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Letter dated 20 December 2023 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2653 (2022) concerning Haiti addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2653 (2022) concerning Haiti, containing an account of the Committee's activities from 1 January to 31 December 2023. The report, which was approved by the Committee, is being submitted in accordance with the note by the President of the Security Council of 29 March 1995 (S/1995/234).

I should be grateful if the present letter and the report were brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Michel Xavier **Biang**
Chair
Security Council Committee established pursuant to
resolution 2653 (2022) concerning Haiti

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Report of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2653 (2022) concerning Haiti

I. Introduction

1. The present report of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2653 (2022) concerning Haiti covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2023.

2. The Bureau of the Committee consisted of Michel Xavier Biang (Gabon) as Chair.

II. Background

3. By its resolution 2653 (2022), the Security Council established the Committee and tasked it with, among other things, monitoring the implementation of the sanctions measures, considering and deciding upon requests for exemptions and designating individuals and entities to be subject to the sanctions measures. Also by its resolution 2653 (2022), the Council established a panel of four experts under the direction of the Committee. The mandate of the Panel of Experts on Haiti was recently extended in resolution 2700 (2023).

4. The Haiti sanctions regime emanates from resolution 2653 (2022), by which the Security Council imposed a travel ban, an asset freeze and a targeted arms embargo on individuals and entities designated as responsible for or complicit in, or having engaged in, directly or indirectly, actions that threatened the peace, security or stability of Haiti.

5. By its resolution 2699 (2023), the Security Council expanded the sanctions regime through the imposition of the arms embargo on the entire territory of Haiti, replacing the targeted arms embargo imposed through resolution 2653 (2022).

6. By its resolution 2700 (2023), the Security Council decided to renew the travel ban and asset freeze measures and extend the arms embargo measure until one year from the date of adoption of the resolution. In addition, in the resolution, the Council directed the Committee to consider expeditiously the update of its sanctions list, taking into account the reports submitted by the Panel of Experts.

7. Further background information on the Haiti sanctions regime can be found in the previous annual report of the Committee.

III. Summary of the activities of the Committee

8. The Committee met six times in informal consultations, on 10 February, 10 March, 30 June, 8 September, 31 October and 4 December, in addition to conducting its work through written procedures.

9. In addition, the Committee organized a briefing for Member States on 7 November to present the final report of the Panel of Experts.

10. During the informal consultations held on 10 February, the Committee heard a presentation by the Coordinator of the Panel of Experts on the programme of work of the Panel established pursuant to resolution 2653 (2022), as well as presentations by the Permanent Representative of Haiti to the United Nations and by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

11. During the informal consultations held on 10 March, the Committee heard a presentation by the Coordinator of the Panel of Experts concerning its interim report (S/2023/189), submitted pursuant to paragraph 21 (c) of resolution 2653 (2022).

12. During the informal consultations held on 30 June, the Committee discussed the report on the visit of the Chair to Haiti and the Dominican Republic from 12 to 16 June.

13. During the informal consultations held on 8 September, the Committee heard a presentation by the Coordinator of the Panel of Experts concerning its final report (S/2023/674), submitted pursuant to paragraph 21 (c) of resolution 2653 (2022), and discussed the findings and recommendations contained in the report. The Committee also heard a presentation by the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) on the procedures to establish a cooperation agreement between the Committee and INTERPOL.

14. During the informal consultations held on 31 October, the Committee heard a briefing by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, on behalf of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, pursuant to paragraph 5 of resolution 2664 (2022).

15. During the briefing to Member States held on 7 November, the Coordinator of the Panel of Experts provided an overview of the main findings and recommendations contained in the Panel's final report (S/2023/674), submitted pursuant to paragraph 21 (c) of resolution 2653 (2022).

16. During the informal consultations held on 4 December, the Committee heard a presentation by the Coordinator of the Panel of Experts on the programme of work of the Panel extended pursuant to resolution 2700 (2023).

17. In accordance with paragraph 104 of the annex to the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507), the Committee issued press releases containing summaries of the meetings held on 10 February, 10 March, 30 June, 8 September and 4 December and the briefing to Member States held on 7 November (SC/15209, SC/15242, SC/15374, SC/15417, SC/15527 and SC/15499).

18. From 12 to 16 June, the Chair visited Haiti and the Dominican Republic to obtain a first-hand account of the implementation of the sanctions measures. The visit enhanced cooperation among the Committee, its Panel of Experts and the Government of Haiti, as well as with the Government of the Dominican Republic. A report on the visit was circulated to the members of the Committee on 23 June.

19. On 6 July, the Security Council heard a briefing by the Chair of the Committee on his visit to Haiti and the Dominican Republic from 12 to 16 June.

20. On 12 December, the Security Council heard a briefing by the Chair of the Committee on the work done by the Committee in accordance with paragraph 19 (e) of resolution 2653 (2022).

