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Haiti

Three years since its initial deployment, the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) was able to bring a measure of stability to the long-troubled island. With enhanced legitimacy found in support from the 2006-elected government, in 2007 MINUSTAH, alongside the fledgling Haitian National Police (HNP), set out on a large-scale and robust security campaign against the violent gangs who had obstructed efforts toward Haitian peace and development. The resultant gains led the Security Council to approve a significant reconfiguration of MINUSTAH's activities and composition in October 2007. Though the mission's mandate was simultaneously extended until October 2008, its work is far from complete, given the poor state of Haiti's governance structures and security sector.

Background

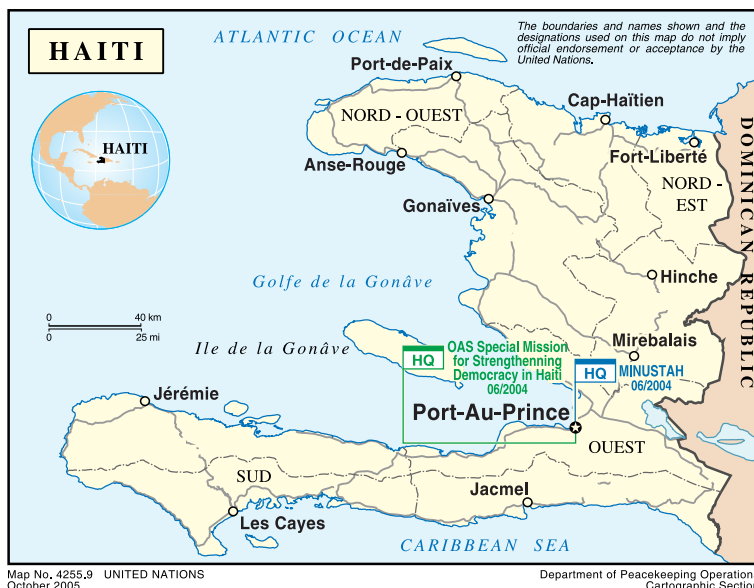
Haiti descended into violent disorder after President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was ousted in

a military coup in 1991. In response, the Security Council sent the UN Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) to establish an effective police force in the country. However, due to noncooperation by the Haitian military regime, UNMIH could not be fully deployed. In July 1994, the Security Council authorized deployment of a 20,000-strong multinational force to ensure the return of legitimate Haitian authorities and promote a stable return to civilian rule. From 1994 to 2001, Haiti witnessed a succession of UN peacekeeping missions, including the UN Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH), the UN Transition Mission in Haiti (UNTMIH), and the UN Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH).

Presidential and parliamentary elections in 2000 saw President Aristide and his Fanmi Lavalas party victorious after a turnout of about 10 percent of voters. The opposition contested the results, and in late 2003 called for Aristide's resignation. In February 2004, armed conflict broke out, with insurgents quickly taking control of the northern part of the country, forcing Aristide to flee.

The Security Council authorized deployment of a US-led multinational interim force, tasked with supporting local police, facilitating humanitarian aid, and promoting the protection of human rights and rule of law. MINUSTAH replaced the interim force in 2004 and oversaw the establishment of a transitional government. MINUSTAH is mandated to maintain security; facilitate the creation of a stable government; disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate all armed groups; and reform the police and judiciary.

Since deployment, MINUSTAH has faced a precarious security situation, fueled by a combination of endemic poverty and violence by gangs and former members of Haiti's military



(the ex-FAd'H). While the mission's mandate includes oversight and support for democratic elections, the high level of violence and the transitional administration's unwillingness to allow former president Aristide's Lavalas party a relevant role in governing militated against legitimate political processes in MINUSTAH's first years.

A dramatic rise in violence during 2005 prompted the Security Council to adopt Resolution 1608, which approved an increase in MINUSTAH's military and police components from 6,700 and 1,622 to 7,500 and 1,897, respectively, and requested that the Secretary-General begin planning a drawdown scheme for MINUSTAH's forces to follow planned elections, commensurate with the situation on the ground. With enhanced force numbers, MINUSTAH began launching operations against groups of gangs and bandits in the Cité Soleil slum of Port-au-Prince. These operations were successful in quickly quelling violent outbreaks, but not in eradicating the nucleus of the gangs. Meanwhile, MINUSTAH's traditional disarmament program proved inappropriate for the circumstances on the ground, yielding slow progress; thus the streets remained flooded with weapons.

