



Security Council

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Letter dated 14 October 2024 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to paragraph 9 of Security Council resolution [2692 \(2023\)](#), as renewed by paragraph 19 of Council resolution [2743 \(2024\)](#), I have the honour to transmit to the Council the fifth quarterly report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. The report includes the requested updated information on the sources and routes of illicit arms and financial flows, and on relevant United Nations activities and recommendations.

I should be grateful if you would have the present document brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(Signed) António **Guterres**



Annex

[Original: English]

Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 9 of Security Council resolution [2692 \(2023\)](#), as renewed by paragraph 19 of Council resolution [2743 \(2024\)](#), in which the Council tasked the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with reporting to the Council every three months, concurrent with the reporting cycle of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), through the Secretary-General, on sources and routes of illicit arms and financial flows and on relevant United Nations activities and recommendations. The report covers the period from 13 July to 13 September 2024, a period of persistent instability in Haiti despite the partial deployment of the Multinational Security Support mission authorized by the Security Council.¹
2. UNODC has already submitted four reports to the Security Council in 2023 and 2024. The first UNODC submission ([S/2023/780](#)) provided an overview of trafficking in firearms and ammunition in Haiti from 2021 to 2023, focusing on the role of criminal gangs and their weapons sources, methods and routes, drawing insights from the UNODC briefing note entitled “Haiti’s criminal markets: mapping trends in firearms and drug trafficking”, issued in March 2023. The second report ([S/2024/79](#)) examined how a small number of powerful gangs played a role in sourcing, stockpiling and distributing weapons, and explored the regional dynamics of firearms trafficking, highlighting source and transit countries, such as the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and the United States of America.
3. The Office’s third report ([S/2024/320](#)) described escalating gang violence in the capital of Haiti from January to March 2024, as well as the consolidation of gang control in the capital and coastal areas. The report highlighted the link between political destabilization in Haiti and increased migration flows to other countries, including in the Caribbean. The fourth report ([S/2024/554](#)) provided a general overview of the regional, national and subnational dimensions of firearms and ammunition trafficking and illicit financial flows. Focusing on the period from April to July 2024, the report described trends in the evolution of the country’s crime networks, including the collusion among political, economic and criminal actors.
4. The present report considers several trends related to the shifting influence of criminal groups and the dynamics of firearms and drug trafficking and illicit financial flows. It finds that gang activities are spreading to areas in Port-au-Prince and other cities or regions since the initial deployment of Kenyan forces affiliated with the Multinational Security Support mission and increased police operations. The report also highlights the number of seizures of firearms as well as the uptick in seizures of cocaine and cannabis, likely as a result of expanding police operations. Moreover, the report draws attention to the regional impact of Haitian and transnational organized crime networks profiting from migrant smuggling and drug trafficking routes, including in the Turks and Caicos Islands. The report also highlights a promising strengthening of anti-corruption measures by Haitian authorities, before issuing conclusions and recommendations.

¹ In accordance with Security Council resolution [2699 \(2023\)](#).

Deployment of the Multinational Security Support mission

5. Haiti continued to experience high levels of violence with significant casualties and kidnapping between June and September 2024.² According to BINUH, gang attacks, clashes with gangs and self-defence groups, and police operations resulted in approximately 1,400 killings and 428 kidnappings in the second quarter of 2024. Close to 580,000 Haitians have been internally displaced and another 5 million residents face severe hunger. On 17 July 2024, the Haitian authorities issued a state of emergency in the West and Artibonite Departments. On 12 August 2024, the authorities expanded the state of emergency to the entire country.

6. In June 2024, the Director General of the Haitian National Police presented a partial review of the joint police and Multinational Security Support mission contingent interventions and operations and announced that over 100 gang members had been stopped and another 65 arrested during recent operations. In early September 2024, the Prime Minister of Haiti, Garry Conille, indicated that firearms and ammunition were distributed to the Armed Forces of Haiti to strengthen their capacity as a part of joint operations with the Haitian National Police, in addition to the regular provision of ammunition and some firearms to the Haitian National Police to retake territory controlled by gangs. There is an expectation that, subject to contributions by Member States, the Multinational Security Support mission will expand its operations and gain more traction in and outside Port-au-Prince as forward operating bases are completed, mobile courts are established and prisons are refurbished.

Spreading gang activity outside of Port-au-Prince

7. A consequence of the deployment of the Multinational Security Support mission appears to be the displacement or “ballooning” of gangs to other areas of Haiti. The spread of criminal gangs and their networks has implications for firearms proliferation and drug trafficking as they expand the ambit of their operations, as well as their other illicit activities, in and outside Haiti. Notwithstanding increased Multinational Security Support mission and Haitian National Police operations from July to September 2024, gangs are still actively killing and kidnapping civilians, blocking roads, looting businesses and targeting government buildings in municipalities in and outside Port-au-Prince, such as Carrefour and Gressier, but also in Arcahaie, Cabaret, Fontamara, Ganthier, Grand Ravine and Village de Dieu. Gangs are likewise extorting drivers and passengers on key transportation networks, including National Road 2. The public transportation union, SOS Transport, has publicly expressed frustration with the slow pace of police action.

8. During the period from June to September, several prominent examples stood out. For example, gangs such as Kokorat San Ras and Gran Grif (also known as the Savien gang) spread into Artibonite, the 5 Second gang moved into Lafito village, the Gran Ravine gang took over Mariani, and the 400 Mawozo gang increased its presence on the primary and secondary roads leading to the neighbouring Dominican Republic.

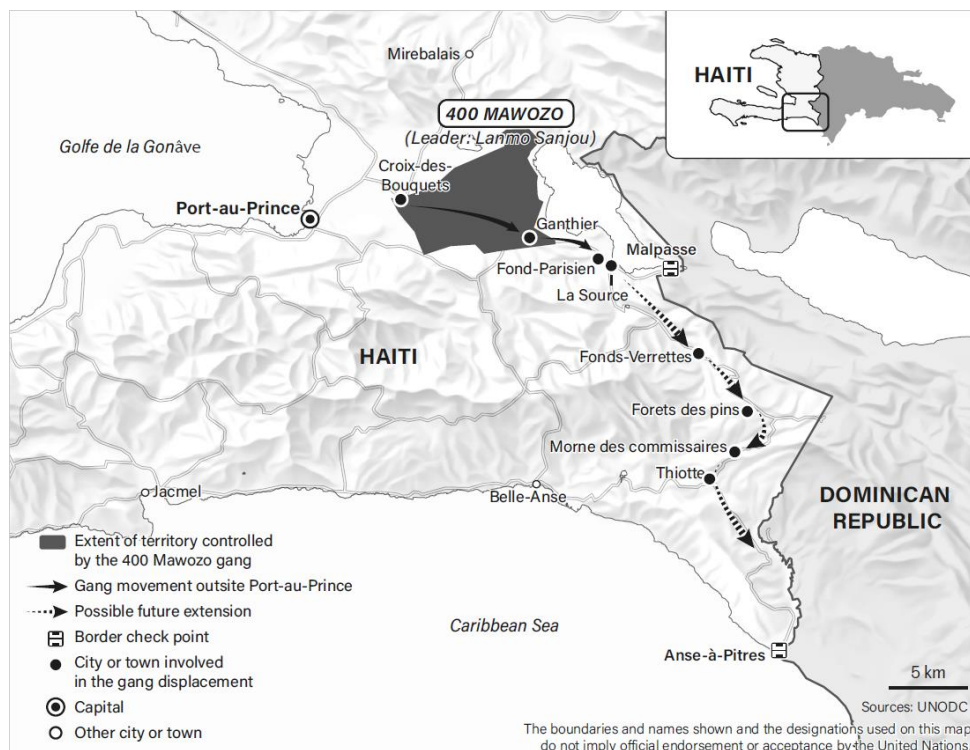
9. Among the most threatening gangs in Haiti is 400 Mawozo, which continues to target urban centres from the capital to the eastern border with the Dominican Republic. The gang has extended its territorial control eastward and south-eastward from Croix-des-Bouquets in Port-au-Prince. Specifically, the criminal group operates along several road corridors, including National Road 8 from Fonds Parisien to Malpasse, giving them access to Fonds Verrettes, Forêts des Pins, Morne des

