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Report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution [2020/11](#), by which the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti was requested to submit a report on its work, with recommendations, as appropriate, to the Economic and Social Council for its consideration at its 2021 session. In fulfilment of its mandate, the Group held a series of virtual meetings with national authorities, representatives of international financial institutions and civil society, as well as representatives of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti and the United Nations country team. Some of the recommendations emerging from the discussions are reflected in the present report.

The Group acknowledges that Haiti continues to be affected by a complex situation, with poverty, social exclusion, economic inequalities, weak institutions, human rights violations, impunity and corruption being the causes of the current political crisis, while, at the same time, political fragility prevents the Government of Haiti from successfully setting the country on a sustainable development path. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) crisis, amid increasing insecurity, adds to the challenge, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities and political and social tensions.

The Group is concerned about the dire humanitarian situation, with 4.4 million people, or 40 per cent of the country's population, requiring humanitarian aid. The Group calls upon humanitarian, development and peace actors to ensure the complementarity of their actions to better reduce risks and vulnerabilities and, therefore, humanitarian needs, to help to address the root causes of the country's deep poverty and lack of development and to promote long-term sustainable development.

The Group underscores that sustained support from the international community, including the United Nations, international financial institutions and the bilateral development partners of Haiti, is required to help the country to effectively respond to and build back better from COVID-19, as well as to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Group calls for such efforts to be well coordinated and coherent so that impact can be maximized to the benefit of the Haitian people.



I. Introduction

A. Mandate and composition of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti

1. Initially created in 1999 and reactivated in 2004, the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti is chaired by Canada and composed of the Permanent Representatives of Argentina, the Bahamas, Belize, Benin, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, France, Haiti, Mexico, Peru, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States of America and Uruguay to the United Nations. On 19 April 2021, the Permanent Representative of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations submitted a request to the President of the Economic and Social Council to join the group. At the time of writing, the request was under consideration by the Council.

2. In its resolution [2020/11](#), the Economic and Social Council extended the mandate of the Group until the conclusion of the 2021 session, with the purpose of following closely and providing advice on the long-term development strategy of Haiti to promote socioeconomic recovery, reconstruction and stability, with particular attention to the need to ensure coherence and sustainability in international support for the country. The Council requested that the Group submit a report on its activities for the Council's consideration at its 2021 session.

3. The present report is the seventeenth submitted to the Economic and Social Council by the Group since its reactivation in 2004. It highlights the main findings of the Group following its meetings with the Haitian authorities and various stakeholders. Owing to travel restrictions related to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), the Group did not visit Washington, D.C., and Haiti during the reporting period. Instead, it undertook a series of virtual consultations, whose findings are included in the present report.

B. Activities of the Group during the reporting period

4. The Group continues to be concerned about the evolving situation in Haiti, characterized by increasing and disturbingly high humanitarian needs, the continuing spread of COVID-19, political instability, a worsening security situation and challenges to sustainable development. The Group organized several meetings to gain insight into the situation in the country through discussions with various national and international stakeholders. On 10 December 2020, the Group met with the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator for Haiti, as well as representatives of the World Health Organization, the Pan American Health Organization and the United Nations Development Programme, to discuss the socioeconomic and humanitarian situation and the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on the country. It was also an opportunity for the Group to determine its plan of activities for 2021.

5. On 10 March 2021, the Group participated in a humanitarian briefing on Haiti on the launch of the Humanitarian Response Plan for Haiti for 2021–2022. The briefing, organized by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, included presentations by the then Prime Minister and Minister of Planning and External Cooperation of Haiti, Joseph Jouthe, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator for Haiti, the Deputy Director-General of the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, Michael Köhler, and the National Coordinator of the Haitian Aid Society for the Blind, Michel A. Péan.

6. On 24 March 2021, the Group held a briefing with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti

(BINUH), the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator for Haiti, the Chief of Mission of the International Organization for Migration, Giuseppe Loprete, the Governor of the Bank of the Republic of Haiti, Jean Baden Dubois, and the Executive Director of the civil society organization Institute of Technology and Animation, Chenet Jean-Baptiste, to gain a better understanding of how the political and security situation in Haiti had affected the country's socioeconomic development.

