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## **I. Foreword**

It was at a Caribbean Conference of Churches meeting in Puerto Rico in May 2003 that the General Secretary of the Protestant Federation of Haiti issued the invitation that led to the information and solidarity ecumenical visit to that country in November 2003.

The visit was an opportunity to re-establish contact with churches in Haiti and to have a first-hand view of the declining economic, political and social situation in that country on the eve of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Haitian Revolution.

Although the organizations represented on the team viz. The World Council of Churches, Church World Service and Witness and the Caribbean Conference of Churches had all been engaged with Haiti for many years, the November 2003 visit occurred in the context of a generalized lack of understanding of what at the time was referred to as an electoral impasse related to disputed outcomes of parliamentary elections of May 2000.

That there was inability to move beyond the electoral stalemate became clear to the team during a week of discussions with church, civil society, opposition groups, government representatives as well as regional and international organizations. While the team may have been tempted to urge the churches to embrace dialogue as a means of moving beyond the impasse, it was also obvious that existing recommendations and agreements toward achieving those relatively narrowly-defined goals – e.g. the related Resolutions crafted by the Organisation of American States – were not achieving the desired ends.

The team was re-confirmed in the truism that engagement with Haiti must be for the long term, and that such engagement must be non-partisan. The key terms of reference which the team set itself - information and advocacy - proved invaluable as we witnessed the events which unfolded in the months following the visit - unrest and upheaval, the eventual departure of President Aristide and establishment of an interim government.

We wish to thank most sincerely the Protestant Federation of Haiti for affording us the opportunity to re-engage with the churches and peoples of Haiti at yet another critical juncture of their history and existence. We are grateful too for the very warm hospitality and care extended to us by our hosts.

I wish to also thank in a very special way, Ms. Sharon Bradshaw, Special Assistant to the (CCC's) General Secretary, International Relations and Cultural Affairs, for the dedication and efficiency with which she undertook both the organising of the visit and the writing of this report. Her commitment to the quest for a just, sustainable solution to the existing crisis in Haiti, as well as the objective of building international awareness of the issues involved, is clearly what has energised her to ensure the realisation of this project.

In conclusion, may I commend this report to you as a document that has the potential to spark a greater interest in the issue at hand, and to form the basis for an even deeper analysis and understanding of a complex situation.

We hope that our discussions and insights related to this period of Haiti's history are useful to those who maintain an abiding interest and involvement in that country, its past, present and future.

**Gerard A. J. Granado**

*General Secretary*

CARIBBEAN CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES (CCC)

## **II. Introduction**

The Caribbean Conference of Churches (CCC), with sister organizations, the World Council of Churches (WCC) based in Geneva and Church World Service and Witness (CWS&W) headquartered in New York, visited Haiti from November 8-15, 2003.

Twelve representatives of these 3 organisations embarked on this “information and solidarity” visit on the invitation of the Protestant Federation of Haiti (FPH), a grouping to which some of the CCC's member churches in Haiti belong. The FPH has 20 member bodies covering 60% of Protestantism in Haiti. (See Appendix One)

Ecumenical organizations of the Western Hemisphere including the Caribbean and North America have, in some ways, been at the forefront of engagement, education and debate on Haiti over the past 15 years or so. Aside from their ongoing activities with partner organizations in Haiti and the FPH's own interest in having its external partners understand the unfolding events in the socio-political and economic sphere in that country, each organization had independently given priority focus to Haiti in its work.

The CCC, seeking to harness the potential positive regional and international focus occasioned by the observance of Haiti's bicentennial of independence in 2004, proposes to work collaboratively with Church World Service and Witness in Haiti with emphasis on strengthening people-to-people contacts between Haiti and the rest of the Caribbean, HIV/AIDS awareness-building among young people and clergy and highlighting the plight of Haitian uprooted people.

Further, the CCC understands the important role that information can play in contrast to the misinformation typically associated with Haiti. In light of this, CCC is in the process of producing a television documentary on Haiti, and to that end the organization included two independent television producers on the team to Haiti in November.

Church World Service and Witness have identified Haiti as a priority in its programming over the next 3-5 years. As part of this special focus, that organization proposes to expand its work in HIV/AIDS and is considering new programme areas such as literacy

programmes for girls and women, sustained food production, human rights with particular focus on ‘restaveks’ – children who work as domestic servants – and soil management.

