would also allow it to draw on the group of countries that have contributed troops and pledged specific capabilities to the UN, such as specialized corps and helicopter units¹⁶⁵.
73. On November 13, 2024, the OAS Permanent Council approved a resolution in support of Haiti's request for a UN peacekeeping operation, noting that it would "provide more sustainable support for long-term stability and security, rule of law and democratic governance"¹⁶⁶. In this regard, the resolution encouraged the UN Security Council to support "as a matter of urgency" Haiti's request and to maintain coordination between BINUH and MSSM¹⁶⁷. Publicly available information would indicate that at least two permanent members of the UN Security Council would be against the transformation of MSSM, arguing that the Council would not be in a position to consider further changes without the Mission becoming fully operational¹⁶⁸. These permanent members also reportedly stated that conditions in Haiti would not be suitable for an eventual deployment of UN peacekeepers¹⁶⁹.

¹⁵⁷ NPR, [The death toll in a gang attack on a Haitian town rises to at least 115](#), October 10, 2024; ACLED, [Pont-Sondé massacre marks a surge in Gran Grief's deadly campaign in Artibonite](#), October 11, 2024.

¹⁵⁸ AP News, [Gangs attack neighborhoods across Haiti's capital in new wave of violence](#), 18 October 2024; The Guardian, ['This is effectively a civil war': despair in Haiti as gangs step up assault on capital](#), 30 October 2024.

¹⁵⁹ Miami Herald, [More than 1,200 have been killed in Haiti as gangs launch fresh attacks, UN says](#), 30 October 2024; Crisis Group, [Weighing the Case for a New Peacekeeping Mission to Haiti](#), 1 November 2024.

¹⁶⁰ PBS, [Haiti's main airport and capital frozen day after plane shot by gangs](#), November 12, 2024; AP News, [US bans airlines from flying to Haiti and UN suspends flights after planes were shot by gangs](#), November 12, 2024.

¹⁶¹ The New York Times, [Haiti's Gang Violence Worsens as FAA Suspends Flights From the U.S.](#), November 14, 2024; The Guardian, [Haiti appoints new prime minister as security crisis mounts](#), November 11, 2024.

¹⁶² BINUH, [UN human rights expert William O'Neill concludes official visit, laments bleak situation](#), September 20, 2024; UN Web TV, [Maria Isabel Salvador \(BINUH\) on the question concerning Haiti](#), October 22, 2024.

¹⁶³ AP, [Haiti says it supports a UN peacekeeping mission to fight the country's violent gangs](#), September 26, 2024; Miami Herald, [As gangs expand, Haiti formally asks UN for peacekeeping](#), October 22, 2024.

¹⁶⁴ UN Peacekeeping, [How Are We Funded?](#), 2024; Crisis Group, [Weighing the Case for a New Peacekeeping Mission to Haiti](#), 1 November 2024.

¹⁶⁵ UN Peacekeeping, [Troop and Police Contributors](#), 2024; Crisis Group, [Weighing the Case for a New Peacekeeping Mission to Haiti](#), 1 November 2024.

¹⁶⁶ OAS, Permanent Council, [Resolution CP/RES. 1268/24](#), In support of Haiti's request for a United Nations peacekeeping operation, approved by the Permanent Council at its regular session held on November 13, 2024, par. 1.

¹⁶⁷ OAS, Permanent Council, [Resolution CP/RES. 1268/24](#), In support of Haiti's request for a United Nations peacekeeping operation, approved by the Permanent Council at its regular session held on November 13, 2024, par. 2.

¹⁶⁸ Reuters, [US changes tack on Haiti peacekeeping push amid China, Russia opposition](#), 29 September 2024; Miami Herald, US drops, for now, [UN peacekeeping bid for Haiti gang crisis](#), 29 September 2024; Crisis Group, [Weighing the Case for a New Peacekeeping Mission to Haiti](#), 1 November 2024.

¹⁶⁹ Reuters, [US changes tack on Haiti peacekeeping push amid China, Russia opposition](#), 29 September 2024; Miami Herald, US drops, for now, [UN peacekeeping bid for Haiti gang crisis](#), 29 September 2024; Crisis Group, [Weighing the Case for a New Peacekeeping Mission to Haiti](#), 1 November 2024.

IV. The importance of press freedom in overcoming the multidimensional crisis

74. As a universal pillar of democracy, freedom of the press is a fundamental tool for overcoming the multidimensional crisis that Haiti is going through¹⁷⁰. In particular, the Office of the Special Rapporteur highlights the role of this right, enshrined in Article 13 of the American Convention on Human Rights¹⁷¹, in the documentation and reporting of human rights violations; the accountability of political actors and the security apparatus; the creation and maintenance of optimal conditions for the holding of general elections; and the dissemination of information, nationally and internationally, so that Haitian citizens can build consensus around the future of their country and the scope and characteristics of the international community's accompaniment.
75. A free, pluralistic and independent press can document and make visible human rights violations, amplify the voices of victims, and mobilize national and international actors to act. In Haiti, journalists can document severe violations of the human rights of the population, including killings by criminal gangs and vigilante groups, extrajudicial executions, enforced disappearances and abductions, torture and physical abuse, gender-based violence, and forced internal displacement. By collecting testimonies, cross-checking and verifying information, and disseminating, in a timely and accurate manner, the experiences of victims and their demands to national and international actors, the press can contribute to ensuring prevention, protection, justice and reparations¹⁷². Without freedom of the press, these violations would run the risk of remaining hidden or lacking echo, which in turn could further accentuate impunity in the country and exacerbate the lack of attention and action by hemispheric and extra-hemispheric States, international and regional organizations, and humanitarian actors, among other members of the international community¹⁷³.
76. In a context marked by alterations in constitutional powers and profound State dysfunctionality, accountability takes on critical importance. In this scenario, the media can play a key role in investigating and analyzing the performance of the new governance and security bodies, including the CPT, the interim prime minister and his or her cabinet, the CEP, and the MSSM. This effort could include the evaluation of their performance, especially their progress in relation to their stated objectives, the ethical integrity of their members and their respect for human rights, as well as the use of public and international cooperation resources¹⁷⁴.

¹⁷⁰ The IACHR has historically held that an independent and critical press is a fundamental element for the validity of the other freedoms that make up the democratic system and the rule of law. See IACHR, Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Mexico, OEA/Ser.L/V/II.100, Doc 7 rev.1, September 24, 1998, par. 649, p.142. and Case #11,739 Report No. 5/99 Héctor Felix Miranda.

¹⁷¹ The Republic of Haiti ratified the American Convention on Human Rights on September 14, 1977. OAS, [Status of Signatures and Ratifications of the American Convention on Human Rights](#), November 2024.

¹⁷² The IACHR has recognized that it is part of the field of journalistic activities covered by the right to freedom of expression to visit communities affected by situations of public order or armed conflict, to document their living conditions, to collect testimonies and denunciations of violations of their human rights by the authorities, and that therefore any attack or reprisal by the authorities as a consequence of the exercise of these activities is a violation of the right to freedom of thought and expression. See IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, [Inter-American Legal Framework on the Right to Freedom of Expression](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II IACHR/SRFOE/INF. 2/09, December 30, 2009, par. 193.

¹⁷³ The IACHR has explained that it is journalists who, risking their lives, bring to the public an independent and professional view of what is really happening in areas of conflict, including conflicts involving illegal armed groups. In this sense, it has urged States to grant the greatest possible protection and the maximum degree of guarantees for them to fulfill their function of seeking and transmitting information on human rights violations. See IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, [Inter-American Legal Framework on the Right to Freedom of Expression](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II CIDH/SRFOE/INF. 2/09, December 30, 2009, par. 195.

¹⁷⁴ The Inter-American Court has recalled in judgments that in a democratic society, the press must report extensively on issues of public interest that affect social goods, and that officials must be held accountable for their actions in the exercise of their public duties. See IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, [Inter-American Legal Framework on the Right to Freedom of Expression](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II IACHR/SRFOE/INF. 2/09, December 30, 2009, par. 48.

77. The press in Haiti can also play a key role in creating and maintaining optimal conditions for the holding of general elections, which are fundamental for the return to participatory democracy and the full functioning of the State¹⁷⁵. Its work could include coverage of the CEP to report on the electoral process, logistics, and voting procedures, as well as countering misinformation through civic education campaigns. Likewise, the press can oversee electoral actors, investigate irregularities, supervise the behavior of parties and candidates, and encourage citizen participation. During Election Day, its role may also include promptly reporting incidents such as intimidation, acts of violence or technical failures, and comparing and contrasting this information with election observers.
78. Finally, journalists, in fulfillment of their social function, can inform citizens and promote an inclusive public debate, allowing consensus building on the future of the country and international accompaniment¹⁷⁶. In this way, they can explain the political, economic and social challenges to multiple sectors of the population, ensuring that the information is impartial, reliable and accessible, including through the prioritization of radio programs and Haitian Creole. This is in addition to facilitating tools and spaces for open and pluralistic discussions on a new social contract, where the different voices of Haitian society can express themselves, including those of marginalized sectors, such as women, youth and rural communities. The press can also help the population to understand the dynamics and limitations of international support in Haiti, providing information and analysis on the most appropriate types of intervention or cooperation for the national context, as well as evaluating the effectiveness and impact of current accompaniment.

V. Press freedom situation

79. In compliance with its mandate and functions, the SRFOE has followed up on the press freedom situation in Haiti amidst the State's multidimensional crisis. The annual monitoring carried out since 2018 has allowed the Rapporteurship to conclude that the deterioration of press freedom in Haiti, both in scale and speed, is unprecedented in the hemisphere.
80. In the last six years, the SRFOE has gathered information on multiple violations of freedom of expression. Below, the Rapporteurship presents a systematization of the facts recorded to date and an analysis of the patterns of violence observed based on the corresponding Inter-American standards.

A. Murder of journalists

81. The SRFOE has recorded the murder of 18 journalists since the beginning of the first cycle of the multidimensional crisis. This alarming figure contrasts with the 11 murders that were documented in the previous two decades, between 1998, when the Rapporteurship was created, and 2018¹⁷⁷.

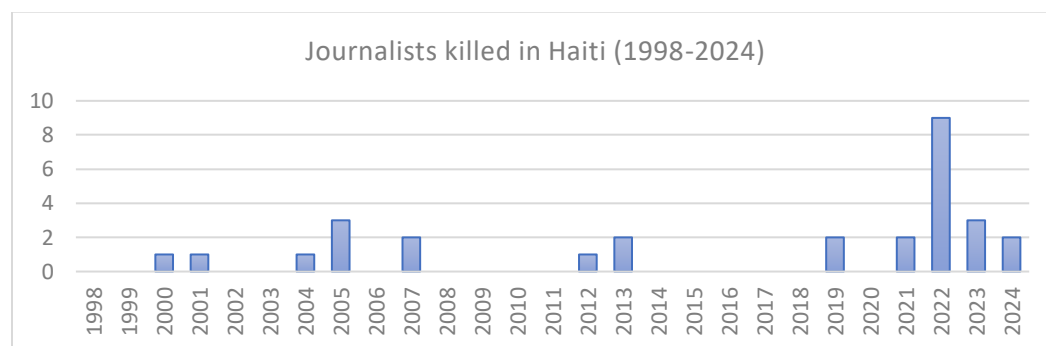
¹⁷⁵ The Inter-American Court has explained that freedom of expression, and by extension freedom of the press, is a fundamental element in electoral processes because it shapes the public opinion of the voters, strengthening the political contest between the different participants; providing instruments for analyzing the proposals of each of them; thus allowing for greater transparency and oversight of future authorities and their management; and nurturing the formation of the collective will expressed in the vote. See IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, *Inter-American Legal Framework on the Right to Freedom of Expression*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II CIDH/SRFOE/INF. 2/09, December 30, 2009, par. 119.

¹⁷⁶ Inter-American jurisprudence has emphasized the importance of freedom of expression, and therefore of freedom of the press, for participation in active, firm and challenging debates regarding all aspects linked to the normal and harmonious functioning of society. See IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, *Inter-American Legal Framework on the Right to Freedom of Expression*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II IACHR/SRFOE/INF. 2/09, December 30, 2009, par. 34.

¹⁷⁷ According to the systematization of the information recorded in SRFOE's annual reports.

82. Most of the journalists killed in Port-au-Prince have been gunned down while traveling between their homes and the headquarters of their media outlet, or between their place of work and the epicenter of the story they were trying to cover. Their personal belongings and work devices, such as cell phones, cameras and tape recorders, as well as the journalistic material contained therein, have frequently been stolen by the perpetrators. Despite the obstacles to the pursuit of justice, the available information indicates that most of the lethal attacks recorded have been perpetrated by criminal structures retaliation for the journalistic work of their victims.
83. In addition to murder with firearms, the Rapporteurship has documented cases of mutilation and burning of corpses. These cases reflect a worrisome effort to intimidate the press in an extreme manner and to nullify evidence for forensic investigations.
84. Although the murder of journalists is not a new phenomenon in Haiti, the SRFOE considers that this form of extreme censorship is related to the investigative work of the press on State corruption, alleged links between authorities and illegal actors, and the crimes and illicit activities of illegal armed actors with a high degree of territorial control. In addition, the Rapporteurship notes that lethal violence against the press has been aggravated by repeated confrontations between the PNH and armed groups, territorial disputes between the latter, and the excessive use of force by State agents during social protests. With respect to the excessive use of force, the Rapporteurship has received reports on the improper use of live ammunition and failures to distinguish between demonstrators and journalists carrying out their informative work, which has resulted in lethal injuries.
85. It is of particular concern to the SRFOE that, according to the information collected, at least a quarter of the murdered journalists have publicly denounced, through their social networks or media, threats against their lives. Below, the Rapporteurship presents an overview of the murders of journalists perpetrated in Haiti since 1998.

Table 1: Journalists killed in Haiti since the creation of the SRFOE¹⁷⁸.



86. The first two journalists killed in the context of the current multidimensional crisis were Petión Rospide and Nehemie Joseph in 2019¹⁷⁹. In turn, these two murders were the first to be recorded by the Rapporteurship after a period of six years¹⁸⁰.
87. According to publicly available information, Rospide, a presenter for “Radio Sans Fin”, was shot dead on June 10, 2019, while driving back to his home in an official vehicle of the radio

¹⁷⁸ Prepared by the authors based on the corresponding annual reports.

¹⁷⁹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2019*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 5, February 24, 2020, par. 763.

¹⁸⁰ According to SRFOE’s annual reports, no murders were recorded in the country during this period.

station, located in Port-au-Prince¹⁸¹. The 45-year-old reporter had just finished a radio program focused on corruption allegations against the government of then President Jovenel Moïse¹⁸².

88. Four months later, on October 10, 2019, Joseph, a reporter for “Radio Méga”, was found dead with gunshot wounds in his private vehicle in the commune of Mirebalais, northeast of Port-au-Prince¹⁸³. Joseph denounced death threats in September 2018 through his Facebook account¹⁸⁴. In that publication, the reporter claimed that the threats against him came from politicians who accused him of “inciting” protests social¹⁸⁵. According to information recorded by the Rapporteurship, his work stood out for expressing criticism of the government and local authorities for their management of the political crisis at the time¹⁸⁶. Joseph was reportedly missing before his murder¹⁸⁷.
89. In 2021, the Rapporteurship was alerted to two murders, that of journalist Diego Charles, 33 years old, who worked as a reporter for “Radio Vision 2000”, “Gazette Haiti News” and “La Repiblik”, and that of Antoinette Duclaire, also 33 years old, a radio broadcaster and activist¹⁸⁸. Available information indicates that Charles and Duclaire were attacked on the night of June 29, 2021 by armed individuals driving a motorcycle and shot at them as Duclair was leaving Charles in the driveway of his house in the ChristRoi sector of Port-au-Prince¹⁸⁹. According to public reports, the reporter and the broadcaster were the target of threats¹⁹⁰. Likewise, after his murder, his relatives alleged that they received threats for testifying before the authorities in the framework of the respective investigations¹⁹¹. According to local media reports, Charles was investigating various issues of public relevance for the magazine “La Repiblik”, among them the murder in 2020 of the President of the Bar Association of the Haitian capital, Monferrier Dorval¹⁹².
90. 2022 was the deadliest year for the press in the hemisphere since the SRFOE’s first annual report, published in 1998. The SRFOE recorded the highest number of murders of journalists in the Americas since its creation in 1998: at least 38 members of the press from 10 of the 35 OAS Member States were killed for reasons possibly linked to their profession¹⁹³. Of those 38 victims, nine were Haitians: John Wesley Amady; Wilguens Louissaint; Maxihen Lazzare; Frantzsen Charles; Tayson Lartigue; Romelson Vilcint; Garry Tesse; Fritz Dorilas; and

¹⁸¹ IACHR, SRFOE, *Annual Report 2019*, par. 764.

¹⁸² Haïti Libre, *Le journaliste Rospide Pétion assassiné*, January 12, 2019; AlterPresse, *Funérailles émouvantes du journaliste assassiné Pétion Rospide*, July 8, 2019.

¹⁸³ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2019*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 5, February 24, 2020, par. 765.

¹⁸⁴ Le Nouvelliste, *Assassinat du journaliste Néhémie Joseph à Mirebalais*, October 14, 2019; RSF, *Nouvel assassinat de journaliste en Haïti*, October 11, 2019.

¹⁸⁵ IFJ, *Haïti: assassinat du journaliste Néhémie Joseph dans le département de Mirebalais*, 11 October 2019; Vant Bèf, *Le journaliste Néhémie Joseph assassiné par balle à Mirebalais*, 11 October 2019.

¹⁸⁶ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2019*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 5, February 24, 2020, par. 765.

¹⁸⁷ IACHR, SRFOE, *Annual Report 2019*, par. 765.

¹⁸⁸ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2021*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 64, Rev. 1, May 26, 2022, par. 515.

¹⁸⁹ Al Jazeera, *Haitian journalist, activist killed in Port-au-Prince shootings*, June 30, 2021; Amnesty International, *Les autorités doivent protéger les proches menacés de mort d'un journaliste et d'une militante assassinés*, August 6, 2021.

¹⁹⁰ Rezo Nodwes, *La famille du journaliste assassiné, Diego Charles, salue le renouvellement du mandat du Juge Belabre*, 26 July 2023; AlterPresse, *Deux ans après, demandes renouvelées de justice pour la militante Antoinette Duclaire et le journaliste Diego Charles*, 30 June 2023.

¹⁹¹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2021*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 64, Rev. 1, May 26, 2022, par. 515.

¹⁹² Committee to Project Journalists, *Le journaliste haïtien Diego Charles tué par balle à Port-au-Prince*, July 6, 2021; Rezo Nodwes, *La famille du journaliste assassiné, Diego Charles, salue le renouvellement du mandat du Juge Belabre*, July 26, 2023.

¹⁹³ SRFOE, Press Release No. R245/22, “SRFOE registers the highest number of murders of journalists in the Americas since 1998, and calls on the States of the region to promote comprehensive prevention, protection and justice policies”, November 2, 2022.

Francklin Tamar. Their assassination coincided with the acceleration and deepening of the country's multidimensional crisis following the assassination of President Moïse.