MINUSTAH oversaw delayed elections in February 2006, bringing former Aristide ally René Préval to the presidency. The elections were followed by a brief lull in violence, but in the context of Haiti's widespread poverty, unemployment, and corruption-ridden government, the security situation quickly backslid. By July 2006, steady gang violence in Port-au-Prince and the surrounding areas reached its height with a massacre in the Martissant slum of Port-au-Prince, where wanton murders and widespread kidnappings by armed gangs prevailed.

Developments 2007

With persistent instability threatening consolidation of the modest gains after the elections, MINUSTAH, alongside the growing HNP, began operations at the end of 2006 aimed at rooting out the gangs of the Port-au-Prince slums. These operations, which continued into

UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH)

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| • Authorization Date | 30 April 2004 (UNSC Res. 1542) |
| • Start Date | 1 June 2004 |
| • SRSG and Head of Mission | Hédi Annabi (Tunisia) |
| • Force Commander | Major-General Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz (Brazil) |
| • Police Commissioner | Mamadou Mountaga Diallo (Guinea) |
| • Budget | \$535.4 million (1 July 2007–30 June 2008) |
| • Strength as of 31 October 2007 | Troops: 7,060 Police: 1,829 International Civilian Staff: 494 Local Civilian Staff: 1,122 UN Volunteers: 194 |

For detailed mission information see p. 211.

the first half of 2007, were supported by the legitimacy of the elected government when Préval issued gang members an ultimatum: disarm peacefully or be forced to do so by MINUSTAH and the HNP. Between December 2006 and March 2007, MINUSTAH and the HNP launched nineteen operations in the notoriously violent Cité Soleil and Martissant slums, removing gang leaders from positions of power and installing the state's authority.

Unlike the previous attempts to address the gangs, the security operations of 2007 were driven by reliable local intelligence and were provided with the largest force strength in MINUSTAH's history. The operations were initially met with fierce armed resistance, though this dissipated as inroads were made into the gang havens. Capitalizing on this success, and with an eye toward sustaining the hard-won stability, MINUSTAH, together with the HNP, stepped up the presence and frequency of their joint police patrols in the cleared areas, established satellite police headquarters in Martissant, and symbolically transformed former gang-control centers into medical clinics. By July, 850 gang members had been arrested and their figureheads removed.

Against the backdrop of the improved security situation, in July 2007 MINUSTAH

conducted a detailed threat assessment that, with the gang violence under control, identified three areas that could impede MINUSTAH's work, and more importantly, further progress in Haiti. Each of these areas—threats of civil unrest, renewed armed conflict, and the thriving smuggling and drug trades—reflected longer-term challenges and the necessity for change in MINUSTAH's operational focus to address the root causes of Haiti's persistent conflict.

Despite these relative successes, the Haitian government still suffers from weak institutions that are further limited by a lack of human, financial, and material resources. Still, during 2007, MINUSTAH continued to support the government by coordinating international assistance efforts, providing support for efforts to organize the parliament, and developing links between local and state political actors.

Politically, the Préval government enjoyed a high level of public support throughout 2007, reinforced by the successful antigang operations. Préval's approach continues to be inclusive and supportive of decentralization. In April, municipal elections were held with the support of MINUSTAH, installing mayors in Haiti's 140

municipalities. With stability on the rise, in May Préval announced a government-wide war on corruption and in June, with MINUSTAH's support, the HNP seized a large shipment of narcotics, arresting twelve people involved, half of whom were members of the HNP.