² See, for example, www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/06/haiti-soaring-number-displaced-desperately-need-protection-and-aid-priority.

Commissaires and Thiotte. This in turn affords access to Anse-à-Pitres, a border town next to the Dominican Republic (see figure I).

10. In August 2024, Dominican authorities reported the presence of 400 Mawozo on its national territory. At least 15 undocumented Haitian migrants were arrested, including a member of 400 Mawozo, amid claims that they were operating in Santiago and other areas of the Cibao district. The group was suspected of attacking trucks using the Joaquín Balaguer highway. The Vice-President of the Dominican Republic, Raquel Peña, noted that the arrests constituted an “isolated incident” and that national authorities were actively working to dismantle the criminal network. The Vice-President also reiterated warning by the President of the Dominican Republic, Luis Abinader, that criminal activities on Dominican territory would face the full weight of the law. In late August 2024, the Vice-President noted that the authorities were strengthening the armed forces and national police to protect borders.

Figure I
Spread of 400 Mawozo

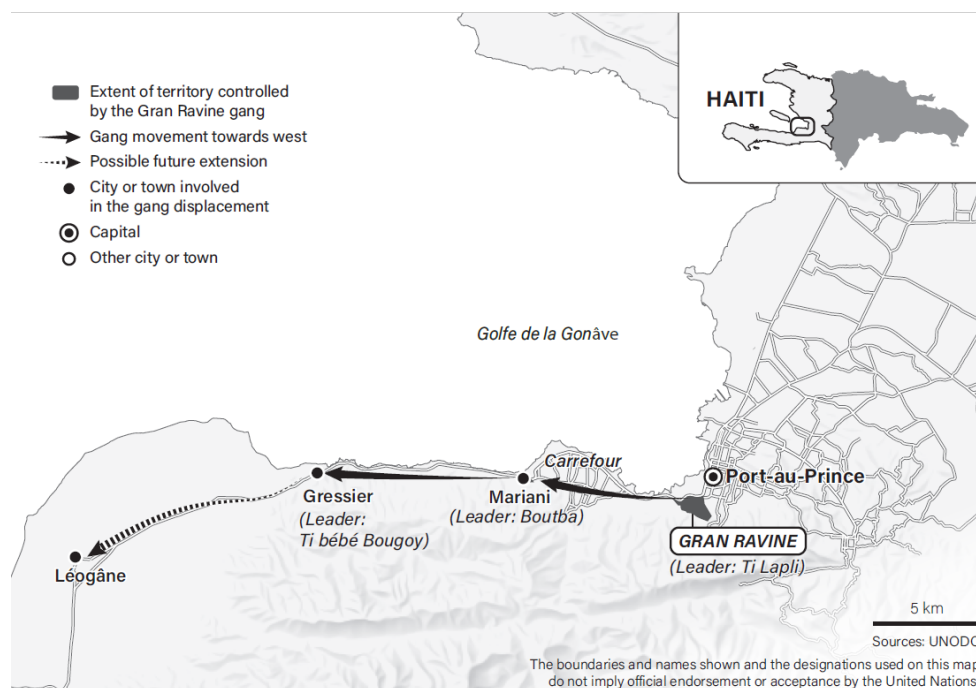


11. The Gran Ravine criminal gang continues to expand its southward influence along National Road 2 (see figure II). In November 2023, the gang, led by Ti Lapli, consolidated its control after attacking and taking over the town of Mariani located at the intersection of National Road 2 and Route des rails. In May 2024, Gran Ravine also targeted the coastal community of Gressier on the western tip of Port-au-Prince, burning cars and attacking homes and infrastructure. The group was repelled by the Haitian National Police in the town of Léogane.

12. Gran Ravine's attacks on Gressier and Léogane were carefully documented by the National Human Rights Defence Network. Specifically, between January and July 2024, the non-governmental organization reported that dozens of people were killed, reported missing and displaced, including women and children. Several Haitian National Police officers were targeted during the episode. The Network claims that at

least 66 people were killed or missing, and another 46 individuals were victims of rape, including 3 minors.³

Figure II
Spread of Gran Ravine

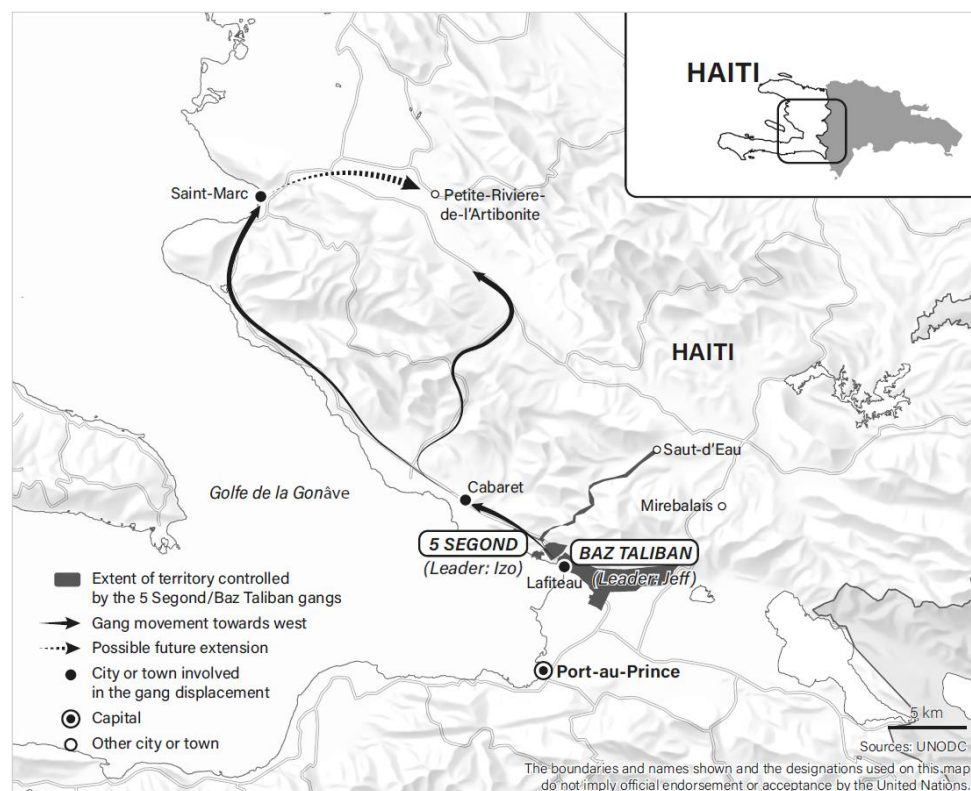


13. The 5 Segond coalition has also expanded north and north-west from the Haitian capital (see figure III). The 5 Segond group is made up of two separate gangs, “Baz 5 Segond” from Village de Dieu, led by Johnson Andre (also known as “Izo”) and the “Canaan gang”, or Baz Taliban, led by “Jeff”. These gangs have temporarily joined forces and extended their influence from the village of Lafiteau,⁴ in Port-au-Prince, to the town of Cabaret. Some of their members have also been reported by local communities in the town of Saint-Marc, close to Petite Rivière de l’Artibonite and adjacent to areas where another gang called Gran Grif (also known as the Savien gang) is known to operate.