91. According to information received by the Office of the Special Rapporteur, John Wesley Amady, from the Canadian radio station "Radio Écoute FM", and Wilguens Louissaint, a local reporter for various digital media, including "Télé Patriote" and "Tambou Verité", were killed in the afternoon of January 6, 2022 by members of criminal structures¹⁹⁴. The journalists were shot and burned alive in the Laboule 12 sector in Port-au-Prince, prompting media and civil society organizations to speak out about the brutality of the case¹⁹⁵. In this locality, multiple criminal gangs were disputing the control of the territory as it was particularly strategic, so both Wesley and Louissaint were reporting on it¹⁹⁶.
92. A month and a half later, on February 23, 2022, national media reported that police officers opened fire from an official vehicle on people demonstrating for an increase in the minimum wage¹⁹⁷. During the incident, three journalists were reportedly hit by gunfire. Maxihen Lazzare, from "Roi des Infos", died shortly afterwards in a hospital as a result of serious injuries sustained¹⁹⁸.
93. On September 11, 2022, reporters Frantzsen Charles and Tayson Lartigue were killed while reporting on violence and clashes between criminal structures in the Cité Soleil neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, according to local press reports¹⁹⁹. The clashes had allegedly resulted in the murder of a minor the day before, so Charles and Lartigue, along with five other journalists, went to the locality to interview his relatives²⁰⁰. As far as the Rapporteurship was able to learn, Frantzsen Charles worked for the media "FS News", while Tayson Lartigue reported through his digital portal "Tijèn Jounalis". The bodies of Charles and Lartigue could not be recovered as they had been burned, according to public information²⁰¹.
94. On October 26, 2022, authorities in the southern Haitian city of Les Cayes found the naked, mutilated, and partially cremated body of radio commentator Garry Tesse, who had been reported missing since October 18, according to reports received by the SRFOE²⁰². Tesse, a lawyer by profession, worked as a political analyst and host of the radio program "Gran Lakou" on "Radio Le Bon FM", and was known for his denunciations of alleged cases of corruption and abuse of power involving the acceptance of bribes to resolve property disputes and arbitrary

¹⁹⁴ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2022*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, par. 815.

¹⁹⁵ Al Jazeera, *'Criminal and barbaric': Two Haitian journalists killed by gang*, January 7, 2022; BBC, *Two Haitian journalists killed in gang attack*, January 7, 2022.

¹⁹⁶ Vice News, *Haitian Journalists 'Savagely' Murdered by Armed Gangs*, January 7, 2022; DW, *2 journalists killed by gang in Haiti*, January 7, 2022; International Press Institute, *Haiti: Two journalists burned alive by gang members*, January 7, 2022; CBC, *Journalist for Montreal online radio station killed on the job in Haiti*, January 7, 2022.

¹⁹⁷ Al Jazeera, *Factory workers in Haiti go on strike to demand higher wages*, February 10, 2022; Reuters, *Haitian garment workers protest to demand higher wages*, February 17, 2022.

¹⁹⁸ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2022*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, par. 816; Haïti Liberté, *Le journaliste Maxihen Lazzare assassin*, March 2, 2022; Le Filet Info, *L'autopsie du cadavre du journaliste Maxihen Lazzare est dans l'impasse*, March 6, 2022.

¹⁹⁹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2022*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, par. 817.

²⁰⁰ Committee to Protect Journalists, *Haitian journalists Frantzsen Charles and Tayson Lartigue shot dead while covering violence in Port-au-Prince*, September 15, 2022; International Federation of Journalists, *Charles Frantzen, Tayson Lartigue*, September 11, 2022.

²⁰¹ Committee to Protect Journalists, *Haitian journalists Frantzsen Charles and Tayson Lartigue shot dead while covering violence in Port-au-Prince*, September 15, 2022; International Federation of Journalists, *Charles Frantzen, Tayson Lartigue*, September 11, 2022.

²⁰² IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2022*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, par. 818.

- arrests, among other illegal practices²⁰³. In addition, the communicator was reportedly particularly critical of a prosecutor in Les Cayes for alleged acts of corruption and abuse of power²⁰⁴. According to Tesse's lawyer, the journalist received bribe offers from this prosecutor to mitigate his criticism; after rejecting this offer, Tesse denounced on the radio a "plot to assassinate him"²⁰⁵.
95. Four days later, on October 30, 2022, journalist Romelson Vilcint of the radio station "Génération 80", located in Port-de-Paix, in the North-West department²⁰⁶ was killed. Public source reports indicated that Vilcint was hit in the head by a tear gas canister when the HNP's Departmental Unit for the Maintenance of Order (UDMO) attempted to disperse a group of people demanding the release of another journalist, Robest Dimanche, of "Radio Tele Zenith"²⁰⁷. Hours earlier, Dimanche was arbitrarily arrested by the police and taken to the Delmas 33 police station, in Port-au-Prince, while he was covering another protest in the area, according to journalists on the scene²⁰⁸. According to the monitoring conducted by this Office, Vilcint would be the second journalist to die after being injured by State security forces between 2018 and 2025.
 96. A week later, on November 5, 2022, journalist Fritz Dorilas, who worked for "Radio Télé Megastar", a radio station in the Haitian capital, and co-host of the program "Le droit, la loi et la justice"²⁰⁹, was murdered. According to some reports, the journalist was gunned down in a confrontation between criminal gangs near his home in the Tabarre commune, a sector disputed by these armed groups²¹⁰.
 97. In addition to these murders, Francklin Tamar, a journalist with the radio station "Radio Solidarité", was killed on December 18, 2022²¹¹. According to public information, the reporter was the victim of an armed attack by two unidentified individuals on a motorcycle²¹². Tamar died on the way to the hospital, after having been shot at least twice²¹³.
 98. In 2023, although the number of homicides decreased compared to the previous year, the phenomenon of widespread violence against the press persisted, especially in the context of the expansion of criminal gangs in the capital and the emergence of "vigilante" groups.
 99. In April 2023, the SRFOE recorded two murders. On the 16th of that month, the murder of journalist Dumesky Kersaint was reported in the Mahotiere 83 neighborhood, in the Carrefour commune, epicenter of frequent clashes between armed groups, the PNH and vigilante

²⁰³ Committee to Protect Journalists, 'Powerful enemies': Did a prosecutor order the murder of Haitian journalist Garry Tesse?, March 26, 2024; RHI News, Assassinat de Garry Tesse: SOS Journalistes sur le point d'obtenir le renvoi du commissaire du gouvernement des Cayes, Ronald Richemond, October 23, 2024.

²⁰⁴ Committee to Protect Journalists, 'Powerful enemies': Did a prosecutor order the murder of Haitian journalist Garry Tesse?, March 26, 2024; RHI News, Assassinat de Garry Tesse: SOS Journalistes sur le point d'obtenir le renvoi du commissaire du gouvernement des Cayes, Ronald Richemond, October 23, 2024.

²⁰⁵ Rezo Nodwes, Cayes: deux autorités judiciaires citées dans l'assassinat du journaliste Garry Tess, October 25, 2022; Ayibopost, Qui a ordonné le meurtre du journaliste haïtien Garry Tesse?, March 26, 2024.

²⁰⁶ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2022, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, par. 819.

²⁰⁷ UNESCO, Director-General calls for investigation into killing of journalist Romelson Vilcin in Haiti, November 3, 2022.

²⁰⁸ AP News, Witnesses: Journalist killed after police in Haiti open fire, 30 October 2022; RSF, RSF horrified by frequent murders of journalists in Haiti, 3 November 2022.

²⁰⁹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2022, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, par. 820.

²¹⁰ Gazette Haïti, L'IPA condamne l'assassinat du journaliste Fritz Dorilas, November 9, 2022; Latin Times, Violence Escalates In Haiti As Another Journalist Is Murdered, November 14, 2022.

²¹¹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2022, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, par. 821.

²¹² International Press Institute, Francklin Tamar, Haiti, December 18, 2022; International Federation of Journalists, Haiti: journalist Francklin Tamar murdered, December 21, 2022.

²¹³ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2022, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, par. 947.

- groups²¹⁴. Kersaint, who specialized in covering demonstrations and criminal gang violence for “Radio Télé INUREP”, was shot after photographing a crime scene in which a person was reportedly killed²¹⁵. The journalist reportedly refused to erase the images taken when an unidentified gunman demanded that he do so because they were evidentiary material²¹⁶. After the journalist’s murder, his camera and cell phone were stolen, according to local media²¹⁷.
100. Less than ten days later, on April 25, 2023, the murder of Ricot Jean was documented in the commune of Saint-Marc by unidentified armed subjects²¹⁸. According to information from a public source, Jean, who worked for “Radio-Télé Evolution Inter”, was kidnapped on the night of April 24 by four armed men dressed in uniforms of the Departmental Unit for the Maintenance of Order (UDMO) under the pretext of being “arrested” for committing a crime²¹⁹.
 101. The last murder recorded by the Rapporteurship in 2023 occurred on May 5, when journalist Paul Jean Marie, host of the program “Une voix dans la nuit”, on “Radio Lumière”, was the victim of an armed attack by subjects who entered his residence in Onaville, Croix-des-Bouquets, on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince, according to information provided by local channels²²⁰.
 102. For its part, on December 24, 2024, the Rapporteurship recorded what would have been the latest murder of journalists as of the closing date of this special report, and one of the most severe monitored by this Office since 2018 based on the number of victims. According to Haitian media and civil society organizations, a group of reporters were ambushed while conducting live coverage of the reopening of the Port-au-Prince general hospital, closed for months after a coordinated attack by a coalition of armed groups in the first quarter of the year²²¹. Two were killed, Jimmy Jean, of the digital media “Moun Afe Bon”, and Marckendy Natous, correspondent of “Voice of America”, and at least seven more were wounded²²². The leader of a criminal gang claimed responsibility for the attack in a video circulated on social networks, claiming that the coalition of which he is a member did not “authorize” the reopening of the hospital²²³. At least one association of local journalists urged the State to take responsibility for the attack for having reopened the hospital and invited journalists to cover it without creating or maintaining the required security conditions²²⁴. The same association

²¹⁴ PEN International, [Haiti: PEN International and PEN Haiti condemn the murder of journalist Dumesky Kersaint](#), 19 April 2023; UNESCO, [Director-General condemns killing of journalist Dumesky Kersaint in Haiti](#), 10 May 2023.

²¹⁵ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), [Annual Report 2022](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, par. 947.

²¹⁶ Committee to Protect Journalists, [Dumesky Kersaint](#), 16 April 2023; PEN International, [Haiti: PEN International and PEN Haiti condemn the murder of journalist Dumesky Kersaint](#), 19 April 2023.

²¹⁷ Committee to Protect Journalists, [Dumesky Kersaint](#), 16 April 2023; PEN International, [Haiti: PEN International and PEN Haiti condemn the murder of journalist Dumesky Kersaint](#), 19 April 2023.

²¹⁸ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), [Annual Report 2023](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 948.

²¹⁹ UNESCO, [Director-General Condemns Murder of Ricot Jean in Haiti](#), May 2, 2023; Inter American Press Association, [Another Journalist Murdered in 48 Hours in Haiti](#), April 26, 2023.

²²⁰ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), [Annual Report 2023](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 949; Le Nouvelliste, [Radio personality Paul D. Jean Marie shot dead, his only sin was living in Ona-Ville](#), May 9, 2023.

²²¹ CBS News, [At least 2 journalists killed in shooting during hospital reopening in Haiti](#), Dec. 24, 2024; NPR, [A gang attack on a Haitian hospital reopening kills 2 reporters and a police officer](#), Dec. 25, 2024.

²²² Committee to Protect Journalists, [2 journalists killed, 7 injured, in attack at Haitian hospital](#), 24 December 2024; Reporters Without Borders, [RSF condemns gang attack in Haiti that killed two reporters, wounded seven others](#) 26 December 2024.

²²³ BBC, [Three shot dead as gunmen attack Haiti hospital](#), 25 December 2024; The Haitian Times, [Friends and family mourn journalist killed in Haiti Christmas Eve gang attack at hospital](#), 17 January 2025.

²²⁴ AP, [Mourners bury journalist killed in one of Haiti’s worst attacks on reporters](#), January 16, 2025; The Washington Post, [Journalists in Haiti demand justice as they bury a second colleague killed by gangs](#), January 18, 2025.

also demanded financial compensation so that the families of Jean and Natous could bury them²²⁵.

103. In view of the facts presented in Haiti, the Office of the Special Rapporteur recalls that the murder of journalists constitutes the most extreme form of censorship, and that impunity for these crimes contributes to the repetition of these crimes and the self-censorship of the press in the country.²²⁶ In this regard, the Rapporteurship reiterates what it has said in its annual reports and press releases: the Haitian State has the obligation to identify and punish the perpetrators of these crimes against the press, fully, effectively, impartially and diligently investigating the murders, and clarifying their motives in order to judicially determine the relationship they may have with the journalistic activity and freedom of expression²²⁷.
104. The Rapporteurship insists that the Haitian authorities should not rule out the practice of journalism as a motive for each of the murders recorded here.²²⁸ The omission of logical lines of investigation or the lack of diligence in the collection of evidence can have serious repercussions on the development of the processes in the indictment or trial stages, however late they may be, limiting the ability to identify the masterminds, and thus contributing to impunity and the risk of repetition²²⁹.
105. The Rapporteurship also highlights that the absence of a forceful institutional reaction after each murder sends a message of tolerance to violence, encouraging the occurrence of new crimes. This Office emphasizes the importance of the State authorities publicly, clearly and firmly recognizing the legitimacy and value of journalistic work and strongly condemning the aggressions against each of the press workers²³⁰.
106. The Office of the Special Rapporteur regrets that information on each of the aforementioned murders has been and continues to be extremely limited. In this regard, it notes the lack of official statistics on murdered journalists and systematized information on progress in police investigations or judicial actions taken.
107. Finally, the Rapporteurship notes with concern the decision of the families of the victims, as well as their journalist colleagues, to resort to self-censorship in the investigation of these murders as a form of protection. The absence of denunciations and testimonies due to fear of reprisals also hampers the pursuit of justice.

B. Armed attacks against journalists and media outlets

108. Armed attacks against journalists and media outlets have been a constant since the beginning of the multidimensional crisis in 2018. According to information documented and systematized by the Rapporteurship, there have been at least 13 armed attacks against

²²⁵ AP, Mourners bury journalist killed in one of Haiti's worst attacks on reporters, January 16, 2025; The Washington Post, Journalists in Haiti demand justice as they bury a second colleague killed by gangs, January 18, 2025.

²²⁶ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, Special Study on the Situation of the Investigations on the Murder of Journalists for reasons that could be related to the Journalistic Activity (period 1995-2005), OEA/Ser.L/V/II.131. Doc. 35, March 8, 2008.

²²⁷ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, Violence against Journalists and Media Workers, Inter-American Standards and National Practices on Prevention, Protection and Prosecution. OEA/Ser.L/V/II. IACHR/SRFOE/INF. 12/13, December 31, 2013, par. 160.

²²⁸ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, Violence against Journalists and Media Workers, Inter-American Standards and National Practices on Prevention, Protection and Prosecution. OEA/Ser.L/V/II. IACHR/SRFOE/INF. 12/13, December 31, 2013, par. 13.

²²⁹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, Violence against Journalists and Media Workers, Inter-American Standards and National Practices on Prevention, Protection and Prosecution, OEA/Ser.L/V/II. IACHR/SRFOE/INF. 12/13, December 31, 2013, par. 203.

²³⁰ IACHR, Zonas Silenciadas: Regiones de alta peligrosidad para ejercer la libertad de expresión, March 2017, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, IACHR/SRFOE/INF.16/17, par. 159.

journalists and six against the vicinity of media outlets. The information available to date suggests that these have been perpetrated by criminal gangs in control of the Haitian capital and other strategic strongholds in the country. The lack of investigations by the police and judicial bodies has prevented the identity of most of perpetrators and masterminds from being known. In turn, the high levels of impunity have facilitated the repetition of these crimes against the press.

109. According to this Office's estimates, armed attacks have endangered the lives of more than 41 communicators. Likewise, the attacks have resulted in the loss of journalistic material of high public interest due to its coverage of acts of corruption, ties between criminal gangs and public officials, and crimes perpetrated by armed groups. This is because the attacks have partially or totally destroyed journalists' working equipment, such as cameras, voice recorders and cell phones, as well as essential newsroom furniture, including desks, computers and printers. In addition, they have sought to restrict the mobility of journalists by incinerating both their personal vehicles and the official vehicles of their media outlets.
110. The Rapporteurship notes with concern that at least five armed attacks have occurred after threats were reported through social networks and the media themselves, which denotes serious shortcomings in the prevention of crimes against the press.
111. Below, the Rapporteurship gives an account of the armed attacks recorded between 2018 up to the date of publication of this special report.
112. On July 16, 2019, an attack with firearms was alerted against the vehicle in which Kendi Zidor, journalist and political analyst of the channel "Télé Pacific" and the newspaper "Le National"²³¹ was being transported. According to local media reports, three unidentified persons shot at Zidor's car, who had previously reported death threats after publishing an editorial criticizing the Haitian authorities' handling of the investigations into the La Saline massacre.²³²
113. Less than a month later, on August 6, 2019, the vehicle of "Loop News Haiti" journalist Luckson Saint-Vil was reportedly shot at least seven times by unknown persons while he was on his way to his home, located in the south of the country.²³³ Like Zidor, Saint-Vil reported death threats to the judicial police days before this armed attack²³⁴. According to national media reports, the threats were made after Saint-Vil received the Philippe Chaffanjon Award in recognition of a report on links between criminal groups and State authorities²³⁵.
114. On July 28, 2020, an armed attack was documented against the journalist and cameraman of "Radio Télé MegaStar", Yvens Sétoute²³⁶. According to media reports, Sétoute was returning home on his motorcycle after work when two armed men intercepted him to accuse him of having published information about them in reports on criminal acts in the area²³⁷. Although Sétoute reportedly managed to escape thanks to a motorcycle that was circulating in the area, the journalist and cameraman said he heard gunshots which, as later verified by a local

²³¹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2019*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 5, February 24, 2020, par. 775.

²³² Vant Bêf Info, *Un journaliste attaqué par des individus armés*, July 16, 2019; Loop News, *Victime d'une attaque armée, le journaliste Kendi Zidor porte plainte*, July 19, 2019.

²³³ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2019*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 5, February 24, 2020, par. 776.

²³⁴ Loop News, *Notre reporter Luckson Saint-vil victime d'une attaque armée à Léogâne*, August 6, 2019; AlterPresse, *Attaque armée contre le jeune journaliste Luckson Saint-Vil*, August 7, 2019.

²³⁵ Committee to Protect Journalists, *Journalist Luckson Saint-Vil survives shooting attack in southern Haiti*, August 19, 2019; Ayibopost, *The precariousness of journalists threatens democracy in Haiti*, May 24, 2021.

²³⁶ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2020*, OEA/Ser.L/Doc.28, March 30, 2021, par. 828.

²³⁷ Haiti Standard, *Menaces de mort proférées contre le journaliste Pradel Alexandre, l'Union des journalistes du bas-artibonite dénonce et condamne*, July 29, 2020; Actunews, *Le journaliste Sétoute Yvens a frôlé la mort*, July 30, 2020.

authority, hit the vehicle²³⁸. The journalist asserted he planned to file a complaint about the incident, which he described as an “assassination attempt”²³⁹.