MINUSTAH's continued efforts to develop Haiti's vital rule-of-law institutions saw some progress during the year. At the end of August 2007, some 7,728 HNP officers were active on patrol, and an additional 633 officers in the police academy were anticipated to join the force by the end of the year. Efforts to build a maritime component of the HNP are also under way, with MINUSTAH's assistance. Vetting of HNP officers began in January 2007 with a review of 220 officers by HNP-MINUSTAH teams, and background checks on recruits resulting in the dismissal of 26 potential officers by September 2007. The ability of the HNP to work without MINUSTAH's assistance remains unclear, as the force suffers from an enormous skill deficit and does not have the capacity to patrol outside Port-au-Prince, and because only a little more than half of the 14,000 police required to patrol Haiti are active.

Provision of technical advice and support to the development and reform of Haiti's judicial system is another area that saw progress with MINUSTAH's support. And while still under consideration, two bills submitted by the minister of justice and public security, on the status of magistrates and the Superior Council, which were adopted by the Senate, demonstrate significant progress toward beginning concerted judicial reform and providing necessary elements to fight corruption and establish a professional judiciary.

During August 2007, President Préval urged MINUSTAH to continue its support to Haiti, but also requested that it reorient its focus away from security matters and toward building Haitian state institutions and providing support for border control. The Secretary-General endorsed this request in his August 2007 report on MINUSTAH and recommended that



minustah.org/Marco Dormino

MINUSTAH Police instructs a Haitian National Police Academy cadet, Port-au-Prince 5 September 2007.

Box 4.10.1 Colombia

The Organization of American States (OAS) continued to operate its Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia (known by its Spanish acronym, MAPP) throughout 2007. First deployed in 2004, MAPP is mandated to help verify the demobilization of the right-wing United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC). While the mission has achieved considerable success in its demobilization efforts—over 30,000 paramilitaries and some 18,000 weapons had been demobilized and surrendered by early 2007—in the second half of 2007 the OAS strongly warned that, if this process is not followed by a strong reintegration process, the demobilized ex-combatants may revert to violence, dragging Colombia back into widespread conflict.

Following a critical assessment of MAPP's performance by the OAS in late

2005, and growing criticism from Colombian nongovernmental organizations that the mission lacked the resources to go beyond basic demobilization verification, MAPP received enhanced funding, allowing it to grow from forty-four civilian staff in 2005 to eighty-three by the end of 2006. The enhanced mission strength yielded a heightened MAPP presence and activity in the field, bringing the demobilization process of the mission's mandate near completion in the first half of 2007.

In his ninth quarterly report to the Permanent Council on MAPP, OAS Secretary-General José Miguel Insulza commended the mission and Colombia for their benchmark progress in demobilizing the AUC, but also warned of the immense challenges that will result from this successful phase. Focusing largely on evidence collected by MAPP, Insulza stressed

that the reintegration process had progressed at an alarmingly slow rate, resulting in the regrouping and rearming of demobilized combatants into new armed groups and gangs, and thus posing a serious threat to the peace process as a whole. Observations from MAPP's regional offices and mobile teams showed that the demobilized are not only relapsing into their violent past, but also operating in increasingly complex and clandestine frameworks.

The difficulties experienced in the reintegration process have exposed weaknesses in Colombia's institutions and in MAPP's ability to mount a successful reintegration program. The Colombian authorities and the international community therefore need to increase their efforts to address the question of reintegration if the modest gains registered through the demobilization efforts are to be sustained.

the Security Council maintain MINUSTAH's initial mandate, but approve the reorientation of the mission commensurate with realities on the ground and downsize and enhance the mission's troop and police components respectively. On 15 October, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1780, authorizing MINUSTAH's reorientation.

Despite these positive developments, in November 2007 MINUSTAH's activity was marred by a sexual exploitation scandal allegedly involving Sri Lankan peacekeepers. Following a subsequent UN investigation, 108 of Sri Lanka's 950 peacekeepers were repatriated. Among

those repatriated was the battalion's second in command.

The peace that has been established in Haiti is a credit to MINUSTAH's work over the past three years, but it is the tenuous nature of this peace that will present new challenges to the mission and its ability to balance the maintenance of security while developing institutions to prevent Haiti from relapsing to its turbulent past. While the stabilization of Haiti during 2007 made remarkable progress, successful peacebuilding efforts will require sustained commitment by the international community.