

[Haiti\(/country/hti\)](#)

Haiti: Soaring number of displaced desperately need protection and aid priority, UN experts urge

News and Press Release

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GENEVA (20 June 2024) - UN experts said today Haiti's escalating gang violence and political instability have forced a record **578,074** internal displacements in 2024 including over 310,000 women and girls and **180,000** children, more than double the figure from 2022, making it the country with the largest number of displacements globally due to crime-related violence. Expressing grave concern over unprecedented violence, insecurity, and the humanitarian crisis, the independent experts made the following statement:

"Violence, particularly in the capital Port-au-Prince, has reached alarming levels, with armed groups controlling large areas and complicating humanitarian access. Clashes between gangs and the Haitian National Police have created a pervasive environment of fear, restricting freedom of movement and access to basic services. In the first quarter of 2024 alone, **2,500** , including at least **82 children** , have reportedly been killed or injured in gang-related violence. Reportedly, more than half a million children in Haiti are living in neighbourhoods controlled by armed groups, which puts them at higher risk of violence, and child recruitment.

According to UN Migration (IOM), at the national level, **80 per cent** of internally displaced persons are hosted by host families compared to 20 per cent residing in over 114 sites (including in schools, churches, and other public buildings) in Port-au-Prince, including in gang-controlled or high-risk areas. Many internally displaced persons are living in overcrowded and inadequate conditions without basic hygiene and sanitation, facing severe shortages of food, water, shelter, and medical care, including a lack of safe and private spaces for psychological support. These conditions heighten disease and violence risks, particularly gender-based violence. Furthermore, the growing number of internally displaced children who are unaccompanied renders them particularly vulnerable to exploitation, abuse and trafficking by gangs.

The protection crisis is severe, with **sexual violence** against women and girls in IDP sites surging as gangs use rape as a weapon of terror. Weaknesses in the justice system, attacks against justice personnel, and lack of police presence exacerbate the situation, leaving many victims without recourse. Nearly half the population suffers from severe food insecurity, with 18 per cent in a state of emergency. The resurgence of cholera and tuberculosis, compounded by fuel shortages, has strained the health system to the brink of collapse.

The ongoing violence has forced the closure of nearly 900 schools, affecting almost 200,000 children. Attacks on educational facilities have increased, disrupting learning and putting children **at risk** of exploitation by gangs.

Since the reopening of Port-au-Prince International Airport on 20 May, operations have been limited, with significant backlogs and humanitarian supplies blocked at the port.

We welcome the recent inauguration of the National Emergency Operations Centre in Port-au-Prince, which is crucial for coordinating disaster preparedness and management following the heavy rains in the capital and the challenging hurricane season forecast for 2024.

We call for the Multinational Security Support (MSS) mission in Haiti to support the National Police and bring security to the Haitian people, under conditions that comply with international human rights norms and standards. We call for comprehensive training for the MSS mission, particularly on the protection of the population, including protection of children, and preserving distinction of humanitarian operations.

The current 21 per cent funding coverage for Haiti's 2024 Humanitarian Response Plan is insufficient to address the severe humanitarian crisis. There is an urgent need for increased humanitarian aid, including food, water, medical supplies, menstrual and maternal health products, and shelter.

We call on donors, development partners and humanitarian actors to prioritise the protection of IDPs, both in identified and informal sites, including emergency assistance, cash assistance for service access, food distribution, counselling, referrals, and promoting social cohesion and resilience of both IDPs and host communities as well strengthening community-based organisations' protection capacity. Financial resources need to be mobilised to increase protection actors' intervention capacities around displacement sites to inform, refer, and assist victims promptly.

Access for humanitarian workers must be guaranteed, and protection mechanisms for IDPs, especially women, including older women, children, and vulnerable groups, must be strengthened. Efforts to prevent and respond to sexual violence, abuse, and exploitation must be strengthened, focusing on prevention, risk mitigation, response services, and access to justice.

Addressing the humanitarian crisis and protecting human rights are also necessary prerequisites to prepare for free elections; this effort requires the entire Haitian government and society, including private actors, with the support of the international community. Given the disproportionate impact of this crisis on women and girls, their leadership and meaningful participation in decision making is also critical to the successful political transition in Haiti.

Rebuilding security in neighbourhoods of origin for IDPs must be a top priority to address displacement causes and improve their situation. IDPs should be consulted in planning relocation projects or sustainable solutions impacting their lives. Durable solutions for IDPs, such as safe return, resettlement, or local integration, require addressing the root causes of displacement, including violence, political instability, and environmental degradation."

*** The experts: Paula Gaviria Betancur, Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons ; Farida Shaheed, Special Rapporteur on the right to education ; Morris Tidball-Binz, Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions ; Dorothy Estrada Tanck (Chair**), Laura Nyirinkindi** (Vice-Chair), Claudia Flores, Ivana Krstić, and Haina Lu, Working group on discrimination against women and girls ; Tlaleng Mofokeng, Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health ; Tomoya Obokata, Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, Margaret Satterthwaite, Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers ; Michael Fakhri, Special Rapporteur on the right to food ; Mama Fatima Singhateh, Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children ; Reem Alsalem, Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences , Siobhán Mullally, Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children .**

The Special Rapporteur, Independent Experts and Working Groups are part of what is known as the **Special Procedures**([blank](#)) of the Human Rights Council. Special Procedures, the largest body of independent experts in the UN Human Rights system, is the general name of the Council's independent fact-finding and monitoring mechanisms that address either specific country situations or thematic issues in all parts of the world. Special Procedures' experts work on a voluntary basis; they are not UN staff and do not receive a salary for their work. They are independent from any government or organization and serve in their individual capacity.

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Infographic

Sources: [Govt. Haiti\(/organization/govt-haiti\)](#), [Protection Cluster\(/organization/protection-cluster\)](#),

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