

URGENT ACTION

FEAR FOR SAFETY OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER

On 2 April Pierre Espérance, a prominent Haitian human rights defender, received a letter containing a bullet and death threats related to his work. Amnesty International fears for his safety and that of other human rights defenders in the country.

On 2 April, **Pierre Espérance**, executive director of the National Human Rights Defense Network (Réseau National de Défense des Droits Humains, RNDDH), one of Haiti's leading human rights organizations, received a threatening letter at the organization's office. The letter contained a gun bullet and accused Pierre Espérance and the RNDDH of putting up false reports aiming to destabilize the government. It also mentioned the attack on Pierre Espérance in 1999 when he escaped a shooting by gunmen in Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti. The letter concluded that "in 99 we missed you, this time you won't escape it, stop speaking bullshit".

A complaint was lodged on 9 April with the office of the public prosecutor and the judicial police is believed to have opened an investigation.

In recent months, the RNDDH has presented various reports on issues such as a touristic project affecting residents in Île-à-Vache Island, the judicial process against former dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier. The organization has also criticized the current government for alleged corruption, manipulation of the justice system and impunity.

Amnesty International is concerned for the vulnerability of human rights defenders in Haiti, many of whom have suffered attacks in the last few months, and urges the authorities to immediately take steps to provide adequate protection to the defenders and their families.

Please write immediately in French or your own language:

- Expressing concern for the safety of Pierre Espérance and calling on the authorities to provide effective protection to him according to his wishes;
- Calling on the authorities to immediately and independently investigate the accusation of threats and intimidation against Pierre Espérance and prosecute those found responsible;
- Reminding the authorities of their duty to guarantee that human rights defenders can carry out their work without fear of reprisals, as established in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 27 MAY 2014 TO:

Minister of Justice and Public Security
(Ministre de la Justice et de la Sécurité
Publique)

Jean Renel Sanon
18 avenue Charles Summer
Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Email: secretariat.mjsp@yahoo.com,
jrsanon@mjsp.gouv.ht
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear
Minister

General Director of the Haitian Police
(Directeur Général de la PNH)

Godson Orélus
Police Nationale d'Haiti
Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Email: godore68@hotmail.com
Salutation: Monsieur le directeur / Dear
Director

And copies to:

RNDDH
9, rue Rivière
Port-au-Prince, Haïti
Fax: 011 509 2244 4146
Email: rnddh@rnddh.org

Also send copies to:

Ambassador H.E. Raymond A. Joseph, Embassy of the Republic of Haiti
2311 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC 20008
Fax: 1 202 745 7215 | Email: embassy@haiti.org

Please check with the AIUSA Urgent Action Office if sending appeals after the above date.

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information about the attack on Pierre Espérance in 1999 please see Urgent Action 45/99 (AMR 36/001/1999): <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR36/001/1999/en>.

Several human rights defenders have reported to be victims of threats and attacks in recent times in Haiti. The Inter-American Commission of Human Rights issued precautionary measures in favour of human rights lawyers Mario Joseph and Patrick Florvilus respectively in October 2012 and November 2013 requesting the Haitian state to adopt any necessary measures to guarantee the life and personal integrity of the lawyers.

In repeated occasions during 2013, Kouraj, a LGBTI rights group, has been the victim of threats and intimidations during public demonstrations held in Port-au-Prince (see Urgent Action AMR 36/014/2013 <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR36/014/2013/en>), and of a direct attack against the premises of the organization in November (see Urgent Action AMR 36/021/2013 <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR36/021/2013/en>).

On 8 February 2014, human rights defender Daniel Dorsinvil, and his wife were killed by a gunman in the residential neighborhood of Canapé Vert of the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince. The circumstances and the motives of the killings remain unclear. An investigation was opened and various people are currently held in pre-trial detention. However, the Port-au-Prince prosecutor has still to formulate formal charges. In February Amnesty International called for a thorough investigation into the killing (see <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR36/021/2013/en>).

In accordance with the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, authorities in Haiti must fulfil their obligation to protect human rights defenders and to fully investigate attacks against them and bring those responsible to justice. They also have the duty to guarantee that human rights defenders can carry out their work without fear of reprisals.

Name: Pierre Espérance (m)

Issue: Fear for safety, Death threats

UA: 87/14

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