³ See Réseau national de défense des droits humains, “Assassinats, viols, pillages et incendies à Carrefour et Gressier sous le regard indifférent des nouvelles autorités étatiques”, 15 August 2024 (in French).

⁴ More precisely, from Les Moulins d’Haiti and Cimenterie Nationale S.E.M. CINA.

Figure III
Spread of 5 Second



Changing dynamics of firearms and ammunition trafficking

14. A wide range of firearms and ammunition are being used by criminal groups in Haiti. The presence of AR-15 and AKM series assault rifles, as well as a wide array of handguns, shotguns and ammunition calibres, continue to circulate. Recent open-source analysis of online images posted by gang members sheds light on their arsenals. Among the firearms identified include FN FAL rifles (7.62 x 51mm calibre), newly manufactured AK-308 rifles (7.62 x 51mm calibre), Galil automatic rifles (5.56 x 45mm or 7.62 x 51mm calibre), H&K G3 assault rifles (7.62 x 51mm calibre), BM59 Beretta rifles (7.62 x 51mm calibre) and VZ58 rifles (7.62 x 39mm calibre).⁵ Most of these firearm types are chambered for NATO-standard rounds.

15. There is evidence of some changes in the types of firearms, ammunition and parts and components in circulation in Haiti. Specifically, some firearms identified by key informants have been heavily customized to include new stocks, extended magazines and telescopic sights. It appears that these adjustments are intended for cosmetic effect – to make firearms appear more impressive – rather than to improve their operational capabilities. In fact, it is likely that some customizations may in fact decrease the performance or combat effectiveness of the firearms in question. Moreover, a significant portion of gang members are minors with only basic knowledge of firearms and their use. In contrast, a smaller group of gang enforcers, tasked with protecting leaders, have received more advanced training. Over time,

⁵ Based on key informant K1 interview and unpublished documents, 22 July 2024.

gangs have adapted their tactics to fit the weapons they have had access to and type of armed engagements they are involved in.⁶

16. Several advances have been made with regard to the investigation of illicit firearms trafficking in Haiti. As noted in an earlier UNODC report (S/2024/554, para. 13), on 5 April 2024 Haitian authorities intercepted 26 illegal handguns and assault rifles and hundreds of rounds of ammunition concealed in a 45-foot container shipped from Port Everglades in Fort Lauderdale, United States. On 24 July 2024, visiting officials from the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation questioned a Haitian customs officer who has been imprisoned since 13 April on charges of complicity in international firearms and ammunition trafficking.

17. As documented in previous UNODC reports to the Security Council, the Government of the United States is reportedly taking steps to restrict the flow of illicit firearms and ammunition from Haiti and other countries in the Caribbean and Latin America. Several United States Senators have also proposed a bill entitled the Americas Regional Monitoring of Arms Sales (ARMAS) Act. According to the draft bill, the intention is to transfer greater regulatory authority over small arms and ammunition transfers from the Department of Commerce to the Department of State. In addition to improving Congressional and Administration oversight over arms transfers, the draft Act also calls for the establishment of an international inter-agency strategy and programme to disrupt arms trafficking.

18. The Haitian authorities reported multiple seizures of firearms and ammunition throughout July 2024. For example, on 15 July, five boxes of 5.56 x 45mm cartridges were intercepted by the Haitian National Police in Mirebalais. The ammunition was reportedly destined for members of 400 Mawozo. According to a Haitian National Police representative, the cartridges likely crossed into Haiti from the Dominican Republic, in either the Malpasse or Anse-à-Pitres region. Photographic evidence of the ammunition boxes following the seizures shows that the cartridges were produced by Fiocchi, an Italian manufacturer, which has production facilities in Italy and the United States (see figure IV). Fiocchi ammunition boxes were also observed in social media videos posted by Lanmo Sanjou, the leader of 400 Mawozo (see figure V).

⁶ Information collected in collaboration with the Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime in Haiti from June to September 2024.

Figure IV
Image of ammunition boxes seized by the Haitian National Police



Source: Haitian National Police on social media.

Figure V
Image of ammunition boxes posted by the leader of 400 Mawozo



Source: Lanmo Sanjou, leader of 400 Mawozo, on his private Tik Tok channel.

19. Operations led by the Haitian National Police appear to have generated multiple instances of firearms and ammunition seizures throughout August 2024. Specialized Haitian National Police units seized illicit firearms and ammunition during operations conducted from 12 to 16 August. The official social media page of the Haitian National Police, for example, features images of six firearms and 195 cartridges intercepted during multiple operations. On 15 August, another three firearms were seized, two of which were described as high-powered assault rifles. According to the Haitian National Police, five individuals were fatally injured during the 15 August operation. Among those killed were three police officers and a prison escapee. Separately, the Haitian National Police arrested two journalists on 15 August and retrieved a Ruger Carbine rifle, two pistols and 15 rounds of ammunition.⁷

20. The Haitian National Police headquarters in the Grand-Anse Department reported that it had conducted over 88 operations from 18 to 29 August alone, seizing six firearms during the period. On 1 August, Haitian National Police reportedly arrested multiple individuals possessing 10 assault rifles in a car bearing diplomatic plates near Hugo Chávez Square in Port-au-Prince.⁸ And on 23 August, a Haitian public official was arrested for trafficking in firearms.

21. There appears to be a spike in the availability of firearms – especially 5.56 calibre rifles – on the black market in Port-au-Prince. Interviews conducted by UNODC of key informants suggest that some criminal groups are seeking to sell their weapons as swiftly as possible to generate funds to flee the country. There are also indications that some Haitian public authorities are also selling firearms to purchase plane tickets and shore up their financial reserves to support themselves abroad. Key informants also reported that some private security companies have posed as aid organizations or members of the media, while in reality the weapons appear to have been purchased to bolster the arsenals of these private companies.⁹

22. The Haitian authorities have expanded the use of joint operations involving the Haitian National Police and the Haitian Armed Forces. As a result, there has been an increase in the number of operational forces involved in anti-gang activities, including in parts of Port-au-Prince such as Bel-Air, Solino and lower Delmas. The so-called integrated security strategy has also been accompanied by an effort to augment the capacities of the Haitian Armed Forces, including the recruitment of 1,500 new cadets. This represents a significant shift of posture by the national authorities, not least because the recruitment and provision of equipment to the Haitian Armed Forces was considered a highly sensitive topic after the armed forces were disbanded by the former President of Haiti, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, in 1995.

