

January 20, 2020

Dear Member of Congress:

As you are aware, the escalating political crisis in Haiti has led the country into a dire state of social and economic unrest. Many experts predict a complete breakdown of all functioning institutions, which is expected to result in a refugee migration to the Florida shores in the summer and fall of 2020. One idea that has been proposed is the formation of the Haitian-American Congressional Caucus, which would allow members of Congress and the Haitian diaspora to address the most serious issues currently facing Haiti and thus potentially avoid a looming disaster.

There are four major issues that the Caucus and the Haitian diaspora should focus on:

1. Reestablishment of Haitian Democratic Process & Institutions – On January 13th, the Parliament became defunct and President Moïse began ruling by decree. This will be in violation of the Haitian Constitution and provide no system of checks and balances in a country already plagued by corruption. This situation is a direct result of the Moïse administration's inability to coordinate parliamentary elections in the fall of 2019, which would have allowed new members to take office in January 2020.

2. Reestablishment of Rule of Law – The only way to reestablish trust in the justice system is to show that no one is above the law—to include the political elite. The corruption surrounding the PetroCaribe funds (~\$4 billion) is a prime example of a situation that could have been avoided if the justice system worked as intended. A government investigation found that multiple members from the uppermost echelon of government, under the current and former administration, were involved in the corruption surrounding these funds, but none were prosecuted because the political elite control the justice system and operate with impunity.

3. Targeting of Political Opponents & Nationalization of Private Sector – The Haitian government has a long history of targeting political opponents and the current administration, under President Moïse, is no exception. Recently, the Vorbe family (who owns Sogener Energy and has provided power to the government for over a decade) was targeted because Dimitri Vorbe, a Sogener executive, became an extremely vocal opponent of President Moïse. He was placed under investigation, tried, and convicted, in absence, and his family's company was seized by order of the president. Additional court action is being taken against other members of the Vorbe family and Mrs. Preval (the former first lady of Haiti), who was a member of the company's board. Furthermore, President Moïse has directed justice officials to go after other vocal government opponents, including Dr. Reginald Boulos—a Haitian businessman, philanthropist, and avid opponent of President Moïse—and he has made threatening public statements about “small accidents” that may happen to anyone who stands in his way.

4. Halting the Use of Armed Criminal Gangs for Political Exploitation – For decades, the Haitian government has used armed gangs to intimidate, murder, and otherwise oppress dissidents and political opponents. Journalists, police officers, and political opponents who attempt to expose corruption in the government are either killed or forced to exile. An increasing number of human rights violations have been documented by the U.N. and other human rights organizations since 2018, with the November 2018 La Saline Massacre being the most significant. This massacre was clearly used as a political tool used by the Moise Administration to intimidate and disrupt participation in a planned PetroCaribe demonstration on November 18, 2018.

The actions of the Haitian government should be of grave concern to the U.S., as billions of taxpayer dollars has been expended to put Haiti on a successful path. The Haitian government's actions threaten democracy; the individual rights of Haitian citizens; and any progress made since the 2010 earthquake. These actions, coupled with President Moise's request for funding for the Haitian Army, could be used to foster in a new era of dictatorship in Haiti.

Thank you for your time and consideration in addressing these serious and potentially explosive crises in the Republic of Haiti. For Phase I, the Haitian-American Congressional Caucus, U.S. administration, and the international community must quickly form a united front to combat this corruption and help Haiti avoid a massive crisis later this year.

Dr. Reginald Boulos

Dr. Reginald Boulos is a Haitian medical doctor, entrepreneur, philanthropist, and politician. He is the founder and president of the RBoulos Group and Mouvement Troisième Voie.

Dr. Boulos earned a medical degree from the Faculté de Médecine de l'Université d'État d'Haïti in 1981, followed by a Master's in Public Health & Tropical Medicine from Tulane University in 1982. He also holds an Executive Certificate in Management and Leadership from MIT Sloan School of Management.

During his medical career, Dr. Boulos closely collaborated with Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore on numerous interdisciplinary medical research projects, to include measles, HIV, breastfeeding, and childhood immunization. While serving as an assistant professor for community health at the University of Baltimore over the course of several years, he contributed to more than 25 scientific articles which were published in medical journals.

Dr. Boulos eventually left the medical practice to begin a career in private business development. In 1996, he collaborated with investors to form the Intercontinental Bank S.A. and, as president of the bank, he negotiated the merger with one of Haiti's largest banks—Sogebank. In 2000, Dr. Boulos and his group purchased a failing automobile dealership and restructured it under the name of Autoplaza. Recently, through Auoplaza, RBoulos Group negotiated the acquisition of all shares of Universal Motors S.A., the Nissan brand dealer in Haiti. Autoplaza/Universal Motors S.A. Group is now the largest automotive group in Haiti.

In 2003, Dr. Boulos orchestrated the restructuring of one of Haiti's oldest daily newspapers—*Le Nouveau Matin*. He also founded the first food chain supermarket—Delimart—and membership-based food discount store—Megamart. In 2009, Dr. Boulos organized the purchase and renovation of a landmark hotel in Petion-Ville, Haiti—El Rancho Hotel. He also served as president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIH) of Haiti for two non-consecutive terms between 2005 and 2011. Under Dr. Boulos' leadership, the ten departmental chambers of commerce in Haiti were united into a single national chamber. In 2009, Dr. Boulos orchestrated the consolidation of Haiti's main business associations and large companies into an organization called the "Forum Économique du Secteur Privé," which he led until 2011. Between 2013 and 2015, he represented the business sector on the "Conseil Supérieur des Salaires."

Dr. Boulos is a long-standing champion of social improvement in Haiti. From 1982 to 1996, he served as Chair and General Manager of the Centers for Development and Health—a Haitian non-governmental organization. Since 1974, this organization (which was founded by his father) has provided services and integrated health care to the populations of disadvantaged areas in Haiti. Under Dr. Boulos' leadership, the Center developed and managed the most comprehensive health program in Haiti, providing health and social services to 550,000 people. Dr. Boulos is also the founder of Haiti's Child Health Institute—a research institution—and the Haitian Institute for Community Health—a training institution. In 1992, he founded the Fond de Parrainage National (FPN), which is now responsible for funding the education of over 20,000 elementary school children in Haiti. He continues to serve as Chairman of FPN.