115. On December 28, 2020, it became known that the journalist and founding member of the “Groupe Média Alternatif”, Vario Sérant, was attacked by unidentified armed men while he was driving with a companion²⁴⁰. According to publicly available information, the journalist was shot and had to be rushed to hospital, but his companion died at the scene after being hit by several bullets²⁴¹. Sérant also reportedly had to be transferred to Costa Rica to receive the necessary treatment²⁴². The director of the media outlet, Godson Pierre, indicated that the attack against his colleague had a chilling effect on the media outlet’s newsroom²⁴³.
116. On June 25, 2021, local reports specified that armed individuals shot and wounded “Le Nouvelliste” journalist Fritz Pinvin as he was on his way to his home on Capois Street in Port-au-Prince²⁴⁴. According to the same reports, Pinvin was rushed to a hospital with serious injuries after being hit by at least three bullets²⁴⁵.
117. On the day of the assassination of John Wesley Amady and Wilguens Louissaint on January 6, 2022, it was reported the national press that a third journalist, Wilmann Vil, who was also covering armed violence for “RL Production” with Amady and Louissaint, managed to escape with his life from the armed against him. However, Vil was reportedly forced to go into hiding and temporarily abandon his journalistic work²⁴⁶.
118. At the end of January 2022, allegations were made that the media outlet “Radio Télé Zénith”, located in the Croix-des-Bouquets sector of Port-au-Prince, was attacked²⁴⁷. Available information suggests that the windows and doors of “RTZ” were smashed, and part of its interior burned, including work equipment and furniture, after Molotov cocktails were thrown inside the newsroom and studio²⁴⁸. Two journalists were inside the station’s premises at the time of the attack while broadcasting a news report, although they were reportedly not injured²⁴⁹. The manager of the radio station explained that criminal gangs were behind the armed attack, seeking to silence the media’s coverage of their violent activities²⁵⁰. These same

²³⁸ Actunews, Le journaliste Sétoute Yvens a frôlé la mort, July 30, 2020; Vant Bèif Info, Setoute Yvens, journaliste de la Radio Télé Mégastar, a frôlé la mort, July 30, 2020.

²³⁹ Vant Bèif Info, Setoute Yvens, journaliste de la Radio Télé Mégastar, a frôlé la mort, July 30, 2020; Committee to Protect Journalists, En Haïti: le journaliste Setoute Yvens survit à un attentat par balles, un autre journaliste reçoit des menaces de mort, August 6, 2020.

²⁴⁰ Le Nouvelliste, Le journaliste Vario Sérant blessé par balle lors d’une attaque à Port-au-Prince, December 29, 2020; Alterpresse, Le journaliste Vario Sérant, victime d’une attaque armée, le 28 décembre 2020, à Port-au-Prince, December 29, 2020.

²⁴¹ Le Nouvelliste, Le journaliste Vario Sérant blessé par balle lors d’une attaque à Port-au-Prince, December 29, 2020; Alterpresse, Le journaliste Vario Sérant, victime d’une attaque armée, le 28 décembre 2020, à Port-au-Prince, December 29, 2020.

²⁴² Alterpresse, Le journaliste Vario Sérant, évacué vers le Costa Rica après avoir été gravement atteint par balle, January 1, 2021; Rezo Nodwe, Le journaliste haïtien Vario Sérant, victime d’une attaque armée à Port-au-Prince, AlterPresse report, December 30, 2020.

²⁴³ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2020, OEA/Ser.L/Doc.28, March 30, 2021, par. 832.

²⁴⁴ Gazette Haïti, Haïti-Insécurité: le journaliste Junior Pinvin du Nouvelliste blessé par balles, June 26, 2021; International Journalists’ Network, Les dangers d’être un journaliste en Haïti, August 20, 2021.

²⁴⁵ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2021, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 64, Rev. 1, May 26, 2022, par. 518.

²⁴⁶ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2022, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, par. 815.

²⁴⁷ Le Nouvelliste, Attaque armée contre deux sous-commissariats et la radio Zénith, January 31, 2022; Committee to Protect Journalists, Des assaillants tirent et lancent des cocktails Molotov sur les locaux de la station haïtienne Radio Télé Zenith, February 7, 2022.

²⁴⁸ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2022, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, par. 823.

²⁴⁹ Le Nouvelliste, Attaque armée contre deux sous-commissariats et la radio Zénith, January 31, 2022; Committee to Protect Journalists, Des assaillants tirent et lancent des cocktails Molotov sur les locaux de la station haïtienne Radio Télé Zenith, February 7, 2022.

²⁵⁰ Le Nouvelliste, Attaque armée contre deux sous-commissariats et la radio Zénith, January 31, 2022; Committee to Protect Journalists, Des assaillants tirent et lancent des cocktails Molotov sur les locaux de la station haïtienne Radio Télé Zenith, February 7, 2022.

illegal actors threatened RTZ through social networks, as explained by the Association of Haitian Journalists (AJH)²⁵¹.

119. For the Office of the Special Rapporteur, it is important to note that this armed attack against “RTZ” took place two months after members of an armed group operating in the vicinity of its vicinity threatened to set fire to its stations²⁵². The information available indicates that the media outlet filed multiple complaints with the corresponding authorities, but did not receive any response²⁵³.
120. On the day of Maxihen Lazzare’s murder on February 23, 2022, the Rapporteurship learned of reports alleging that two other journalists, Sony Laurore of “Laurore News TV” and Yves Moise of “Radio RCH 2000”, were reportedly hit by HNP projectiles²⁵⁴. Similarly, on the day of Romelson Vilcint’s death in late October 2022, shortly after he was allegedly hit in the head with a tear gas canister fired by riot police to disperse a demonstration, the Rapporteurship received reports alleging that five other journalists were injured and that some of their working equipment was confiscated²⁵⁵.
121. On September 11, 2022, the day of the murder of Frantzsen Charles and Tayson Lartigue, local media reported that five journalists accompanying them in their report on the violence in the Haitian capital had managed to flee the scene after a group of criminals ambushed the motorcycles on which they were riding²⁵⁶. However, part of the journalistic material collected and work equipment were allegedly left in the hands of the perpetrators²⁵⁷.
122. On October 25, 2022, an assassination attempt was reported against Roberson Alphonse, news director of “Le Nouvelliste” and news director of the radio station “Makig9”²⁵⁸. According to information registered by media and civil society organizations, Alphonse was traveling from his residence in the Delmas neighborhood of the Haitian capital to the vicinity of the media when unidentified subjects fired at least ten shots at his vehicle²⁵⁹. The reporter was wounded in both arms, although he managed to drive himself to the hospital for urgent medical attention²⁶⁰.
123. On July 23, 2023, in the commune of Liancourt, Artibonite region, the national press and international civil society organizations warned that alleged members of armed groups set fire to the facilities of “Radio Antarctique”, destroying its transmission equipment and antenna, and forcing the station to cease transmissions and regular operations²⁶¹. According

²⁵¹ Gazette Haiti, [La Radio Télé Zénith, objet de menaces des “400 Mawozo”, “ne reçoit aucune solidarité des associations de médias”](#), November 29, 2021; Le Floridien, [La radio télé zénith menacée par 400 Mawozo](#), November 29, 2021.

²⁵² Haïti24, [Attaque contre Radio-Télé Zénith : AJH condamne et appelle à la protection des travailleurs de la presse](#), February 1, 2022; Committee to Protect Journalists, [Attackers shoot at, firebomb offices of Haitian outlet Radio Télé Zenith](#), February 3, 2022.

²⁵³ Committee to Protect Journalists, [Attackers shoot at, firebomb offices of Haitian outlet Radio Télé Zenith](#), February 3, 2022; Vant Bèf Info, [Haïti / Attaque armée contre la Radio Télé Zénith : Frantz Elbé exprime sa solidarité](#), January 31, 2022.

²⁵⁴ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), [Annual Report 2022](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, par. 816.

²⁵⁵ Miami Herald, [Haiti journalist dies after being hit in the head with police tear gas canister](#), October 31, 2022; Committee to Protect Journalists, [Haitian journalist Romelson Vilcin killed during demonstration at police station](#), November 11, 2022.

²⁵⁶ Voice of America, [Alarm in Haiti over killing of two more journalists by armed gangs](#), September 13, 2022; Committee to Protect Journalists, [Haitian journalists Frantzsen Charles and Tayson Lartigue shot dead while covering violence in Port-au-Prince](#), September 15, 2022.

²⁵⁷ Haiti Libre, [Two young journalists killed in Cité-Soleil](#), September 13, 2022; Voice of America, [Alarm in Haiti over killing of two more journalists by armed gangs](#), September 13, 2022.

²⁵⁸ Miami Herald, [Haiti journalist victim of armed attack](#), October 25, 2022; Le Nouvelliste, [Roberson Alphonse échappe à une tentative d’assassinat, émotions et réactions](#), October 26, 2022.

²⁵⁹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), [Annual Report 2022](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, par. 826.

²⁶⁰ Al Jazeera, [Prominent Haitian journalist survives assassination attempt](#), October 26, 2022; International Federation of Journalists, [IFI with AJH repudiates attack on journalist Roberson Alphonse](#), October 26, 2022.

²⁶¹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), [Annual Report 2023](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 965.

to what they were able to ascertain, the 15 employees of the radio station escaped unharmed after fleeing the scene, although they were unable to return to the station after the attack²⁶². The leader of one of the criminal gangs reportedly accused the director and founder of the station, Roderson Elias, of turning local residents against his organization and revealing its location²⁶³.

124. On August 11, 2023, it was reported that Brown Larose, host of the weekly radio program “Pawòl Geto” and “Matin Débat,” broadcast by “Radio Télé Éclair,” was the victim of an armed attack outside his residence in the Delmas neighborhood, east of Port-au-Prince, by an unidentified man²⁶⁴. According to public information, the journalist had been the subject of threats following his coverage of the actions of armed groups and his questioning of the interim government of Ariel Henry²⁶⁵.
125. Meanwhile, between September 29 and October 9, 2023, two alerts were issued for two armed attacks against Maxo Dorvil, a radio journalist for “Radio Télé Zip”²⁶⁶. The first attack was reportedly perpetrated against his vehicle by two armed men on motorcycles while he was on his way home in the suburb of Croix-des-Bouquets, on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince²⁶⁷. The second attack reportedly occurred in the Lilavois area, within the metropolitan area of the capital; approximately five armed men also reportedly shot at his vehicle after ordering him to stop²⁶⁸. After the first attack, Dorvil claimed to have received a call from a member of a criminal group, who allegedly demanded the payment of US\$1,700 in exchange for protection; the second attack reportedly occurred after his refusal to pay this sum²⁶⁹.
126. In April 2024, there were reports of a coordinated attack on the premises of the newspaper “Le Nouvelliste”, the oldest newspaper in the country²⁷⁰. The information disseminated by the media and civil society indicates that an unknown number of assailants had vandalized, vandalized and looted the newspaper’s facilities, located in the center of Port-au-Prince, interrupting the printing and circulation of the newspaper²⁷¹. In the previous months, there were reports that this newspaper, along with other media outlets based in the main streets of the center of the Haitian capital, had begun to move their operations to other relatively safer areas as illegal armed groups gained greater territorial control²⁷². However, the difficulty of moving printing presses forced “Le Nouvelliste” to continue printing newspapers at its

²⁶² Committee to Protect Journalists, [Haitian broadcaster Radio Antarctique burned down in gang attack](#), July 28, 2023; Voice of America, [Haitian Journalists at Risk From Arson, Kidnapping, Attack](#), July 31, 2023.

²⁶³ Metropole, [Liancourt, Artibonite, en proie à la violence des bandits de Savien](#), July 23, 2023; Le Nouvelliste, [Week-end tragique à Liancourt](#), July 24, 2023.

²⁶⁴ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), [Annual Report 2023](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 964.

²⁶⁵ Vant Bèf Info, [Haiti: Armed attack against the presenter Brown Larose: Une tentative inquiétante contre la liberté d’expression](#), August 11, 2023; Gazette Haiti, [Brown Larose, un animateur de l’émission “Matin Débat”, blessé par balles](#), August 11, 2023.

²⁶⁶ Committee to Protect Journalists, [‘I’ll be killed if they find me’: Radio reporter Maxo Dorvil flees Haiti amid gang violence](#), November 27, 2023; Vant Bèf Info, [Victime d’une deuxième tentative d’assassinat, le journaliste Maxo Dorvil a pris le maquis](#), November 3, 2023.

²⁶⁷ Committee to Protect Journalists, [‘I’ll be killed if they find me’: Radio reporter Maxo Dorvil flees Haiti amid gang violence](#), November 27, 2023; Vant Bèf Info, [Victime d’une deuxième tentative d’assassinat, le journaliste Maxo Dorvil a pris le maquis](#), November 3, 2023.

²⁶⁸ Committee to Protect Journalists, [‘I’ll be killed if they find me’: Radio reporter Maxo Dorvil flees Haiti amid gang violence](#), November 27, 2023; Vant Bèf Info, [Victime d’une deuxième tentative d’assassinat, le journaliste Maxo Dorvil a pris le maquis](#), November 3, 2023.

²⁶⁹ Committee to Protect Journalists, [‘I’ll be killed if they find me’: Radio reporter Maxo Dorvil flees Haiti amid gang violence](#), November 27, 2023; Vant Bèf Info, [Victime d’une deuxième tentative d’assassinat, le journaliste Maxo Dorvil a pris le maquis](#), November 3, 2023.

²⁷⁰ Le Nouvelliste, [The Nouvelliste, Oldest Haitian Newspaper, Vandalized, ANMH Expresses Solidarity and Concern](#), April 26, 2024; Miami Herald, [Haiti’s oldest newspaper forced to stop printing after armed gangs attack premises](#), April 29, 2024.

²⁷¹ Le Nouvelliste, [Les locaux du Nouvelliste vandalisés](#), April 25, 2024; Miami Herald, [Haiti’s oldest newspaper forced to stop printing after armed gangs attack premises](#), April 29, 2024.

²⁷² Committee to Protect Journalists, [Haitian press face ‘existential crisis’ with no end to gang violence](#), July 24, 2024; LatAm Journalism Review, [Print media in Haiti is on the brink of extinction](#), September 23, 2024.

original location²⁷³. In parallel, there were also warnings of an alleged attack against the headquarters of “Le Moniteur”, the official government newspaper through which all executive branch information is shared²⁷⁴.

127. In November 2024, two armed attacks against journalists were reported. According to information from a public source, on November 5, alleged members of criminal gangs burned down the house of Lookens Jean-Baptiste, a reporter for the radio station “Tropic FM”, located in the Fort National district of Port-au-Prince²⁷⁵. According to the journalist, his killers discovered that he was a journalist and suspected him of having connections with the police because of his work²⁷⁶. A week later, on November 11, suspected members of another armed structure allegedly shot journalist Wandy Charles, editor-in-chief of “Vant Bèf Info,” as well as his family, in front of his house in Vivy Michel, a suburb of the Haitian capital, shortly before this group took over the area²⁷⁷. According to Charles, the criminal gangs do not want the media to criticize them or to give a voice to the victims, the police, or the government²⁷⁸.
128. At the end of the year, in December 2024, a group of journalists were ambushed while covering the reopening of the country’s main hospital, which had been closed since the first quarter of the year after being targeted by armed groups²⁷⁹. Two were killed, and at least seven more were wounded²⁸⁰. The leader of a criminal gang claimed responsibility for the attack in a video circulated on social media, claiming that the coalition of which he is a member did not “authorize” the reopening of the hospital²⁸¹. An association of local journalists urged the State to take responsibility for the attack for having reopened the hospital and invited journalists to cover it without creating and maintaining the security conditions required for this purpose²⁸².
129. Finally, between March 12 and 16, 2025, armed attacks against three radio stations in Haiti were documented. The facilities of “Radio Télévision Caraïbes (RTVC)” and “Mélodie FM” were set on fire after being abandoned due to the serious deterioration of security in the center of Port-au-Prince²⁸³. Subsequently, the private television channel “Télé Pluriel”, located in the Delmas 19 neighborhood, was looted and burned down²⁸⁴. Although no casualties were reported, journalists from these media outlets reported that they were unable to return and were forced to set up makeshift studios in their homes and other less unsafe areas to continue

²⁷³ Committee to Protect Journalists, [Haitian press face ‘existential crisis’ with no end to gang violence](#), July 24, 2024; LatAm Journalism Review, [Print media in Haiti is on the brink of extinction](#), September 23, 2024.

²⁷⁴ Le Quotidien d’Haïti, [Scènes de vandalisme dans les locaux du journal Le Nouvelliste, l’ANMH consternée](#), April 28, 2024; Miami Herald, [Haiti’s oldest newspaper attacked amid gang violence](#), April 29, 2024.

²⁷⁵ Realité Info, [Haïti: La résidence du journaliste Lookens Jean Baptiste incendiée par des individus armés](#), November 16, 2024; Committee to Protect Journalists, [Haitian journalist attacked as gang violence again surges in country](#), November 20, 2024.

²⁷⁶ Realité Info, [Haïti: La résidence du journaliste Lookens Jean Baptiste incendiée par des individus armés](#), November 16, 2024; Committee to Protect Journalists, [Haitian journalist attacked as gang violence again surges in country](#), November 20, 2024.

²⁷⁷ Vant Bèf Info, [Attaque Armée: Wandy Charles, Rédacteur en Chef de Vant Bèf Info, échappe de justesse à la mort avec sa famille](#), November 12, 2024; Télépluriel, [Insécurité: Attaque armée contre le journaliste Wandy Charles et sa famille](#), November 13, 2024.

²⁷⁸ Committee to Protect Journalists, [Haitian journalist attacked as gang violence again surges in country](#), November 20, 2024.

²⁷⁹ CBS News, [At least 2 journalists killed in shooting during hospital reopening in Haiti](#), Dec. 24, 2024; NPR, [A gang attack on a Haitian hospital reopening kills 2 reporters and a police officer](#), Dec. 25, 2024.

²⁸⁰ Committee to Protect Journalists, [2 journalists killed, 7 injured, in attack at Haitian hospital](#), 24 December 2024; Reporters Without Borders, [RSF condemns gang attack in Haiti that killed two reporters, wounded seven others](#) 26 December 2024.

²⁸¹ BBC, [Three shot dead as gunmen attack Haiti hospital](#), 25 December 2024; The Haitian Times, [Friends and family mourn journalist killed in Haiti Christmas Eve gang attack at hospital](#), 17 January 2025.

²⁸² AP, [Mourners bury journalist killed in one of Haiti’s worst attacks on reporters](#), January 16, 2025; The Washington Post, [Journalists in Haiti demand justice as they bury a second colleague killed by gangs](#), January 18, 2025.

²⁸³ Reporters Sans Frontières, Haïti: RSF condamne l’incendie criminel contre Radio Télévision Caraïbes et appelle à des mesures urgentes pour protéger la presse, 14 de marzo de 2025; 20 minutes, [Les locaux de trois médias attaqués](#), 16 de marzo de 2025; Committee to Protect Journalists, [Haitian gangs set fire to 3 Port-au-Prince radio stations as violence escalates](#), 20 de marzo de 2025.

²⁸⁴ Gazette Haiti, [Après la Radio Caraïbes, la télé pluriel incendiée par la coalition criminelle «Viv Ansanm»](#), 17 de marzo de 2025; AlterPresse, [Télé Pluriel, un autre média saccagé par les bandits armés à Port-au-Prince](#), 17 de marzo de 2025; ONU Info, [Attaqués et avec des revenus qui s’effondrent, les médias en Haïti luttent pour survivre](#), 20 de marzo de 2025.

at least a fraction of their regular programming²⁸⁵. They also indicated that the losses suffered would be “enormous” and would include studios and recording equipment, computer hardware, journalistic archives, and personal documents²⁸⁶. Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aimé described this series of attacks as a “despicable act” against freedom of expression and announced measures to strengthen media security²⁸⁷.

