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Sent: Wednesday, January 27, 2021 1:17 PM
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Subject: Interview with Haitian Ambassador

Tom,

As per your request, Bio on the Ambassador, and information on the Constitutional Referendum.

As per now we are scheduled for an interview at 4 PM on Friday, on Miami Beach

Ambassador Bocchit Edmond's Biography

His Excellency Ambassador Bocchit Edmond, is a diplomat of 29 years who is now serving in his new role as the Ambassador of the Republic of Haiti in the United States, and the Chargé d'Affaires, a.i. at the Permanent Mission of Haiti to the OAS.

The Ambassador started his tremendous career as an Attaché in 1990 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1993, he was promoted to First Secretary at the very same Ministry he led during his tenure as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship. Simultaneously, he was the Minister of Tourism and Creative Industries, then Counselor in 1996. He later worked as a Member of the Presidential Committee, facilitating Haiti's membership at the CARICOM, then as a Counselor at the Embassy of Haiti in Kingston, Jamaica from 2001 to 2003.

In 2003, he became the Chargé d'Affaires of Haiti in Panama and Central America and Colombia, a position he held until 2011. In January 2012, he was nominated Deputy Permanent Representative of Haiti to the OAS for two years before becoming Permanent Representative in 2014. In 2016, he was transferred to the Haitian Embassy in London as the Head of that diplomatic Mission until he was appointed as Foreign Affairs Minister in September 2018 and Minister of Tourism and Creative Industries from September 2019, positions held until March 2020.

His Excellency Ambassador Bocchit EDMOND holds a Bachelor's Degree in legal studies from the State University of Haiti and is a member of the bar of Port-au-Prince. He also studied International Relations at OXFORD University in England. He obtained a Master's Degree in International Relations Studies at the same Ivy League University. The Diplomat also holds a second Master's Degree in International Trade Arbitration with the Latin-American University of International Commerce in Panama and Chili.

He attended several seminars on National Security and Negotiations in 2011 in Israel and on International Relations Studies in 1996 and 1997. The Ambassador speaks Haitian Creole, French, Spanish, and English.

Constitutional Referendum

- President Moise is proposing constitutional reforms designed to break the deadlock which has plagued Haitian politics since the return of democracy in 1987.
- The revised constitution is being drafted by an independent commission and will be put to the public to vote in a national referendum.
- The proposed changes would create balance among the government branches, including the executive branch, ahead of the next President's term. Without balance there can be no checks.
- Another flaw in the current system is that, despite being appointed by popular vote, the President has a very limited role in the day-to-day governing of the country. The Prime Minister, who is head of government and approved by parliament rather than the public directly, has a much larger role.
- President Moise has called for the Haitian diaspora to play a bigger role in the country's politics.
- The current constitution – and the political structures it sets out – have led to cyclical deadlock, with the smallest minority in parliament able to block anything getting done, and near continuous political instability in the country.
- It is widely accepted by international partners and inside Haiti that a new constitution is needed to set Haiti on a path to progress. The United Nations and the Organization of American States have both been supportive, so has the President of the Dominican Republic.
- The urgency of moving on this now is the momentum around it. This change has been direly needed for many years, but a recent poll shows 87% of Haitian public supports the constitutional reform now.

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