

**Committee: Security Council**

**Issue: The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH)**

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## TOPIC INTRODUCTION

Replacing the United Nations Mission in Haiti -a peacekeeping operation carried out by the United Nations between September 1993 and June 1996- the United Nations stabilization mission in Haiti was established on the first of June 2004, by the Security Council resolution 1542, a resolution condemning all violations of human rights in Haiti. Following a Coup d'état in Haiti, which resulted in Haiti's president at the time, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, to go into exile, the UN established the MINUSTAH, as it regarded the situation in Haiti as a threat to international peace and security. The Council further authorized Multinational Interim Force for a period of three months so as to ensure the stabilization of Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince. The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti is a United Nations peacekeeping mission. Peacekeeping by the United Nations is controlled through the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), a dynamic instrument developed by the UN, which aims to help countries severely affected by conflict to construct conditions of everlasting peace. The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti has assisted efforts to improve public security, protect vulnerable groups, and protect the country's institutions. According to its mandate from the Security Council, MINUSTAH is required "to concentrate the use of its resources, including civilian police, towards increasing security and protection during the electoral period" and "to assist with the restoration and maintenance of the rule of law, public safety and public order in Haiti."<sup>1</sup> The security council decided that the mission would initially involve 6,700 troops, 1,622 civilian police, and additional international and local civilian staff.

MINUSTAH has received a lot of criticism over the years, some arguing that its actions have been a threat to both Haitian stability and security. Critics claim that it has failed to achieve its aims, and its "failure" has brought Haitians together in a persistent solidarity against it.

On April 13, 2017, the United Nations Security Council announced that the mission is due to end in October and will be replaced by a follow-up mission: The United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH). 2,370 soldiers serving the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti will be progressively withdrawn over a six-month period to make the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (which will have just about 1,275 personnel) the substitute operation. Stimulated by the 2015 elections, a political crisis continues in Haiti. This crisis has impeded the Haitian government's ability to respond to the basic needs of its citizens, resolve the continuing human right problem, or address enduring humanitarian crises. About 61,000 people in Haiti still live in displacement camps since the 2010 earthquake, meanwhile about one third of people live with food insecurity. A cholera epidemic is still prevalent in the country.<sup>2</sup> Human rights in Haiti are continuously violated, leading to a low standard of living for its citizens. Consequently, the UN's involvement in Haiti is essential. The United Nations must ensure that any missions established in Haiti work to their

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<sup>1</sup>UN News Centre. "Haiti: former Senator detained after UN mission finds illegal weapons."

<sup>2</sup> Human Rights Watch. "Haiti: Events of 2016"  
<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2017/country-chapters/haiti>

maximum efficiency so as to help Haiti eventually get out of this crisis, and additionally ensure it will develop and prosper as a country.

## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

### Chapter VII of the UN Charter

Provides the framework within which the Security Council may take enforcement action. Allows Council to recognize any threat to peace and take both military and non-military action to maintain international peace and security. The United Nations stabilization mission in Haiti is a mission acting under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

### Political Process

The entirety of the social relations within a political system. While, traditionally, political science has focused on formal, constitutionally defined political processes, a sociological approach regards processes outside the political sphere as necessarily involved.<sup>3</sup> One of MINUSTAH’s aims was to help the government achieve political process in Haiti.

### HNP

The Haitian National Police. The law enforcement and defense force of Haiti.

### Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programs (DDR)

These are mostly featured in the mandates of peacekeeping operations. They help provide the initial stabilization of societies which have been through conflict as well as their long-term development. DDR helps create an environment which encourages political and peace process. Disarmament refers to the collection, documentation, control and disposal of military forces and weapons; demobilization is the controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces; Reintegration is the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status, gaining employment and income.

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS<sup>4</sup>

Date	Description of Event
September 1993	First United Nations Peacekeeping Mission established in Haiti- United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH)
5–29 February	Haitian coup d'état, led by Haitian political gangs and former army officers, resulting in the removal of President Jean- Bertrand Aristide from his office.
29 February 2004	<i>Resolution 1529</i> was adopted, authorizing the multinational interim force (a force composed of military elements of nations who have formed an alliance for some specific purpose. This was established in order to contribute to a secure and stable environment in Haiti, to facilitate the provision of humanitarian assistance, to provide help to the Haitian police and look out for purposes of establishing safety and protecting human rights, to prevent the situation from getting worse, and to support other international organizations wishing to assist the Haitian people. <sup>5</sup> ), and confirming the Council’s willingness to establish a United Nations Stabilization force