The World Council of Churches (WCC) has a longstanding involvement with Haiti especially on issues of human rights. It is in working relationship with the FPH which is in the process of becoming an associate council with the WCC. Following a visit of the General Secretary in 2000, the WCC is seeking to deepen its links with Haiti and to accompany the churches in their witness in the political and socio-economic situation. The Methodist Church and the Episcopal Church belong to the membership of the WCC through the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas, and the Episcopal Church in the USA.

### **III. The Context of the visit**

Visits to Haiti by the organizations of which the delegation was comprised typically have been prompted by a specific turn of events or at critical periods of the country’s history. The impasse arising out of the contested May 2000 parliamentary elections was the departure point both for our hosts, the FPH, and for many of those opinion-makers with whom the team spoke. The FPH expressed its hope that the team would form independent opinions on the situation which obtained in Haiti at that time regarding crime, poverty, corruption, human rights violations and the political situation.

Further, the FPH looked forward to the team making some assessment of the will of the various stakeholders to promote dialogue and the likelihood that the impasse might be resolved peacefully. The FPH hoped that churches would be apprised of the situation in Haiti and that the team would accompany the people of Haiti in their quest for social justice, economic development, respect for democracy and establishment of the rule of law in Haiti. The team, mindful of the links between Haiti’s history and its current situation set itself the following terms of reference:

#### Pastoral

To demonstrate to the churches and the people of Haiti the continuing concern and support of the churches of the Caribbean and the Americas, in fraternity with the World Council of Churches at yet another moment in the evolution of Haitian society, as that society is envisaged by its 1987 constitution: “une République indivisible, souveraine, indépendante, cooperative, libre, démocratique et sociale.”

#### Fact-finding

- To dialogue with a wide cross-section of individuals and organizations and to document, assess and share information about the current socio-political situation in Haiti
- To communicate the reality “on-the-ground” and to disseminate a report in print and via video to concerned and interested parties and the general public in Haiti, the Caribbean region and beyond.

### Advocacy

- To establish a means through which the Caribbean churches, in collaboration with their international partners, and with the peoples and governments of the Caribbean, might integrate Haiti and its concerns more effectively into regional and hemispheric concerns
- To strengthen ties between the churches and wider civil society of Haiti and the Caribbean and so to contribute to greater public understanding and appreciation of the past and future roles of Haiti in the Caribbean and internationally.

## **IV. Methodology**

The team was comprised of staff members and clergy associated with the CCC, the WCC and the CWS&W. Given the range of persons interviewed and the extent of the ongoing contacts between these organizations and partners in Haiti over the years, the visit and its findings would be of particular interest to a broad cross-section of interests in the Caribbean and beyond.

The team met with groups and individuals using a conference-type format. (See Appendix Two) A few of these interviews were held at the El Rancho Hotel in Pétionville where the team was accommodated, most of the interviews were held at the offices of interviewees or at the downtown office of the FPH in Port-au-Prince. Team members were made to feel welcome and discussions were conducted in an atmosphere of openness. Members of the Protestant Federation were not present at most of the interviews in order, as they said, to foster an atmosphere in which frank discussions could occur.

The team regretted its inability to meet with popular organizations, representatives of the Roman Catholic Church and youth or student's organizations. There was some consideration as to whether the team should request a meeting with President Aristide. Eventually this was decided against. The team met with the Minister of government with portfolio responsibility for churches – The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship.

## **V. The Religious Sector**

Three of the major denominations in Haiti are among groups selected to form the current, 9-member Provisional Electoral Council or CEP, the entity constitutionally authorized to oversee the electoral process. These are the Roman Catholic Church, the Protestant Federation and the Episcopal (Anglican) church; none of these groups at the time of the team's visit had yet named their representative to the CEP, citing concerns for security arrangements as their deterrent.

This position of the church members of the CEP was critiqued as obstructionist and, a departure from the 'proper' role of the church as a mediator (as opposed to actor). It was

stated that some of the other members of the CEP even view churches as being at the centre of the ongoing crisis.

Another point of discussion was the omission of certain church denominations on a CEP which is in some quarters viewed as leaning heavily toward church interests. A spokesperson from CONASPEH – the National Spiritual Council of Haiti's 3,500 indigenous protestant 'grass roots' churches - deplored the omission of their constituency on the CEP. The Methodist church and vaudou organizations, both groups considered to be influential, are not represented.