130. With regard to armed attacks against journalists and the media, the Office of the Special Rapporteur refers to Principle 9 of the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression, which states that any attack on the lives of journalists, as well as the material destruction of the media, violates fundamental rights and severely restricts freedom of expression²⁸⁸. For the Rapporteurship, these types of violence seek to keep the press silent as a control mechanism, preventing society from being informed about events of public interest.
131. The SRFOE has determined in previous reports that violence against journalists has a triple effect: it violates the right of victims to express and disseminate their ideas, opinions and information; it generates a chilling and silencing effect on their peers; and it violates the rights of individuals and societies to seek and receive information and ideas of any kind. The consequences for democracy, which depends on a free, open and dynamic exchange of ideas and information, are particularly serious²⁸⁹. Therefore, the Rapporteurship insists that the restoration of democracy in Haiti will depend to a large extent on the State’s ability to prevent violence against the press.
132. Inter-American standards stipulate that States have the obligation to adopt measures to prevent violence against journalists and other members of the media. The Inter-American Court has emphasized that “the practice of journalism can only be carried out freely when the persons engaged in it are not victims of threats or physical, psychological or moral aggression or other acts of harassment”²⁹⁰. This obligation is particularly important in countries where there is a risk of such acts occurring and in specific situations where the authorities know or should have known that there is a real and immediate risk of such crimes being committed, as is the case in Haiti²⁹¹.
133. Likewise, the Rapporteurship emphasizes that the lack of due diligence in the investigation, prosecution and punishment of all those responsible, as has occurred in the country, can generate an additional violation of the rights to access to justice and judicial guarantees of the affected persons and their families²⁹². Therefore, it is crucial that the State complies with its obligation to investigate in order to find those materially and intellectually responsible for these crimes, in order to provide justice in the specific case, avoid its repetition, repair the victims and avoid the inhibiting effect that violence causes in communicators.
134. Relatedly, the SRFOE expresses its concern about the threats of armed attacks against journalists and media outlets that it has documented and which, according to available

²⁸⁵ Ayibopost, Les pertes énormes que la RTVC pourrait subir dans l’incendie de ses locaux, 14 de marzo de 2025; Committee to Protect Journalists, Haitian gangs set fire to 3 Port-au-Prince radio stations as violence escalates, 20 de marzo de 2025.

²⁸⁶ Ayibopost, Les pertes énormes que la RTVC pourrait subir dans l’incendie de ses locaux, 14 de marzo de 2025; Committee to Protect Journalists, Haitian gangs set fire to 3 Port-au-Prince radio stations as violence escalates, 20 de marzo de 2025.

²⁸⁷ Gouvernement de la République d’Haïti, Le Gouvernement condamne avec la plus grande fermeté l’attaque criminelle contre la RTVC et réaffirme son engagement pour la protection de la presse, 13 de marzo de 2025.

²⁸⁸ IACHR, Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression, 2000, Ppio. N° 9.

²⁸⁹ IACHR, Violence against journalists and media workers: Inter-American standards and national practices on prevention, protection and prosecution, 2013, OEA/Ser.L/V/II. CIDH/SRFOE/INF.12/13, par. 287.

²⁹⁰ I/A Court H.R., Case of Vélez Restrepo and Family v. Colombia, Case of Vélez Restrepo and Family Members v. Colombia. Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations and Costs, Series C 248, 2012, par. 209.

²⁹¹ IACHR, Violence against journalists and media workers: Inter-American standards and national practices on prevention, protection and prosecution, 2013, OEA/Ser.L/V/II. CIDH/SRFOE/INF.12/13, par. 33.

²⁹² IACHR, Silenced Zones: Regions of high danger to exercise freedom of expression, March 2017, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, IACHR/SRFOE/INF.16/17, par. 147.

information, have not been investigated by the authorities, including the Central Directorate of the Judicial Police (DCPJ).

135. On July 28, 2020, death threats were reported against journalist Pradel Alexandre, correspondent of “Radio Nationale d’Haïti” in Saint-Marc and general coordinator of the Federation of Journalists of Artibonite (FEJA)²⁹³. Per the systematized reports by the media and civil society, the alleged leader of a criminal gang operating in the village of Savien, in the commune of Petite Rivière, Artibonite department, threatened to kill Alexandre for his reports which, according to him, falsely linked him to kidnappings of people in the region²⁹⁴.
136. On September 14, 2020, it was learned that Patrick Moussagnac, general director of “Radio Télé Caraïbes”, denounced that criminal gangs announced on social networks “imminent attacks” against the television station he manages²⁹⁵. The Rapporteurship recorded pronouncements by the ANMH condemning the threats, although it did not document any police or judicial action in this regard²⁹⁶.
137. In early June 2023, a series of assaults were documented against Amentha Léonard, director of legal affairs of the Haitian Observatory for Law and Freedom of the Press (OHDLP)²⁹⁷. According to the observatory, the director’s injuries put her life at risk²⁹⁸. Despite having identified the alleged perpetrators of the attack, the OHDLP noted that the authorities had not taken any action against them, describing their actions as “slow” and “lax”²⁹⁹.
138. More recently, in September 2024, a threat was reported against journalist Widlore Mérancourt, of “AyiboPost,” for publishing an article questioning the ethical integrity of two correspondents of an international news agency for giving gifts to one of the main criminal leaders in the country³⁰⁰. In a video published on September 25 on social networks, the leader of a coalition of criminal gangs allegedly told Mérancourt that he would pursue him and attack him by surprise, for which the journalist reportedly deleted his social networks and went into hiding, according to reports in the national press³⁰¹.

C. Enforced disappearance and kidnapping

139. In the context of the current multidimensional crisis, and especially since the expansion and consolidation of territorial control by criminal gangs, the Office of the Special Rapporteur has warned about the use of forced disappearance and short-term kidnapping as a method of intimidation, extortion and silencing of the press in Haiti. These criminal practices allow criminal gangs to finance arms smuggling and commit crimes with total impunity, protected

²⁹³ Haiti en marche, In sécurité: le chef de gang de Savien, Odma, fait des menaces de mort contre le journaliste Pradel Alexandre, July 29, 2020; AlterPresse, L’Aïh dénonce des menaces et attaques contre plusieurs journalistes en Haïti, July 31, 2020.

²⁹⁴ Haiti Standard, Menaces de mort proférées contre le journaliste Pradel Alexandre, l’Union des journalistes du bas-artibonite dénonce et condamne, July 29, 2020; Committee to Protect Journalists, Journalist Setoute Yvens survives shooting attempt, another reporter receives death threats in Haiti, August 4, 2020.

²⁹⁵ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2020, OEA/Ser.L/Doc.28, March 30, 2021, par. 831.

²⁹⁶ Juno7, Menace de toutes sortes contre la RTVC. le PDG Patrick Moussagnac n’entend pas baisser les bras, September 14, 2020; Télé Pluriel, Menaces contre Radio Télévision Caraïbes: Patrick Moussagnac dénonce une tentative visant à ternir l’image de la station, September 14, 2020.

²⁹⁷ Rezo Nòdwes, L’OHDLP condamne énergiquement la tentative d’assassinat perpétrées à l’encontre de Me Amentha LÉONARD, 6 June 2023.

²⁹⁸ Rezo Nòdwes, L’OHDLP condamne énergiquement la tentative d’assassinat perpétrées à l’encontre de Me Amentha LÉONARD, 6 June 2023.

²⁹⁹ Rezo Nòdwes, L’OHDLP condamne énergiquement la tentative d’assassinat perpétrées à l’encontre de Me Amentha LÉONARD, 6 June 2023.

³⁰⁰ AyiboPost, Reuters Journalists’ Gifts to a Notorious Haiti Gang Leader Spark Controversy, September 18, 2023.

³⁰¹ Committee to Protect Journalists, Haitian journalist threatened over article about Reuters reporters’ gifts to gang leader, 30 September 2024; The Baron, Haitian editor in hiding since story questioning Reuters’ gifts to gang leader, 21 November 2024.

by the lack of information that conceals their activities from the public, the security forces and the judiciary. Most of the recorded kidnappings occurred while the journalists were traveling in private vehicles or while they were at their homes. Their duration has varied; some journalists have been kidnapped for a few hours, while others have been deprived of their freedom for up to three weeks.

140. Based on the information received and documented by the Rapporteurship, it is estimated that at least two forced disappearances and 16 kidnappings have occurred between 2018 and 2024. The year 2023 was particularly worrisome due to the frequency of kidnappings against members of the press, becoming a systematic practice with at least nine cases.
141. The Office of the Special Rapporteur has not been able to access official and verifiable information on the whereabouts of the disappeared journalists or progress in the identification and prosecution of the perpetrators and masterminds of most of the kidnappings.
142. Additionally, the SRFOE observed that at least two national media outlets temporarily suspended their programming in protest of the kidnapping of their members, while others publicly demanded the release of the kidnapped persons and concrete actions by the authorities. Reports received by the Rapporteurship suggest that the ransoms of the kidnapped journalists were paid by their families, without State support.
143. The first case of enforced disappearance was recorded on March 14, 2018, when photojournalist Vladjimir Legagneur was reported missing in Grand Ravine, a sector in the Croix-des-Bouquets district in Haiti's West department³⁰². Legagneur was reportedly working on a freelance project aimed at documenting clashes between police and armed groups in this area³⁰³. On March 29 of that year, media reported that Haitian police conducted an intensive search and found the remains of a body in a vacant lot³⁰⁴. According to a police report, officers recovered the bones without the skull, and these were transferred for DNA testing to determine their identity³⁰⁵. On June 1, 2018, the Special Rapporteurship requested information from the State on the progress of the case, without having received a response to date³⁰⁶. However, it learned of the arrest of three suspects, including a person who would have in his possession Legagneur's cell phone³⁰⁷.
144. For its part, the first case of kidnapping occurred at the end of November 2021, when news emerged alleging that the reporter Alexander Gálvez, correspondent of "Telemicro Media Group", had been kidnapped by a criminal gang on the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic³⁰⁸. The reporter was reportedly deprived of his freedom for nine days before being released on December 5 of that year³⁰⁹.

³⁰² IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2018*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 30, March 17, 2019, par. 652

³⁰³ Haiti Libre, *The mystery remains around the disappearance of Journalist Legagneur*, March 27, 2018; Miami Herald, *Haiti police find partial human remains in area where journalist disappeared*, March 29, 2018.

³⁰⁴ Miami Herald, *Haiti police find partial human remains in area where journalist disappeared*, March 29, 2018; Haiti Libre, *Bones of a body without head found in Grand Ravine*, March 29, 2018.

³⁰⁵ Miami Herald, *Haiti police find partial human remains in area where journalist disappeared*, March 29, 2018; Haiti Libre, *Bones of a body without head found in Grand Ravine*, March 29, 2018.

³⁰⁶ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2018*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 30, March 17, 2019, par. 652.

³⁰⁷ Vant Bèf Info, *Haïti/Justice : 3 arrestations dans le cadre de l'enquête sur la disparition du journaliste Vladjimir Legagneur*, May 4, 2018; Haiti Libre, *3 suspects apprehended by the Police in the disappearance of Vladjimir Legagneur*, May 5, 2018.

³⁰⁸ Dominica Today, *Haitian gang kidnaps Telemicro Group's correspondent in Haiti*, November 28, 2021; Rezo Nodwes, *Le chroniqueur haïtien-dominicain, Alexander Galvez, kidnappé par les 400 mawozo*, November 27, 2024.

³⁰⁹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2021*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 64, Rev. 1, May 26, 2022, par. 519.

145. On February 6, 2022, it became known that the presenter of “Radio Télé Caraïbes”, Caëlle Edmond, was kidnapped by criminal gangs in the Bourdon sector, Port-au-Prince; this would be Edmond’s second kidnapping after having been abducted in 2021, according to publicly available information³¹⁰. Her release reportedly took less than two weeks, although the terms have not been publicly shared³¹¹.
146. Three weeks later, on February 28, 2022, an alert was issued about the kidnapping of Marc Théagène, administrator of “Radiotélévision Caraïbes”, who was reportedly released on March 4. The conditions of his release were also not publicly disclosed, per available reports³¹².
147. A week later, on March 3, 2022, while Théagène was still in captivity, armed criminals allegedly wearing PNH uniforms kidnapped Patrick Moussignac, the president and CEO of “Radio Télévision Caraïbes” in Steet Capois³¹³. Media reported that, faced with the scale of rejection for his kidnapping, the unidentified criminals allegedly released the media executive without the payment of a ransom³¹⁴.
148. Three months later, a fourth kidnapping took place on July 17, 2022. Journalist Edner Fils Decime, of “AlterPresse”, was kidnapped after the car in which he was traveling was intercepted by three vehicles with armed people in the town of Delmas, in Port-au-Prince, as reported by local media³¹⁵. According to the same reports, the journalist was held captive for 20 days and was released on August 5, 2022³¹⁶. The media outlet for which he worked organized a campaign calling for his release, which was supported by numerous local organizations such as the AJH³¹⁷.
149. In 2023, the Rapporteurship learned of the kidnapping of at least nine journalists. Thus, it learned that Jean Thony Lorthé, a journalist with “Radio Vision 2000”, was reportedly kidnapped along with his brother and a member of his family on February 3, 2023, while on their way to a funeral at Carrefour, at the southern entrance to Port-au-Prince³¹⁸. The radio broadcaster was the host of the Creole program “Rafrech memwa” and, according to public information, the kidnappers reportedly demanded large sums of money for his release and that of his companions³¹⁹. The AJH demanded that the kidnappers release the group, pointing out that Lorthé’s family would not have the financial means to pay a ransom, and that the

³¹⁰ The Haitian Times, Radio Caraïbes host, two pastors among 10 kidnapped since February started, February 11, 2022; Haiti Libre, Release of the RTC host, February 16, 2022.

³¹¹ Caribbean Television Network, Haiti-Kidnapping: Caëlle Edmond recovered her freedom, February 15, 2022; Haiti Libre, Release of the RTC host, February 16, 2022.

³¹² VBI, Haiti-Kidnapping: Libération de l’administrateur de Radiotélévision Caraïbes Marc Théagène, March 5, 2022; Haiti24, Insécurité: Enlèvement de Marc Théagène, un employé de la RTVC, February 28, 2022; Haiti Libre, Haiti - Insecurity: The Administrator of RTVC and his wife kidnapped, March 1, 2022; Vant Bèf Info, Haiti-Kidnapping: Libération de l’administrateur de Radiotélévision Caraïbes Marc Théagène, March 5, 2022.

³¹³ Caribbean Television Network, Patrick Moussignac kidnapped and Released less than an hour later, March 3, 2022; Ici Haiti, RTVC : CEO Patrick Moussignac kidnapped then Released under popular pressure, March 3, 2022.

³¹⁴ Le Nouvelliste, Patrick Moussignac, directeur de Radio télévision Caraïbes, enlevé puis libéré, March 3, 2022; AlterPresse, Haiti-Criminalité: Kidnapping, puis libération du Pdg de la Radio télévision Caraïbes, Patrick Moussignac, March 3, 2022.

³¹⁵ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2022, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, par.824.

³¹⁶ Juno7, Haiti: le journaliste Edner Fils Décime a recouvré sa liberté après 20 jours de séquestration, August 6, 2022; AlterPresse, Haiti-Presse/Kidnapping : Edner Décime enfin libre, August 5, 2022.

³¹⁷ Rezo Nodwes, Rapt collectif: Le journaliste Décimé Edner et plusieurs autres personnes enlevés à Delmas 30, July 17, 2022; CTN, Journalist Edner Fils Décime Released almost 3 weeks after his kidnapping, August 6, 2022.

³¹⁸ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2023, OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 953.

³¹⁹ AP, Haitian journalist snatched as kidnapping scourge continues, February 8, 2023; Haitian Times, Group demands kidnappers Release Haitian journalist as “act of love”, February 16, 2023.

journalist would suffer serious health problems³²⁰. After 15 days in captivity, Lorthé's release was announced following the payment of a ransom of an unknown amount³²¹.

150. Following Lorthé's kidnapping, there were reports that his case led to a work stoppage by his colleagues at "Radio Vision 2000"³²². In addition, dozens of media workers in the Haitian capital gathered in mid-February to demand his release and to denounce before the Ministries of Culture and Communication and of Justice and Public Security the "complicit silence" of the authorities in the face of the insecurity in the country, according to information from a public source³²³. Likewise, the secretary general of the AJH, Jacques Desrosiers, asked the government to adopt measures to facilitate the release of his colleague and to reestablish peace so that reporters can carry out their work³²⁴.
151. In addition, it was reported that Lebrun Saint-Hubert, president and general manager of the community radio station "RCH 2000", was kidnapped on March 17, 2023 in the vicinity of the same station, located in the Delmas district³²⁵. According to available information, the media executive was seized by men disguised as DCPJ agents³²⁶. Saint-Hubert was released on March 25 after payment of a ransom; the kidnappers reportedly demanded US\$1.5 million for his release, but neither the authorities nor the family or colleagues have confirmed the delivery of that amount of money³²⁷. Ten days later, the Rapporteurship was also alerted to the kidnapping of Sandra Duvivier, a member of "Telemax", channel 5 of TV³²⁸.
152. Additionally, Robert Denis, general manager of the private television station "Canal Bleu", was kidnapped on April 11, 2023, in Petion Ville, a sector of the Haitian capital³²⁹. According to local media, Denis was kidnapped by men belonging to a criminal gang³³⁰. The ANMH expressed its concern for the journalist's health, given that he had undergone several operations for heart problems, was not in good health, and was in the middle of a recovery period at the time of his abduction³³¹. Nine days later, the release of Denis was reported³³².
153. Likewise, Marie Lucie Bonhomme, of "Radio Vision 2000" and owner of "Télé Pluriel", was kidnapped for a few hours on June 13, 2023, in the early hours of the morning at her place of residence, located in the commune of Tabarre, on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince, and

³²⁰ International Federation of Journalists, [Haiti: journalist Jean Thony Lorthé kidnapped by criminal group](#), February 7, 2023; KTVZ, [Haitian journalist snatched as kidnapping scourge continues](#), February 8, 2023.

³²¹ Inter-American Press Association, [A Journalist Kidnapped in Haiti Freed](#), February 20, 2023; Committee to Protect Journalists, [Journalist kidnappings rise in Haiti as violence spikes](#), October 24, 2023.

³²² IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), [Annual Report 2023](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 954.

³²³ AlterPresse, [Haïti-Criminalité : L'Ajh sous le choc, après le kidnapping du journaliste Jean Thony Lorthé](#), 7 February 2023; Gazette Haïti, [Haïti-Kidnapping: des journalistes marchent pour exiger la libération du journaliste Jean Thony Lorthé](#), 15 February 2023.

³²⁴ AlterPresse, [Haïti-Criminalité : L'Ajh sous le choc, après le kidnapping du journaliste Jean Thony Lorthé](#), 7 February 2023; Gazette Haïti, [Haïti-Kidnapping: des journalistes marchent pour exiger la libération du journaliste Jean Thony Lorthé](#), 15 February 2023.

³²⁵ Loop News, [Un inspecteur de police et responsable de média kidnappé à Delmas](#), March 17, 2023; Vant Bèf Info, [Le directeur de la radio RCH 2000 enlevé à Delmas](#), March 17, 2023.

³²⁶ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), [Annual Report 2023](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 955.