Increasing drug seizures in Haiti

23. UNODC has noted a measurable increase in counter-narcotics operations in Haiti, particularly since the installation of the new Director General of the Haitian National Police in June 2024. While the overall volume of drugs seized by Haitian authorities continues to be comparatively low, they nevertheless highlight the dynamics of drug trafficking routes – involving cocaine, and to a lesser extent cannabis – in and outside Haiti. However, it is important to note that there have been multiple cocaine seizures across the Caribbean over the past few months. At least three cases in the Caribbean reported in August 2024 involved seizures of over 7,300 kilograms of cocaine by the navies of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the United

⁷ In addition to weapons and ammunition, the Haitian National Police found 10,250 gourdes, four blocks of chequebooks and two mobile phones.

⁸ Based on key informant K2 interview, 7 August 2024.

⁹ Ibid.

Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States with an assessed value of \$96 million.

24. Several seizures were announced by Haitian authorities and the independent media in recent months. For example, on 17 August, the police of Nippes arrested four people and confiscated 5 kilograms of cocaine and 4,903 kilograms of marijuana from a boat called the *Destiny*. In Belle-Anse, the police arrested three individuals in a car and seized two bags of cocaine and 481,500 gourdes (see figures VI and VII). An even more significant interdiction occurred in Port-de-Paix on 13 August 2024. Approximately 32 kilograms of cocaine were seized during an operation led by the counter-narcotics bureau of the Haitian National Police.¹⁰ The District Attorney and the Administrator of the Public Prosecutor's Office of Port-de-Paix have both been detained in connection with the aforementioned case. Moreover, the Director of the North-West Department is also under investigation amid allegations of involvement in drug trafficking.

Figure VI
Drug seizures in Belle-Anse, 3 July 2024

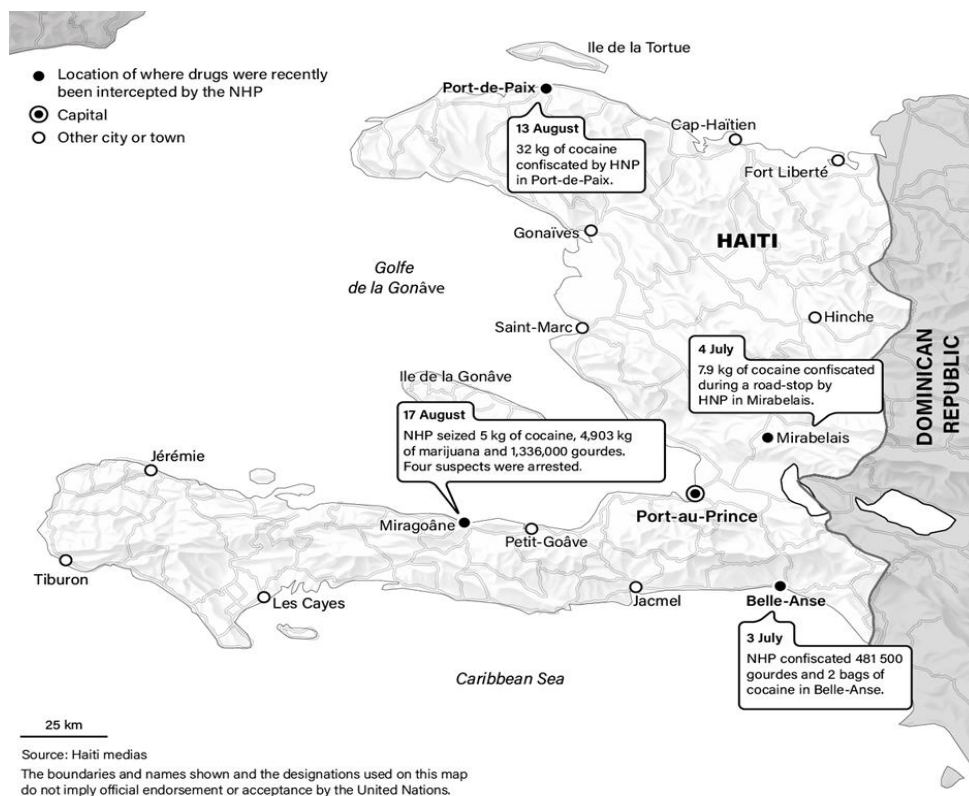


Source: Haitian National Police.

25. Apart from the above-mentioned counter-narcotics operations, which were conducted in various parts of Haiti during August 2024, the counter-narcotics bureau of the Haitian National Police, together with the Judicial Police of the South-East Department and the Departmental Unit for Maintaining Order of the South-East also led an operation on 14 August, destroying a marijuana growing area in the Bois Codène locality, in the Baie d'Orange section of Belle-Anse.

¹⁰ Based on an interview with officers of the counter-narcotics bureau in the North Department.

Figure VII
Reported seizures of drugs in Haiti, July and August 2024



26. Another relevant development involves the seizure of significant quantities of marijuana in the Turks and Caicos Islands which originated from Haiti. The Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force reported an interdiction of over \$2.8 million worth of marijuana in two separate seizures in mid-August 2024. The first seizure occurred on 16 August when the Police Force responded to an illegal landing of migrants at Bird Rock. Aboard the vessel was a quantity of marijuana that amounted to over \$131,000 and 15 irregular Haitian migrants. A second seizure occurred on 17 August after a Police Force marine unit intercepted two more vessels in Jones Cay. Aboard the boats was marijuana with a value of \$2.7 million and 41 Haitian migrants.¹¹ Another drug interdiction on 16 September at a location east of South Caicos found approximately 209 pounds of marijuana.

Use of migrant smuggling routes by drug trafficking networks between Haiti and the Turks and Caicos Islands

27. The collusion and increase of drug trafficking and migrant smuggling from Haiti to the Turks and Caicos Islands is concerning. While migrant smuggling from northern Haiti towards the Bahamas, the Turks and Caicos Islands and eventually the United States is persistent, it was reported that it was highly uncommon for cannabis to be coming out of the northern coast, raising questions about its origin and transportation.¹² And while communities of Haitians have lived on the Turks and

¹¹ Interview with the Permanent Secretary for the National Security Secretariat of the Turks and Caicos Islands, 5 September 2024. See also J. Charles, "String of Haitian migrant landings in Turks & Caicos lead to \$2 million marijuana busts", *Miami Herald*, 19 August 2024.

¹² See J. Charles, "String of Haitian migrant landings in Turks & Caicos lead to \$2 million marijuana busts".

Caicos Islands for generations, there are growing concerns that transnational criminal networks are leveraging migration routes to also traffic in drugs and firearms. There are also the worrying destabilization effects of these illicit activities on the Turks and Caicos Islands, some of which appeared to be worsening in recent months.

28. With support from international partners, law enforcement authorities, among them the Haitian coast guard, have stepped up operations to counter drug trafficking, migrant smuggling and property theft. However, as noted in previous UNODC reports to the Security Council,¹³ the Haitian coast guard suffers from extremely limited resources and capacity. Nevertheless, they conducted several operations and seizures in coordination with the Cap-Haïtien Haitian National Police and the Judicial Police of the North Department. In addition, they have carried out search and rescue missions and investigated various forms of property theft, including boats.