<sup>3</sup> Collins Dictionary of Sociology, 3rd ed. © HarperCollins Publishers 2000

<sup>4</sup> “Security Council Report”. Revised on 4 May 2017. <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/chronology/haiti.php?page=2>

<sup>5</sup> United Nations; Security Council. 29 February 2009. “SECURITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZES DEPLOYMENT OF MULTINATIONAL FORCE TO HAITI FOR 3 MONTHS, UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTING RESOLUTION 1529 (2004)” <http://www.un.org/press/en/2004/sc8015.doc.htm>

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30 April 2004	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) was put into action, following the demands of <i>Resolution 1542</i> .
22 June 2005	Council extends mandate of MINUSTAH until the 15 <sup>th</sup> of February 2006
6 <sup>th</sup> July 2005	MINUSTAH troops went on a rampage in Cité Soleil.
18 October 2005	Haiti's former Prime Minister, Gérard Latortue, informed the council that difficult challenges remained regarding the judicial system, the humanitarian situation, and the disarmament process.
February 7 2006	First round of presidential and legislative elections held in Haiti. Haiti began the process of establishing a democratic government. Street violence persists, despite MINUSTAH's presence. Haitian economy remains in tatters.
January-March 2007	MINUSTAH and the Haitian police collaborated, arresting more than 400 people (gang leaders included) by carrying out operations against gangs who were accused of kidnappings, thefts, rapes and drug trafficking in Cité Soleil and Martissant.
31 August 2007	Foreign and defence vice ministers of the nine Latin American MINUSTAH troop-contributing countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay) , along with Panama met in Guatemala, agreeing that the MINUSTAH was to remain in Haiti until sustainable achievements in security, institutional strengthening and socioeconomic development goals were achieved.
4 September 2007	Defence ministers and military officers of the Latin American MINUSTAH troop-contributing countries met in Port-au-Prince, agreeing that it is fundamental to strengthen the cooperation between all of those involved in Haiti's stabilization.
27 September 2007	Haitian President ,René Préal, quoted that MINUSTAH was the "only formula that is realistic and available at this time that enables Haitians to restore freedom and live in peace.
2007	114 out of the 950-member Sri Lanka peacekeeping contingent in Haiti were accused of sexual abuse.
2 June 2008	Food crisis in Haiti emphasized by the Secretary General, immediate humanitarian aid as well as the encouragement to increase agricultural production was put into action. MINUSTAH announced that kidnapping gang had been broken up in Port-au-Prince.
12 September 2008	Council was informed that Haiti was hit hard by a series of Hurricanes. Most of the harvests for the current season were wiped out.
October – November 2008	UN envoys visit Haiti to evaluate sanitation issues, food security, access to water, prison conditions, and corruption.
22 June 2009	MINUSTAH congratulates Haiti for holding peaceful senate elections.
12 January 2010	Disastrous earthquake hits Haiti
19 January 2010	MINUSTAH personnel increased by 1,500 police and 2,000 military personnel.
4 June 2010	<i>Resolution 1927</i> - deployment of an additional 680 officers to the police component of MINUSTAH. Mission was also encouraged to provide support to Haiti's government.
October 2010	<i>Resolution 1944 adopted</i> . The mandate of MINUSTAH was renewed for a year. Cholera outbreak in Haiti confirmed.
December 2010	Press statement issued by council, stressing the importance of holding credible elections. MINUSTAH urged to continue providing support in ensuring a peaceful environment. Announcement of the creation of an independent panel to investigate a cholera epidemic. Evidence shows that MINUSTAH soldiers were most likely the ones who introduced the strain.
2010	Gérard Jean-Gilles, a teenage boy, was found dead in MINUSTAH's Police Unit base.