7. On 13 April 2021, the Group met with representatives of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank to learn about the activities carried out by international financial institutions in Haiti during the reporting period, as well as to gain a better understanding of the prospects for the country's socioeconomic development in 2021 and the role that such institutions can play in helping to promote sustainable development.

8. On 27 April 2021, the Group held a meeting on development effectiveness with the participation of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator for Haiti, the President ad interim of the non-governmental organizations coordination mechanism, Nicolas Derenne, the National Coordinator of the External Aid Coordination Framework for the Development of Haiti, Marc Anglade, and the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme.

9. The Group expresses its appreciation to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, the Deputy-Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator for Haiti and the other members of BINUH and the United Nations country team for their continuous support for the Group's work.

II. Overview of the current situation in Haiti

A. Political deadlock and increasing insecurity

10. During the past three years, the situation in Haiti has been marked by political instability and social unrest. The President, Jovenel Moïse, has faced public protests, general strikes and *peyi lòk* (lockdown of the country) since his aborted attempt in 2018 to remove fuel subsidies, which led to a significant increase in fuel prices and contributed to deteriorating socioeconomic conditions, and since the publication in 2019 and 2020 by auditors of three reports on government mismanagement of funds from PetroCaribe petroleum import finance projects. Meanwhile, protests continue in connection with the length of the President's tenure and his governance by executive decree.

11. Notwithstanding repeated efforts to address the political crisis, no significant progress has been made to organize an inclusive and serious national dialogue to bring together all sectors of the population and shape a common vision for the country. Attempts are being made to change the country's Constitution, but several actors, including political parties and civil society organizations, continue to call for a more inclusive consultation process. Meanwhile, with the parliament's mandate expiring following the postponement of the October 2019 elections, the President has ruled by decree for the past 16 months.

12. The polarized political environment, with some political and civil society groups calling for the President to step down, has made efforts to reach an agreement on the proposed constitutional referendum, currently planned for June 2021, as well as legislative, municipal, local and presidential elections, expected in the fall of 2021,

very challenging. On 14 April 2021, Claude Joseph was nominated Prime Minister ad interim, becoming the sixth Prime Minister under the current presidency after Mr. Jouthe resigned from his post as Prime Minister. On 28 April 2021, Mr. Joseph called upon the Organization of American States to deploy a mission of good offices to Haiti to facilitate a dialogue among various stakeholders with a view to finding a political agreement to facilitate the organization of the constitutional referendum and the elections at all levels planned for 2021.

13. The political crisis is unfolding against a backdrop of growing insecurity, including a sharp rise in gang-related criminal activity, homicide, rape and kidnapping. Moreover, owing to pervasive impunity and corruption – Transparency International ranked Haiti 170th out of 180 countries in its Corruption Perceptions Index 2020 – there is increasing mistrust in public institutions, including the rule of law and justice sectors. During the second half of 2020, a monthly average of 84 demonstrations were held in the country.

14. The Group’s interlocutors stressed that insecurity could undermine confidence in the electoral process and prevent people from successfully participating in the elections. They noted that forging a consensus among relevant political stakeholders to create a conducive environment for a constitutional referendum and free, fair, transparent and credible elections remains of paramount importance to ensure the country’s democratic renewal, rule of law and long-term stability. The engagement of the international community to support the electoral process by providing financial resources to the United Nations-managed electoral basket fund remains crucial.

B. Socioeconomic development under threat

15. While COVID-19 has not resulted in as many cases in Haiti as originally anticipated (as at 25 April 2021, there are about 13,000 cases and 252 deaths), for reasons not well understood but likely explained in part by the fact that more than half the country’s population of 11 million is under the age of 24 years, the pandemic’s socioeconomic impact has been considerable, in particular in the current volatile political and security situation.

