Prime Minister Claude Joseph is the Acting President of Haiti

Will Lead Country Through the Scheduled September Elections

Haitian Constitution – Prime Minister Claude Joseph legally assumed the responsibility of Acting President in accordance with Article 149 of the 1987 Constitution on Wednesday, July 7th. Article 149 states, "in the event of the vacancy of the Presidency of the Republic either by resignation, dismissal or in the event of duly established permanent physical or mental incapacity, the Council of Ministers, under the Presidency of the Prime Minister, exercises the Executive Power until the election of another President."

Article 149 adds that "the ballot for the election of the new President of the Republic for the time remaining to run takes place at least sixty (60) days and one hundred and twenty (120) days at most after the opening of the vacancy, in accordance with the Constitution and the electoral law." Prime Minister Joseph and the Council of Ministers will shepherd Haiti to a national election within this 60 to 120 day-timeline.

Presidential and parliamentary elections will be held in September 2021 and, if necessary, run-off elections will be held in November 2021. This timeline closely tracks with the elections schedule President Moise had already planned and set in motion for September 26th, and therefore should place no further undue burden.

U.S. State Department – On Wednesday, July 7th, U.S. Secretary of State Tony Blinken spoke with Prime Minister Claude Joseph to extend his condolences to President Jovenel Moise's family and the Haitian people, wish First Lady Martine Moise a full and speedy recovery, and reaffirm the U.S.'s commitment to Haiti.[1] During a press conference the same day, State Department Spokesperson Ned Price told reporters Prime Minister Claude Joseph had assumed charge and that the U.S. government was in regular contact with Prime Minister Joseph. Price stated that "the United States calls on all political parties, civil society groups, and stakeholders to echo what we've heard from Acting Prime Minister Claude Joseph's call for calm and to work together in the wake of this tragedy to ensure peace and democratic governance."[2] Price also tweeted a similar message from his official account: "The United States calls on all political parties, civil society groups, and stakeholders to echo Acting Prime Minister @claudejoseph03's call for calm and to work together in the wake of this tragedy to ensure peace and democratic governance in Haiti."[3]

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[1] Ned Price, "Secretary Blinken's Call with Acting Haitian Prime Minister Joseph," U.S. State Department, July 7, 2021, https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinkens-call-with-acting-haitian-prime-minister-joseph/
[2] Ned Price, "Department Press Briefing – July 7, 2021," U.S. State Department, July 7, 2021, https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-july-7-2021/
[3] Ned Price, Twitter, July 7, 2021, https://twitter.com/StateDeptSpox/status/1412863152484651019

United Nations – On Thursday, July 8th, UN Special Representative to Haiti Helen La Lime, "acknowledged the legitimacy of Prime Minister Claude Joseph to lead the Caribbean nation, following the 'cowardly' assassination of President Jovenel Moise on Wednesday, and welcomed his government's commitment to hold national elections later this year."[4]

White House – On Monday, July 12th, White House National Security Council Spokesperson Emily Horne issued a statement providing an update about the U.S. interagency delegation to Haiti which met with Prime Minister Joseph.[5]

Addendum

The following is a readout of Secretary Blinken's phone with Haitian Prime Minister Joseph on Wednesday, July 7th.[6]

★ ★ ★

Secretary Blinken's Call with Acting Haitian Prime Minister Joseph

READOUT

OFFICE OF THE SPOKESPERSON

JULY 7, 2021

Share

The following is attributable to Spokesperson Ned Price:

Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken spoke with Acting Haitian Prime Minister Claude Joseph today. Secretary Blinken extended condolences to the family and loved ones of President Moïse and to the people of Haiti. The Secretary also expressed the United States' wishes for First Lady Martine Moïse's recovery. Secretary Blinken reiterated the United States' continued commitment to work with the Government of Haiti in support of the Haitian people and democratic governance, peace, and security.

[4] UN News, "Top UN Haiti envoy hails commitment to hold new elections," United Nations, July 8, 2021, https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/07/1095542

[5] Emily Horne, "Statement by NSC Spokesperson Emily Horne on U.S. Government Delegation to Haiti," White House, July 12, 2021, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/07/12/statement-by-nsc-spokesperson-emily-horne-on-u-s-government-delegation-to-haiti/

[6] Ned Price, "Secretary Blinken's Call with Acting Haitian Prime Minister Joseph," U.S. State Department, July 7, 2021, https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinkens-call-with-acting-haitian-prime-minister-joseph/

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The following exchanges are three excerpts of State Department Spokesperson Ned Price's comments on Haiti to reporters on Wednesday, July 7th.[7]

Except 1:

MR PRICE: I just want to make sure everyone is paying attention.

I obviously want to stop – start with the situation in Haiti. The United States strongly condemns, as you heard from President Biden earlier today, the assassination of President Jovenel Moise and the attack on First Lady Martine Moise in Haiti. We extend our deepest condolences to President Moise's family and his loved ones and to the people of Haiti in the midst of this tragedy.