³²⁷ Vant Bèf Info, [Libération du Directeur général de la RCH 2000 et de l'employé des Archives Nationales](#), March 25, 2023; Inter American Press Association, [Liberan a radiodifusor secuestrado en Haití](#), March 27, 2023.

³²⁸ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), [Annual Report 2023](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 956.

³²⁹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), [Annual Report 2023](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 957.

³³⁰ Vant Bèf Info, [Robert Denis est souffrant, l'ANMH réclame sa libération immédiate](#), April 12, 2023; Loop News, [L'ANMH exige la libération immédiate de Robert Denis](#), April 13, 2023.

³³¹ Radio Vision 2000, [Robert \(Bobby\) Denis, director of Canal Bleu kidnapped on the road from Frères to PV](#), April 12, 2023; Gazette Haïti, [L'Association Nationale des Médias Haïtiens \(ANMH\) exige la libération de Robert Denis](#), April 12, 2023.

³³² Rezo Nodwes, [Robert \(Bobby\) Denis libéré contre rançon](#), April 20, 2023; Vant Bèf Info, [Robert Denis libéré contre rançon ce jeudi](#), April 20, 2023.

controlled by local armed groups³³³. According to the journalist and media executive, a criminal group allegedly ransacked her house and stole multiple items³³⁴. Although the leader of this illegal organization reportedly released her in a short time, the gang temporarily seized her car and some electronic devices, including laptops, her cell phone and an iPad³³⁵.

154. Meanwhile, Pierre-Louis Opont, former president of the last CEP and owner with his wife, Marie-Lucie Bonhomme, of the independent television channel “Télé Puriel”, was kidnapped on June 20, 2023, a week after his wife, according to public reports³³⁶. The media executive was reportedly captured by criminal structures while driving home late at night³³⁷. According to his family, Opont was only released on August 25, more than two months after his kidnapping, following a ransom payment³³⁸.
155. A month later, allegations were made that Blondine Tanis, of “Radio Rénovation FM” (107.1FM), was kidnapped on July 21, 2023, and subsequently released nine days later, on July 30³³⁹. According to available information, the journalist was abducted as she was about to enter her home, located in the Haitian capital, after leaving work³⁴⁰. On July 22, the kidnappers reportedly contacted Tanis’ family, demanding a “large sum of money, beyond the family’s means”³⁴¹. The radio station, where the reporter was the host of the program “Tribunale Matinale”, issued a communiqué informing that all its programming would be suspended until she was found alive³⁴².
156. Four months later, Pierre-Fils Saintamour, presenter of “Radio Scoop FM”, was kidnapped on November 27, 2023, in a commune northeast of Port-au-Prince, according to information gathered by the media³⁴³. Saintamour was reportedly abducted along with his two children and his pregnant wife³⁴⁴. After being held captive for eleven days, the presenter was reportedly released on December 8, 2023, following the payment of what the victim described as a significant ransom³⁴⁵.
157. At the end of 2023, Daniel Banatte, a Port-au-Prince-based broadcaster, was reported missing by his family after he was last seen on December 15 at the end of hosting his regular program on “Radio Regard FM”³⁴⁶. According to local press reports, Banatte reportedly received

³³³ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2023*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 958.

³³⁴ The Coalition for Women in Journalism, *Haiti: Criminal Gang Abducts Well-known Journalist Marie Lucie Bonhomme Opont*, June 13, 2023; IFEX, *Journalist kidnapped in Haiti, sixth so far this year*, July 25, 2023.

³³⁵ AlterPresse, *La journaliste Marie Lucie Bonhomme enlevée en sa résidence à Tabarre, puis libérée peu de temps après*, June 13, 2023; Loop News, *Marie Lucie Bonhomme, enlevée puis relâchée par le gang de Vitel’homme*, June 14, 2023.

³³⁶ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2023*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 959.

³³⁷ Miami Herald, *Former head of Haiti’s electoral council kidnapped*, June 22, 2023; Inter-American Press Association, *Haitian Press Leaves Behind a Less Deadly Year, But Remains in Grave Danger*, January 3, 2024.

³³⁸ Le Nouvelliste, *Libération de Pierre Louis Opont après deux mois de séquestration*, August 28, 2023; RSF, *RSF urges Haitian authorities to do more to locate missing TV channel owner*, August 29, 2023.

³³⁹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2023*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 960.

³⁴⁰ The Coalition for Women in Journalism, *Haiti: Blondine Tanis Kidnapped From Home, Sixth Journalist Abducted This Year*, July 21, 2023; Le Nouvelliste, *Several associations are demanding the Release of journalist Blondine Tanis*, July 24, 2023.

³⁴¹ Committee to Protect Journalists, *Haitian radio reporter Blondine Tanis kidnapped amid wave of abductions*, July 26, 2023; Voice of America, *Haitian Journalists at Risk From Arson, Kidnapping, Attack*, July 31, 2023.

³⁴² Vant Bèf Info, *La journaliste Blondine Tanis libérée contre rançon*, July 30, 2023; Loop News, *La journaliste Blondine Tanis libérée*, July 31, 2023.

³⁴³ Haiti News, *L’animateur de Scoop FM, Pierre-Fils Saint-Amour, kidnappé à Delmas*, 29 November 2023; Netalkole, *Le journaliste Pierre-Fils Saintamour raconte son expérience éprouvante et celle de sa famille*, 15 December 2023.

³⁴⁴ Invasion Radio TV, *L’animateur Pierre Fils Saint-Amour, Alias Passy, Victime d’Enlèvement à Delmas*, December 15, 2023; Haiti Libre, *Radio host Pierre Fils Saint-Amour kidnapped*, November 30, 2023.

³⁴⁵ L’Etendard, *Le journaliste, Banatte Daniel libéré contre rançon*, December 27, 2023; Invasion Radio TV, *L’animateur Pierre Fils Saint-Amour, Alias Passy, Victime d’Enlèvement à Delmas*, December 15, 2023.

³⁴⁶ Inter-American Press Association, *Journalist Missing and Broadcaster Kidnapped for Twelve Days in Haiti*, December 18, 2023; Tripotay Lakay, *Ansyen jounalis Radio Zenith lan, Banatte Daniel jwenn liberasyon l anba men kidnape yo*, December 27, 2023.

telephone threats in October 2021 after reporting the kidnapping of a pastor of an evangelical church³⁴⁷.

158. In 2024, the Special Rapporteurship recorded at least two new kidnappings. In particular, Lucien Jura, an independent commentator, former spokesman for two presidents, and journalist by training, was kidnapped between March 18 and 21, 2024 by criminal gangs, according to reports received from civil society³⁴⁸. Jura was reportedly abducted from his home in Pétion-Ville, on the outskirts of the capital, and his kidnappers reportedly contacted his family to agree on a possible ransom amount, although the amount was not disclosed by his relatives after his release³⁴⁹. His kidnapping took place in the midst of an offensive by multiple criminal structures in this sector of the capital and repeated confrontations with the PNH³⁵⁰.
159. On parallel dates, Sean Roubens, a journalist and intermediary between communicators and armed actors in Haiti, was kidnapped between March 14 and 20, 2024³⁵¹. Roubens, according to media reports, has specialized in helping Haitian and foreign journalists, as well as social media content creators, to cover the violence of armed groups in the country³⁵². Reports suggest that the journalist was allegedly intercepted by suspected criminals while traveling with a youtuber, Adisson Pierre Maalouf, from the north of the country to Port-au-Prince to arrange an interview with a leader of an armed group³⁵³. Roubens accused members of the police of selling him information about his displacement to illegal groups³⁵⁴. Maalouf's family reportedly paid an undisclosed ransom for his release³⁵⁵. After his release, Roubens claimed to be traumatized and to have made the decision to abandon his work as a journalist and intermediary in highly dangerous areas³⁵⁶.
160. More recently, the kidnapping of journalist Roger Claudy Israël, former correspondent for Radio Ginen and founder of the local radio station RC FM, was reported. According to available information, the journalist had been reported missing since March 31, 2025, and it was later confirmed that he had been kidnapped along with his brother in the city of Mirebalais after a video was posted on social media on April 4 showing both of them kneeling in front of armed men who threatened to kill them³⁵⁷.
161. Given the use of forced disappearance and express kidnapping as a form of intimidation, silencing and extortion against the press in Haiti, the Office of the Special Rapporteur recalls that these two practices violate the fundamental rights of journalists and severely restrict their freedom of expression, as well as the right of society to be informed. In this regard, the

³⁴⁷ Haiti Libre, [Journalist Banatte Daniel Released](#), December 27, 2023; Inter-American Press Association, [Journalist Missing and Broadcaster Kidnapped for Twelve Days in Haiti](#), December 18, 2023.

³⁴⁸ Committee to Protect Journalists, [Haitian journalist Lucien Jura kidnapped as violence escalates in capital](#), March 20, 2024; Caribbean Television Network, [Haiti Insecurity: Release of Journalist Lucien Jura and Continued Violence by Armed Gangs](#), March 22, 2024.

³⁴⁹ Juno7, [Lucien Jura kidnapped chez lui à Vivy Mitchell](#), March 19, 2024; Foley Foundation, [Haitian Journalist Lucien Jura Kidnapped as Violence Escalates in Capital](#), March 20, 2024.

³⁵⁰ AlterPresse, [Kidnapping of Lucien Jura, ancien porte-parole des présidences Phtk](#), March 19, 2024; CTN, [Haiti Insecurity: Release of Journalist Lucien Jura and Continued Violence by Armed Gangs](#), March 22, 2024.

³⁵¹ The New York Times, [American YouTuber Freed After Kidnapping in Haiti](#), April 1, 2024; Committee to Protect Journalists, [Haitian journalist, YouTuber kidnapped by gang members](#), Released, April 3, 2024.

³⁵² The New York Times, [American YouTuber Freed After Kidnapping in Haiti](#), April 1, 2024; Committee to Protect Journalists, [Haitian journalist, YouTuber kidnapped by gang members](#), Released, April 3, 2024.

³⁵³ Forbes, [American YouTuber Reportedly Kidnapped In Haiti-What We Know About His Disappearance](#), March 29, 2024; The Independent, [YouTuber allegedly kidnapped in Haiti freed after paying \\$50,000 ransom](#), April 4, 2024.

³⁵⁴ Voice of America, [YouTube influencer blames 'corrupt policemen' for his kidnapping in Haiti](#), March 31, 2024; Committee to Protect Journalists, [Haitian journalist, YouTuber kidnapped by gang members](#), Released, April 3, 2024.

³⁵⁵ Forbes, [American YouTuber Reportedly Kidnapped In Haiti-What We Know About His Disappearance](#), March 29, 2024; The Independent, [YouTuber allegedly kidnapped in Haiti freed after paying \\$50,000 ransom](#), April 4, 2024.

³⁵⁶ Voice of America, [YouTube influencer blames 'corrupt policemen' for his kidnapping in Haiti](#), March 31, 2024; Committee to Protect Journalists, [Haitian journalist, YouTuber kidnapped by gang members](#), Released, April 3, 2024.

³⁵⁷ AlterPresse, [Haïti-Médias: SOS pour la libération d'un journaliste et de son frère captifs des gangs à Mirebalais](#), 7 de abril de 2025; Le Nouvelliste, [Two Journalists Missing after Armed Gang Attacks in Mirebalais](#), 8 de abril de 2025.

SRFOE urges the Haitian State to prevent and investigate these acts, punish the perpetrators and masterminds, and ensure that the victims and their families receive adequate reparations³⁵⁸.

D. Forced internal displacement and exile

162. The Office of the Special Rapporteur has found that forced internal displacement and exile are measures of force majeure and last resort that journalists in Haiti have been forced to adopt to protect their integrity, that of their families and that of their newsrooms. To date, the Rapporteurship has learned of at least seven internally displaced journalists and four more in exile since the beginning of the multidimensional crisis and, in particular, since the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse.
163. The SRFOE has observed that the forced internal displacement and exile of journalists has increased along with the number of threats, armed attacks and murders against the press, especially by criminal gangs. Reports recorded by this Office suggest that the years 2021, 2022 and 2023 have been especially critical.
164. With regard to forced internal displacement, August 2023 marked a worrying milestone when at least 12 journalists and their families were forced to flee their homes due to violence by armed groups. These 12 journalists, according to national media reports and civil society organizations, resided in Carrefour-Feuilles, one of the main districts of Port-au-Prince³⁵⁹. This district has been subject to territorial disputes and violent clashes between the police and at least one criminal gang³⁶⁰. As part of its violent, illegal and human rights-violating efforts, this armed group has launched large-scale attacks in the district to destroy police stations, expel security forces, and terrorize residents of the sector³⁶¹.
165. On August 23, 2023, an invasion of the Savane Pistache neighborhood was reported, in which armed men set fire to the home of journalist Arnold Junior Pierre of the local independent radio station “Radio Télé Galaxie”³⁶². After losing his home, Pierre was reportedly forced to flee with 15 family members³⁶³. A month earlier, on July 31, 2023, the journalist was also reportedly beaten by an unknown number of hooded men while covering demonstrations in the southwestern part of Port-au-Prince³⁶⁴.
166. On August 30, 2023, there were reports that the house of Judex Vélima, camera operator of the local independent radio station “Radio Télé Espace”, was also reportedly deliberately set on fire by hooded men³⁶⁵. Vélima, like Pierre, was reportedly forced to flee the area with his

³⁵⁸ IACHR. Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression. 2000. Ppio. N° 9.

³⁵⁹ Inter-American Press Association, The IAPA Expressed Concern over the Kidnapping of Journalists in Haiti, 19 December 2023; Committee to Protect Journalists, Reporters in Haiti flee gang violence surge in capital's Carrefour Feuilles neighborhood, 6 September 2023; RSF, Haiti's right to information must be protected, say 90 Haitian journalists and RSF, 16 April 2024.

³⁶⁰ The Haitian Times, Carrefour-Feuilles deaths latest of 2,400 killed in Haiti this year, report says, August 21, 2023; Le Nouvelliste, A Year After the Bandit Invasion: The Situation in Carrefour-Feuilles, August 20, 2024.

³⁶¹ Reuters, Haitians fleeing gangs set up camp around capital's main square, September 1, 2023; Voice of America, Journalists in Embattled Haiti Weigh Risk Against Need to Report Truth, September 28, 2023.

³⁶² IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2023, OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 962.

³⁶³ Vant Bèf Info, La résidence d'un journaliste de Radio Galaxie incendiée par des bandits du gang de Grand Ravine, August 25, 2023; AlterPresse, L'Association interaméricaine de la presse dénonce la vague de violence touchant les journalistes en Haïti, September 8, 2023.

³⁶⁴ Inter-American Press Association, A Journalist was Attacked while Covering a Protest in the Haitian Capital, August 11, 2023; Fact Checking News, Attaque armée à Carrefour-feuilles: la maison d'un journaliste de FCN-HAÏTI incendiée, August 26, 2023; Committee to Protect Journalists, Haitian radio journalist's home destroyed in arson attack, August 31, 2023.

³⁶⁵ Télé Pluriel, Des bandits armés incendient la résidence du journaliste Judex Vélima à Carrefour-Feuilles, September 1, 2023; AlterPresse, Une vingtaine de journalistes, parmi les milliers de personnes chassées à Carrefour Feuilles par les gangs armés, September 6, 2023.

family³⁶⁶. A day later, on August 31, 2023, local media and civil society organizations reported that journalist Jacques Desrosiers, secretary general of the AJH, was forced to leave his home after members of criminal gangs entered his neighborhood³⁶⁷. In the same week, Kenny Raynald Petitfrere, president of the Haitian Online Media Association (CMEL), was forced to leave his home after receiving death threats³⁶⁸. Likewise, on September 1, 2023, there were reports that Celou Flécher, editor-in-chief of the independent news website “Le Facteur”, was also reportedly forced to evacuate his family from his home in Carrefour Feuilles because of the wave of violence³⁶⁹.

167. Other victims of local criminal gangs who have reportedly been forced to leave their homes include Réginald Esaie Orélus and Richardson Jourdan of Radio Television Nationale d’Haïti (TNH); Dessources Dieumaitre of Fact Checking News; Samuel Dallemand and Rubens Artist of Télé Ginen³⁷⁰. Also Jean Yves Saint-Louis, from “Radio Lumière”; Kettia Marcellus, from “Solidarity of Haitian Women Journalists” (SOFEHJ); and Jacques Stevenson Saint-Louis, communicator for the Ministry of Education³⁷¹.
168. With regard to cases of exile, the Rapporteurship has learned of at least four, described below.
169. In 2021, it became known that the Associated Press photojournalist in Haiti, Dieu-Nalio Chery, had decided to leave the country and go into exile in the state of Michigan, United States, because of the security risks he and his family were facing³⁷². According to available information, the reporter has reportedly received threatening messages since he took photographs of an armed attack by a criminal group on the route to the Port-au-Prince international airport on March 17, 2021, subsequently circulated in the international press³⁷³. A month earlier, on February 10, 2021, during a student protest in Port-au-Prince against the government, Chery was reportedly one of the journalists injured by tear gas canisters launched by HNP agents³⁷⁴. Similarly, a year and a half earlier, in September 2019, Chery was reportedly wounded in the eye after a senator opened fire on a group of protesters³⁷⁵.
170. In 2022, the exile of Roberson Alphonse, reporter for the newspaper “Le Nouvelliste” and broadcaster for “Radio Magik9”³⁷⁶ was recorded. An assassination attempt in October 2022, from which he was seriously wounded, was reportedly his main motivation for leaving

³⁶⁶ Radio Télé Galaxie, Des bandits de Grand Ravine ont incendié la résidence d’un ancien journaliste de la radio Vision 2000 à Carrefour-Feuilles, August 31, 2023; Vant Bèf Info, Des journalistes victimes des gangs armés en difficulté, September 4, 2023.

³⁶⁷ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2023, OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 961.

³⁶⁸ Committee to Protect Journalists, Reporters in Haiti flee gang violence surge in capital’s Carrefour Feuilles neighborhood, September 6, 2023; AlterPresse, Une vingtaine de journalistes, parmi les milliers de personnes chassées à Carrefour Feuilles par les gangs armés, September 6, 2023.

³⁶⁹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2023, OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 961.

³⁷⁰ Committee to Protect Journalists, Reporters in Haiti flee gang violence surge in capital’s Carrefour Feuilles neighborhood, September 6, 2023; AlterPresse, Une vingtaine de journalistes, parmi les milliers de personnes chassées à Carrefour Feuilles par les gangs armés, September 6, 2023.

³⁷¹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2023, OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 386, December 6, 2023, par. 961.

³⁷² IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2021, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 64, Rev. 1, May 26, 2022, par. 516; University of Michigan, Knight-Wallace Fellows 2024-2025, 2024; Visura, Dieu-Nalio Chery, 2023; Columbia Journalism Review, Haiti: Covering a chaotic nation, with deadly consequences, May 4, 2022.

³⁷³ The Haitian Times, Haitian photojournalist moves to NYC to escape threats to his life, June 29, 2021; The New York Times, Haitian Immigrants in New York Describe Perilous Escape, October 27, 2021.

³⁷⁴ Al Jazeera, In Pictures: Haitian police tear gas protesters, journalists, February 11, 2021; CNN, Protests in Haiti as political standoff continues, February 21, 2021.

³⁷⁵ The Guardian, Haiti: photojournalist shot in face as senator opens fire outside parliament, September 23, 2019; Reuters, Pistol-packing senators confront Haiti’s angry opposition, September 24.

