

Restoring the economical and social stability in Haiti

The Economic and Social Committee (ECOSOC)

Written by: Alexandre Boudier

Key terms

Civilian: A civilian can typically be described as a person who is not a member of the police or armed forces.

Humanitarian aid: Humanitarian aid is assistance that is used to relieve suffering during emergency situations. It is usually only temporary assistance until it is replaced by long term assistance provided by institutions and governments for those in need.

UN peacekeepers: UN peacekeepers provide security and the political and peacebuilding support to help countries make the difficult, early transition from conflict to peace.

Economic stability: A term used to describe the financial system of a nation that displays only minor fluctuations in output growth and exhibits a consistently low inflation rate. Economic stability is usually seen as a desirable state for a developed country that is often encouraged by the policies and actions of its central bank.

Introduction

Currently facing the destructive effects of climate change and natural disasters, Haiti is experiencing one of the largest socio-economic crises in recent history. These challenges find their origins within the insufficient structural stability of the nation, and the lack of a strong, transparent and unified political system. Over the last 15 years the situation has worsened, and humanitarian aid has become more and more necessary in order to help a nation which is the poorest in the western hemisphere.

General Overview

Part 1: The effects of natural disasters on the economical and social stability of Haiti

The instability in Haiti can be in great part linked back to natural disasters that have occurred in the country over the past few years. As a nation of the Caribbean, Haiti is prone to hurricanes and earthquakes. The 2010 7.0 magnitude earthquake was one of the pivotal points in the stability of the country, claiming an estimated 220 000 lives and leaving the capital, Port-au-Prince, and other major cities devastated. This was not only a humanitarian crisis, but it also greatly impacted the economy of the country, with considerable damage to infrastructure in cities. Many crops were destroyed, causing massive rates of unemployment within the agricultural sector and displacement of population from rural to urban areas. It is estimated that the earthquake caused around US\$7.8 billion of damage, which is equivalent to more than 120% of Haiti's GDP in 2009, one year before the disaster. Since then, other earthquakes have been recorded in Haiti, a more recent example being the 2021 7.2 magnitude earthquake that caused the death of 2 200 people and the destruction of around 13 000 homes.

However, earthquakes are not the only natural disasters the country has to face. Hurricanes,

like in many other Caribbean nations, are particularly violent and have also deeply affected Haiti. Over the past 30 years, Haiti has been hit by six hurricanes affecting the West and South regions the most. The capital Port-au-Prince is also prone to flooding, and the poor construction of houses makes it harder for the authorities to contain the damage done to the civilians and to the economy. High deforestation rates, coupled with intense rainfall, have made landslides a common sight and particularly dangerous in the steep lands of the center of the country. Overall, these disasters have made it almost impossible for Haiti to recover a stable economy and build a structured state. Humanitarian aid is desperately needed in order to help the millions who are suffering the consequences of these disasters. These natural disasters are also expected to double in force and destruction, as climate change has made hurricanes, floods and landslides more frequent than ever creating ever more challenges for the nation.

Part 2: Political and security instability impacts on the social and economical stability of Haiti

Another major issue affecting the stability of Haiti is the increase in crime and gangs and the instability of the political system which has left Haiti without a centralized and performing government. On the 7th of July 2021 at 01:00 local time, the president of Haiti Jovenel Moise was shot dead in his private residence. His wife also got shot but survived the attack. The attackers went on the loose however some of them were caught. Ariel Henry was declared the new President of Haiti. This incident raises a bigger issue within the country which is the lack of security not only for top officials but also for the citizens. Illegal gangs have generated massive insecurity especially in Port-au-Prince, the capital. The number of gangs has also increased exponentially, according to the Humans Rights Defense Network, there were 90 gangs spread around the country in 2021. As of 2022, the number has risen to 150, including 92 gangs in Port-au-Prince. This rise in gang violence can be partly explained due to the increase in poverty, and the lack of security services from the government. One of the most affected areas is the neighborhood of Cité Soleil, where many gangs fight to gain control of this strategic part of the capital. According to a report from the United Nations, over 471 people were killed, injured or unaccounted for between the 8 and 17th of July 2022. The gangs have been known commit serious incidents of sexual violences against girls and women, but also to recruit children. Around 3,000 people have fled their homes, including hundreds of unaccompanied children, while at least 140 houses have been destroyed or burnt down only in Cité Soleil. To conclude, the increase of crime, insecurity and gang violence has significantly impacted the lives of many civilians across the country and has left thousands without food, shelter or even a safe place to stay.