16. There is concern that, should the general situation in the country deteriorate further, the gains made in the past 30 years with regard to some social indicators, such as life expectancy and mean years of schooling, could be lost. Haiti remains the poorest country in the western hemisphere and one of the poorest in the world, ranking 171st out of 189 countries in the 2019 human development index. The country’s per capita income, which decreased by 22 per cent between 1990 and 2019, is expected to have worsened further in the past year. In November 2020, 69 per cent of households reported a decrease in their income, with 52 per cent estimating a decline of between 60 and 79 per cent. Some 7 million Haitians live under the poverty line of \$2.41 per day, and 2.5 million Haitians are extremely poor, surviving on \$1.12 per day. Rural areas continue to experience the highest poverty rates, in particular in the west and north-west parts of the country.

17. Economic growth contracted by 1.7 per cent in 2019 and by around 4 per cent in 2020. Inflation remains high, at approximately 18 per cent, although it has declined from 25 per cent in September 2020. The current account deficit, which was 1.7 per cent as a percentage of gross domestic product in 2017, recorded a 5 per cent decrease in 2020, mainly as a result of an increase in formal remittances, from about \$3.3 billion in 2019 to \$3.5 billion in 2020.

18. In October 2020, the Bank of the Republic of Haiti undertook a series of administrative and regulatory measures, direct monetary policy measures and incentives to stabilize the exchange rate, given that the national currency, the gourde,

had appreciated against the United States dollar, from 119.6 in August 2020 to 63.9 in October 2020. The exchange rate appreciation contributed to a lowering of the increase in consumer prices from December 2020 to February 2021. However, although the measures might have benefited the purchasing power of Haitian households, they may also have reduced that of the more than 3 million Haitians who benefit from remittances, as well as that of people whose wages are linked to the United States dollar.

19. The country's fiscal deficit is expected to increase in the near future. The production of textiles, whose export accounted for \$1.11 billion during the 2018/19 fiscal year and which represent some 90 per cent of the country's total exports, is expected to decline by 16 per cent during the 2020/21 fiscal year. Fuel subsidies, estimated at 5 per cent of gross domestic product, remain a fiscal burden, limiting fiscal space for spending in other sectors. Given the low level of tax revenues collected, 6.3 per cent of gross domestic product, the situation is likely to result in an increase in the country's fiscal deficit. The Group's interlocutors underscored the need for effective reform of the fuel sector to bring about macroeconomic stability with a view to promoting growth and development, as well for accompanying measures to dampen the distributional impact of the reform of fuel subsidies.

20. The worsening economic prospects can only further exacerbate the already poor quality of life suffered by the Haitian people. According to the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, the life expectancy at birth in Haiti in 2019 was estimated at 64.9 years: 63.8 years for men and 66 years for women. On the basis of results of global burden of disease studies, it was estimated that, in 2019, the 10 leading causes of death in Haiti were ischaemic heart disease, stroke, lower respiratory tract infections, HIV/AIDS, neonatal disorders, diabetes, diarrhoeal diseases, congenital defects, interpersonal violence and chronic kidney disease. According to the most recent World Health Organization data published, in 2018, deaths related to low birth weight and maternal conditions constituted, respectively, 2.94 per cent and 1.25 per cent of all deaths. In recent months, reduced access to health care, water, hygiene and sanitation services has led to an increase in the number of cases of diarrhoeal diseases, which remain the main cause of malnutrition in children under 5 years of age. Some 2.1 per cent of children currently face severe acute malnutrition. There have been community cases of diarrhoea, but, as a result of fear of visiting health-care facilities during the pandemic, there is an evident low number of cases of the condition in the national health information system.

21. Owing to the impact of COVID-19, access of pregnant women to prenatal services has plummeted, from 91 per cent in 2016 to 2017 to 48 per cent in 2021. The number of first prenatal visits decreased, from 88 per cent in 2018 and 93 per cent in 2019 to 73 per cent in 2020. According to data from 2016 to date, the percentage of pregnant women receiving their first prenatal care services was lowest in 2020. Haiti has submitted a national deployment and vaccination plan for the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out. The COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) Facility approved 756,000 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine for the country for the first wave of vaccination, but the roll-out is still pending.