³⁷⁶ The Guardian, ‘I decided to not let anybody silence my voice’: the journalists in exile but still at risk, 3 May 2024; Trinidad & Guardian, Haitian journalist wins NABJ Foreign Journalist of the Year Award, 22 May 2024.

Haiti³⁷⁷. Alphonse has publicly maintained that the assassination attempt was related to his long history of investigating corruption in the country and exposing the massacres perpetrated by criminal gangs in the most marginalized neighborhoods of Port-au-Prince³⁷⁸. According to the same journalist, police investigators have not yet given him any update on his case, and the material and intellectual authors of the crime are reportedly still at large³⁷⁹. According to Alphonse's public statements, the threats against him have diminished since he went into exile, although the security situation would prevent him from returning to the country³⁸⁰. Nevertheless, he assures to continue doing his journalistic work through digital platforms to contact sources, conduct interviews, and continue publishing reports and broadcasting for his radio station³⁸¹.

171. In November 2023, it was reported that radio journalist Maxo Dorvil, of the station "Radio Télé Zip", decided to go into exile after being the victim of two armed attacks in less than ten days, as described above³⁸². Dorvil, however, was unable to leave the country with his family, so that the members of his first circle had to disperse throughout the country³⁸³. The attacks, according to the radio journalist, were perpetrated by the same armed group that had been threatening him for at least a year³⁸⁴. After the first attack, they also allegedly demanded a payment of US\$1,700 in exchange for protection. According to the radio journalist, "[t]he gangs think that journalists are rich and demand money as a tax from people living in the neighborhoods under their control," allegedly to finance the purchase of weapons and the recruitment of members³⁸⁵.
172. The fourth case of exile recorded so far is that of Roberson Elias, director and founder of "Radio Antarctique", a radio station in Liancourt, a commune in the department of Artibonite. Elias, according to information from a public source, also reportedly went into exile after criminal structures set fire to the media outlet as part of a large-scale attack on this area³⁸⁶. The police had reportedly withdrawn from the area weeks before the attack due to the impossibility of fighting these armed groups³⁸⁷. Elias has assured from exile that the members of the press "[w]e are alone, defenseless against the gangs"³⁸⁸. He also explained that he would like to return to the country, but that "right now we cannot count on our local authorities to protect us"³⁸⁹.

³⁷⁷ Committee to Protect Journalists, Haitian press face 'existential crisis' with no end to gang violence, July 24, 2024; RFI, Roberson Alphonse, une plume contre les gangs, August 13, 2024.

³⁷⁸ The Guardian, 'I decided to not let anybody silence my voice': the journalists in exile but still at risk, May 3, 2024; Trinidad Guardian, Haitian journalist wins NABI Foreign Journalist of the Year Award, May 22, 2024.

³⁷⁹ Committee to Protect Journalists, Haitian press face 'existential crisis' with no end to gang violence, July 24, 2024; RFI, Roberson Alphonse, une plume contre les gangs, August 13, 2024.

³⁸⁰ Le Nouvelliste, Roberson Alphonse: Freedom of expression, the driving force behind all other human rights, May 3, 2023; Every Child Thrives, At NABI, Haitian panelists discuss the perils of doing their job - and of "a single story", September 5, 2024.

³⁸¹ The Guardian, 'I decided to not let anybody silence my voice': the journalists in exile but still at risk, May 3, 2024; Trinidad Guardian, Haitian journalist wins NABI Foreign Journalist of the Year Award, May 22, 2024.

³⁸² Committee to Protect Journalists, 'I'll be killed if they find me': Radio reporter Maxo Dorvil flees Haiti amid gang violence, 27 November 2023; VBF, Victime d'une deuxième tentative d'assassinat, le journaliste Maxo Dorvil a pris le maquis, 3 November 2023.

³⁸³ Civicus Monitor, Civic freedoms under threat amid rising political instability and criminal gang violence, October 14, 2024; VBF, Victime d'une deuxième tentative d'assassinat, le journaliste Maxo Dorvil a pris le maquis, November 3, 2023.

³⁸⁴ Committee to Protect Journalists, 'I'll be killed if they find me': Radio reporter Maxo Dorvil flees Haiti amid gang violence, 27 November 2023; VBF, Victime d'une deuxième tentative d'assassinat, le journaliste Maxo Dorvil a pris le maquis, November 3, 2023.

³⁸⁵ VBF, Victime d'une deuxième tentative d'assassinat, le journaliste Maxo Dorvil a pris le maquis, November 3, 2023; Civicus Monitor, Civic freedoms under threat amid rising political instability and criminal gang violence, October 14, 2024.

³⁸⁶ Committee to Protect Journalists, Amid gang instability and violence, journalist murder cases in Haiti end in impunity, October 31, 2023; Vant Bèf Info, Les journalistes pris pour cible dans une spirale de violence et d'impunité, November 11, 2023.

³⁸⁷ Committee to Protect Journalists, In Haiti, murders of journalists go unpunished amid instability and gang violence, 31 October 2023.

³⁸⁸ Committee to Protect Journalists, In Haiti, murders of journalists go unpunished amid instability and gang violence, 31 October 2023.

³⁸⁹ Committee to Protect Journalists, In Haiti, murders of journalists go unpunished amid instability and gang violence, 31 October 2023.

173. The Special Rapporteur notes that the phenomenon of forced exile of journalists in Haiti, as well as internal displacement, must be analyzed within the framework of State obligations under international human rights law and international refugee law. This corpus iuris includes, on the one hand, the American Convention on Human Rights (Articles 13 and 22)³⁹⁰, the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man (Articles IV, VIII and XXVII)³⁹¹, the Inter-American Principles on the Human Rights of All Migrants, Refugees, Stateless Persons and Victims of Trafficking in Persons, adopted by the IACHR³⁹²; on the other, the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees³⁹³ and its 1967 Protocol³⁹⁴, the 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees³⁹⁵, and the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement³⁹⁶. Together, these instruments articulate the State obligations to respect and guarantee the right to freedom of expression, the right not to be arbitrarily displaced, and the right to seek and receive international protection in case of persecution or risk to life and integrity.
174. In the specific context of Haiti, where structural violence and insecurity have forced many journalists to move internally or go into exile, it is particularly relevant to remember that, as the Inter-American Court has pointed out, “the practice of journalism can only be carried out freely when the persons engaged in it are not victims of threats or physical, psychological or moral aggression or other acts of harassment”³⁹⁷. The exile of journalists constitutes not only a violation of individual rights, but also profoundly affects the social dimension of the right to freedom of expression, since it deprives society of sources of information on matters of public interest at a crucial moment for overcoming the multidimensional crisis.
175. The Office of the Special Rapporteur recalls that the State has specific obligations to prevent situations that force people into exile, to investigate the violations that led to their exile, and to create conditions that allow for their safe return. In addition, it must adopt all measures within its power to protect those who practice journalism. The Rapporteurship also emphasizes that, in the Haitian context, characterized by the erosion of institutional capacity and the territorial expansion of criminal structures, these obligations need to be implemented through international cooperation mechanisms under the principle of shared responsibility³⁹⁸.
176. With respect to internal displacement, the Inter-American Court has established that “the right of movement and residence may be violated by de facto restrictions if the State has not established the conditions or provided the means to exercise it, for example, when a person is the victim of threats or harassment and the State does not provide the necessary guarantees so that he or she can move and reside freely in the territory in question, even when the threats and harassment come from non-State actors”³⁹⁹. Likewise, the Court has indicated that the

³⁹⁰ American Convention on Human Rights (Pact of San José), adopted on November 22, 1969.

³⁹¹ American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, adopted at the Ninth International Conference of American States, Bogotá, Colombia, 1948.

³⁹² IACHR, Resolution 04/19, *Inter-American Principles on the Human Rights of All Migrant, Refugee, Stateless and Trafficking Victims*, December 7, 2019.

³⁹³ Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, adopted at Geneva, Switzerland, on July 28, 1951 by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Status of Refugees and Stateless Persons (United Nations).

³⁹⁴ Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees of January 31, 1967.

³⁹⁵ Cartagena Declaration on Refugees, adopted by the ‘Colloquium on the International Protection of Refugees in Central America, Mexico and Panama: Legal and Humanitarian Problems’, held in Cartagena, Colombia, November 19-22, 1984.

³⁹⁶ Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, UN Doc. E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2, 1998.

³⁹⁷ I/A Court H.R., Case of Vélez Restrepo and Family v. Colombia. Case of Vélez Restrepo and Family Members v. Colombia. Preliminary Objection, Merits, Reparations and Costs. Judgment of September 3, 2012. Series C No. 248, par. 209.

³⁹⁸ The IACHR has highlighted “the transnational nature of migration and the importance of shared responsibility among States, and the need to cooperate and dialogue to defend and protect the human rights of all migrants, regardless of their migratory status.” IACHR, Resolution 04/19, *Inter-American Principles on the Human Rights of All Migrant, Refugee, Stateless and Trafficking Victims*, December 7, 2019.

³⁹⁹ IACHR Court, Case of Members of the Chichupac Village and neighboring communities of the Municipality of Rabinal v. Guatemala, Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations and Costs, Judgment of November 30, 2016, Series C No. 328, par. 174.

lack of an effective investigation of the violent acts can propitiate or perpetuate exile or forced displacement⁴⁰⁰.

177. For journalists who have crossed international borders, specific legal frameworks for international protection are applicable. In the Inter-American human rights system, Article 22.7 of the American Convention recognizes the right of all persons to seek and receive asylum in case of persecution. In addition, the Cartagena Declaration expands this protection to include persons fleeing because “their life, safety or freedom have been threatened by generalized violence, internal conflicts, massive violation of human rights or other circumstances that have seriously disturbed public order”⁴⁰¹. This expanded definition, incorporated into the domestic legal system of various States in the region, offers complementary protection that is relevant to the Haitian context.
178. States receiving Haitian journalists have the obligation to facilitate access to international protection procedures, guaranteeing respect for due process. Also, in accordance with the Inter-American Principles on the Human Rights of All Migrants, Refugees, Stateless Persons and Victims of Trafficking in Persons, they “must adopt all reasonable and positive measures necessary to prevent, eliminate and reverse or change discriminatory situations that perpetuate stigmatization, prejudice, intolerant practices and criminalization” against Haitian persons⁴⁰².
179. Of particular importance is the principle of non-refoulement, considered a customary rule of international law binding on all States⁴⁰³. This principle, enshrined in Article 22(8) of the American Convention and Article 33 of the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, prohibits States from expelling or returning a person to another State where there are substantial grounds for believing that he would be in danger of being subjected to torture, persecution or irreparable harm to his life or freedom. The Inter-American Court has emphasized that this prohibition is absolute and extends to any person, not only to those who have formally obtained refugee status⁴⁰⁴. In the case of Haitian journalists, this principle takes on special relevance given the environment of extreme violence against the press.
180. The guarantee of the right to personal integrity, enshrined in Article 5 of the American Convention, is crucial in the context of the exile and forced displacement of Haitian journalists. The uncertainty and lack of protection experienced by communicators is intensified by the persistent fear of transnational reprisals, the concern for family members who remain in areas controlled by criminal gangs, and the psychosocial and economic challenges they face in their places of refuge. This impact on their integrity requires a comprehensive response that includes not only physical security measures, but also specialized psychosocial support and programs for labor insertion and socioeconomic integration.
181. The Office of the Special Rapporteur emphasizes that the exile of journalists constitutes a severe form of censorship with effects on both the individual and social dimension of the right to freedom of expression. In Haiti, where the independent press plays a fundamental role in giving visibility to the crisis, documenting human rights violations and keeping the international community informed, the forced exile of journalists represents a significant

⁴⁰⁰ IACHR Court, Case of Members of the Chichupac Village and neighboring communities of the Municipality of Rabinal v. Guatemala, Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations and Costs, Judgment of November 30, 2016, Series C No. 328, par. 174.

⁴⁰¹ Cartagena Declaration on Refugees, Conclusion Three, adopted by the ‘Colloquium on the International Protection of Refugees in Central America, Mexico and Panama: Legal and Humanitarian Problems’, held in Cartagena, Colombia, November 19-22, 1984.

⁴⁰² IACHR, Resolution 04/19, *Inter-American Principles on the Human Rights of All Migrant, Refugee, Stateless and Trafficking Victims*, December 7, 2019.

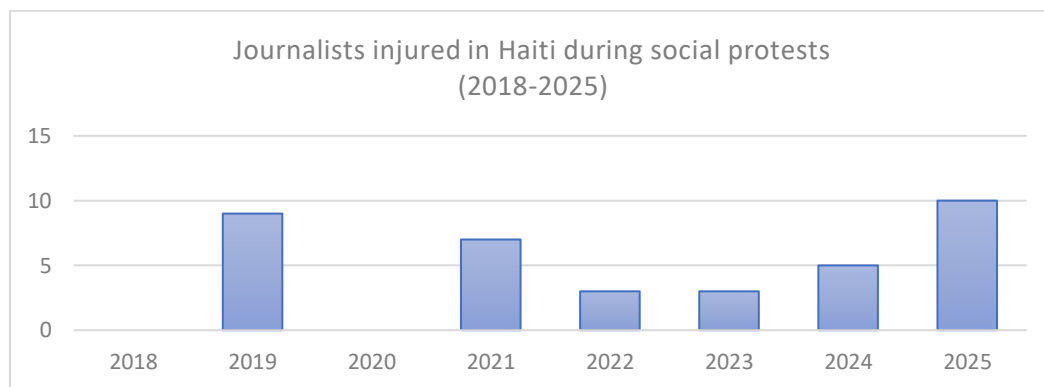
⁴⁰³ IACHR Court, Advisory Opinion OC-25/18, The institution of asylum and its recognition as a human right in the Inter-American Protection System, May 30, 2018, Series A No. 25, pars. 179-180.

⁴⁰⁴ IACHR Court, Advisory Opinion OC-25/18, The institution of asylum and its recognition as a human right in the Inter-American Protection System, May 30, 2018, Series A No. 25, pars. 179-180.

obstacle to the democratic reconstruction of the country. Therefore, the protection of displaced and exiled journalists should be conceived not only as a humanitarian imperative but also as a necessary condition for institutional reconstruction and the holding of free and transparent elections. The Rapporteurship calls upon the Haitian State, as well as the receiving States of exiled journalists, to adopt coordinated measures to guarantee their effective protection, as well as the implementation of conditions that allow, when possible, their safe return or, failing that, their full integration in the host countries.

E. Violence in the context of social protests

182. In the last six years, the Office of the Special Rapporteur has received multiple reports of violence against press workers, from cameramen to reporters, in the context of social demonstrations, some of which have lasted for weeks. These demonstrations have been driven by accusations of corruption against public authorities, irregularities and delays in electoral and constitutional reform processes, the rising cost of fuel, and the worsening of citizen security as a result of the expansion of criminal gangs and the lack of capacity of the PNH.
183. According to the information gathered and systematized by the Office of the Rapporteur, at least 37 journalists have been injured while covering social protests in the country. The reports registered by this Office indicate that the injured journalists were trying to explain to their audience the motives, the development, and the possible implications of these demonstrations. The SRFOE notes with concern the violence against the press for interrupting journalistic work and promoting self-censorship as a method of protection, to the detriment of the right to information of Haitian citizens and the monitoring and response capacity of the international community.
184. *Table 2: Journalists injured in Haiti in the context of social protests since the first cycle of the current multidimensional crisis⁴⁰⁵.*



185. The years with the highest number of recorded incidents were 2025 and 2019, followed by 2021. According to information gathered by the Rapporteurship, these peaks coincide with periods of intensified social protest, suggesting a relative correlation between the number of incidents and the frequency, scale, and duration of such mobilizations. In this sense, the Rapporteurship observed a reduction in violent incidents between 2022 and 2023. Also, as mentioned, the year 2020 would have been atypical, in part because of the restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

⁴⁰⁵ Prepared by the authors based on the corresponding annual reports and validation of the information recorded by the media and civil society organizations.

186. Most of the cases of violence against the press in the context of social demonstrations took place in Port-au-Prince, the country's most populous city, the seat of the three branches of the State, and the largest territory subject to disputes between the State, criminal gangs, and vigilante groups. However, the Rapporteurship also took note of some incidents in the north and southwest of the country.
187. According to information documented by the Rapporteurship, several seriously injured journalists have been transferred to hospitals to receive the necessary care. However, the shortage of personnel and medicines has had a negative impact on the speed and quality of the treatment received.
188. The reports systematized by this Office indicate that most of the journalists injured while covering social protests were the result of an alleged excessive use of force by the HNP, including the use of tear gas, rubber bullets and live ammunition. The Rapporteurship also recorded allegations that members of the police forces reportedly ignored the identification of journalists and press workers, some of whom reportedly wore vests and helmets marked "press", carried cameras and/or microphones, or verbally identified their media affiliation.
189. Although to a lesser extent, the Rapporteurship has observed instances in which violence against the press was allegedly perpetrated by demonstrators accusing some media outlets of bias and political militancy. These episodes of violence were not only directed directly against journalists, but also affected the property of at least two media outlets, including their headquarters, transmission equipment and official vehicles.
190. The SRFOE is particularly concerned about the attacks against four international correspondents: two from "Associated Press", one from "Reuters" and one from "Island TV". These attacks represent a serious obstacle and precedent for the access of the international community to essential information, especially in critical moments to guarantee a comprehensive response and accompaniment of the international community.
191. In February 2019, in the framework of a week of protests throughout the national territory on the second anniversary of the inauguration of President Jovenel Moïse, there were reports from the ANMH, the AMIH and the AJH on acts of violence against journalists⁴⁰⁶. These included instances in which demonstrators allegedly beat up reporters carrying out news coverage; damage to official media vehicles; attempts to steal reporters' journalistic material; threats by PNH agents; attacks against "Radio Télévision Nationale d'Haïti (TNH)", including the burning of broadcasting equipment, six official vehicles and two electricity generators; as well as the jamming of the airwaves of at least two radio stations.
192. Of particular gravity were the events reported on February 13, 2019, when the correspondent of the "Reuters" agency in Haiti, Robenson Sanon, was shot in the right arm while reporting on confrontations between demonstrators and anti-riot units⁴⁰⁷. Per media and civil society reports, Sanon was initially taken to the Haiti State University Hospital and later transferred to the Bernard Mevs Hospital due to the lack of available personnel and supplies⁴⁰⁸. The

⁴⁰⁶ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2019*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 5, February 24, 2020, par. 773; Le Nouvelliste, *Violences contre la presse: association de journalistes et patrons de médias protestant*, February 14, 2019.

⁴⁰⁷ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), *Annual Report 2019*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 5, February 24, 2020, par. 772.

⁴⁰⁸ Le Nouvelliste, *Le journaliste Robenson Sanon blessé par balle lors de manifestations anti-gouvernementales*, February 13, 2019; Loop News, *Haïti - Manifestation : le journaliste Robenson Sanon touché par balle*, February 13, 2019.

journalist reportedly received the necessary medical attention and was eventually discharged, although it was not possible to identify any perpetrators⁴⁰⁹.

