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NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENSE NETWORK

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NEWS RELEASE

COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE

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***Intensification of armed attacks:
RNDDH demands explanations from the government authorities.***

1. Since the beginning of 2023, raids, sporadic armed attacks, and massacres against the Haitian population have intensified in the country, particularly in the departments of the West and Artibonite, resulting in the murder of several hundred people and the gang rape of several dozen women and girls.
2. Pernier, Marlique, Diègue, Meyotte, Cargo, Tunnel, Thomassin, Laboule, in the commune of Pétion ville; Bérette, Calebasse, Fort-Jacques, in the commune of Kenscoff; Marché Salomon, Cité Soleil, Bel-Air, Caradeux, Solino, Delmas, in the communes of Port-au-Prince and Delmas; Source Matelas, in the commune of Cabaret, Onaville, in the commune of Croix-des-Bouquets, as well as the communes of Liancourt, Verrettes, Petite Rivière de l'Artibonite, and Montrouis: the armed bandits prove, if need be, that they operate wherever they want and that they take control of all areas that interest them.
3. The armed attack perpetrated during the night of April 23-24, 2023, in Debussy, in the upper part of Turgeau, in the commune of Port-au-Prince, it is a reason for the National Human Rights Defense Network (RNDDH) to revisit these various bloody events.
4. **Bel-Air:** Between February 28 and March 5, 2023, Bel-Air was the scene of violent armed confrontations between the armed gangs members of the G-9 an Fanmi and Allies and the Bel Air gang, respectively led by Jimmy CHERIZIER alias Barbecue and Kempès SANON. During these clashes, one hundred and forty-eight (148) people were murdered or are missing. Three (3) people were shot and wounded, at least sixty-two (62) houses were burned down, and twenty-six (26) other houses were looted and/or burned. At least two (2) women were gang raped.

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5. **Cargo and Tunnel:** During the night of March 19-20, 2023, heavily armed men led by the gang leader Vitelhomme INNOCENT carried out an armed attack on the communities of Cargo and Tunnel. They had accused the population of these two (2) localities of having currently executed some of their acolytes. During this violent attack, at least nine (9) people were killed. The bodies of six (6) of them were burned. Four (4) of the victims, including the driver, were in a van.
6. **Bérette, Calebasse, Fort-Jacques:** On March 31, 2023, armed bandits from the Kraze Baryè base led by Vitelhomme INNOCENT attacked the localities of Bérette, Calebasse, and Fort Jacques. This armed attack was carried out against the population of Fort-Jacques who on the morning of March 31, 2023, had helped the National Police of Haiti (PNH) to thwart a kidnapping. During this kidnapping attempt, one (1) vehicle was burned, one (1) firearm seized, and one (1) suspected bandit was lynched by members of the public. On the afternoon of March 31, 2023, approximately one hundred bandits returned to Fort-Jacques, sweeping through their route, the neighboring communities of Bérette and Calbasse, burning houses and vehicles, and executing several members of the population.
7. **Onaville:** On April 6, 2023, armed bandits from Canaan launched an attack against the residents of Onaville, killing members of the population on the one hand, and looting and burning houses on the other. Unable to cope with the fury of these armed bandits, the population fled.
8. **Cité Soleil:** From April 14 to 19, 2023, armed clashes in several neighborhoods of Cité Soleil resulted in the murder of at least seventy (70) people. About Forty (40) others were shot or stabbed. To date, the exhaustive assessment of this umpteenth attack in the commune of Cité Soleil, cannot be established.
9. **Source Matelas:** Since April 19, 2023, armed bandits operating in Canaan and Titanyen, respectively led by gang leaders Jeff LAROSE and Jean Auguste CHERISME alias General Bogi, orchestrate a deadly attack against the population of Source Matelas, located in the municipality of Cabaret. To carry out these raids, they were helped by the armed gang led by Johnson ANDRE alias Izo 5 seconds, of Village de Dieu.
10. During the attack of April 19, 2023, the civil prison of Cabaret was targeted by these armed bandits who were currently intent on taking control of it. In the ensuing firefight, a police officer was shot and wounded. He could not even be evacuated to a hospital to receive the necessary treatment.
11. On social media, gang leader Jean Auguste CHERISME aka General Bogi circulated a video in which he claims he is at Source Matelas and claims responsibility for the raids perpetrated in the area in question.
12. Meanwhile, members of the population of Source Matelas, surprised by the virulence of the armed attack, were trapped at home. Others tried to escape but were hunted down and captured by armed bandits who executed them. Nine (9) other people, including three

(3) babies who had used the seaway to flee the war zone, perished at sea, according to the Maritime and Navigation Service of Haiti (SEMANAH).

13. According to information gathered by the RNDDH, this attack was carried out to punish the population of Source Matelas who dared to erect barricades to prevent armed bandits from attacking them, after the massacre perpetrated on the night of November 29-30, 2022. In this sense, it should be remembered that on that one night in November 2022, seventy-two (72) people were murdered, twenty-nine (29) women and girls were gang raped and hundreds of houses were set on fire.
14. The most complacent assessment of the raids conducted since April 19, 2023, in Source Matelas is that at least one hundred people were murdered, many of whom were imprisoned in the houses that the armed bandits had set on fire, and dozens of people were wounded by bullets.
15. Debussy and Solino: While calm have not yet returned to the above-mentioned areas and fear is palpable, since the night of April 23 to 24, 2023, the localities of Debussy, Turgeau, and Solino, in the Delmas 24 area, have been under gunfire.
16. Heavy shots of automatic weapons were fired at both Debussy and Solino areas, blows and wounds were inflicted on members of the civilian population who had the misfortune to cross the path of the armed bandits, and intrusions into homes to rob and loot the victims were also reported. Houses, including at least two (2) in Debussy, as well as vehicles, were burned. Although the results of these events are not yet known, RNDDH can affirm that the above-mentioned exactions caused panic in these two (2) areas, causing many people to flee their homes, taking only a few personal belongings with them.
17. RNDDH strongly condemns the climate of terror that has been established and maintained in the country by those who owe protection to the Haitian population. The armed criminals, protected by the political coalition in power, have currently been given complete freedom to attack the civilian population left to fend for themselves.
18. RNDDH believes that at this point, the policy of silence of the de facto government is no longer appropriate. Government authorities owe the Haitian population explanations on the intensification of these simultaneous armed attacks and the measures taken in order to restore order in the country in general and in the departments of the West and Artibonite in particular.
19. These explanations are more important than ever because the measures that were taken from February to October 2022 by the police authorities to contain the armed gangs in their stronghold have been canceled. Indeed, immediately after the PNH had received equipment and vehicles from the international community - particularly from the United States - it was decided to occupy and control the territory to confine the armed gangs to their strongholds, making their movements difficult. Today, it is precisely the dismissal by the state authorities of this strategic control plan put in place by the PNH that allows the armed gangs to completely control the metropolitan area.

20. RNDDH would like to remind the public that the rights to life, security, and private property are guaranteed by the Haitian Constitution and by various regional and international human rights protection instruments ratified by Haiti.
21. Finally, RNDDH presents its sympathies to the victims of these different armed attacks and reaffirms its willingness to stand-by their side to demand from the State authorities the respect of their fundamental rights to life, security, physical and psychological integrity, and private property.

Port-au-Prince, April 24, 2023