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March 2011	Legislative elections and the presidential run-off held in Haiti. MINUSTAH urged candidates to be cautious while voting results were tallied., it further commanded all candidates avoid threats, harassment, and intimidation.
October 2011	<i>Resolution 2012 adopted</i> - MINUSTAH's mandate extended for a year.
2011	4 Uruguayan marines were deemed responsible of gang raping a 19-year-old boy.
January 2012	MINUSTAH contacts UN headquarters with regard to allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation against mission personnel.
March 2012	Three Pakistani peacekeepers were accused of raping a 14-year-old boy in Haiti.
September 2012	Council held meeting with MINUSTAH police and troop contributing countries. Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Ivan Šimonovic, after his visit to Haiti, called for the planned downsizing of MINUSTAH's military forces to be accompanied by support to the national police and the rule of law institutions.
October 2012	<i>Resolution 2070 adopted</i> , renewing mandate of MINUSTAH until 15 October 2013.
March 2013	Council held its semi-annual debate on Haiti, where the Secretary-General's March 8 report on MINUSTAH was presented, and an update was provided on recent developments. Conditions-based strengthening plan for MINUSTAH was also presented.
May 2013	Haitian Senate voted unanimously on a policy that would demand the UN to compensate Haitian cholera victims.
October 2013	Council adopts <i>resolution 2119</i> once again extending MINUSTAH's mandate until 15 October 2014. Resolution called for a reduction in MINUSTAH's troops, however, police component remained unchanged. It also urged Haiti to comply by all steps for holding elections in accordance to the constitution. UK expresses concern that MINUSTAH was performing tasks that could be managed more effectively by other parts of the UN.
9 October 2013	BAI, IJDH and a few other law firms filed a law suit against the UN with regard to the accusations on UN soldiers for the 2010 cholera outbreak.
October 2014	<i>Resolution 2180</i> adopted, extending mandate of MINUSTAH until 15 October 2015. Reduction in mission's military component from 5,021 personnel to 2,370 personnel was authorized. Police unchanged. Argentina, Chile, Guatemala, and Ecuador (countries contributing troops to MINUSTAH) expressed concerns, stating that peacekeeping operations must take opinions of troop contributing countries into account.
April 2015	Council members condemned an attack against a MINUSTAH vehicle which killed Chilean peacekeeper.
October 2015	Council held semi-annual debate on Haiti. Resolution 2243 was adopted, extending MINUSTAH's mandate for one year, maintaining both its troop strength and police. Consideration of the possible withdrawal of MINUSTAH and transition to a future UN presence no sooner than 15 October 2016 was expressed.
October 2016	Hurricane Matthew strikes Haiti. Council adopted <i>resolution 2313</i> , MINUSTAH'S mandate renewed for six months.
December 2016	Secretary General issues public apology for the UN's role in the cholera outbreak.
April 2017	In <i>resolution 2350</i> , council decided to extend MINUSTAH's mandate for a final six-month period until 15 October. The Council further authorized the establishment of a smaller peacekeeping mission, "The UN Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH)". It will be composed of a maximum of 7 police units and 295 police officers (no military component). It will be put in action so as to assist the Haitian government in strengthening the rule of law institutions, support the Haitian National Police, and participate in human rights monitoring.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### ***Beginning of MINUSTAH***

Initially, the mission's mandate was to support the Government so as to ensure a secure and steady environment; to help rebuild and strengthen the HNP; to help achieve complete and sustainable Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programs; to help reinforce the recovery of the rule of law and public safety in Haiti; to protect United Nations personnel, facilities, installations and equipment and to protect civilians under threat of physical violence; to support political processes; to support free and fair municipal, parliamentary and presidential elections; to ensure no human rights are violated, and to report on the human rights situation in the country.<sup>6</sup> In the years to come MINUSTAH's mandate, as well as its strength, were changed by the Security Council numerous times, adjusting to the changing circumstances.

In 2004 Haiti was left in complete chaos after former president Aristide was forced to exile. The United Nations Stabilization mission in Haiti was initially enforced so as to provide immediate security to Haiti. Efforts were also made to create political process and support elections. The mission further initiated direct action against gangs and helped build-up the scope of security institutions. In 2006 the first Presidential and Legislative elections were successfully held in Haiti. By 2007 the mission had accomplished positive results. The elected government was now capable of providing both democratic process and economic growth. Violence and kidnappings had decreased, thanks to MINUSTAH's operations against gangs, providing a sense of safety to civilians. Efforts had also begun to help rebuild and strengthen the HNP; by mid-2009 the force had reached about 9,500 officers which was way past the halfway mark of the 14,000-officer goal by 2011. Public confidence in the HNP grew with it.

By 2010 Haiti seemed to be on the right track to advance towards a prosperous future, thanks to the collaboration of the Haitian authorities with the United Nations and the international community. The economy was also growing, and various constitutional amendments guaranteed economic growth in the years to come.

### ***2010 Earthquake***

Unfortunately, a devastating earthquake hit Haiti, on the 12<sup>th</sup> of January 2010, leaving more than 220,000 people dead and around 1.5 million homeless. The event had serious consequences on the Haitian economy and infrastructure and further led to a period of political uncertainty. All in all the earthquake interrupted a period of smooth progress towards legislative, presidential and municipal elections, which were scheduled to be held in 2010.