29. A particularly notorious example of property theft occurred in 2024, involving a suspected transnational migrant smuggling and potential drug trafficking operation. On 16 February 2024, the Haitian coast guard was notified of the theft of a vessel named *Marauder* in the Turks and Caicos Islands. The vessel was spotted near the Haitian island of Île de la Tortue and reported to the Haitian authorities. The Haitian coast guard launched an operation to investigate the incident but upon arrival at Île de la Tortue a group of criminals, allegedly consisting of Haitians, Bahamians and Jamaicans, fired on the coast guard vessel. Months later, in April, the coast guard returned, together with the counter-narcotics bureau of the Haitian National Police, to seize the vessel that remained at Île de la Tortue. However, another vessel, which was reported to have powerful engines, was also present and fled the scene with the suspects on-board. Finally, in May, a joint operation involving the Turks and Caicos authorities was launched in Île de la Tortue, and while the *Marauder* was still present, she was partially destroyed (see figure VIII).

Figure VIII

Image of the *Marauder* kept at the coast guard base in Cap-Haïtien



Source: United Nations official.

¹³ See [S/2023/780](#), [S/2024/79](#), [S/2024/320](#) and [S/2024/554](#).

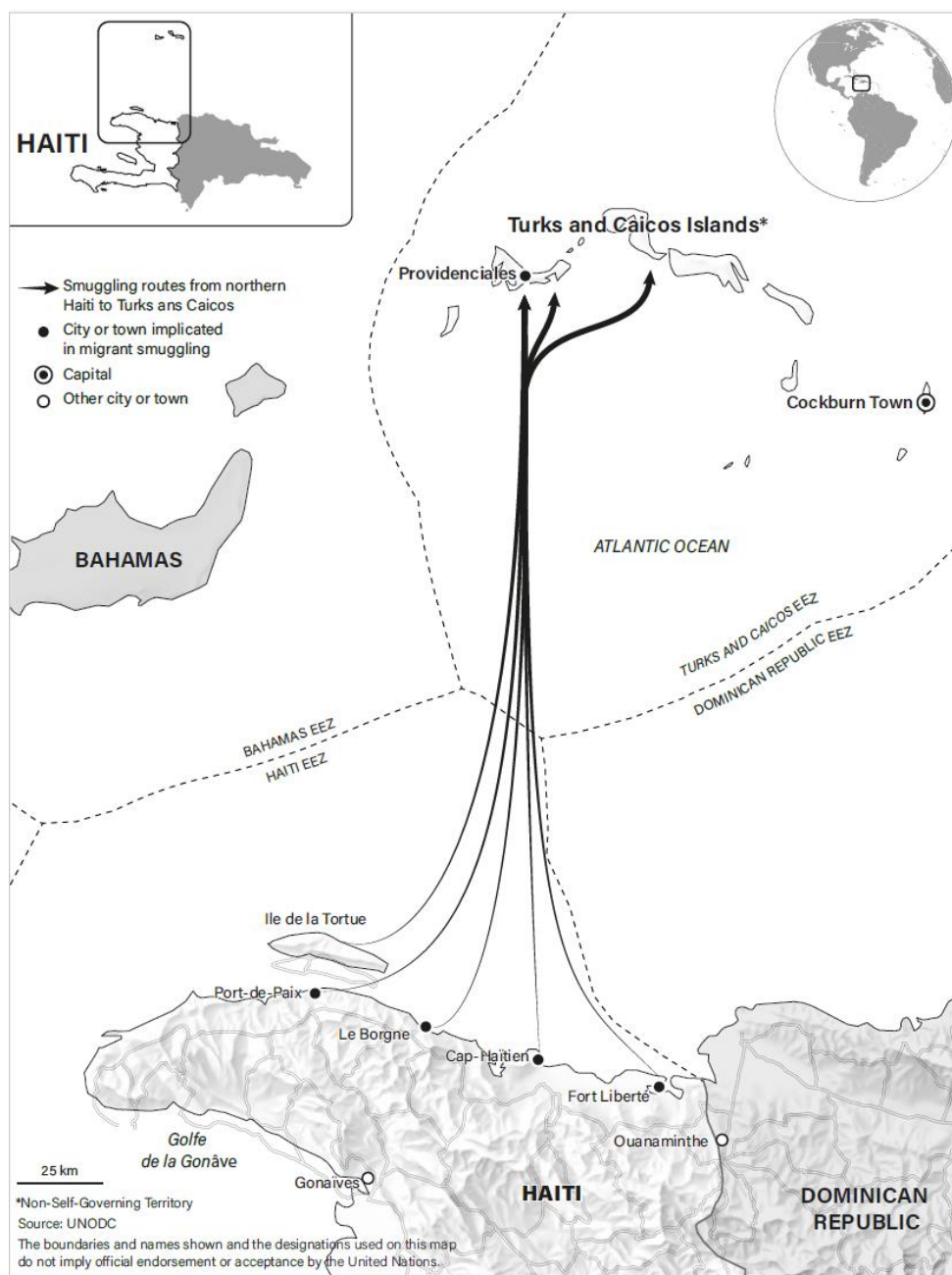
30. According to authorities in Haiti and the Turks and Caicos Islands, the case of the *Marauder* exposed a criminal operation specializing in migrant smuggling and other types of trafficking spanning from Haiti (Île de la Tortue, Port-de-Paix, Fort Liberté and Borgne) to the Turks and Caicos Islands. A Haitian suspect, who was involved in the *Marauder* theft, was arrested on 5 April 2024 by the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force. He was intercepted on another vessel with 30 irregular migrants while seeking to enter the Turks and Caicos Islands on a stolen boat. In addition to being charged with handling stolen goods and illegal entry into the Turks and Caicos Islands, the individual in question was charged with the theft of the *Marauder*, as well as stealing other boats including the *Jupiter* and *Team Baja*. The total value of the recovered assets was estimated to be over \$1.2 million.

31. Another similar case is currently on trial in the Turks and Caicos Islands. A suspect was arrested by the Police Force in April 2024. The 35-year-old man from Île de la Tortue faces multiple allegations, including involvement in gang-related activities in the Turks and Caicos Islands to assist “illegals”; engaging in gang-related activity in the Turks and Caicos Islands, including the handling of stolen property from 24 August 2023 to 5 April 2024; possession of criminal property (a 32-foot vessel) in the waters of the Turks and Caicos Islands between 25 August 2023 and 5 April 2024; and handling stolen goods between 25 August 2023 and 5 April 2024.

32. The Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force have identified at least 13 criminal-associated groups operating on the Islands, some of them involved in drug, firearms and migration-related offences. Most groups are small, and are locally based.¹⁴ It is important to specify that these criminal groups were already present in the Turks and Caicos Islands, but that there is growing concern about the rising influence of Bahamian, Haitian and Jamaican organized crime groups there. There are also concerns that gangs are growing more sophisticated and better armed, including with assault rifles such as M-16s and AK-47s. Despite the introduction of a strict anti-gang law in 2022 and international cooperation agreements with the Bahamas and the United States to fight transnational crime, national law enforcement authorities are challenged by increasingly violent gangs involved in drug trafficking and migrant smuggling, among other criminal activities.