Major parties involved

The Dominican Republic

As a close neighbor to Haiti sharing a border stretching from the Caribbean Sea to the Atlantic, the Dominican Republic has always played a major role in the events happening in Haiti. After the 2010 earthquake, the Dominican Republic was the first nation to send humanitarian aid, providing food, medicine and safety equipment. However, relations between the two nations have always been tense. Years of conflict, border disputes, ethnic and cultural division have maintained difficult relations between the two countries. The economies of the two countries are also drastically different, the Dominican Republic being one of the leading countries in the Caribbean in terms of development and Haiti one of the poorest nations in the world. This has created a corridor of migration for Haitians wishing to lift themselves up from poverty. As of

2022, the president of the Dominican Republic has inaugurated the first part of a wall the nation intends to build on the 302 kilometers border that separates the country from Haiti.

The United States of America

The USA and Haiti have always had close ties. Due to the closeness of the two nations, many Haitians have tried to emigrate in the USA creating a large diaspora, especially in the state of Florida. The USA has also provided over US\$5.1 billion in assistance to Haiti since the 2010 earthquake. This aid was specifically focused on improving living conditions for workers in the agricultural sector, developing training for the police force and providing medical assistance to hospitals. However, the USA have also been known to send haitian migrants back to their home country, and have become stricter in the policies of entry for haitian nationals wishing to leave.

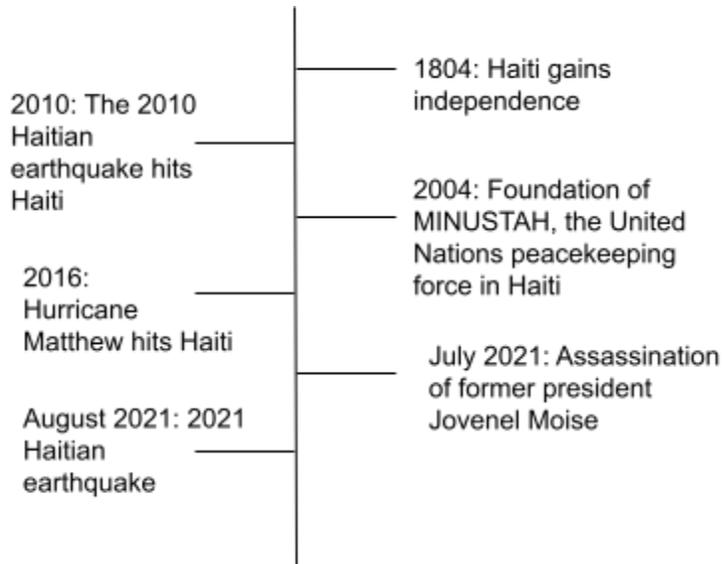
World bank

The World Bank is also a major player in the crisis in Haiti, as it has taken many initiatives to help the haitian economy grow, notably by initiating projects with the aim of making electricity accessible for all, creating schools, hospitals and helping many Haitians find jobs. The World Bank has also taken action to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within the population, and help make vaccines accessible for all which was a major issue during the multiple COVID-19 outbreaks in the country.

European Union (EU)

The European Union is a major player in the current state of Haiti. Not only does it have historic ties with the country, as Haiti used to be a French colony, it has been actively participating in the constructions of schools, hospitals and shelters, and has provided humanitarian relief after the successive hurricanes and earthquakes that have deeply affected the country. The EU has also been involved in the creation of a fairer, genuine and effective government system in cooperation with NGOs around the nation. They have created the large State Building Contract which aims at underpinning the government's effort in improving its public finance management and state reform. This project was almost entirely funded by the EU, which invested around 157 million € in order to create a more transparent and open fiscal administration in the country. EU member states such as France and the UK have also provided direct humanitarian aid, with France actively participating in the earthquake relief in 2010 and even sending its military from their bases in the Antilles, most notably with the frigate *Germinal*.

Timeline of events



Possible solutions

Possible solutions to restoring the political and social stability in Haiti include encouraging member states to further deploy humanitarian aid in order to help the people of Haiti recover from the current crisis they are facing. This aid could comprise everything from building isolated shelters resistant to hurricanes to providing fresh food and water to the most needy. It is crucial that nations call for international cooperation in order to help Haiti. Not only will this help the desperate situation many civilians are finding themselves in, it could possibly be a starting point to the growth of the economy.