Even amidst allegations that churches are implicated in the current crisis, their potential role in building a new society is widely acknowledged provided, as one commentator put it, they take into account their past failures, gains and losses. Another opinion was expressed on the role of the church in Haitian society. It was opined that whereas the Roman Catholic church was one of two influential institutions (the other being the military) at the fall of the Duvalier regime, that organisation, as was true for the military, lacked the credibility to assist the country in the transition to democracy.

Churches in Haiti run the full spectrum of political involvement. Among the churches with which the team met was the Protestant Federation of Haiti (FPH) formed in 1986 (as was CONASPEH) and to which grouping two of the CCC's member churches in Haiti belong. The FPH does not describe itself as non-neutral. Neither is it perceived as being apolitical. In a widely circulated statement dated August 7, 2003 the FPH lamented Haiti's descent into impunity, gangsterism and criminality. (See Appendix Three) The statement also called on President Aristide to implement OAS Resolutions 806 and 822 fully or else step down ahead of 2004 elections. The Christian Movement for a new Haiti also supported this call.

CONASPEH sees itself as apart from the Protestant Federation – both as an entity and in its outlook - and does not share the concerns of the wealthy class by virtue of its involvement with the grassroots in the areas of health care, education and theological training. This grouping has strong ties with Church World Service & Witness and with Global Ministries. A representative of CONASPEH admonished the ecumenical team saying that it was impossible for the team to express solidarity while meeting with the privileged. It was felt that the team in its fact-finding needed to be careful not to pit actors in the society against each other. CONASPEH advocated a strong role for the church in Haiti but felt that the church must go outside of its walls to achieve this for there seemed to be no other true option but to work directly with the poor.

Members of the ecumenical team attended Sunday worship sessions at the churches of several of our hosts. Churches remain well-attended. We could not assess if they were prone to the hopelessness, which Minister Antonio felt he saw evident in the churches currently.

The team is aware as well, that churches have been involved in processes of dialogue. For example, there is an ongoing dialogue process between church leaders in Haiti and in the Dominican Republic. The FPH is involved in this process.

## **VI. Culture and the Social Sector**

A number of commentators hold that Haiti must be understood in its own right. Some of those with whom the team spoke stoutly resisted drawing analogies between current events in Haiti and other situations in the Caribbean or internationally. One example was the declaration by a journalist who insisted that to be at an impasse was to not have any suggestions as to the way forward. This discussant was prepared to allow for any eventuality, including one where the street might impose a solution.

This approach, some might say intransigence, was not uncommon. Some of the considerations in assessing the Haitian reality ‘from within’ included the leadership question. One interviewee held that Haitian leadership has never been able to give substance to the core values of the Haitian Revolution – aspirations for justice, freedom and liberty. Leaders had always sought to form alliances to fortify their personal power while insisting that insecurity was the country’s main problem.

As far as the current scenario goes, a journalist commented that the political leadership had failed Haiti. This analysis might be moderated by two considerations: the team was informed that many of those who are currently in leadership positions in Haiti spent many years in exile during the period of the Duvalier dictatorship (as did the previous generation of leaders). While in exile, many of them met together to plan strategies for working in the interest of Haiti’s poor. Now back home, they were on different sides of the political fence. In a number of instances, members of opposition groupings were former members of President Aristide’s government.

This touched on the question of forming consensus. Most discussants described the society as being completely divided with each group defending its own interests. The thinking of the Group of 184 (a grouping of 300 plus non-governmental organizations) was that the society became deeply polarized in the period 1986-2000 with attendant difficulties for societal classes to find common ground to establish consensus. The latter part of that assertion was endorsed by another commentator who took a perhaps broader view. That person saw the lack of infrastructural linkages such as roads and transport, the absence of a centralized education curriculum and limited media products, combined with the impact of illiteracy (estimated at more than 50%) as leading to social cleavages.

Many acknowledged the weaknesses of Haiti’s institutions; some felt that they were chronically weak. Shortly before our team’s arrival in Haiti the Association of Haitian journalists was involved in an exercise internal to that organization of elaborating a code of ethics for journalists. The Association was prevented from mounting a related seminar in Cap Haitien. In a similar institution-building vein, the CARICOM Secretariat office in

Haiti has facilitated the work of the umbrella NGO group, the Caribbean Policy Development Centre, with Haitian civil society organisations as part of the CARICOM civil society process. Likewise, the OAS Special Mission in Haiti is involved in institutional strengthening processes in many sectors. These range from supporting the public education work of human rights and women's organizations to technical assistance to the police force.