¹⁴ For a detailed overview of gangs in the Caribbean, including references to the Turks and Caicos Islands, see www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/AOTP/Caribbean_Gangs_Drugs_firearms_and_gang_networks_in_Jamaica_Saint_Lucia_Guyanaand_Trinidad_an_July_2024_Final.pdf.

Figure IX
Reported smuggling and trafficking routes between Haiti and the Turks and Caicos Islands



Trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants

33. The Turks and Caicos Islands has faced record numbers of Haitians arriving to the country, many of them fleeing insecurity (see figure IX). In 2023, for example, 3,030 irregular migrants (over 2,400 of them men) were detained while trying to enter the territory. The numbers in 2023 far surpassed those of past years, when 2,132 people were detained in 2022 and 1,426 people were detained in 2021.¹⁵ Despite warnings issued by the Turks and Caicos Islands to prospective migrant smugglers,

¹⁵ Interview with the Turks and Caicos Islands Border Force, September 2024.

the Haitian coast guard noted a significant increase in the number of attempts and departures by boat in early 2024. In recent months, the Turks and Caicos Islands has seen an increase in use of fast boats, which can be more challenging to interdict. In addition to the Turks and Caicos Islands, increased numbers of boats originating from Haiti are being intercepted by coast guards from countries such as the Bahamas and the United States. As of mid-July 2024, over 86,000 Haitian migrants had been forcibly returned to Haiti by neighbouring countries in 2024, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

34. There are multiple risks facing Haitians involved in irregular migration to the Turks and Caicos Islands and other neighbouring countries. Of concern are the humanitarian implications of the use of dilapidated vessels for migrant smuggling and the large numbers of children involved and the consequent safeguarding risks.¹⁶ As noted above, Haitian migrants may also be smuggled by individuals involved in drug trafficking, which amplifies their personal risks. The Turks and Caicos Islands National Security Council, which includes the Governor, the Premier, the Commissioner of the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force and the Minister for Immigration and Border Services, maintains a key focus on these escalating risks and issues.

35. Protracted instability in Haiti continues to create opportunities for the irregular trafficking of migrants. Specifically, it is enabling criminal organizations to smuggle migrants and traffic in persons, including internally displaced persons and forcibly repatriated persons. According to IOM, there has been a 60 per cent increase in the number of internally displaced persons in Haiti since March 2024. Following a surge of gang-related violence in July and August 2024 in Ganthier – a municipality located south-east of Port-au-Prince and 22 kilometres from the Dominican Republic – close to 6,000 residents were internally displaced.¹⁷ According to the Caribbean Community Implementation Agency for Crime and Security, gang violence and the lack of economic opportunities are triggering displacement, both in southern Haiti and along the northern coast, a known departure point for migrants.

36. Increasingly restrictive migration and border management policies are also influencing migratory patterns. Examples include the plan of the Dominican Republic to build a 174-kilometre wall, the suspension of commercial air flights between the Dominican Republic and Haiti and the intention of Panama to reduce land entry points from Colombia to Panama through the so-called Darién Gap. Meanwhile, the repatriation of irregular migrants by the United States¹⁸ has also encouraged some Haitians to seek new migratory routes, including by air and sea. The Government of Panama has indicated that the number of Haitians crossing the Darién Gap steadily decreased during May (882), June (626) and July (495).

37. The Caribbean Community Implementation Agency for Crime and Security has identified new air routes involving Haitian migrants. Specifically, the Agency has observed Haitians migrating from Port-au-Prince through Montego Bay, Jamaica; Santo Domingo; and Sao Paulo, Brazil. According to the Agency, 453 Haitian

¹⁶ An example of this phenomenon happened on 17 July 2024 when at least 40 migrants died and several others were injured after a boat they were travelling in caught fire off the coast of Cap-Haïtien, in the north of Haiti. The boat had departed from Fort Saint-Michel for the 250 kilometre journey carrying over 80 people. See <https://americas.iom.int/en/news/tragic-boat-fire-claims-40-migrant-lives-haitis-coast>.

¹⁷ See <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/haiti-emergency-tracking-tool-451-updates-displacement-following-attacks-ganthier-01-03>.

¹⁸ See <https://pa.usembassy.gov/es/estados-unidos-firma-memorandum-de-entendimiento-con-panama-para-implementar-programa-de-vuelos-de-repatriaciones/> (in Spanish).

nationals entered Brazil between May and August 2024 compared with just 21 Haitians between January and April 2024.

Allegations of high-level corruption by Haitian authorities

38. In August 2024, the media reported on illegal migration to Suriname involving the complicity of Haitian diplomats and immigration officials. According to the media reports, Haitians pay on average \$4,000 to travel agencies to fly to Suriname and then board buses to French Guiana or undertake the journey to Brazil and onward through Colombia and Central America before seeking to cross into the United States. Among those smuggled are under-aged children who are sent as unaccompanied minors. In response to the allegations reported in August 2024, the Ministry of Foreign and Religious Affairs recalled all but one of its diplomatic staff from Suriname and fired all 12 local contractors. The Ministry has also launched an internal investigation into the allegations first raised by France.¹⁹

39. Meanwhile, the Haitian Anti-Corruption Unit is expanding its investigations into the corruption of State authorities. On 3 September 2024, the Anti-Corruption Unit submitted a request to the Public Prosecutor's Office to initiate criminal proceedings against 13 former Haitian diplomats for failing to declare their assets as required by law.²⁰ The Anti-Corruption Unit simultaneously submitted seven investigation reports that detailed potential offenses including bribery, conflict of interest, embezzlement, abuse of function, money-laundering, financial mismanagement and illicit enrichment involving senior officials across various public institutions.²¹ The reports recommended initiating criminal proceedings against multiple high-level former officials.

40. Ongoing investigations by the Anti-Corruption Unit into several public institutions in Haiti have raised allegations of significant crimes and institutional dysfunctions, including systemic governance and oversight failures. The Unit has identified the misappropriation of funds, irregularities in loan disbursements and non-compliance with procurement laws, resulting in significant financial losses in government revenue. Multiple fraudulent activities were identified, including the creation of shell companies to channel public funds through illegitimate contracts. Weak internal controls and management deficiencies were highlighted as factors that allowed these irregularities and potential fraud cases to go undetected and unaddressed.²²

41. The investigations led by the Anti-Corruption Unit into the assets of a former high-level public official have also exposed major discrepancies between declared and actual wealth, including numerous undeclared bank accounts, substantial deposits and unreported properties and luxury items far exceeding legitimate income. Delayed, incomplete and potentially misleading asset declarations suggest possible illicit enrichment and misrepresentation of income.²³

42. The aforementioned corruption allegations against Haitian diplomats come in the wake of the country's Ministry of Foreign and Religious Affairs pursuing several reforms to modernize and strengthen the effectiveness of the country's diplomatic corps. Indeed, in a recent government action tens of diplomats and personnel connected to embassies and consulates were recalled for evaluation and potential

¹⁹ See J. Charles, "Haiti fires most staff in its Suriname consulate over possible human-trafficking ring", *Miami Herald*, 14 August 2024.