193. Four months later, in early June 2019, the Rapporteurship documented a new wave of violence against journalists covering social mobilizations demanding the resignation of President Jovenel Moïse, questioning the legitimacy of his election and his possible involvement in corruption schemes⁴¹⁰.
194. On June 7, 2019, it became known that a group of protesters allegedly assaulted Richardson Jourdan, a cameraman for “Radio Télévision Nationale d’Haïti” (TNH) for allegedly praising the President of the Republic through the State-owned media⁴¹¹. On June 9, 2019, two journalists from “Radio Sans Fin”, Michel Dominique Victor and Esdra Jeudy, claimed to have come under fire after agents in an official car allegedly fired on dozens of protesters⁴¹². Victor and Jeudy reportedly threw themselves to the ground claiming to be journalists, although their cries were ignored, forcing them to seek temporary shelter in a nearby hotel⁴¹³. That same day, there were additional reports that photojournalist Lesly Dorcin of “Le Nouvelliste” was wounded in the back by a rubber bullet after police sought to respond to apparent provocations by demonstrators throwing stones in his direction⁴¹⁴.
195. Similarly, on June 10, 2019, it was reported that a group of protesters had set fire to three official vehicles of “Radio Télé Ginen” after accusing the media outlet of bias and political militancy with the ruling party⁴¹⁵. Reporters from the same media outlet were reportedly attacked with stones, according to local media⁴¹⁶. The Secretariat of State for Communications rejected the attacks against the media outlet, as well as against journalists Richardson Jourdan and Lesly Dorcin⁴¹⁷.
196. On September 23, 2019, reports were received of a serious incident in which a senator allegedly fired a gun into a crowd of demonstrators near the Senate building in Port-au-Prince⁴¹⁸. One of the bullet fragments reportedly hit Dieu-Nalio Chery, an “Associated Press” photographer, injuring his face⁴¹⁹. Dieu-Nalio was reportedly taken to a local hospital, where he was treated for his wounds and released, although it was necessary for him to return to have the bullet fragment in his jaw removed⁴²⁰. The senator claimed to have been attacked by “violent militant groups” and denied firing a weapon, although he also claimed to have acted

⁴⁰⁹ AlterPresse, [Protestation contre des actes d’agression et d’attaques envers des journalistes et des médias](#), February 14, 2019; International Journalists’ Network, [Les dangers d’être un journaliste en Haïti](#), August 20, 2021.

⁴¹⁰ Miami Herald, [Journalists come under attack in Haiti](#), June 11, 2019; Voice of America, [Haiti Anti-Graft Protesters Attack Journalists](#), June 11, 2019; Amnesty International, [Haiti: Protesters at continued risk](#), June 14, 2019.

⁴¹¹ Vant Bèf Info, [Un journaliste de la Télévision Nationale D’Haïti bastonné par des manifestants](#), June 7, 2019; Haïti Libre, [L’État condamne les attaques contre des journalistes et des médias](#), June 11, 2019.

⁴¹² AZ Infos, [Des journalistes échappent de peu aux tirs de policiers](#), June 9, 2019; Loop News, [2 reporters de la RSF ont failli tomber sous les balles de la Police](#), June 9, 2019.

⁴¹³ Loop News, [2 reporters de la RSF ont failli tomber sous les balles de la Police](#), June 9, 2019; Wi-News 86, [Un journaliste de la RSF tué par balles à Portail Léogâne](#), June 11, 2019.

⁴¹⁴ Le Nouvelliste, [Notre collaborateur Lesly Dorcin blessé par balle](#), June 9, 2019; Vant Bèf Info, [Un photojournaliste blessé par balle](#), June 10, 2019.

⁴¹⁵ Loop News, [Des véhicules de Radio Télé Ginen incendiés par des protestataires](#), June 10, 2019; Miami Herald, [Radio Télé Ginen attacked in Haiti](#), June 11, 2019.

⁴¹⁶ AlterPresse, [At least 3 vehicles burned at Radio Télé Ginen, during an attack](#), June 10, 2019; Haïti24, [Des manifestants ont tenté d’incendier 3 véhicules de la Radio Télévision Caraïbes](#), June 14, 2019.

⁴¹⁷ MCC Communication Haïti, [Le Bureau du Secrétaire d’Etat à la Communication condamne les attaques contres des journalistes et des médias tant publics que privés](#), June 10, 2019.

⁴¹⁸ The Guardian, [Haiti: photojournalist shot in face as senator opens fire outside parliament](#), September 23, 2019; BBC, [Photographer tells how he captured Haiti shooting incident](#), September 24, 2019.

⁴¹⁹ Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), [Annual Report 2019](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 5, February 24, 2020, par. 778.

⁴²⁰ Committee to Protect Journalists, [Haitian senator opens fire, injuring AP photographer Chery Dieu-Nalio](#), Sept. 24, 2019; AP, [AP photographer wounded as senator fires gun during protest](#), Sept. 23, 2019.

in self-defense, adding that he was unaware that a journalist had been in the crowd⁴²¹. As evidenced in videos recorded by other media outlets, the photographer was wearing a vest marked “press” at the time he was shot⁴²².

197. A week later, on September 30, 2019, a third “Radio Sans Fin” journalist, Edmond Joseph Agenor, was reportedly wounded with a bullet wound to the wrist while covering new clashes between demonstrators and anti-riot units in the Haitian capital⁴²³. According to other media reports, the journalist was wearing a press badge, a bulletproof vest and a helmet⁴²⁴. Different civil society organizations reported that on several occasions the police had used lethal weapons and tear gas to disperse this new round of protests⁴²⁵.
198. On November 11, 2019, another Associated Press correspondent, Rebecca Blackwell, who was filling in for Chery while he was recovering, was reportedly injured by a glass bottle during new demonstrations⁴²⁶. Both Blackwell and Chery were nominated for Pulitzer Prizes in 2020 for their photographs “that convey the horrors of lynchings, killings and human rights abuses as the country faces ongoing unrest”⁴²⁷.
199. The Office of the Special Rapporteur recorded a single instance of violence against journalists in the context of social demonstrations in 2020, partly due to restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID-29 pandemic. However, this phenomenon resumed the following year.
200. On February 23, 2020, it was reported that a group of masked individuals, carrying firearms and claiming to be members of the PNH, attacked the premises of the private radio station “Radio Télévision Caraïbes” (RTVC), located in Port-au-Prince⁴²⁸. The attack reportedly took place in the midst of a demonstration organized by the PNH to demand better working conditions, including guarantees of protection and better salaries⁴²⁹. The radio and television station was covering the events live when the armed group burst into the facilities, ordering them to turn off the drone they were using to film the development of the protest, which the journalists refused to do, unleashing the attack against the media⁴³⁰. According to information compiled by the media and civil society, this group allegedly set fire to several vehicles, threw stones at the building, and smashed windows and transmission equipment, although no journalists were injured⁴³¹. In protest of these events, RTVC announced the suspension of its programming⁴³².
201. The Office of the Special Rapporteur has observed that violence against the press in the context of social protests has been accompanied by stigmatizing statements by public leaders.

⁴²¹ Al Jazeera, [Haiti senator opens fire outside parliament, wounds photographer](#), Sept. 24, 2019; Miami Herald, [Haiti senator who opened fire calls it self-defense, but others demand an investigation](#), Sept. 26, 2019.

⁴²² Miami Herald, [Video shows Haitian senator shooting into crowd](#), September 23, 2019; Le Nouvelliste, [Des blessés par balle, dont le journaliste Dieu-Nalio Chéry, au cours d'une fusillade en marge de la séance au Sénat](#), September 23, 2019.

⁴²³ Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), [Annual Report 2019](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 5, February 24, 2020, par. 779.

⁴²⁴ Committee to Protect Journalists, [Journalist Edmond Agenor Joseph shot by police in Haiti while covering protests](#), October 1, 2019; RSF, [Nouvel assassinat de journaliste en Haïti](#), October 11, 2019.

⁴²⁵ Rezo Nòdwes, [Journaliste blessé par balles: Radio Sans Fin envisage de saisir la justice](#), October 1, 2019; elPeriódico, [Haiti protests leave at least 17 dead and 189 injured](#), October 4, 2019.

⁴²⁶ Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), [Annual Report 2019](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 5, February 24, 2020, par. 780; iciHaiti, [2 injured journalists including a foreigner](#), December 10, 2019.

⁴²⁷ The Pulitzer Prizes, [Finalist: Dieu Nalio Chery and Rebecca Blackwell of Associated Press](#), 2020.

⁴²⁸ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), [Annual Report 2020](#), OEA/Ser.L/Doc.28, March 30, 2021, par. 821.

⁴²⁹ The Haitian Times, [Looters Burned Radio Television Caraïbes](#), February 25, 2020; Le Nouvelliste, [Protestations unanimes après l'attaque contre la Radio Télévision Caraïbes](#), February 27, 2020.

⁴³⁰ Vant Bèf Info, [Menace d'incendie contre la Radio/ Télévision Caraïbes](#), February 23, 2020; Gazette Haïti [Radio Caraïbes condamne l'attaque contre ses locaux et suspend ses émissions](#), February 24, 2020.

⁴³¹ Committee to Protect Journalists, [Haitian outlet Radio Télévision Caraïbes targeted with arson attack during police protest](#), February 26, 2020.

⁴³² Gazette Haïti, [Radio Caraïbes condamne l'attaque contre ses locaux et suspend ses émissions](#), February 24, 2020.

In early 2021, then President Jovenel Moïse stated, in the context of a UN Security Council meeting, that “gangs often disguise themselves as protesters and journalists to attack police officers on duty”⁴³³.

202. On January 20, 2021, there were reports of violence against at least four journalists: Réginald Rémy, of “Radio Caraïbes”; Alvarez Destiné, of the online media “Actualité locale TV” (ALTV); Reynald Petit-Frère, of “Signal FM”; and Daniel Lamartinière, of “Impartial Info”⁴³⁴. Rémy was reportedly shot three times by a patrol car despite being clearly identified as a journalist⁴³⁵. For their part, Destiné and Petit-Frère were also reportedly physically assaulted, although in the case of Petit-Frère this would have been the third aggression in the context of social mobilizations⁴³⁶. In June 2019, the “Signal FM” journalist was reportedly hit by two rubber bullets during a new round of protests⁴³⁷. Then, in October 2019, he was allegedly beaten by agents of the General Security Unit of the National Palace (USGPN, for its French acronym) after attempting to cover an event of President Moïse at the National Pantheon Museum Haitian⁴³⁸. Upon identifying himself as a journalist on the premises, at least one policeman allegedly accused him of contributing to the destabilization of the country and proceeded to beat him⁴³⁹. More recently, Lamartinière reported having been hit by a rubber bullet in the eye and expressed concern about the high possibility of losing his sight⁴⁴⁰.
203. Similarly, on February 8, 2021, two journalists were reportedly wounded with live ammunition while covering clashes between demonstrators and security forces in the Champs-des-Mars area of Port-au-Prince: again, Alvarez Destiné of “ALTV” was reportedly shot in the hand, while Méus Jeanril, a reporter for the “Télé Pam” channel, was reportedly shot in the abdomen⁴⁴¹. Both were rushed to the Bernard Mevs Hospital, which has been frequented by other wounded journalists since 2018⁴⁴².
204. Two days later, on February 10, 2021, information was disseminated about an attack against the “Radio Télé Pacific” team while they were being transported in an official vehicle of the media⁴⁴³. According to reports shared by the local press, police officers allegedly tried to disperse the demonstration with tear gas, even firing a canister at the back of the vehicle despite being marked as press⁴⁴⁴.

⁴³³ La Presse, Le président Moïse accusé de mettre en danger les journalistes, 23 February 2021; Le Nouvelliste, Le président Moïse met en danger la vie des journalistes, dénonce la corporation, 23 February 2021; AlterPresse, Les propos de Jovenel Moïse, le 22 février 2021, devant le Conseil de sécurité de l’Onu, une attaque contre les journalistes, dénonce l’Ajh, 23 février 2021.

⁴³⁴ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2021, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 64, Rev. 1, May 26, 2022, par. 527.

⁴³⁵ Vant Bèf Info, L’Association des Médias Indépendants d’Haïti s’insurge contre les violences faites aux journalistes, January 22, 2021; Voice of America, Haitian Journalists Protest Police Brutality, January 28, 2021.

⁴³⁶ AlterPresse, L’Anmh appelle le président Jovenel Moïse à se “conformer à son statut de garant de la Constitution.” January 25, 2021; RNDDH, Systematic repression of freedom of movement and expression, January 22, 2021.

⁴³⁷ Vant Bèf Info, Un journaliste de Signal FM blessé par balle au Champ de Mars, June 16, 2019; Annew News, Haiti: Le journaliste Reynald Petit Frère dit Kenny de la Radio Signal FM, blessé par balle, June 17, 2019.

⁴³⁸ Rezo Nòdwes, Un journaliste de Signal FM, Reynald Petit-Frère, brutalisé par des policiers de l’USGPN, 17 October 2019; Le Nouvelliste, Raynald Petit-Frère, journaliste de Signal FM, agressé par des agents de l’USGPN, 18 October 2019.

⁴³⁹ Juno 7, Le journaliste Reynald Petit-Frère brutalisé par des agents de l’USGPN, 17 October 2019; Le Nouvelliste, Raynald Petit-Frère, journaliste de Signal FM, agressé par des agents de l’USGPN, 18 October 2019.

⁴⁴⁰ Ayibopost, Ce journaliste a reçu une balle en plein œil. Il revient à la charge, January 31, 2021; Voice of America, Haitian Journalists Protest Police Brutality, January 28, 2021.

⁴⁴¹ Miami Herald, Haitian journalists injured as nation plunges deeper into turmoil amid constitutional crisis, February 11, 2021; International Journalists’ Network, Being a journalist in crisis-hit Haiti, August 20, 2021.

⁴⁴² Le Nouvelliste, Deux journalistes blessés par balle au Champ de Mars, February 8, 2021; Committee to Protect Journalists, Les journalistes Alvarez Destiné et Méus Jeanril blessés par balles alors que la police et les forces armées dispersent la manifestation en Haïti, February 11, 2021.

⁴⁴³ Vant Bèf Info, La police n’a toujours pas identifié les policiers qui ont attaqué le véhicule de la Radio/Télé Pacific, February 23, 2021; Gazette Haïti, Le secrétaire d’Etat à la communication Eddy Jackson Alexis condamne les violences policières contre les journalistes, February 12, 2021.

⁴⁴⁴ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2021, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, Doc. 64, Rev. 1, May 26, 2022, par. 528.

205. The Rapporteurship took note of the statement of the State Secretary of Communications, who condemned the attacks on members of the press by police officers during the demonstrations of January and February 2021 and invited the security forces to act with restraint⁴⁴⁵. It also recorded the statement of the commander-in-chief of the Haitian armed forces, who denied that members of the armed forces were involved in the violence against the press, and described the accusations made by journalists as false and aimed at manipulating public opinion⁴⁴⁶.
206. In addition, at least three violent incidents were reported in 2022 and 2023. Thus, for example, on September 7, 2022, it was documented that three journalists from the “Télé Zenith” media outlet were reportedly injured by live and less lethal ammunition, tear gas, and assaults by the HNP in Port-au-Prince⁴⁴⁷. Yvenson Joinville was shot in the thigh, a rubber bullet wounded Youly Destiné, and police officers assaulted, for the third time, according to public reports, Robest Dimanche⁴⁴⁸.
207. Meanwhile, on July 20, 2023, another incident was recorded in which reporters Daniel Lamartinière, at the time associated with “Vant Bèf Info”, and Jameson Jean Baptiste, of “JB Média”, were allegedly beaten by a police officer while covering a demonstration against the Prime Minister’s government, despite their clear accreditation as journalists⁴⁴⁹. This would be at least the second violent incident against Lamartinière, according to publicly available information and the systematization of the Rapporteurship.
208. On July 31, 2023, it became known that radio reporter Arnold Junior Pierre, who works for “Radar News Haiti”, “Fact Checking News Haïti”, and “Radio Télé Galaxie”, was reportedly beaten by an unknown number of hooded men while covering demonstrations in the southwestern part of Port-au-Prince⁴⁵⁰. Pierre noted that a police officer reportedly threatened him after he took a photo of him, allegedly saying that he would kill him if they were not from the same neighborhood⁴⁵¹. These same hooded men allegedly destroyed his cell phone⁴⁵². Despite receiving medical treatment for a wound to the back of his head, Pierre continued to experience pain in his upper limbs for the next few days⁴⁵³.
209. Notwithstanding an apparent decrease in the levels of violence against the press in the context of social protests in the last two years, new cycles of violence, political and institutional instability, as well as citizen dissatisfaction, led to new incidents in 2024. As of the date of publication of this report, there have been at least five episodes.
210. On January 29, 2024, according to local media reports, Exavier Charlemagne, a reporter for “Radio Télé Lambi”, was reportedly shot in the left leg by an unknown assailant while covering

⁴⁴⁵ Gazette Haïti, Le secrétaire d’Etat à la communication Eddy Jackson Alexis condamne les violences policières contre les journalistes, February 12, 2021.

⁴⁴⁶ Miami Herald, Haiti journalists fear press freedom under attack, February 10, 2021; Committee to Protect Journalists, Les journalistes Alvarez Destiné et Méus Jeanril blessés par balles alors que la police et les forces armées dispersent la manifestation en Haïti, February 11, 2021.

⁴⁴⁷ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2022, OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, par. 827.

⁴⁴⁸ AlterPresse, Encore 2 journalistes portés disparus dans un fief de gangs armés en Haïti, September 12, 2023; Inter-American Press Association, IAPA condemns the murders of journalists in Haiti and the U.S., September 13, 2022.

⁴⁴⁹ IACHR, Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (SRFOE), Annual Report 2022, OEA/Ser.L/V/II Doc. 50, March 6, 2023, par.963.

⁴⁵⁰ Committee to Protect Journalists, Haitian radio journalist’s home destroyed in arson attack, August 31, 2023; Inter American Press Association, Journalist injured during protests in Haiti, January 30, 2024.

⁴⁵¹ Voice of America, Vulnerable to Attack, Haitian Journalists Flee, September 8, 2023; Inter-American Press Association, A Journalist was Attacked while Covering a Protest in the Haitian Capital, August 9, 2023.

⁴⁵² Vant Bèf Info, Les journalistes pris pour cible dans une spirale de violence et d’impunité, November 11, 2023; Voice of America, Vulnerable to Attack, Haitian Journalists Flee, September 8, 2023.

⁴⁵³ Inter-American Press Association, A Journalist was Attacked while Covering a Protest in the Haitian Capital, August 9, 2023; Committee to Protect Journalists, Haitian radio journalist’s home destroyed in arson attack, August 31, 2021

a protest against the interim government of Ariel Henry in Jérémie⁴⁵⁴. Witnesses attributed the incident to the police⁴⁵⁵.