One of the Group of 184's stated objectives from the outset was to compensate for the weaknesses of Haitian institutions by unifying organized sectors of civil society around its consensus document, the Social Contract (See Appendix Five) The G184 has won admiration for their vaunted success in bringing together under a loose alliance, a broad cross-section of Haitian civil society including the following sectors: peasants' associations, women's groups, journalists, human rights groups and religious groupings including vaudou organizations.

Despite this activity, the impact of the impasse is very real. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship, Joseph Antonio, voiced his government's interest in ending the economic embargo and the class divisions in the society. He acknowledged the errors of Lavalas and their mishandling of certain issues. Still, his party wanted to move forward toward deeper consensus within the society. A member of the Convergence Democratique described Haitian society as decaying and President Aristide as manifesting the 'old demons of the past'.

The language used by many of the interviewees conveyed the harshness of life in Haiti. Terms such as 'impunity', 'non-democratic', 'lies', 'illegality' were often attributed by groups we met to each other. Only in looking forward to the future did the language soften to include phrases such as 'culture of tolerance' and 'new beginnings'

Our team wondered whether the press might take on the role of public education. We were told that journalists were as much part of the divisions within the society – for instance, the membership of a journalists' association in the G184 has been criticised within some quarters of that profession. Additionally, the comment was made that the media is not perceived as operating in the common good. We were told that the state apparatus did not have access to the media in Haiti; it was private interests, usually with international connections, which had greater access, accounting, partially for what one member of our team perceived as the stilling of President Aristide's voice internationally.

Additional social and cultural challenges to the way forward were identified as including the ongoing decline in the economic and financial situation of Haiti and challenges of language linked to the fact that Kreyol is spoken by the majority of illiterate Haitians while French is the language of commerce and 'respectability'.

A comment by CARICOM representative in Haiti, Hayden Blades, underscores the social challenges. He believes that development in Haiti doesn't begin with politics but in communities and sees need for a better balance between the objectives being pursued at

the political level and the creation of a facilitative environment for moving between the different levels.

## **VII. The Political Sector**

Several dates in Haiti's recent political history are bandied about by opinion makers as the codes which hold the keys to the resolution of Haiti's political economic and social crisis.

For many, this discussion begins in May 2000 with local and parliamentary elections the results of which were contested. The opposition movement as well as the Organisation of American States disputed the formula used to count votes for seven seats in the Senate. These Senators subsequently resigned their posts as part of an extensive agreement with the Organisation of American States (OAS) towards resolution of the electoral crisis which subsequently unfolded.

The essential chronology of the 3-year old crisis is as follows:

December 17, 2001 – attack on the presidential palace with retaliatory attacks on homes of political leaders and private persons resulting in loss of life and of property. Reparations to affected parties forms part of the conditionalities of OAS resolution 806.

January 15, 2002 is the date of OAS Resolution 806 which called for thorough investigation of December 17, 2001, reparations to affected individuals and invited further investigation and support for building democratic institutions in Haiti as well as resumption of OAS-sponsored negotiations.

April 2002. Establishment in Haiti of the Special Mission of the Organisation of American States in order to strengthen democracy in Haiti. The parameters of the Mission's work as explained by Head of Mission, Ambassador David Lee were: security, justice, human rights and good governance.

September 4, 2002 is the date of OAS Resolution 822. That Resolution acknowledged ongoing developments and discussions including the commitment by both ruling party Fanmi Lavalas and the Convergence Democratique to the need for elections in 2003. The resolution sought to move toward conduct of "free, fair and technically feasible" legislative and local elections simultaneously with ensuring protection of human rights and press freedoms and disarmament of armed gangs. The Resolution also called for formation of an "autonomous, independent, credible and neutral CEP" no later than two months after (the resolution's) adoption.

OAS Resolution 1959 was adopted by the OAS General Assembly in June 2003 essentially to affirm decisions endorsed in Resolutions 806 and 822 and to reaffirm the principles of democracy under girding the Inter-American system and to urge parties

named in Resolution 822 toward implementation of their obligations. The Resolution also noted the willingness of some CARICOM countries to make financing available to Haiti.

There are many other dates and events deemed to be at the core of the crisis. And it is around the political issues that there is much contestation. The team became aware that much of this political contestation was contained in the capital, Port-au-Prince and in more recent times in the towns of Gonaives and Cap Haitien.