²⁰ Anti-Corruption Unit published investigation reports and requests to Justice - September 2024. Reports directly shared by the Anti-Corruption Unit to UNODC.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ These findings show the value of comprehensive audits, corrective actions by tax authorities and the initiation of legal proceedings to address suspected crimes.

reassignment.²⁴ While refraining from releasing the specific list of diplomats affected, the Minister for Foreign and Religious Affairs of Haiti emphasized that this recall should not be interpreted as a dismissal, but rather as part of an effort to evaluate, inventory, reassign and make resources available to central services. A parallel goal is the promotion of gender parity across the country's diplomatic missions worldwide. Already, 33 women have been promoted to the position of Head of Mission, a significant step towards the 50 per cent goal set by the Haitian authorities.²⁵

43. The Haitian Ministry of Foreign and Religious Affairs has outlined proposed reforms to diplomatic structures in several key documents.²⁶ Moreover, the Minister for Foreign and Religious Affairs has formally requested audits and investigations from the Superior Court of Auditors and Administrative Disputes and the Anti-Corruption Unit. These activities are expected to cover Ministry operations from 1 October 2021 to 30 June 2024.

Investigating illicit financial flows and international sanctions

44. The Security Council established a sanctions regime targeting Haiti in its resolution [2653 \(2022\)](#). The sanctions were renewed for another year under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations in Council resolution [2700 \(2023\)](#). In that resolution, the Council demanded an immediate cessation of kidnappings, sexual and gender-based violence, trafficking in persons, migrant-smuggling, homicides, extrajudicial killings and the recruitment of children by armed groups and criminal networks. The sanctions include, among other things, a travel ban, an asset freeze and an arms embargo prohibiting the supply, sale or transfer to Haiti of small arms and light weapons and ammunition. Individuals designated for sanctions are those deemed to be responsible for or complicit in, or who have engaged in, directly or indirectly, actions that threaten the peace, security or stability of Haiti. On 27 September 2024, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [2653 \(2022\)](#) concerning Haiti approved the addition of the entry of Victor Prophane, a former member of the Haitian Parliament involved in weapons trafficking and using violence to secure political gain, as well as Elan Luckson, leader of the Gran Grif gang.²⁷

45. Several countries have also initiated separate bilateral sanctions since 2022, targeting both gang members and members of the political and economic elite of Haiti. The European Union, and by extension European Union member States, for example, imposed travel and asset sanctions against the same individuals named by the Security Council in 2022 and 2024. Collectively, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States have issued sanctions against over 30 Haitian nationals, including former presidents, prime ministers, cabinet ministers, senators, police officers, customs officials and businessmen. The Dominican Republic has issued sanctions²⁸ against dozens of Haitian nationals, including gang members, religious figures, former police personnel, politicians and commercial actors. Many of these sanctions by the Dominican Republic were issued through presidential instructions in 2022 and 2023,²⁹ in line with article 128 of its Constitution and article 15 of its General Law on Migration.

46. The European Union member States implemented the sanctions adopted by the Security Council and created an autonomous framework to impose additional

²⁴ See www.youtube.com/watch?v=fHfbjEq-ea8 (in French).

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Including an order on the reform of Haitian diplomacy, a draft decree defining the diplomatic and consular career and an order concerning the operation of the Jean Price-Mars Diplomatic Academy.

²⁷ See <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15837.doc.htm>.

²⁸ These sanctions mainly consist of a ban on entering the country.

²⁹ According to the two presidential instructions shared, the sanctions involved 13 people in 2022 and 9 in 2023.

restrictive measures. The European Union's sanctions framework mirrors the United Nations regime, with an additional criterion related to undermining democracy or the rule of law through financial misconduct or unauthorized capital export. As of July 2024, the European Union had sanctioned one entity under its global human rights sanctions regime: Kokorat San Ras, a Haitian gang operating mostly in the Artibonite and north-west region, "well known for its use of violence against women as a common weapon", according to the European Union.³⁰

47. The Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Department of the Treasury of the United States has implemented sanctions against Haitian nationals under various authorities, including the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act and Executive Orders 13818 and 14059. As of September 2024, the United States had imposed sanctions on 15 Haitian individuals – including former government officials and gang leaders – and one airline company for their involvement in serious human rights abuses, corruption and drug trafficking. The United States emphasized that these corrupt officials created an environment that empowered illegal armed gangs and their supporters to perpetrate violence against the Haitian people, while also abusing their power to further drug trafficking activities across the region.³¹ The sanctions, which may vary from one sanctioned individual to another, typically include asset freezes, travel bans, and prohibitions on United States persons engaging in transactions with designated individuals.³²

48. Among those sanctioned by the Office of Foreign Assets Control is the former President of Haiti, Michel Martelly, who was sanctioned on 20 August 2024. The former President was sanctioned pursuant to Executive Order 14059 for having engaged in, or having attempted to engage in, activities or transactions that materially contributed to, or posed a significant risk of materially contributing to, the international proliferation of illicit drugs or their means of production. He is accused of having abused his influence to facilitate the trafficking of drugs, engaging in the laundering of illicit drug proceeds, working with Haitian drug traffickers and sponsoring multiple Haiti-based gangs, which fuelled gang violence and political instability. The imposed sanctions against the former President prohibit United States financial institutions from providing loans or credit to him, block any foreign exchange transactions under United States jurisdiction involving his interests and bar United States persons from investing in or purchasing significant equity or debt instruments associated with him.^{33,34}

49. Canada has likewise implemented Security Council sanctions and autonomous sanctions against Haitian nationals. As of September 2024, Canada had imposed autonomous sanctions on 31 Haitian individuals under its Special Economic Measures (Haiti) Regulations. These sanctions were issued for various reasons, including grave breaches of international peace and security, acts of significant corruption and gross human rights violations. The sanctions prohibit persons in Canada and Canadians outside Canada from dealing with listed individuals and have resulted in the blocking of financial transactions. Moreover, these measures render listed individuals inadmissible to Canada under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. Several

³⁰ See www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2024/07/22/sexual-and-gender-based-violence-council-lists-four-individuals-and-two-entities-under-the-eu-s-global-human-rights-sanctions-regime/.

³¹ See <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy1389>.

³² See, for example, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy2542>, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy1080> and <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm1208>.

³³ See <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy2542>.

³⁴ The United States Drug Enforcement Administration is not able to arrest the former President without an indictment or arrest warrant issued by a United States court.

sanctioned individuals have filed judicial reviews with the Federal Court of Canada, challenging their listings or decisions on their delisting applications.³⁵

50. The United Kingdom has implemented both Security Council sanctions and autonomous sanctions against Haitian nationals. In 2022 and 2023, the United Kingdom imposed sanctions on the same five Haitian gang leaders that were also sanctioned by the Security Council for acts that threatened the peace, security and stability of Haiti and had planned, directed or committed acts that constituted serious human rights abuses. In addition, in December 2023, the United Kingdom imposed autonomous sanctions on two former high-level Haitian officials under its Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations 2020 for involvement in serious human rights violations, particularly related to the 2018 La Saline massacre. The Haiti (Sanctions) Regulations 2022, which entered into force on 28 December 2022, impose financial and trade sanctions. These include asset freezes on designated persons and prohibitions on making funds or economic resources available to them. The regulations also impose trade prohibitions relating to the provision of small arms and light weapons and ammunition to Haiti. The sanctions prohibit United Kingdom persons from dealing with listed individuals and freeze any assets they may hold in the United Kingdom.³⁶

51. Knowledge by the Haitian authorities of all relevant nationals facing international sanctions is a key enabling condition to take action. On 27 August 2024, the Haitian Minister for Justice and Public Security reached out to multiple countries to request a list of all sanctioned Haitians and supporting evidence supporting these measures. Access to such information could serve as a starting point for criminal investigations that could lead to future convictions and the substantial confiscation of assets previously frozen as part of the international sanctions regime.