21. On 2 August, the Committee sent a note verbale to all Member States inviting them to recommend qualified individuals to serve on the Panel of Experts.

22. On 31 October, the Committee sent a note verbale to all Member States inviting them to participate in a briefing by the Coordinator of the Panel of Experts.

23. On 24 November, the Committee sent a note verbale to all Member States in connection with paragraphs 183 (b), (c), (d) and (e) of the final report of the Panel of Experts (S/2023/674).

24. The Committee sent 12 communications to four Member States and other stakeholders with reference to the implementation of the sanctions measures, in addition to three notes verbales to all Member States.

IV. Exemptions

25. Exemptions to the asset freeze are contained in paragraph 7 of resolution 2653 (2022), as renewed in paragraph 3 of resolution 2700 (2023).

26. Exemptions to the travel ban are contained in paragraphs 3 and 5 of resolution 2653 (2022), as renewed in paragraph 3 of resolution 2700 (2023).

27. Exemptions to the arms embargo are contained in paragraphs 14 (a) and (b) of resolution 2699 (2023), as reaffirmed in paragraphs 6 (a) and (b) of resolution 2700 (2023).

28. During the reporting period, the Committee received no requests for exemption.

V. Sanctions list

29. The criteria for the designation of individuals and entities as subject to the travel ban and asset freeze are set out in paragraphs 15 and 16 of resolution 2653 (2022).

30. On 20 October, the Committee amended one entry on its sanctions list.

31. On 8 December, the Committee added four individuals to the list. At the end of the reporting period, there were five individuals on the sanctions list of the Committee.

VI. Panel of Experts

32. On 2 March and 18 August, respectively, in accordance with paragraph 21 (c) of resolution 2653 (2022), the Panel of Experts provided its interim and final reports to the Committee. The reports were subsequently transmitted to the Security Council on 13 March and 15 September, respectively, and issued as documents of the Council (S/2023/189 and S/2023/674).

33. On 13 November, following the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 2700 (2023), the Secretary-General appointed four individuals, with expertise in the areas of armed groups and criminal networks, arms, finance and humanitarian affairs, to serve on the Panel of Experts (see S/2023/874). The mandate of the Panel expires on 18 November 2024.

34. The Panel of Experts conducted visits to Brazil, Canada, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, France, Haiti, Italy, Mexico and the United States of America.

35. In pursuance of its mandate, the Panel of Experts, through the Secretariat, sent 33 letters to 21 Member States, the Committee and several national and international entities.

VII. Secretariat administrative and substantive support

36. The Security Council Affairs Division provided substantive and procedural support to the Chair and the members of the Committee. Advisory support was also provided to Member States to promote understanding of the sanctions regime and facilitate the implementation of the sanctions measures. Induction briefings were also provided to incoming members of the Council to familiarize them with the specific issues relevant to the sanctions regime. To complement those briefings, from 1 to 3 December, the Secretariat conducted the third training session on the design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, adjustment and redesign of sanctions for incoming members of the Council.

37. The Division continued to cooperate closely with the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti and the Department of Safety and Security in order to support the different activities of the Committee on security-related matters, including by providing support to the visits of the Panel of Experts and the visit of the Chair to Haiti and the Dominican Republic from 12 to 16 June.

38. To support the Committee in its recruitment of well-qualified experts to serve on sanctions monitoring groups, teams and panels, the Division has begun to brief regional groups and held public outreach events on 21 June and 26 October to attract a more geographically diverse applicant pool. On 13 December, a note verbale was sent to all Member States to request the nomination of qualified candidates for the pool of experts. In addition, a note verbale was sent to all Member States on 2 August, notifying them of upcoming vacancies on the Panel of Experts and providing information on recruitment timelines, areas of expertise and pertinent requirements. On 28 July, vacancy announcements were also made available online at the United Nations career portal (https://careers.un.org).

39. The Division continued to provide support to the Panel of Experts, assisting in the preparation of the Panel's interim report, submitted to the Committee in March, and its final report, submitted to the Committee in August. The Secretariat facilitated travel by Panel members to deliver their mandate, which included meetings with Member States and other stakeholders. The Secretariat organized an inter-panel workshop from 5 to 7 December, which was focused on providing additional tools to enhance expert investigations and reporting and to foster inter-panel cooperation.

40. The Secretariat continued to update and maintain the United Nations Security Council Consolidated List and the committee-specific sanctions lists in the six official languages and the three technical formats. Furthermore, the Secretariat implemented improvements concerning the effective utilization of and access to the lists, as well as further developing, in all official languages, the data model approved in 2011 by the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL/Da'esh, Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, as requested by the Council in paragraph 54 of its resolution 2368 (2017).

41. On 15 September, pursuant to paragraph 25 of resolution 2653 (2022), the Secretary-General submitted his first assessment of progress achieved on the key benchmarks established in paragraph 25 of resolution 2653 (2022) (S/2023/677).