The Convergence Democratique (CD) identified several points of concern in the political debate. This main coalition of opposition groups remains dissatisfied with electoral fraud in both 2000 and 2001 elections and with Lavalas occupying all of the electoral positions available from senatorial level through to the smallest unit of governance. The CD refers to President Aristide's government as having won an electoral coup d'etat and refers to the government's power as stolen. The CD described itself as a front for resistance made up of parties each with their own programme toward democracy. They are open to the possibility of becoming an electoral outfit in the event of free and fair elections, describing themselves on the one hand as being at the forefront of democratic and peaceful opposition forces in Haiti. On the other hand, the CD believes that President Aristide has failed to implement Resolution 822 and that he must step down. In that event, the CD put forward a proposal to have a transition government headed by the President of the Court of Appeal.

The CD voiced an interest in forming links between themselves and civil society groupings in the Caribbean and sought the support of the team to have President Aristide step down.

The Protestant Federation, as mentioned previously, is not neutral. By its own admission it seeks to present a political message, though claiming in principle to be unable to form itself into a political party. The FPH sees the crisis as mainly political, and warned the team that President Aristide's government had spent much money on lobbyists to CARICOM and the OAS. On the team's last working day in Haiti, the FPH urged the team to make a statement on the social and political situation in Haiti. Such a statement was not made.

The G184's position vis-à-vis the political impasse was that they were fighting for the right to demonstrate peacefully. The group had organized several 'gatherings' of its members and persons in the general public. The team was informed of the role of the Civil Society Initiative (CSI) ( The Civil Society Initiative is a founding member of the G 184, and the FPH is one of the 23 member bodies of the CSI) in bringing together in the early stages, opposition and ruling party for negotiation. One prominent member of the FPH is in the frontline of the G184.

All of the above-mentioned groups voiced concern over what was viewed as blanket support of the government by CARICOM governments, an issue which is linked to one of the central tasks the team undertook viz. to assess the will of various parties to resolve issues through dialogue.

In the Haitian context, there was much debate about the environment for elections. Some among those with whom the team spoke, including journalists and members of the Lavalas ruling party, believed that with the proper will, elections could be held. The OAS Mission felt that the terrain for elections was not good. Members of the OAS mission corroborated the comments of Foreign Minister Joseph Antonio on the question of fostering trust in the negotiation process saying that every time the negotiation process got closer to breakthrough, demonstrations were planned to frustrate any further progress. OAS staff members also revealed that they were surprised at the number of concessions made by the government side in the negotiation process. Linked to this, there is some comment circulating of which the Convergence Democratique was aware, that opposition groups do not believe that they could win an election.

One senior staff member of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Haiti assessed that at the core of the impasse was the refusal of the ruling class to allow the popular sector to assert itself politically.

### **VIII. International Relations**

The international community, not for the first time, is seen as playing an important role in the unfolding events and long-term solutions in Haiti. As one commentator told the team: the stakes are not limited to the electoral process.

Many of the discussants demonstrated a keen sensitivity to the potential influence of international actors and appeals were made to the international composition of the team with the rationale that we could ‘influence decisions within our countries’. This interpretation was often related to an interest in having the team communicate ‘the real situation’ in Haiti, often in respect of human rights violations and also in relation to the declared intention to have President Aristide demit office. The Convergence Démocratique openly appealed to our church communities to be porte-parole for them before our respective communities and to support Haitians in their quest to have President Aristide step down.

In one incident, the team was invited to attend a ‘gathering’ hosted by the G184 at the Champs de Mars on November 14, 2003. It was stated that the presence of the team at that event would help to deter any possibility of violence. On the morning of the ‘gathering’ several members of the FPH urged the team to make a statement during the event. This was declined. In the event, stone-throwing and other disturbances forced the ‘gathering’ to an aborted end.

Some opposition groupings revealed that they were ‘pre-occupied’ by the thought that the international community was supporting President Aristide. This accusation was often directed at CARICOM governments and to a lesser extent, OAS member countries.

Haitian opinion-makers also point to potential positive outcomes for Haiti as a direct result of international pressure. One example was the payment by the current government of reparations to all the parties making claims related to the events of December 17, 2001. At the time of our visit, individual claims had not yet been settled. The Convergence Democratique informed us that they had used this reparation money to repair their building where the team spoke with them. In other examples, it was stated that perhaps President Aristide made many concessions in the process of negotiations with the opposition, in part, due to international pressures; likewise, the government's acceptance of the composition of the current CEP might have been due to international interest in this process...