52. The Haitian authorities have taken concrete initiatives to facilitate the recovery of stolen assets located abroad. For example, on 30 and 31 July 2024, the coordinator of the Haitian Central Financial Intelligence Unit participated in the Annual General Meeting of the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network for the Caribbean, held in Barbados. In November 2023, the Financial Action Task Force published the first third-party review of the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Networks and their global impact, functions and key challenges.³⁷ The review underlined how the Networks can help investigators and prosecutors follow illicit financial flows across borders and recover assets in transnational crime cases. On 13 and 14 August 2024, a consultation workshop was organized in Haiti with international stakeholders (from Belgium, Canada, France and Romania) and civil society on the drafting of a bill on the recovery of ill-gotten assets.

Conclusion and recommendations

53. Given the transnational dimensions of the challenges facing Haiti, a comprehensive regional security strategy is essential. Short-term priorities include improving the dynamic analysis of gangs and organized crime to guide responses, law enforcement, criminal justice and customs, together with cross-border information exchange and cooperation on criminal investigations and prosecutions related to the trafficking of drugs and firearms and the smuggling and trafficking of people. Also

³⁵ Response of Canada to a request by UNODC for information in the context of Security Council resolution 2692 (2023), para. 9.

³⁶ See www.gov.uk/government/publications/haiti-sanctions-guidance/haiti-sanctions-guidance. See also <https://globalsanctions.com/region/haiti/>.

³⁷ See www.fatf-gafi.org/en/publications/Methodsandtrends/recovering-international-proceeds-crime-inter-agency-networks.html.

essential is a “follow-the-money” approach to dismantle the illicit financial flows that empower criminal organizations.

54. Relevant regional bodies and regional government agencies, together with UNODC, could consider establishing a regional task force to share information and improve coordination and cooperation on firearms, drugs and human trafficking and migrant smuggling. The present report underlines the transnational dynamics of criminal actors and activities across the Caribbean, and improving the transfer of data and analysis is critical to addressing those dynamics.

55. Additional training is recommended to improve the criminal investigation of trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants, including for law enforcement, prosecutors, customs and immigration officials, and other stakeholders, to effectively identify cases and ensure access to justice.

56. Member States that have imposed sanctions on Haitian individuals should share all relevant information with relevant Haitian authorities, including on suspected criminal offences. The sanctions imposed on Haitian individuals can then trigger a corresponding response from the Haitian judicial authorities to obtain court convictions and, where appropriate, the final confiscation of frozen assets.

57. The Haitian authorities should also be encouraged and supported to use informal asset recovery networks to help international and domestic investigators and prosecutors to follow illicit financial flows across borders and recover assets.

58. The situation in Haiti requires a regional security perspective that includes a structural security development strategy, as well as a short-term security strategy that entails the timely exchange of information, and international cooperation throughout the entirety of criminal investigations into the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons using a follow-the-money approach that allows for the dismantling of transnational criminal organizations.

59. Haitian institutions are encouraged to consider enhancing their anti-corruption frameworks through reforms aimed at strengthening oversight mechanisms, including for diplomatic staff and contractors. This initiative would align with global best practices for transparency and accountability, ensuring regular audits, thorough background checks for personnel and a well-defined code of conduct to prevent corruption and the abuse of power within diplomatic missions.

60. Haiti may wish to consider strengthening collaboration among the control units,³⁸ the Police and the Public Prosecutor’s Office and other relevant agencies to facilitate the timely initiation of criminal proceedings against officials allegedly involved in corruption and illicit activities.

61. It is recommended that Haitian authorities focus on enhancing the national capacity for international mutual legal assistance to effectively respond to potential requests for judicial cooperation on specific cases, including those arising from international sanctions regimes.

62. Haiti is encouraged to consider prioritizing the adoption and implementation of legal reforms to close gaps in anti-corruption, asset recovery and financial crime legislation, in line with international standards. This initiative would align with efforts to establish specialized anti-corruption jurisdiction and enhance prosecutorial independence, thereby improving the judiciary’s capacity to handle complex corruption cases and prevent undue influence from vested interests.

³⁸ Control units are entities that customs and police are establishing to strengthen control at the border to stop illicit trafficking.

63. Haitian authorities should consider formulating a national anti-corruption strategy that fosters transparency and public accountability in governance. This strategy would provide a cohesive framework for State authorities, the private sector and civil society to coordinate their efforts and follow a clear, transparent process in combating corruption and illicit financial flows, ultimately contributing to more effective, accountable and inclusive institutions.

64. Haitian authorities should be informed of all relevant nationals who face international sanctions.

Enclosure

List of firearms seized, 2021–August 2024

		<i>Pistol</i>	<i>Revolver</i>	<i>Rifle</i>	<i>Shotgun</i>	<i>Home-made weapons</i>	<i>Total</i>
2021	January	30	2	8	1	9	50
	February	27	1	8	5	–	41
	March	8	2	3	1	5	19
	April	23	4	2	2	8	39
	May	15	5	3	1	3	27
	June	3	1	2	–	6	12
	July	17	1	13	7	7	45
	August	25	3	2	3	4	37
	September	16	6	6	–	12	40
	October	18	1	3	2	2	26
	November	16	–	6	4	3	29
	December	24	3	3	5	1	36
Total		222	29	59	31	60	401
2022	January	19	–	4	1	1	25
	February	10	2	2	1	6	21
	March	26	5	2	3	5	41
	April	15	5	4	3	5	32
	May	29	6	7	–	6	48
	June	13	1	3	–	2	19
	July	30	3	23	2	1	59
	August	11	–	4	2	2	19
	September	4	1	5	3	4	17
	October	9	2	5	–	6	22
	November	16	2	6	1	1	26
	December	10	1	1	1	–	13
Total		192	28	66	17	39	342
2023	January	14	1	7	1	2	25
	February	16	4	3	2	–	25
	March	9	4	3	–	5	21
	April	20	–	10	1	–	31
	May	4	1	5	1	1	12
	June	4	2	5	1	4	16
	July	9	2	3	1	4	19
	August	13	1	1	–	1	16
	September	13	2	4	1	1	21
	October	18	3	2	3	5	31
	November	10	4	1	–	2	17
	December	10	1	6	1	13	31
Total		140	25	50	12	38	265

	<i>Pistol</i>	<i>Revolver</i>	<i>Rifle</i>	<i>Shotgun</i>	<i>Home-made weapons</i>	<i>Total</i>
2024 January	5	1	1	2	1	10
February	7	1	6	4	3	21
March	7	1	6	–	3	17
April	22	–	13	–	–	35
May	7	3	2	–	1	13
June	15	–	5	–	4	24
July	15	1	3	4	4	27
August	19	3	6	–	1	29
Total	97	10	42	10	17	176

Source: United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti and United Nations police.