22. Education has been severely affected by the *peyi lòk* period of civil unrest, insecurity and COVID-19, as witnessed by the large number of children, 4 million, affected by resulting school closures. In a country where access to digital devices and the Internet remains limited, 87 per cent of schools have not been able to offer students the online learning opportunities required for the continuation of their studies.

23. Even before COVID-19, Haiti struggled with poor educational levels, with one third of children between 6 and 11 years of age in rural areas and 9 per cent thereof

in urban areas not in school and with less than 1 per cent pursuing higher education. Given the high tuition fees (approximately \$80 per year) charged by private schools, which constitute most of the schools in the country, attendance is prohibitively costly for the average Haitian family. Of those who graduate from university, only 14 per cent remain in the country. Owing to the high rate of emigration of graduate students who move abroad in search of better opportunities, the highest in the world, every year Haiti is deprived of significant human capital that could otherwise contribute to the country's development.

24. The Group stresses the importance of providing young people with high-quality education at all levels to improve their job prospects, including through remote learning solutions, which could help to build a more resilient education system. At the same time, measures to improve education should go hand in hand with profound structural changes to enhance people's well-being and economic prospects in order to encourage highly skilled professionals to remain in the country. With technology dramatically changing lives and labour markets, increasing the digital literacy of Haitian students and the country's workforce is critical for their participation in the digital age and to enable successful competition in the global economy. In that regard, the Group welcomes the World Bank's support for Haiti in helping to transform the country's economy using digital technology.

25. The Group's interlocutors underscore the importance of mitigating the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 by providing social protection, sustaining people's livelihoods and promoting economic opportunities and climate resilience while paying special attention to the most vulnerable groups, including women and young people. The Group appreciates that the United Nations development system quickly mobilized to support the Government of Haiti with a rapid, coherent and well-coordinated response to COVID-19 and encourages the continuation of such efforts. The Group underscores the need for the international community to stand in solidarity with Haiti to help the country to overcome the challenges it is facing in relation to the pandemic.

C. Growing humanitarian needs

26. The humanitarian situation in Haiti is extremely dire. Some 4.4 million people, more than 40 per cent of the total population, need emergency assistance, including 3.5 million people suffering from multidimensional vulnerabilities. Women, children, people with disabilities and people on the move are the most affected. Children and women constitute, respectively, 51 per cent and 29 per cent of those requiring humanitarian aid, while people with disabilities account for 14 per cent of overall needs.

27. Food insecurity is the main driver of humanitarian needs in the country (4.4 million people), followed by water, hygiene and sanitation (3.8 million people), health (3 million people) and protection (1 million people). Haiti continues to host 30,000 persons who were displaced internally as a result of the 2010 earthquake and who live at 21 sites for internally displaced persons. New displacement has been triggered by intensified gang violence, particularly in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, where some 3,500 internally displaced persons live in conditions of extreme vulnerability.

28. Haiti is highly vulnerable to natural hazards, including floods, hurricanes and earthquakes. More than 96 per cent of the population is exposed to natural disasters. With climate change expected to have an impact on the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, there are concerns that, unless adequately prepared, Haiti might continue to suffer the devastating effects of natural hazards. In 2020, the passage of Tropical Storm Laura caused flooding in several parts of the country,

destroying and damaging homes, schools and infrastructure. Between 2010 and 2020 alone, natural disasters damaged or destroyed more than 6,000 schools. The Group welcomes the national risk and disaster management plan for 2019–2030, developed by the Government of Haiti with the support of the United Nations to better prevent the devastating effects of natural hazards and climate shocks.

