



RESEAU NATIONAL DE DÉFENSE DES DROITS HUMAINS (RNDDH)
NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENSE NETWORK

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NEWS RELEASE

Suspicious and Allegations: RNDDH's Position

On April 4, 2017, Marie Yolène GILLES COLAS, one of the assistants of the Program Manager of the National Network for the Defense of Human Rights (RNDDH), presented a letter of resignation dated March 3, 2017 to her superiors, She presented her many grievances to the Executive Director, Pierre ESPERANCE and the organization in general.

A media outcry followed, which plunged the RNDDH into an unprecedented situation, shaking the trust of the country threatening to ignore 25 years of strong work and struggle working towards the establishment in Haiti of a democratic State governed by rule of law.

Today, RNDDH considers it its duty to position itself in relation to this situation by addressing the community.

First of all, RNDDH would like to point out that before the resignation of Marie Yolène GILLES COLAS, several meetings were held between the Executive Director, the Program Manager and two Program Assistants. The purpose of these meetings were to analyse the issue regarding the receipt of a check from the **Bureau of Monetization for Development Assistant Program (BMPAD)**

RNDDH's team, by a majority of its members, decided it necessary to make people aware of the facts as they happened. Therefore, on April 3, 2017, the Executive Director publicly stated that the institution had effectively received a grant of 1,500,000 gourdes from BMPAD.

Even if this public statement could not prevent the resignation of one of its members, it at least allows the country to understand that for RNDDH, the right to information remains sacred.

On April 4, 2017, following the receipt of t Marie Yolène GILLES COLAS's letter of resignation, a four-member working commission was formed. After seven days of reflection, discussion and consultation, this commission believes, above all, that RNDDH has an obligation to apologize. With this, we would like to extend a humble apology to the Haitian people in general, to partners, sister institutions, and members of the human rights sector for the spectacle created.

Their faith in the institution and their collaboration is dear to RNDDH. It is thanks to them, that RNDDH is able to state proudly that it represents a national heritage belonging to the Haitian community, not to any of its executives, whoever he/she might be.

The working committee wishes to reassure the partners of RNDDH, its collaborators, its staff and the entire Haitian population, that its commitment to continue to accompany the people in its quest for a just society that is respectful of human rights remains unchanged.

The working committee would like to inform the public, that RNDDH automatically registers its employee to the Office National d'Assurance Vieillesse (ONA). Similarly, tax deductions are made on the salaries of employees, for the General Directorate of Taxes (DGI). From 2014 to 2016, for financial reasons, RNDDH was unable to honor its commitments to these institutions. However, since October 2016, following an agreement with the ONA and the DGI, RNDDH has resumed paying its royalties to these institutions.

The working committee would also like to inform the public that RNDDH received a total of 2,500,000 gourdes, including 1,000,000 gourdes from the **National Old Age Insurance Office** (ONA) in 2015 and one 1,500,000 gourdes from **BMPAD** in 2016. In addition, RNDDH received in October 2016 the sum of \$7,500 US dollars from the **National Port Authority** (APN).

In October 2016, RNDDH also acquired 14 motorcycles at **Appolo Motors S.A.** at a preferential price for its regional network offices.

In addition, DIGICEL was unfortunately mentioned. In this regard, the Working Committee states that according to the initial information gathered, there was a memorandum of understanding drawn up regarding the work of RNDDH without threat of interference by DIGICEL, and that these two institutions have been working together for three years.

The working committee also examined the current functioning of RNDDH and the statutory decision-making bodies of the organization, namely: the **General Assembly**, the **Board of Directors** and **Governing Board**.

After analyzing the functioning of these bodies and the situation of the institution in general, the Committee reached the following recommendations:

- Publication of a detailed report on the use of grants received from BMPAD, ONA and APN;
- As quickly as possible, the organization will hold a **General Assembly**, with the following objectives :
 - Reaffirm the vision, mission and objectives of the institution, modify them if necessary.
 - Make the RNDDH statutory bodies operational,
 - Elect the new members of the **Board of Directors**,
 - Analyze all contracts that bind the RNDDH to its private and public Haitian partners.
- Implementation of the provisions of the organization's guiding instruments, including internal statutes and regulations.

Port-au-Prince, April 11, 2017