Those who seek to accomplish their political goals through violence and by subverting the rule of law will not succeed in thwarting the Haitian people and their desire for a better – for a brighter future. We urge Haitian authorities to bring those responsible to justice. The United States calls on all political parties, civil society groups, and stakeholders to echo what we've heard from Acting Prime Minister Claude Joseph's call for calm and to work together in the wake of this tragedy to ensure peace and democratic governance.

Excerpt 2:

MR PRICE: There is – Acting Prime Minister Claude Joseph has assumed charge. What we know and what we will continue to do is to preserve Haiti's democratic institutions. We know that by preserving Haiti's democratic institutions, that is key to restoring peace. At this time, we don't have any updates to announce in terms of our assistance, but I can assure you that our partnership with the Haitian people and with their elected government will continue. As you know, that partnership has taken many forms in recent months; in, of course, recent years. In January of this year we announced 75.5 million for – in support for a wide range of issues, and that includes democratic governance, health, education, agricultural development, strengthening pre-election activities through the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening program.

Excerpt 3:

MR PRICE: — Haiti is a partner, and that is how we will treat this relationship. It is how we have treated Haiti, it is how we will going forward. We would echo what we have heard from the acting prime minister, Claude Joseph, in his calls for calm, his calls for the Haitian people to work together to ensure peace, to ensure democratic government. The United States has and will continue to stand by to provide assistance to the Haitian people.

Humeyra.

QUESTION: So on Haiti, the ambassador told us that they – he has been in touch with the State Department and a number of different agencies in U.S. Government. Can you at least say – you just said that you can't give an update on the U.S. assistance, but can you at least say perhaps a new package is being formed and you guys are working on something new on top of these quite little numbers – $5 million, $3 million – that you've just mentioned?

MR PRICE: $75.5 million.

QUESTION: Okay. I missed that, sorry.

MR PRICE: We have been in regular contact with the acting prime minister, Claude Joseph. We are prepared to respond to requests for assistance. Our ambassador to Haiti, Ambassador Sison, has been in regular contact with a range of Haitian officials. She has spoken to the acting director general of the Haitian National Police. Of course, Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield at the UN this morning spoke to Haiti's permanent representative to the UN. We have been, as I said before, in regular contact.

[7] Ned Price, "Department Press Briefing – July 7, 2021," U.S. State Department, July 7, 2021, https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-july-7-2021/

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State Department Spokesperson Ned Price reiterated Prime Minister Joseph's calls for calm in tweet from Wednesday, July 7th.[8]

Julie Chung Retweeted

Ned Price
@StateDeptSpox
United States government official

The United States calls on all political parties, civil society groups, and stakeholders to echo Acting Prime Minister @claudejoseph03's call for calm and to work together in the wake of this tragedy to ensure peace and democratic governance in Haiti.

President Biden @POTUS · Jul 7
United States government official
We are shocked and saddened to hear of the horrific assassination of President Jovenel Moïse and the attack on First Lady Martine Moïse of Haiti. We condemn this heinous act — and stand ready to assist as we continue to work for a safe and secure Haiti.

3:56 PM · Jul 7, 2021 · Twitter Web App

36 Retweets **4** Quote Tweets **74** Likes

[8] Ned Price, Twitter, July 7, 2021, https://twitter.com/StateDeptSpox/status/1412863152484651019

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On Monday, July 12th White House National Security Spokesperson Emily Horne issued the following statement.[9]

BRIEFING ROOM

Statement by NSC Spokesperson Emily Horne on U.S. Government Delegation to Haiti

JULY 12, 2021 • STATEMENTS AND RELEASES

On July 11, a United States interagency delegation with representatives from the Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, Department of State, and National Security Council traveled to Haiti in response to the Haitian government's request for security and investigative assistance following the July 7 assassination of Haitian President Jovenel Moïse. The delegation reviewed the security of critical infrastructure with Haitian government officials and met with the Haitian National Police, who are leading the investigation into the assassination. The delegation also met with Acting Prime Minister Claude Joseph and Prime Minister-Designate Ariel Henry in a joint meeting, as well as Senate President Joseph Lambert, to encourage open and constructive dialogue to reach a political accord that can enable the country to hold free and fair elections. In all their meetings the delegation committed to supporting the Haitian government as it seeks justice in this case and affirmed the United States' support for the people of Haiti in this challenging time. The United States stands with Haiti in becoming a safer, more democratic country.

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[9] Emily Horne, "Statement by NSC Spokesperson Emily Horne on U.S. Government Delegation to Haiti," White House, July 12, 2021, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/07/12/statement-by-nsc-spokesperson-emily-horne-on-u-s-government-delegation-to-haiti/

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