29. The Group learned that, in 2020, more than 280,000 Haitian nationals, three times more than in 2019, had either returned to Haiti voluntarily or been repatriated from the Dominican Republic owing mainly to a loss of jobs in that country. Despite COVID-19-related travel restrictions, more than 1,000 Haitian nationals were deported from other countries by air or sea. The International Organization for Migration highlighted the difficulties of resettling in Haiti faced by returnees, in particular after many years spent outside the country. The Group is concerned that repatriations, particularly through unofficial border crossings, could expose women, men and children to COVID-19, as well as serious risks of trafficking and other protection hazards. The Group stresses the need to ensure that Haitians returning home be provided with the necessary protection and humanitarian assistance and calls upon the international community to support the Government of Haiti in these efforts.

30. The Group expresses its appreciation for efforts made in combating cholera through the comprehensive National Plan for the Elimination of Cholera in Haiti for 2013–2022 and the new United Nations approach to cholera in Haiti, which has resulted in no new laboratory-confirmed cholera cases since February 2019. The Group thanked the United Nations Special Envoy for Haiti for her tireless efforts following the end of her mandate, in December 2020. The Group notes that the work on the ground is now led by the Resident Coordinator and welcomes the fact that it will be under the strategic direction of the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General in her capacity as Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group.

31. The Group is very concerned that, despite the difficult humanitarian situation, donors have progressively disengaged from the country, as evidenced by the fact that the Humanitarian Response Plan for Haiti for 2020 received only around one third of its financial requirements in recent years. The Group calls upon donors to adequately fund the Plan for 2021–2022, which requires \$235.6 million to address the needs of the 1.5 million most vulnerable people.

32. The Group underscores that saving lives should go hand in hand with addressing the structural causes of vulnerability and risks and that humanitarian assistance must be seen as part of a larger strategy to promote sustainable development. It therefore welcomes the strategic objective of the Humanitarian Response Plan to reduce the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance by at least 20 per cent by strengthening the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. The Group appreciates that the Government of Haiti has adopted a national social protection and promotion policy to help to build resilience to hunger.

D. Challenging human rights, rule of law and administration of justice situations

33. The human rights situation in Haiti remains challenging. The right to life and security, the right to education, the right to work, the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, clothing and housing, and the right to physical and mental health have been seriously affected by the political crisis and insecurity. For example, reported kidnappings increased by 200 per cent in the first half of 2020 compared with the entirety of 2018, while voluntary homicides increased by 20 per cent in 2020. As noted above, 4 million children have been out of school in the past year owing to

insecurity, protests and COVID-19. The situation is putting many children at increased risk of violence, including sexual violence, as well as of early pregnancy and of recruitment by armed criminal gangs. It is having an impact on children's right to food, given that those who are not going to school cannot gain access to the food provided through school feeding programmes. Roadblocks and gang violence have also prevented many Haitians from obtaining access to food, drinking water, medicine, fuel and other basic services.

34. Another critical challenge to address is judicial accountability. The Group notes the lack of judicial action taken to address the human rights violations and abuses committed by prominent gang members suspected of emblematic cases, such as in Grand Ravine (2017), La Saline (2018) and Bel-Air (2019). Similarly, many human rights violations committed by law enforcement officials remain to be investigated. Addressing impunity for human rights violations by taking prompt action to bring perpetrators to justice remains of paramount importance to break the cycle of violence and restore public confidence in the justice system.

35. The Group learned that, on 26 November 2020, the Government had adopted two decrees on national security, one creating a national intelligence agency and the other greatly expanding the definition of terrorism to include lesser offences, such as vandalism and the obstruction of roads. The measures have prompted criticism that they could restrict civic space by curtailing human rights, including freedom of speech, the press and assembly.

36. Actions have been taken to strengthen the capacity of the Haitian National Police, including through a 53 per cent budget increase from the 2019/20 fiscal year, bringing to \$239.7 million the total police budget, as well as through advice and support provided by a number of donors and the United Nations. Strengthening the police and ensuring its adherence to human rights and police standards remain crucial to help to address the country's security challenges, including in view of the electoral events planned for 2021. The Group stresses the need to adopt a holistic approach to security so that measures to reform the police are accompanied by those aimed at addressing the root causes of gang violence, including through community violence reduction programmes, weapons and ammunition management and strengthening the rule of law, as well as through political and socioeconomic measures.