Aside from the comments by Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship, Joseph Antonio who spoke to his government's purported interest in moving the country beyond the economic embargo – a position which the OAS Head of Mission seemed to endorse by his comments that an executive structure was needed to channel aid to Haiti - there was not much analysis by discussants of the linkages among aid flows to Haiti, the country's international standing and its internal situation. However, development aid in Haiti is larger than the government's budget. As one interviewee put it, Haiti has an NGO growth industry.

The government's planned commemoration of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Haitian Revolution was a discussion point among some interviewees. The FPH believed that in the current circumstances this anniversary could arouse only shame and indifference. The team was also informed of a petition by some Haitian academics who were against government activities in commemoration. There was evident on television and elsewhere in Haitian society some level of discourse and awareness of the significance of that event.

The opinions of the international community were clear. The OAS Special Mission was interested in deepening links with credible counterparts in civil society and in government, at the national and international levels, with a view to carrying on their work of transitioning to democracy and institution-building. The CARICOM office in Haiti, while it described its role as facilitative, saw potential for CARICOM to assist the Haitian public sector in training and other activities related to governance. That office had also embarked on a number of business facilitation and other exchanges within the Caribbean region, recognizing, as did many of our interviewees that Haitians neither know nor are well-known in the rest of the Caribbean.

## **IX. Conclusion**

The visit served to convince the ecumenical team of the complexities of the current Haitian situation and the extent of the impact of the political impasse.

The team believes that further analysis of the situation requires a developmental approach, fully informed by Haiti's socio-political and cultural milieu and history. Based on its experiences, the team was tempted to suggest to the churches, its primary interlocutors, that they seek to move beyond their differences and towards consensus. Members of the team remained mindful of the challenges which any such process would entail; it appeared that our discussants while making themselves available to us for the purposes of the visit may not have availed themselves of that level of access to one another

The majority of the team supports the following observations

1. Churches are among those groups of opinion-makers which are determined to influence governance in Haiti.
2. Aside from the OAS Resolutions and the Group of 184's work toward building consensus on some social issues there appeared to be little focus or clarity within Haiti on the way forward beyond the impasse
3. Popular groups did not seem to enjoy the same level of international exposure as did the group of opinion-makers with which the group met
4. Whereas CARICOM governments and politicians were viewed with distrust by some opinion-makers, interest was expressed in deepening contact with non-governmental groups within the Caribbean

The following observations proposed by some members of the team may be noteworthy:

1. Churches are among opinion-makers who are calling for Aristide to step down, contrary to the provisions of the relevant OAS provisions to which some church actors are subject
2. The resolve was expressed by many opinion-makers to end the impasse and to move toward curbing the impact of the declining human rights, political and economic situation of Haiti
3. It remains to be seen whether churches can rise above their own differences – Protestant vs. Catholic, privileged Protestant as against grassroots Protestant, Christianity versus vaudou - and beyond politically partisan alliances to work toward bridge-building and development of civic consciousness.

The team, for its part assured of its long-term interest in being available to those working toward the restoration of normalcy in Haiti.

## APPENDIX ONE

### Composition of the CCC/WCC/CWS&W team to Haiti

Mr Gerard Granado Ms Sharon Bradshaw	General Secretary, Caribbean Conference of Churches Special Assistant to the General Secretary, International Relations & Cultural Affairs, Caribbean Conference of Churches
Ms Allison Bidaisee	Regional Programme Co-ordinator, Communications & Advocacy, Caribbean Conference of Churches
Rev. Trevor Edwards	Deputy President, United Theological College of the West Indies, Board member, CCC
Rev. Margarita Santana	Priest in the Episcopalian Church, Dominican Republic, Representative of a CCC member church
Mr Hubert Van Beek	Programme Executive for Church and Ecumenical Relations, World Council of Churches
Mr Richard Williams	Associate Director, Mission Relationships & Witness Church World Service and Witness
Ms Joan Maruskin	Washington Representative, Church World Service and Witness Immigration and Refugee Programme
Rev. Heriberto Martinez	Pastor and President of the Council of Churches, Puerto Rico
Rev. Juan Edghill	Bishop and President of the Council of Churches, Guyana
Mr Ernest Rodriguez	Independent television producer, St Lucia
Mr Fimber Anius	Independent television producer, St Lucia