It is also important to invest in the security of the people of Haiti, which could also be done by encouraging the structuring of a justice system able to conduct trials where major gang leaders could be subjected to a judiciary response whereas today the country lacks proper judiciary procedure for criminals who are often let loose. Finally, it is important to fight corruption in the country, and call out the unfair conduct of elections and the conduct of prominent politicians, who often receive bribes and have strong ties with prominent armed gangs. Corruption also plays a major role in maintaining inequality in Haiti and hindering the sustainable development of the economy.

Bibliography

Works Cited

10 January 2020

By Iolanda Fresnillo, [\\$\({'#authors'}\).html\({'#authors'}\).html\(\).trim\(\).substring\(0. "Haiti 10 Years after the Earthquake: The Fight for Social and Economic Justice Continues."](#)

Eurodad, 10 Jan. 2020,

https://www.eurodad.org/10_years_haiti#:~:text=More%20than%201.5%20million%20people.of%20the%20GDP%20of%202009.

Basile, Vincent M. "The Causes and Effects of the 2010 Haiti Earthquake." *ArcGIS StoryMaps*, Esri, 14 May 2021, <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/156382f2727c40a28db502817f7d18f3>.

"Civilian." *Cambridge Dictionary*, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/civilian>.

"Earthquake in Haiti: France Is Providing Assistance (20 August 2021) - Haiti." *ReliefWeb*, 25 Aug. 2021, <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/earthquake-haiti-france-providing-assistance-20-august-2021>.

"Earthquake of August 14, 2021 in Haiti: Impact of Our Actions! - Haiti." *ReliefWeb*, 12 Aug. 2022, <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/earthquake-august-14-2021-haiti-impact-our-action>.

"Economic Stability." ESCWA, <https://www.unescwa.org/sd-glossary/economic-stability>.

"Haiti." *Global Humanitarian Overview*, <https://gho.unocha.org/haiti>.

"Haiti." *World Bank*, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/haiti>.

"Haiti: A Path to Stability for a Nation in Shock." *Crisis Group*, 19 Oct. 2021, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/latin-america-caribbean/haiti/b44-haiti-path-stability-nation-shock>.

"Haiti's Spiraling Gang Violence Threatens to Cut off Capital and Hamper Earthquake Recovery Efforts - Haiti." *ReliefWeb*, 12 Aug. 2022, <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/haitis-spiraling-gang-violence-threatens-cut-capital-and-hamper-earthquake-recovery-efforts>.

"Humanitarian Aid: 5 Things You Should Know." *Concern Worldwide*, 11 July 2022, <https://www.concernusa.org/story/humanitarian-aid-explained/>.

"U.S. Relations with Haiti - United States Department of State." *U.S. Department of State*, U.S. Department of State, 3 Jan. 2022, <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-haiti/>.

Un Delivers Aid Directly to Haitians Caught up in Gang Violence - Un News. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/07/1123222>.

"Un Marks Anniversary of Devastating 2010 Haiti Earthquake | | 1UN News." *United Nations*, United Nations, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/01/1109632#:~:text=On%2012%20January%202010%2C%20a,%2C%20known%20as%20MINUSTAH%2C%20collapsed>.

"What Is Peacekeeping." *United Nations*, United Nations, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/what-is-peacekeeping>.

Wyss, Jim. "Migrants Fleeing Haiti Will Find Dominican Republic's Doors Closed." *Bloomberg.com*, Bloomberg, 28 Sept. 2022, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2022-09-28/dominican-republic-builds-102-mile-wall-to-block-haitian-migrants?leadSource=uverify+wall>.

"EU Projects with Haiti ." *EU Projects with Haiti | EEAS Website*, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/haiti/eu-projects-haiti_en?s=142#:~:text=The%20EU%20is%20investing%20in.the%20field%20of%20child%20labour.

Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères. "Earthquake in Haiti: France Is Providing Assistance (20 Aug. 21)." *France Diplomacy - Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs*, [https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/haiti/news/article/earthquake-in-haiti-france-is-providing-assistance-20-aug-21#:~:text=Earthquake%20in%20Haiti%3A%20France%20is%20providing%20assistance%20\(20%20August%202021\)&text=The%207.2%20magnitude%20earthquake%20that,alongside%20Haiti%20and%20its%20people.](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/haiti/news/article/earthquake-in-haiti-france-is-providing-assistance-20-aug-21#:~:text=Earthquake%20in%20Haiti%3A%20France%20is%20providing%20assistance%20(20%20August%202021)&text=The%207.2%20magnitude%20earthquake%20that,alongside%20Haiti%20and%20its%20people.)