37. With an eye to making progress towards the promotion and protection of human rights, the Group encourages the Government to adopt without delay the national human rights plan developed in 2019, aimed at supporting the implementation of the recommendations in the 2016 universal periodic review and other international human rights mechanisms.

III. Enhancing coherence and coordination of international support for Haiti

A. Whole-of-system approach to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development during the decade of action

38. With the United Nations presence in Haiti having moved from a peacekeeping configuration to a more development-oriented one in 2019 as a result of the establishment of a special political mission, the Group is of the view that a whole-of-system approach is even more important to support long-term development in Haiti. Since the creation of BINUH, the Group has actively advocated close and sustained collaboration between BINUH, the United Nations country team and other United Nations entities, as well as local and international partners, in consultation with the

Government of Haiti, to ensure implementation of the “delivering as one” approach by the United Nations system in Haiti. With United Nations reform well under way, Haiti represents a laboratory for coherent and integrated United Nations support for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Only through an integrated whole-of-system approach across United Nations pillars will it be possible to effectively meet the basic needs of the population, tackle the root causes of instability and vulnerability, promote resilience and achieve sustainable development.

39. The Group appreciates efforts currently being undertaken under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator to prepare a common country analysis, which will help to track progress in Haiti towards achieving the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda, as well as to identify implementation gaps. The analysis will be instrumental in developing the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, which plays a key role in enhancing an integrated approach to United Nations support for the country.

40. The Group welcomes the support for Haiti provided through the Peacebuilding Fund, \$19.3 million, which is a valuable instrument to help to address some of the drivers of insecurity and violence.

41. The Group appreciates the collective mindset embraced by the United Nations in assisting with the health, humanitarian and socioeconomic dimensions of the country’s response to COVID-19. The Group calls upon the international community to provide the United Nations development system in Haiti with the support necessary to help the country to build back better from COVID-19 and to accelerate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals during the decade of action.

B. Promoting the effectiveness of aid in Haiti

42. Development-related expenditures in Haiti have remained flat over the past decade (\$1.015 billion in 2009, \$1.135 billion in 2013 and \$999 million in 2018), with the exception of the year 2010 and the years thereafter, in which official development assistance (ODA) grew to \$2.9 billion as a result of efforts to address the effects of the devastating damage caused by the 2010 earthquake. However, with regard to ODA received as a percentage of gross national income, there has been a decrease, from 15.1 per cent in 2009 to 10.2 per cent in 2018.

43. The most recent figures for United Nations operational activities for development show that, in 2019, Haiti received \$163 million for such activities (\$99 million for development-related activities and \$64 million for humanitarian activities), down from \$196.7 million (\$112.6 million for development-related activities and \$94 million for humanitarian activities) in 2013, which represents less than 0.5 per cent of the \$39.3 billion in global expenditures for operational activities for development. Haiti is the forty-first largest United Nations programme country.

44. The Group learned that the Government of Haiti, concerned about the lack of impact of development interventions, and with United Nations support, recently conducted an analysis of the causes of development ineffectiveness. There is a tendency to focus on short-term solutions in response to crises. As a result, development assistance is usually directed at the symptoms, rather than the causes, of development deficits. In follow-up to the analysis, the Government will launch an action dialogue across the entire Haitian territory, involving a broad range of local, national and international stakeholders, to develop a common understanding of how to maximize development effectiveness. The focus will be on localization of aid to not only make international cooperation more effective but also to ensure that Haitian organizations are taking the lead with regard to their own development.

45. The Government plans to develop a public policy of international cooperation and external aid management. It has, in collaboration with the United Nations, begun the preparation of an integrated national financing framework, a strategic tool derived from the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, to find integrated solutions to finance its development plan. The Group welcomes those efforts and underscores the need for the international community to work in a cohesive and well-coordinated manner to maximize the impact of development cooperation on sustainable development in Haiti.

