

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 17, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,

As members of Congress, we are committed to strengthening bilateral and trade relations with the Republic of Haiti, the second oldest republic in the Western Hemisphere. However, we are deeply concerned regarding the ongoing political crisis in the country. Therefore, we urge your administration to allow the people of Haiti to determine their political destiny by supporting consensus among political actors, civil society, religious and private sectors to create a civil society-led democratic transition.

Due to the extent of the insecurity challenges in Haiti, it is impossible to hold elections in this climate. In 2016, roughly 21 percent of the voting population participated in the presidential election. While elections are often a sign of democracy, holding elections in a climate where citizens are afraid to leave their homes for fear of being kidnapped or killed would severely undermine the electoral process. Hence, your administration must prioritize peace, safety, and security. Elections are necessary but not sufficient to bring about stability in the country if optimal conditions are not met, and consensus among various sectors has not been achieved.

We believe there is a path forward to a democratic transition in Haiti backed by the Haitian people. However, any steps taken to lead to such a transition have limited prospects for success if the United States continues to support the de facto government of Dr. Ariel Henry, who has no incentive to negotiate in good faith while enjoying unfettered support from the United States. There is no doubt that aspects of U.S. policy towards Haiti have undermined the nation's development, peace, and security. However, we have a chance to fix our past mistakes and support the Haitian people to put their country on a path toward true democracy. Now is the time.

Furthermore, your administration's support for Dr. Henry appears contradictory to your stated goal that the United States will not tilt the scales of Haitian politics. Dr. Henry lacks the legitimacy to organize elections and does not have the consensus needed to galvanize the Haitian people to the polls. Dr. Henry's legitimacy comes from the international community, not the Haitian people. We are aware that a growing number of civil societies, the private sector, and political organizations in Haiti have mobilized to offer a more representative inclusive path forward to steer Haiti towards

the direction of sustainable democracy. We are hopeful that your administration will take meaningful steps to substantively engage with these groups.

Additionally, we are deeply concerned that, under the Henry government, there continues to be little progress in the investigation of the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse that took place last July and that those investigating the case in Haiti have faced threats and intimidation. It is crucial that the intellectual authors and those directly involved in President Moïse's assassination be held accountable to provide clarity and best help Haiti resolve its political crisis. As members of Congress, we urge your administration to take the necessary steps to keep us apprised of the investigation and to thoroughly examine and disclose any roles that American citizens or organizations may have played in the assassination, including any individual who has previously worked as an informant for the United States.

In closing, we humbly request that your administration allow the people of Haiti to determine their own political destiny and withdraw support from the de facto government; assist actors working to investigate the assassination and to address insecurity and other institutional challenges; and support free, fair, transparent, and inclusive elections in Haiti only after security and political conditions allow, as determined by the Haitian people. Policies coming out of Washington must be consistent with the will of the Haitian people, democratic ideals, and the rule of law.

Sincerely,



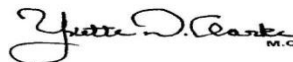
Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick (FL-20)
Member of Congress



Andy Levin (MI-9)
Member of Congress



Hakeem Jeffries (NY-8)
Member of Congress



Yvette Clarke (NY-9)
Member of Congress



Val Demings (FL-10)
Member of Congress



Mondaire Jones (NY-17)
Member of Congress



Dwight Evans (PA-3)
Member of Congress

Ayanna Pressley (MA-7)
Member of Congress

CC:

Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken

U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator Samantha Power

United States Trade Representative Katherine Tai

Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Brian A. Nichols