



NEWS RELEASE

COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE

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**Explosion of a tanker in Cap-Haitien:
The RNDDH presents its sympathies to the victims and their relatives**

1. The National Human Rights Defense Network (RNDDH) learned with difficulty and pain, the tragedy that occurred in Cap-Haitien, on the night of December 13 to 14, 2021 when a fire broke out, following the explosion of a tanker truck carrying gasoline.
2. According to the first information relating to this tragedy, around midnight, the tanker, arriving at the Pont Grand Bois not far from the Samarie roundabout, overturned.
3. Having noticed that members of the population expressed their willingness to take the gasoline from the truck, the driver allegedly urged them to move away because of its probable explosion. Despite the warning, locals, armed with hammers, drilled holes in the tank of the truck and began to take away the gasoline. It only took a few minutes for the gasoline that was pouring into the Laforcet Canal to join the rubbish that was burning nearby. This caused a huge explosion.
4. The human and material losses are enormous: indeed, the provisional balance sheet already shows more than sixty (60) people having lost their life and more than forty (40) others, seriously injured. Many of the survivors are now at the Justinien University

Hospital in Cap Haitien and the Haitian Baptist Convention Hospital. About twenty houses were also set on fire.

5. The RNDDH - through its structure in the North - noted the presence of the Directorate of Civil Protection and officials of the Cap Haitien town hall on the scene. It was also reported to him that the fire brigade services as well as the Haitian National Police (PNH) quickly arrived at the scene of the tragedy. And it was decided to dig a mass grave in the Saint Philomena cemetery in the second city, to quickly proceed with the burial of the victims who did not survive.

6. The RNDDH recalls that the country has already experienced this year several tragedies due to the mismanagement of petroleum products by the state authorities and because of their bad handling by citizens. In this sense, the RNDDH believes that measures must be quickly adopted to educate them on the behavior to adopt in the face of these highly flammable products.

7. Today, more than the drama itself, the cries of the survivors and their loved ones deploring the unavailability of specific care for the wounded resonate painfully and once again put the Haitian authorities in front of them. irresponsibility: public health services must be available everywhere in the country, because the enjoyment of the right to health requires accessibility to general and specific health care for all.

8. The RNDDH expresses its sympathies to the families affected by this umpteenth disaster that hit the country and invites the state authorities to do everything possible to evacuate the survivors as quickly as possible to other cities in the country for the purposes of to be supported by specialized personnel.

Port-au-Prince, December 14, 2021