46. During its meeting with the international financial institutions, the Group was informed that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had made available \$111.6 million in emergency financing under its Rapid Credit Facility for essential health-related expenditures and income support to ease the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the population. IMF is also providing technical assistance and policy advice to the Haitian authorities on how to promote macroeconomic stability, including through a fuel subsidies strategy, and discussions are continuing on a possible staff-monitored programme to help to monitor implementation of the authorities' economic policies. The Group underscores the need to ensure that efforts to promote macroeconomic stability are accompanied by social protection measures to support in particular the poorest and most vulnerable sectors of the population.

47. The Inter-American Development Bank has adopted a strategic approach to operating in complex environments with the aim of providing relief to vulnerable groups. With regard to the response to COVID-19, support in 2020 was provided around three pillars: (a) addressing food, health and other basic needs arising from COVID-19 (\$97 million); (b) undertaking community-level interventions in the areas of agriculture, youth employment and education (\$70 million); and (c) creating economic opportunities to safeguard employment. In 2021, the Bank's programme will continue to respond to humanitarian needs emerging from COVID-19 and previous crises, as well as support economic recovery. Through its grant facility, the Bank hopes to provide \$245 million for interventions related to high-quality education (\$50 million), food security and agriculture (\$60 million), support for vulnerable sectors of the population (\$70 million) and expansion of the Caracol industrial park (\$65 million). The Bank will continue its efforts to execute its portfolio in infrastructure while placing an emphasis on ensuring climate resilience.

48. The World Bank approach in support of Haiti is focused on promoting economic opportunities and bolstering resilience to climate shocks. The Bank is engaged in about 20 projects with a total value of approximately \$1 billion. Bank financing for Haiti is carried out mainly through the 2019 allocations of the International Development Association, with \$260 million provided during the past two cycles in areas such as water, agriculture, transportation, digital transformation and human development. The Group learned that Haiti is one of the few countries where the Bank has been able to fully commit almost all of the Association's 2019 allocations in one year rather than in the usual three years to support the country in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Bank plans to consolidate its programmes in the coming years, with a focus on the most vulnerable groups.

49. The Group appreciates the support provided by development partners to promote development in Haiti. However, it underscores that, to enhance the impact of interventions, there is a need to strengthen synergies and complementarities among the interventions through a more strategic approach. The Group is aware that resolving the political crisis would go a long way towards accomplishing that long-term approach.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

50. With the world still ravaged by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Group could not carry out its annual visits to Washington, D.C., and Haiti, and the number of Haitian stakeholders with whom the group could speak through virtual meetings was limited. The present report does not contain many new recommendations, given that the underlying situation in the country has not fundamentally changed. Many of the Group's previous recommendations, therefore, are still valid.

51. The situation in Haiti remains challenging, given that the country continues to suffer from widespread poverty and inequality, increasing insecurity, corruption and persistent structural deficiencies, which result in recurrent episodes of unrest, hampering economic growth and development and resulting in chronic humanitarian crises. The country remains trapped in a vicious cycle: the exclusion of some groups and perceptions of exclusion, economic insecurity and inequalities, corruption and lack of accountability and poverty are some of the root causes of ongoing political tensions and the deteriorating security situation. Meanwhile, political instability and weak governance capacity prevent the Government from effectively responding to the humanitarian crisis and setting the country on a sustainable development path. The COVID-19 crisis has added another shock to the multiple challenges that Haiti faces.

52. In that context, the Group highlights the need for a comprehensive approach to address complex challenges in Haiti. It has heard consistently from all stakeholders that solving the political crisis is a sine qua non to help to create the conditions for long-term stability and socioeconomic development. Building consensus among all sectors of the country's population to ensure the successful conduct of elections in 2021 should therefore be pursued vigorously.

53. Efforts to address the political crisis would need to be complemented by measures to promote good governance and the rule of law, strengthen public institutions, reform the justice sector, address corruption, reinforce the national capacity for conflict prevention, promote and protect human rights, eradicate poverty and tackle socioeconomic inequalities.

54. Focus should be placed on meeting the humanitarian needs of the population while increasing its resilience to future shocks. That can be done through enhanced coordination, complementarity and coherence across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding interventions.