## APPENDIX TWO

### Groups/individuals with which the ecumenical team held discussions

- Liliane Pierre Paul - journalist
- Hérold Jn François – journalist
- Centre Oecumenique des droits humains (Ecumenical Centre for human rights)
- Comité des Avocats pour le respect des Libertés Individuelles (Lawyers for the promotion of human rights)
- National Coalition for Human Rights
- GARR
- Mouvement des Femmes pour l'Education et le Développement
- Convergence Démocratique
- Mouvement Chrétien pour une nouvelle Haiti
- Espace de Concertation
- Organisation du Peuple en lutte
- Congrès National
- Partie Démocratique D'Haiti(Haitian Christian Democratic Party)
- Partie Sociale Démocratique d'Haiti
- L'Association des Journalistes Haitiens
- CONASPEH – the National Spiritual Council of Churches in Haiti
- Parti Fanmi Lavalas
- Groupe des 184
- 5 Sectors named to participate on the Provisional Electoral Council
- Minister Joseph Antonio, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship
- Hayden Blades – CARICOM representative in Haiti
- Ambassador David Lee and staff members of OAS Special Mission in Haiti
- Protestant Federation

## APPENDIX THREE

### **MESSAGE TO THE NATION**

#### **Is Haiti given over to impunity, gangsterism, roguishness and criminality?**

*Citizens of Haiti,  
Brothers and sisters in Christ,*

Anyone with the slightest powers of observation and lucidity would be loath to deny the glaring obligation to question the disturbing events that have marked the past months in Haiti. We at the Protestant Federation are alarmed and troubled by the events which have occurred in the country and the revelations which have been made in relation to those unspeakable incidents. We are saddened by these stains which taint what was left of the positive image of our country and its people. We feel obliged to quote the wisdom of our people, condensed in this ever so meaningful proverb: “*Yon sèl bourik foure nen li nan barik farin, nen tout bourik sal*”.

Indeed, let us look at the latest developments and refresh our memories as to the state of moral decay which prevails in the country.

1. The flight of and troubling revelations, to say the least, regarding the former Chief of Police, Mr. Jean-Robert Faveur, in May.
2. The vicious attacked on 12 July of the “Caravan of Hope” of the Group of 184 at Cité-Soleil and the statements made by very high-placed officials, including the Prime Minister, certain controversial MPs and other officials as if to condone such odious acts.
3. The illegal search by the police of a citizen’s home which led to the arrest of Mrs. Judie C. Rod, an opponent, on 14 July and the cruelty she suffered following her arrest.
4. The apparently deliberate burning of the Mac Donald public market on the night of 16 to 17 July in Port-au-Prince.
5. The illegal summoning of the Coordinator of the Group of 184, Mr. André Apaid, an industrialist, on Thursday 24 July, to the Court of Port-au-Prince, who was accused and framed by gangs on the payroll of the authorities.
6. The killing of five public servants of the Ministry of the Interior in the Bas-Plateau Central on 25 July.
7. The revelations about the former official of the Cité-Soleil Town Hall, Mr. Johnny Occilius, on 28 July.

8. The application for political asylum in Canada of the former spokesperson of the Haitian Police Service, Mr. Jean-Dady Siméon.

These facts, which have been made known over the past three months, are very distressing to us at the Protestant Federation of Haiti. They create an atmosphere of completely justified mistrust and suspicion among the population. We are indeed very disappointed to see our country nose diving towards impunity, gangsterism, roguishness and criminality. This situation seems to have the blessings of our public institutions for no concrete action has been taken which could instil the slightest amount of confidence among citizens in the discourses and speeches of our country's leaders. Quite the contrary, everything seems to compound the confidence crisis which is undermining our society. And God alone knows how impossible it is for a country to build a future on the shifting sands of mistrust.

Haiti is going downhill fast. We cannot help but realize that the country is being ruled by violent and undemocratic methods. We recall the times of the Judges in ancient Israel. The Bible tells us "*In those days Israel had no king. Each man did what he considered to be right*" (Judges 21:25). Alas, Haiti finds itself in this unhealthy environment. Anarchy is sweeping over our towns and villages. The public access roads are blocked for no apparent reason, thereby depriving users of their basic rights. Principles and rules are no longer applied in our public administrations. Our public institutions are literally besieged by political vote-catching and therefore invalidated with incompetence and its corollaries, corruption and chaos.

