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NEWS RELEASE

COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE

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Enforced Disappearances and Extrajudicial Executions: The RNDDH requires the conduct of an investigation of the General Inspection of the PNH

1. The National Human Rights Defense Network (RNDDH) was shocked to learn that on October 30, 2022, during clashes recorded on the court of the police station of Delmas 33, one (1) journalist was coldly executed by officers of the National Police of Haiti (PNH) and many others were shot.
2. This severe incident occurred when several journalists went to the police station in Delmas 33 to protest the arrest by officers of the Departmental Unit for Law Enforcement (UDMO), a journalist covering a protest movement organized by residents of Delmas 47.
3. According to information gathered by the RNDDH, on October 29, 2022, at approximately seventeen (17) hours, officers assigned to the Swat Team arrived at Delmas 47 in two (2) vehicles bearing the registration of their specialized unit. They positioned themselves in the perimeter and then crisscrossed the area before arresting five (5) people found at the scene. These are:
 - Ezekiel PAUL
 - Enock MERIZIER
 - James MONDESIR
 - Andy Morisseau
 - ORESTIL Dieupuisant
4. Ezekiel PAUL, Enock MERIZIER, and James MONDESIR belong to the Educational Social Action Brigade 47, still known as BASE 47. They had launched the anti-government movement called Bwa Kale, whose slogan was conceived by Ezekiel PAUL. Andy MORISSEAU and

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Dieupuisant ORESTIL are two (2) mechanics who usually work in the area. They were getting ready to go home when they were arrested.

5. On the same day of their arrest, numerous searches were carried out by the members of BASE 47 at the various police stations nearby, at the Central Directorate of the Judicial Police (DCPJ), and the Port-au-Prince Civil Prison. However, the five (5) people who had been arrested by Swat-Team agents were not found anywhere.

6. Thus, in protest, on October 30, 2022, the members of BASE 47 decided to protest the actions of the Swat Team agents responsible for the enforced disappearance of their comrades. They met in Delmas 47, stored burning tires on the pavement, and demanded the return to their respective homes, missing persons when agents of the Departmental Unit for the Maintenance of Order (UDMO) arrived on the scene. They had boarded a red-colored vehicle, registration 1-01177 marked UDMO. They started beating up the demonstrators and threw several tubes of tear gas in their direction.

7. At the same time, journalists who had been informed of the movement had gone to cover it. Among them was Robeste DIMANCHE, a journalist with Radio Télé Zénith, who, having noticed that the police were beating up the demonstrators, wanted to inquire about the situation. Quickly, the police attacked him. They hit him repeatedly, even though he yelled I am a journalist. Subsequently, he was forced to climb to the back of the UDMO pick-up truck towards Bas Delmas.

8. Robeste DIMANCHE, with whom the RNDDH spoke, stated that at some point the officers stopped the vehicle to decide among themselves what to do with him. Throughout their discussion, they insulted him, beat him several times, and accused him of being in league with armed gang members, to whom journalists are giving the microphone. Robeste DIMANCHE was then taken to the police station in Delmas 33. The UDMO officers drew up the minutes of his arrest before detaining him.

9. Having learned of the news of Robeste DIMANCHE's arrest, other journalists covering the protest movement in Delmas 47 went to the police station in Delmas 33 in solidarity. Two (2) back-ups of the UDMO, probably called for reinforcements, fired live bullets at human height toward the journalists. Romelson VILSAINT was coldly shot in the head. At least five (5) other journalists, as well as one (1) BASE 47 officer, were also injured by gunfire. They were:

- Ronald PETIT-FRERE, a journalist with the online media outlet Télé 509. He was beaten several times by UDMO agents;

- Robens Le CAYEN, journalist for the online media Le Cayen Info. He was shot in the left flank. Indeed, Robens LE CAYEN, who was behind Romelson VILSAINT when he was shot, went to a UDMO agent in order to obtain some explanations for this execution. The UDMO agent insulted him and shoved him. After the discussion, while Robens Le CAYEN was leaving, the UDMO agent aimed at him with his gun and shot him. The bullet hit him in the left flank. At the publication of this document, he is still hospitalized;
- Iphanes MONUMA, a journalist for the online media Iphactuality. He was hit on the head several times by UDMO officers who used their firearms to do so;
- Dieudonne ST-CYR, journalist for Radio Kingdom F.M. and the online media L'Ethique. He was beaten by UDMO agents, with boots and rifles;
- Jean-Marc JEAN, a journalist with the online media outlet JJM Info. He was shot several times in the head.