Violence in Haiti increased, as the earthquake led to protests, crime, and sexual violence in camps for internally displaced persons. The earthquake also gave rise to new threats, for example former gang leaders escaping from prisons often armed with weapons stolen from the HNP. 102 UN personnel were killed in the incident and MINUSTAH's headquarters collapsed. The United Nations immediately launched emergency relief operations; MINUSTAH, despite its own losses, made further efforts to restore its capacity and acted to support the needs of those affected. MINUSTAH attempted to provide security and humanitarian relief through projects such as the community violence reduction program (established in 2006) and the canal rehabilitation program. MINUSTAH also provided mission support, used its military to provide protection, assisted the HNP, supported state institutions, and collaborated with UNICEF to improve child protection. These actions can be seen in further detail in the Secretary General's 2010 report on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2010/200](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2010/200)

### ***Cholera Outbreak***

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<sup>6</sup> United Nations. "MINUSTAH: United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti"  
<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minustah/background.shtml>

In October of 2010 a cholera outbreak was confirmed in Haiti. The cholera epidemic progressed rapidly, having severe consequences on the country. By 2016 more than 9,200 deaths had been reported since the start of the outbreak in 2010. Sources such as the CDC (centers for Disease Control and Prevention) linked the introduction of the disease directly to MINUSTAH; they claimed that the start of the disease, which killed thousands, started from the faulty construction of UN sanitation systems located in the Haitian town, M<sup>é</sup>y<sup>è</sup>. However, in December 2010 a study showed that the disease most likely came from South Asia, Nepal in particular. Evidence established that the disposal of human waste by a United Nations Peacekeeping base in Mirebalais contaminated Haiti's rivers, creating the epidemic. Although a UN independent investigation found that the cholera epidemic was caused by a number of circumstances, numerous scientific analyses claim evidence that MINUSTAH troops from Nepal most likely introduced the strain. MINUSTAH's denial of the situation further enraged Haitians, whose anti-UN demonstrations led to protesters being shot dead by UN troops. The Bureau des Avocats Internationaux (BAI) and the institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti (IJDH) tried to make up for the accusations, aiming to gain justice for those affected by the disease, by filing claims to the UN. They asked for the installation of a national water and sanitation system which would control the epidemic, compensation for individual victims of cholera, and a public apology from the United Nations. In February 2013, the UN dismissed the claims deeming them "not receivable". On October 9, 2013 BAI, IJDH and a few other law firms filed a law suit against the UN. The case was dismissed on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January 2015, after a judge heard oral arguments on UN immunity. On May 2013, the Haitian Senate voted unanimously on a policy that would demand the UN to compensate Haitian cholera victims. In December 2016, however, the Secretary General issued a public apology for the UN's role in the cholera outbreak. The Secretary General further stated that the UN would raise \$400 million so as to provide material assistance to communities and help fight the disease. The plan, however, has not gained much interest from member states, as a result, only \$10 million of the total \$400 million has been raised. All the above events sparked a lot of controversy and got various people questioning whether MINUSTAH's presence in Haiti was indeed for the better. On the other hand, MINUSTAH has sustainably helped over 8,500 Haitians, through the Cholera Elimination Plan, from the dangers of extreme poverty, hunger, and contraction of diseases such as cholera. It has also provided over 700,000 Haitians with invaluable lessons in resilience and perseverance. Cholera remains a prominent issue in Haiti. Although the situation seemed to be improving, the number of cholera cases increased after Hurricane Matthew hit Haiti in 2016, and survivors were forced to drink contaminated storm water.

### ***Criticism received by MINUSTAH***

MINUSTAH has received a lot of criticism over the years, with a lot of people calling for its departure from Haiti. Many critics believe that MINUSTAH has done more harm than good to Haiti.

- (i) Aristide's supporters.  
Supporters of the former President, Aristide, state that MINUSTAH was formed as an attempt of the United States, France, and Canada to counteract those who support Aristide's party.
- (ii) Rape scandal.  
MINUSTAH personnel have been accused of involvement in various sexual assault cases. In 2007 114 out of the 950-member Sri Lanka peacekeeping contingent (Sri Lanka army) in Haiti were accused of sexual abuse. Although Sri Lanka Officials claim that there is little evidence on the issue, the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) deduced that acts of sexual exploitation were frequent, happening in all regions where the personnel were deployed.  
In 2011 4 Uruguayan marines were deemed responsible of gang raping a 19-year-old boy. The rape was recorded with a cellphone, after being leaked to the internet, it went viral,

forcing the boy and his family to relocate houses. In March 2012, several Pakistani peacekeepers were accused of raping a 14-year-old boy. Pakistani authorities sentenced two of them to a year in prison in Pakistan, only notifying Haitian authorities after the trial.