211. Also, on February 7, 2024, reports were shared alleging that at least three journalists, including Wilborde Ymozan, Lemy Brutus, and Stanley Belford, were injured after police used tear gas to disperse more than a thousand people gathered in Jérémie⁴⁵⁶. Ymozan, who works for the online video channel “Tande Koze”, was reportedly hit in the leg by a projectile; Brutus, manager of the local online video media outlet “Grandans Bèl Depatman”, reportedly received stitches in his head after being beaten and having his equipment stolen; and Belford, a reporter for Florida-based “Island TV”, reportedly suffered a hand injury, according to two local radio station owners.
212. Moreover, on February 8, 2024, a journalist was reportedly injured in the latest round of mass demonstrations in the country. He is independent journalist Jean Marc Jean, who was reportedly hit in the face by a tear gas canister fired by an officer of the police riot squad in Port-au-Prince⁴⁵⁷.
213. More recently, on March 19, 2025, at least ten journalists were reportedly assaulted while covering a protest in the Canapé-Vert neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, which had been called to condemn violence perpetrated by criminal gangs in the country⁴⁵⁸. According to the Haitian Digital Media Association (CMEL), protesters and locals armed with machetes, sticks, and firearms sought to attack journalists who were doing their job, demanding that they leave the area. Among those attacked were Jephthé Bazil, Sonsonn Cazeau, René Célis, Moïse Beaucejour, Peter Lyonelson Biamby, Herby Val, Wilkenson Germain, Junior Jean, Rudy Éveillard, and Patrick Souvenir⁴⁵⁹. The attackers also reportedly seized their equipment—including cameras, recorders, phones, helmets, and bulletproof vests—seriously limiting their ability to document the events. In a public statement, the CMEL urged citizens not to view the press as a “threat,” but rather as a “fundamental ally in the search for truth and justice”⁴⁶⁰.
214. The Rapporteurship has learned that, according to the State’s institutional framework, cases of human rights violations involving members of the police force must be referred to the General Inspectorate of the Haitian National Police (IGPNH) for investigation and, if necessary, the imposition of administrative sanctions on the responsible officers⁴⁶¹. Cases investigated by the IGPNH may also be referred to the judicial authorities for criminal prosecution⁴⁶².
215. The Rapporteurship has also learned of the creation of the “Office of Verification and Control” to investigate the background of members of the institution for their possible participation in

⁴⁵⁴ Inter American Press Association, Journalist injured during protests in Haiti, January 30, 2024; Committee to Protect Journalists, At least 5 journalists injured during anti-government protests in Haiti, February 9, 2024.

⁴⁵⁵ Nam-Haïti, Un journaliste blessé par balle à Jérémie dans le cadre d'une manifestation, January 30, 2024; Inter American Press Association, Journalist injured during protests in Haiti, January 30, 2024.

⁴⁵⁶ Le Nouvelliste, Attaques, affrontements, pillage, blessés par balles, spirale de violences à Jérémie ce 7 février, 7 February 2024; Committee to Protect Journalists, At least 5 journalists injured during anti-government protests in Haiti, 9 February 2024.

⁴⁵⁷ Radio Écoute FM, Facebook post, February 8, 2024; Committee to Protect Journalists, At least 5 journalists injured during anti-government protests in Haiti, February 9, 2024.

⁴⁵⁸ Gazette Haïti, Agression de journalistes par des habitants de Canapé-Vert: le CMEL condamne fermement l'agression et défend la liberté de la presse, 20 de marzo de 2025; Realité Info, Chaos à Canapé-Vert: Des journalistes passés à tabac, le CMEL monte au créneau, 20 de marzo de 2025.

⁴⁵⁹ Committee to Protect Journalists, Journalists kidnapped, threatened with lynching as chaos worsens in Haiti, 20 de marzo de 2025; Gazette Haïti, Agression de journalistes par des habitants de Canapé-Vert: le CMEL condamne fermement l'agression et défend la liberté de la presse, 20 de marzo de 2025.

⁴⁶⁰ Realité Info, Chaos à Canapé-Vert: Des journalistes passés à tabac, le CMEL monte au créneau, 20 de marzo de 2025; Gazette Haïti, Agression de journalistes par des habitants de Canapé-Vert: le CMEL condamne fermement l'agression et défend la liberté de la presse, 20 de marzo de 2025.

⁴⁶¹ BINUH, Quarterly Report on the Human Rights Situation in Haiti (April-June 2024), 2024, pg. 11.

⁴⁶² BINUH, Quarterly Report on the Human Rights Situation in Haiti (January-March 2023), pg. 5.

human rights violations, links to organized crime, and corruption schemes⁴⁶³. The creation of this Office would have marked a milestone given that it would be the first institutional effort of the HNP to systematically investigate members of the public force and improve citizen confidence in the institution⁴⁶⁴.

216. Although more than 300 investigations have been opened against members of the HNP through the Inspector General's Office, less than a quarter have been concluded⁴⁶⁵. Most of the concluded investigations have led to the temporary suspension or dismissal of police officers, while only a fraction have resulted in transfer to the judicial system for criminal prosecution⁴⁶⁶. Continued criminal gang activity in the vicinity of the IGPNH and lack of resources have affected the operability of this oversight body⁴⁶⁷. In parallel, the judicial system faces a severe deficit of justice operators, who are exposed to high risks from threats and armed attacks at the hands of organized crime⁴⁶⁸.
217. In addition, the Rapporteurship has learned of testimonies of journalists who are victims of police abuses and who denounce high levels of impunity after filing formal complaints with the General Inspectorate of the PHN, as well as others who have chosen not to do so due to the lack of progress in previous cases⁴⁶⁹.
218. Faced with instances of violence against the press in the context of social protests, the SRFOE recalls that States must adopt the necessary measures to prevent acts of violence, ensure the safety of people and maintain public order. ⁴⁷⁰Such measures must be proportional to the achievement of these objectives and must not hinder the exercise of other rights at stake, such as the freedom of expression of the demonstrators and the freedom of the press of the journalists present⁴⁷¹. In this sense, there are no circumstances that enable the use of lethal force to dissolve a protest or demonstration, or to shoot indiscriminately at the crowd⁴⁷².
219. Likewise, the SRFOE recalls that the use of force must conform to strict principles of exceptionality, necessity, progressiveness and proportionality⁴⁷³, and that the use of less lethal weapons must be strictly regulated⁴⁷⁴. Therefore, any incident that has involved the use of any type of weapons by the security forces must be recorded⁴⁷⁵. In accordance with the relevant Inter-American standards, when the use of force results in death and injury, there is a duty to open ex officio investigations by independent and impartial authorities with the necessary tools to determine the facts and identify the actors and their degrees of responsibility within a reasonable time, in order to ensure accountability, due prosecution and punishment, and adequate reparations to the victims' families⁴⁷⁶.

⁴⁶³ BINUH, La police nationale d'Haïti se dote d'un mécanisme permanent de vérification et de contrôle de son personnel, June 2, 2023.

⁴⁶⁴ Le Nouvelliste, IGPNH Implements Verification and Control Bureau to Purify the Police Institution, June 1, 2023; Ted Actu, Haïti: plus de 3 000 policiers et personnels remerciés au cours des deux dernières années, selon un rapport, January 22, 2024.

⁴⁶⁵ Based on figures recorded in the UN Secretary-General's reports to the Security Council since February 2020, available at BINUH Documents.

⁴⁶⁶ Based on figures recorded in the UN Secretary-General's reports to the Security Council since February 2020, available at BINUH Documents.

⁴⁶⁷ United Nations Security Council, Report of the Secretary General, 16 April 2024, par. 48; United Nations Security Council, Report of the Secretary General, 27 June 2024, par. 42.

⁴⁶⁸ United Nations Development Programme, Justice Programme UNDP (Fact Sheet), February 2023.

⁴⁶⁹ International Journalists' Network, Being a journalist in crisis-hit Haiti, August 20, 2021; Ayibopost, L'impunité policière en Haïti inquiète en attendant la force internationale, June 5, 2024.

⁴⁷⁰ IACHR, Protest and Human Rights, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, IACHR/SRFOE/INF.22/19, September 2019, par. 12.

⁴⁷¹ IACHR, Protest and Human Rights, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, IACHR/SRFOE/INF.22/19, September 2019, par. 12.

⁴⁷² IACHR, Protest and Human Rights, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, IACHR/SRFOE/INF.22/19, September 2019, par. 115.

⁴⁷³ IACHR, Protest and Human Rights, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, IACHR/SRFOE/INF.22/19, September 2019, par. 350.

⁴⁷⁴ IACHR, Protest and Human Rights, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, IACHR/SRFOE/INF.22/19, September 2019, par. 351.

⁴⁷⁵ IACHR, Protest and Human Rights, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, IACHR/SRFOE/INF.22/19, September 2019, par. 351.

⁴⁷⁶ IACHR, Protest and Human Rights, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, IACHR/SRFOE/INF.22/19, September 2019, par. 359.

220. With respect to the protection of journalists, the SRFOE emphasizes that, as stipulated in the IACHR's "Protest and Human Rights" report, journalists should not be detained for carrying out their work, nor harassed or attacked by the forces of law and order⁴⁷⁷. Likewise, neither their equipment nor their journalistic material may be retained, confiscated or destroyed by State agents⁴⁷⁸. On the contrary, the authorities have obligations to protect, provide justice and redress for communicators who are victims of violence during demonstrations⁴⁷⁹. The fulfillment of these obligations also requires that the political authorities refrain from expressing notions that are detrimental or stigmatize a protest or the people who participate in it, organize it or cover it for the media, since this may place certain sectors of the population, including the press, in a situation of greater vulnerability and risk of further attacks⁴⁸⁰.

VI. Conclusions

221. In this report, the SRFOE has conducted an analysis of the evolution of the guarantees and conditions for the practice of journalism in Haiti, simultaneously explaining the importance of press freedom to navigate and potentially overcome the multidimensional crisis that the State is going through. The analysis presented here is based on a set of facts, documented since 2018, that reveal an alarming panorama for communication professionals: deliberate murders of communicators; systematic armed attacks against journalists and media outlets; cases of forced disappearance and kidnappings; forced internal displacement and exile of members of the press; and violence against journalists covering social protests.
222. The convergence of these patterns of violence against the press, aggravated by extremely high levels of impunity, allows the Rapporteurship to conclude that Haiti, and especially the areas where the State has lost its monopoly of force, are becoming "silenced zones"⁴⁸¹. The country faces a high presence of organized criminal structures, in control of more than 80% of Port-au-Prince and of the main roads connecting Port-au-Prince with the country's ports, coastal areas, and land borders; high rates of administrative corruption that facilitate the co-optation of State institutions, including the judiciary and security forces; the absence of an effective response by the authorities in charge of prevention, protection and justice; and the lack of support or accompaniment for journalists, exposing them to greater risk. The combination of these factors inhibits journalists in the most affected areas from carrying out their work, limits freedom of expression and produces a chilling effect on the free flow of information, generates self-censorship and reinforces the tendency to carry out journalism that avoids reporting on the most pressing issues in the country, such as crimes and illicit activities of criminal gangs, State corruption and alleged links between authorities and armed groups, as well as irregularities in the State security forces, among others.

⁴⁷⁷ IACHR, *Protest and Human Rights*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, IACHR/SRFOE/INF.22/19, September 2019, par. 356.

⁴⁷⁸ IACHR, *Protest and Human Rights*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, IACHR/SRFOE/INF.22/19, September 2019, par. 356.

⁴⁷⁹ IACHR, *Protest and Human Rights*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, IACHR/SRFOE/INF.22/19, September 2019, par. 356.

⁴⁸⁰ IACHR, *Protest and Human Rights*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, IACHR/SRFOE/INF.22/19, September 2019, par. 287.

⁴⁸¹ The concept "silenced zones" is applied to describe the violence exercised against the physical and psychological integrity of journalists and media workers by criminal structures without or with the acquiescence of the State. In its 2017 report entitled "Zonas silenciadas: Regiones de alta peligrosidad para ejercer la libertad de expresión," the Office of the Special Rapporteur concluded that in these so-called silenced zones, common factors are: (a) the existence of criminal structures that operate outside the law and seek control of an entire region; (b) the cooperation, collusion or omission of broad sectors of the public administration at various levels; (c) the lack of effective response from other state institutions (Executive, Judicial and Prosecutor's Office) called upon to comply with the primary obligations to prevent, protect, investigate and punish threats to life and integrity and to guarantee the exercise of freedom of expression; (d) the lack of support and training of local journalists that make them more vulnerable to this type of attacks, either because of the way in which they approach the news phenomenon or because they are involved with authorities or even criminal structures; (e) the inhibition of journalists to carry out their work, self-censorship and the tendency to carry out journalism that avoids reporting on security issues, corruption or influence peddling and to develop a journalism aligned with power; (f) the generation of incentives to perpetuate violence directed against communicators when criminal structures are successful in silencing the media and opinion makers for long periods of time and enjoy impunity. See IACHR, *Zonas Silenciadas: Regions of high danger to exercise freedom of expression*, March 2017, OEA/Ser.L/V/II, IACHR/SRFOE/INF.16/17, pars. 27-28.

223. It is evident that the practice of journalism has become a high-risk activity that threatens the very possibility of documenting and communicating the national reality, both to Haitian citizens and to the international community. In fact, the patterns of violence identified reflect a deliberate strategy of obscuring information that prolongs and deepens the multidimensional crisis and favors the interests of criminal structures in the country
224. In this regard, the Rapporteurship highlights the role that journalism can play in documenting and denouncing human rights violations; the accountability of political actors and the security apparatus; the creation and maintenance of optimal conditions for the holding of general elections; and the dissemination of information, nationally and internationally, so that Haitian citizens can build consensus around the future of their country and the scope and characteristics of the international community's accompaniment.
225. In order for journalism to contribute to overcoming the multidimensional crisis, it is necessary for journalists to have guarantees of prevention, protection and justice, for which reason the Office of the Special Rapporteur will proceed to formulate a series of recommendations. The Rapporteurship, aware of the multiplicity of challenges and difficulties faced by the State, emphasizes that the implementation and effectiveness of these recommendations depend on the comprehensive, timely and sustained accompaniment of the international community.

VII. Recommendations

Discourse by authorities, the transitional government and domestic and foreign security forces:⁴⁸²

1. Constantly, clearly, publicly and firmly recognize the legitimacy and value of journalistic work, especially in order to face the current multidimensional crisis. This recognition must prevail even when the information disseminated may be critical, inconvenient and inopportune for the interests of high-ranking officials, the transitional government, or national and foreign security forces.
2. Strongly condemn any instance of violence against journalists and the media, and encourage the competent authorities to act with due diligence and speed in clarifying the facts and punishing those responsible.
3. Assume a clear commitment, in its pronouncements and work plans, to the fight against impunity in crimes against journalists, and understand and warn of the inhibiting and silencing effect that violence and impunity have on the existence of a free press and a democratic society.

Official State statistics:

4. Maintain updated, disaggregated and public statistics on violence against journalists. At a minimum, these statistics should include: the type of crime committed, the name, gender and employer of the victim, the place and date of the aggression, the person and/or group allegedly responsible (when it has been clarified), the authority in charge of the investigation and the reference number or code of the investigation and the current status of the investigation and/or judicial process. The classification of crimes should include murders, attempted murders, armed attacks against media facilities, threats, physical aggressions, forced disappearances, kidnappings, and forced internal displacement.

⁴⁸² Including the new Presidential Transitional Council, the office of the interim Prime Minister and his/her cabinet, and the authorities of the States participating in the Multinational Security Support Mission in Haiti.

5. Relatedly, compile statistics on violence against journalists retroactively in order to officially follow up on all incidents recorded by the media, civil society organizations, and the IACHR and its SRFOE, among other actors. In this sense, the State must contrast and verify the available information.
6. Based on statistics, use geo-referencing with a human rights approach identify high-risk areas, warn of risks and prevent, in coordination with all authorities involved, including national and foreign security forces, armed attacks and kidnappings.

Protection mechanisms:

7. Establish special protection mechanisms⁴⁸³ for journalists who denounce: acts of corruption, especially the alleged co-optation of part of the State apparatus by criminal structures; illicit activities of criminal gangs and vigilante groups, as well as their human rights violations; and abuses committed by the security apparatus, including the excessive use of force by national and/or foreign agents.
8. Prioritize journalists who are under threat, who have been victims of armed attacks or kidnappings, who are internally displaced, or who are at high risk due to their investigations and publications, especially in areas with a high presence of criminal organizations. As a minimum, guarantee the provision of personal protection elements, such as helmets and bulletproof vests, with the support of civil society organizations and the international community, if required.
9. Facilitate conditions for communicators to be able to continue their journalistic activity and the specific needs of their profession, such as the privacy necessary to meet with sources. In this sense, the design of available protection measures must take into consideration the circumstances of each specific case, in consultation with each potential beneficiary.
10. As part of these mechanisms, early warnings should be adopted to facilitate the inter-institutional coordination of the authorities in charge of prevention, protection and prosecution of crimes against journalists.

Security guarantees in the context of social demonstrations:

11. Guarantee that journalists and communicators who are carrying out their informative work in the context of public demonstrations and situations of high social conflict are not detained, threatened, assaulted or limited in any way in their rights for exercising their profession.
12. Adequately instruct and train State security forces, as well as foreign security forces, on the role of the press in a democratic society and adopt guidelines on respect for freedom of expression based on an evaluation of existing policies.
13. Since respect for freedom of expression encompasses the right to peaceful protest, all security agencies, national and foreign, must strictly observe the principles of exceptionality, necessity, progressiveness and proportionality. By virtue of these principles, the use of firearms with lethal ammunition is rarely justified in the context of demonstrations, and it is therefore recommended that their use by security agents be restricted.
14. When deaths or injuries are attributable to national and/or foreign security forces, open ex officio investigations by independent and impartial authorities that have the necessary tools to determine the facts in a reasonable time and identify the actors and their degrees of

⁴⁸³ As the coordinating organization of the UN plan of action on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity, UNESCO has accompanied the establishment of national protection mechanisms for journalists over the past decade. In 2024, UNESCO launched a global repository of national mechanisms for the safety of journalists, available [here](#).

responsibility, in order to ensure accountability, prosecution, punishment and adequate reparation to the victims' families. It is the duty of these independent and impartial authorities to systematically monitor and document all incidents and to have multiple internal and external channels for processing complaints.

15. Establish a rapid response mechanism that allows authorities to intervene immediately in case of attacks or threats against journalists during protests. This requires a direct communication channel between journalists and authorities with an emergency line, safe corridors for the entry and exit of journalists from social protests, and a medical assistance protocol, among other measures that the State considers pertinent.

Procurement of justice:

16. Create a specialized unit within the Ministry of Justice and Public Security to investigate crimes against the press. These units must not only exist in the structure, but must also have sufficient political support to be able to carry out their task, which also requires a budget, personnel, and regulations that allow them to act diligently.
17. Allocate sufficient training opportunities for investigative police, prosecutors and judges to ensure that investigations into crimes against freedom of expression are thorough, rigorous and effective, and that all aspects of such crimes are thoroughly examined. State-driven investigations must take into account the complexity of the facts, the context in which they occurred, and the patterns that explain their commission in order to avoid the repetition of these attacks. They must also address the structures that carry out the crimes or the criminal structures to which the perpetrators belong.
18. Investigate crimes committed against journalists taking into account the possible relationship with the profession and, if it is alleged that a given crime is not related to the exercise of journalistic activity, demonstrate why such a relationship does not exist. In this sense, it is important that the State adopts protocols that facilitate and support the work of investigation in which it is established as a requirement the exhaustion of the hypothesis of investigation of relationship with the profession.
19. Ensure that judges and prosecutors competent to act in cases of violence against journalists can operate without being subject to the sphere of influence of the public official or criminal organization allegedly involved in the crimes under investigation, and maintain channels of complaint so that evidence to the contrary is processed and administrative and/or criminal proceedings are opened, as the case may be.
20. Guarantee the protection of all those involved in criminal proceedings to clarify attacks against journalists. This means that the necessary guarantees must be offered so that judges, prosecutors, witnesses, witnesses, family members, as well as the victims themselves, can conduct, participate in and give impetus to the process without fear of suffering reprisals against their lives or integrity. This protection should also be accompanied, as far as possible, by legal assistance for the victims and/or their families, as well as psychosocial support.
21. Ensure that the sanctions applied to persons convicted of acts of violence committed against journalists in the exercise of their profession are proportional and effective, and provide for the possibility of compensation for the victims.