10. Pierre Paul Jean Yvon Exalus was shot in the right thigh. He is one of the leaders of BASE 47.

Subsequent facts

11. On the evening of October 30, 2022, Robeste DIMANCHE was invited to return home.

12. On October 31, 2022, the lifeless bodies of Ezekiel PAUL, Enock MERIZIER, James MONDESIR, Andy MORISSEAU, and Dieupuisant ORESTIL were found in Tabarre 43. They were all executed.

General Remarks

13. The RNDDH notes that for some time now, in a particular context of widespread insecurity, journalists have been increasingly targeted in Haiti. In this sense, the RNDDH recalls that from January to the present day, at least nineteen (19) journalists have been murdered or injured. In addition to the six (6) journalists who were victims of the events of October 30, 2022, there are:

- On January 6, 2022, at Laboule 12, John Wesley AMADY and Wilguens LOUISSAINT were killed, and their remains burned. They worked respectively for Ecoute F.M. and Safe News Haiti;
- On February 23, 2022, Maxiben LAZARRE, a journalist for the online media outlet Rois des Infos, was shot while covering a workers' demonstration. The victim succumbed to his injuries before being transported to Bernard Mevs Hospital. On the same day, three

(3) other journalists were injured: Sony LAUORE, Laureore TV, Yves MOISE of RCH 2000, and Alvarèz ESTIME of Lakay TV;

- On September 7, 2022, three (3) Radio-Télé Zenith reporters were hit with rubber projectiles while covering street demonstrations. They are Youly DESTINE, Robeste DIMANCHE and Yvenson JOINVIL. Yvenson JOINVIL claims to have been targeted that day in cold blood by a policeman, while he was in Bourdon, not far from the Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation (MPCE), and covered a demonstration that was taking place;
- On September 7, 2022, in Cap-Haitien, Luly MENARD, a cultural journalist and Radio Vision 2000 correspondent stood in front of his home watching a demonstration when a bullet grazed his head;
- On September 11, 2022, two (2) online media journalists were murdered in Kafou Lanmò and Dèyè Mi by Katèl, a known gang leader in the area by Iscard ANDRICE. The victims were returning from Nan Brooklyn, a neighborhood of Cité Soleil where they had gone to interview victims and take pictures of some areas devastated by the armed conflict since July 2022;
- On October 25, 2022, in Delmas 40 B, heavily armed individuals shot Roberson ALPHONSE, a journalist with Le Nouvelliste and Magik 9, injuring him with bullets;
- On October 25, 2022, the mutilated and lifeless body of Gary TESS, a journalist with Radio Lebon F.M., was found in Les Cayes, a few days after his disappearance.

14. The RNDDH considers that these serial attacks against journalists are more worrying since they are the target of both armed bandits and PNH agents whose behavior, for some time, is very alarming. Indeed, private cars are used by police officers during patrols, many enforced disappearances are attributed to the agents of specialized units of the PNH and occur after arrests and, anti-government demonstrations are repressed with great violence. On this point, the RNDDH stresses that, in general, the police institution is present during the protest movements organized by the population with the aim of repressing them; but absent when it is the bandits who occupy the streets, demonstrate while brandishing their firearms.

15. The RNDDH recalls that the rights to life, security, and fundamental freedoms of the press, information, and protest are democratic achievements that cannot suffer from any setback. The condemned political coalition led by Ariel HENRY cannot - in addition to its cynicism and its inability to restore security, bring about peace, and allow the resumption of socio-economic

activities in the country - systematically attack journalists and other members of the population, executing them coldly or preventing them from enjoying and exercising their civic prerogatives.

16. The RNDDH notes that the police institution did not share any information relating to the enforced disappearance followed by the summative execution of Ezéchiel PAUL, Enock MERIZIER, James MONDESIR, Andy MORISSEAU, and Dieupuissant ORESTIL. Late after the assassination of journalist Romelson VILSAINT that the PNH announced to open an investigation into the events of the day exclusively.

17. In this sense, the RNDDH considers it regrettable that the communication service of the PNH only works to make propaganda for the institution. He remains desperately silent during police blunders, during punitive interventions of the PNH, or when PNH agents are involved in acts of repression and human rights violations against the population.

18. The RNDDH condemns with the last rigor the enforced disappearance followed by the summative execution of Ezekiel PAUL, Enock MERIZIER, James MONDESIR, Andy MORISSEAU, and Dieupuissant ORESTIL as well as the execution in the precincts of the police station of Delmas 33, Romelson VILSAINT and the gunshot wounds of several others who were on the scene.

19. The RNDDH believes that these facts must be severely punished. Consequently, it urges the Central Directorate of the Judicial Police (DCPJ) and the General Inspection of the PNH to investigate; it encourages the communication of their conclusions to the repressive jurisdiction, so that all the offending agents without exception, be judged and condemned according to the law.

Port-au-Prince, November 3, 2022