(iii) Raid in Cité Soleil.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of July 2005, MINUSTAH troops went on a rampage in Cité Soleil. They targeted a base of illegally armed rebels led by bandit Dread Wilme. Some reports claim that the raid targeted civilians, and was an attempt to destroy support for former President, Aristide, before the upcoming elections. No MINUSTAH personnel were killed in the process however sources estimate that a number of 5 up to 80 civilians were killed.

(iv) Human right violations.

Human rights violations and transgressions have been continuously reported, positioning MINUSTAH as a threat to Haitian stability and security.

In 2010 a 16-year-old boy, named Gérard Jean-Gilles, who run errands for the Nepalese soldiers, was found dead in MINUSTAH's Police Unit base. Although UN personnel claimed that the teen committed suicide, an autopsy carried out 72 hours after the boy's death ruled out suicide as a potential cause of death. However, UN troops have not been held accountable, as they are immune from prosecution or legal action in Haiti.

(v) Language

MINUSTAH peacekeepers do not speak Haiti's native language, creole, and are not usually accompanied by translators. Critics claim that this prevents the organization from gaining local knowledge and lacks accessibility. The inability to communicate can make it harder for them to execute their mission; it can make Haitians view them antagonistically and as a result make them object to having MINUSTAH presence in their country.

MINUSTAH has been in Haiti since 2004; however, it has failed to achieve some of its main aims. It has also been the center of various scandals, which is why after 13 years the U.N. voted to end the mission in Haiti and replace it by MINUJUSTH.

## **MAJOR COUNTRIES INVOLVED**

### **Haiti**

Haiti (officially the Republic of Haiti) is a country located on the island of Hispaniola in the Greater Antilles archipelago of the Caribbean Sea. It occupies 3/8ths of the island, which it shares with the Dominican Republic. Haiti is the most populous country in the Caribbean Community, with a population of about 10.6million people. Haiti was under France's control from 1697 until the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1804 when it gained independence. Haiti has been facing problems since its very beginnings as a modern state. It has been facing political instability for decades and remains one of the poorest countries in the western hemisphere. Around 60% of its population live on less than \$1.00 a day, as a result, both starvation and malnutrition are a prominent problem across the nation; Haiti is the third hungriest country around the world. In addition, most people depend on lakes, streams, or rivers for their water, and a total of 80 percent do not have adequate sanitation available. This explains the ongoing cholera outbreak in Haiti which began in mid-October 2010. About half of the Haitians are illiterate making it even harder for the country to develop.

### Brazil

Brazil is MINUSTAH'S largest troop contributor, providing up to 2,200 troops after the Haitian earthquake in 2010. Prior to MINUSTAH Brazil had strictly only participated in Chapter VI missions; consequently, over the years Brazil has insisted to redesign the MINUSTAH structure, framing its responsibilities exclusively in terms of Chapter VI. (Chapter VI deals with the peaceful settlement of disputes. It requires countries in conflict to first try to seek solutions through methods such as negotiation or judicial settlement, prior going to war. Resolutions made under chapter VI are not legally enforceable.) Brazilian leaders have voiced their preferences which include reducing the mission's military aspects and augmenting those related to development.

### United States

Some sources support that, initially, the establishment of MINUSTAH was just a less controversial façade for the pursuit of US interests in Haiti. Further claims were made that it was the Bush administration that orchestrated a coup d'état against Haiti's democratically elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

## POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The delegates of the Security Council need to focus on all aspects of the mission and primarily the legal framework regarding MINUSTAH's actions and responsibilities. It is up to the U.N to reform the mission in Haiti in order to ensure that U.N presence in the area is beneficial to the population and the nation.

### FURTHER READING

United Nations documents on MINUSTAH (Resolutions of the Security Council):

<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minustah/resolutions.shtml>

This link includes all the Security Council resolutions on Haiti from 2004 onwards.

United Nations Documents of MINUSTAH (Reports of the Secretary General):

<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minustah/reports.shtml>

The Secretary General's reports on MINUSTAH offer a more detailed overview of the actions taken by MINUSTAH to tackle the problems in Haiti, broken down year by year.

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