55. The Group stresses the need to take swift action to improve public safety through a holistic approach so that measures to enhance the capacity of the Haitian National Police are implemented at the same time as those to combat violence through a comprehensive and sustainable long-term strategy to address the socioeconomic root causes of violence, including gang violence.

56. Support from the United Nations system remains crucial to help Haiti to successfully meet its challenges. It should be delivered through a whole-of-system approach to maximize impact so that activities to promote political stability, security, the rule of law, good governance and human rights are complemented by interventions to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Group appreciates that the United Nations country team and BINUH are working closely through the One United Nations initiative in Haiti, which guides United Nations support across pillars.

57. Substantive progress will only be possible with the active engagement of the international community. The Government of Haiti and its development

partners need to work together closely so that the support of development partners is delivered in a well-coordinated, coherent and sustainable manner to be more impactful.

58. The Group presents to the Economic and Social Council the following recommendations for consideration:

59. The Group encourages the Government of Haiti:

(a) To intensify efforts to encourage all sectors of the population, including political parties, the private sector, civil society, women's groups and religious leaders, to work constructively to ensure the successful holding of municipal, local and parliamentary and presidential elections;

(b) To ensure a well-coordinated response to the COVID-19 crisis by addressing, simultaneously, its health, humanitarian, socioeconomic and development dimensions;

(c) To enhance efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda during the remainder of the decade of action;

(d) To accelerate implementation of national development plans in line with the 2030 Agenda;

(e) To strengthen collaboration with countries in the region on areas of common interest, including migration;

(f) To increase attention to justice sector reform, focusing on guaranteeing the rule of law and implementing anti-corruption and anti-impunity measures;

(g) To strengthen efforts to promote full respect for human rights, including by addressing sexual and gender-based violence. In that regard, the Group calls for the swift endorsement by the Council of Ministers of the national human rights plan and its effective implementation;

(h) To provide the required resources and attention to preparedness, disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation to reduce the disruptive impact of natural disasters on communities;

(i) To consider exploring ways to work more closely with the Peacebuilding Fund.

60. The Group recommends that the international community and other development actors:

(a) Provide adequate support to tackle the health, humanitarian and socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic;

(b) Increase financial contributions to the Humanitarian Response Plan for 2021–2022 to address the dire humanitarian needs in the country;

(c) Promote regional solidarity, remain collectively engaged in Haiti and work closely with the Government of Haiti to provide well-coordinated and coherent support for building back better from COVID-19 and to promote sustainable development;

(d) Prioritize investment in the country's agricultural sector with the goal of ensuring food security, thus reducing the prospect of recurrent humanitarian crises in the country and promoting sustainable development;

(e) Work with the Government of Haiti towards modernization of the country's educational sector with regard to school infrastructure, attendance

and curriculum development to help it to adapt to current global challenges and the country's real development needs;

(f) Provide the United Nations country team with the necessary financial resources to be able to effectively support the progress of the Government of Haiti towards achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals;

(g) Enhance cohesiveness and coordination in development cooperation, working closely with the Haitian authorities and through consultations with various Haitian stakeholders, to ensure more impactful long-term development interventions;

(h) Provide adequate, predictable and flexible multi-year funding towards transition, risk reduction, recovery and peacebuilding programming to foster a joined-up approach across humanitarian-development-peace actions.

61. The Group recommends that the United Nations system:

(a) Continue to support the COVID-19 response of the Government of Haiti and to implement activities within the framework of the development priorities defined by the Haitian authorities in line with the 2030 Agenda;

(b) Work in close partnership with international financial institutions to respond to the COVID-19 health and socioeconomic crises and to promote long-term development;

(c) Continue to focus on a whole-of-system approach, including greater cross-pillar cooperation to help to address the root causes of the country's problems and promote long-term development and peace;

(d) Ensure that the United Nations country team maintains close collaboration, cooperation and coordination with BINUH, including through the development of integrated strategies, to maximize the impact of their actions and ensure a successful transition in the country.