We live in state of lawlessness where only the law of the strongest prevails, favouring those who are closest to powerful and influential gang leaders. This is a state where money talks, where those who readily untie their purse strings dominate. Transforming Haiti, our country, Christ's country, into a voodoo and vampire state where human sacrifices are made, it appears, openly and publicly to the knowledge of our leaders, is revolting. What kind of state are we living in? The enquiries never get anywhere. Suffice it to recall the Viola Robert affair, the child that disappeared from the General Hospital, etc. etc. Villainy strolls about shamelessly and bold facedly in our very midst. The rapid deterioration of the social climate regarding respect for law and order, the rise in violence and myriad frustrations among the population have become daily topics of concern and worry.

The Protestant Federation of Haiti is deeply hurt by the irreverence which has overshadowed our morals. Our walls are smeared with obscenities profaned against institutions and individuals. We at the Protestant Federation grasp this opportunity to express our solidarity, particularly with the CLED (Centre for Free Enterprise and Democracy), the bishops and Catholic priests, pastors and Protestant church leaders and with all the other political and civil society figures whose names are reviled through the graffiti inscribed on the walls of the capital. Let us forgive those who gave and carried out the orders to commit such acts for knowing what they do is dehumanizing enough. May our pardon and their repentance restore their humanity fully and wholly.

The Protestant Federation of Haiti recommends to all those who are victims of such villainous and absurd acts to believe in the words of the Bible, the Word of God and make them their own. *“If the wicked man returns from all the sins he has committed and keeps all my statutes and carries out justice and righteousness, he will certainly live; he will not die. None of the transgressions he has committed will be remembered against him; because of the righteousness he has done, he will live. Do I delight in the death of the wicked... and not prefer that he turn from his wicked conduct and live? When a wicked man turns from the wickedness he has done and carries out justice and righteousness, he will preserve his life. Because he considered and turned from all the transgressions he had done; he will certainly live, he will not die”.* (Ezekiel 18:21-28)

It is from the perspective of Ezekiel’s message that the Protestant Federation salutes the recent revelations made by the former official of the Town Hall of Cité-Soleil, Mr. Johnny Occilius. We welcome these revelations as the testimony of a man who repents for his erring ways. In Christian theology, repentance occupies an essential place in the process which leads to genuine and real conversion. A word of thanks, congratulations and encouragement goes to his wife, who pressured him into abandoning those dishonest deeds. Through this act, the couple opted for life instead of death. He chose the path of truth and refuted the path of lies. He chose to build on the rock and not on the sandy ground of crime, denouncement and blood. May the example of Mr. Johnny Occilius serve as a guide to all, Protestants and Catholics alike, those in positions of power and those who are not, who genuinely take the name of Christ. Let us respect life, let us preserve it and help it to develop fully for the greater glory of the Creator of life.

Resist, brothers and sisters. Do not side with evil. Condemn crime and criminal. Shun ill-gotten gains. Brothers and sisters, do away with the forces of evil and their dark paths. Abandon and combat this mafia-like system which unravels the very fabric of one country and one political family. Always remember the words of the Bible which are at hand:

- *Like a club or a sword or a sharp arrow, so is the one who testifies against his neighbour as a false witness. (Proverbs 25:18)*
- *A shrewd person sees danger and hides himself, but the naïve keep right on going and suffer for it. (Proverbs 27:12)*
- *The one who covers his transgressions will not prosper, but whoever confesses and abandons them will find mercy. (Proverbs 28:13)*
- *The one who hardens his neck after numerous rebukes will suddenly be destroyed without remedy. When the righteous become numerous, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan. (Proverbs 29:1-2)*
- *If a ruler listens to lies, all his ministers will be wicked. (Proverbs 29:12)*

- *You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its flavour, how can it be made salty again? You are the light of the world. A city located on a hill cannot be hidden. (Matthew 5:13-14)*

Brothers and sisters, these are hard times. Evil has pulled out its ace in an effort to drive us up against a wall and reflect in our eyes the coin of the realm. But resist, Christians. The Bible says:

*“Better is a dry crust of bread where there is quietness than a house full of feasting with strife” (Proverbs 17:1)*

*“Let nobody deceive you with empty words, for because of these things God’s wrath comes on the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not be partakers with them, For you were at one time darkness, But now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of the light for the fruit of the light Consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth – Trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, But rather expose them. (Ephesians 5:6-11)*

Our country, Haiti, has fallen under the sway of impunity, gangsterism, villainy and criminality. Time is of the essence when the citizens of a country are distrustful of their leaders. Unfortunately, we are getting to that stage. If our leaders do nothing to deserve our trust and win it back, the bell of disaster is already tolling at our gates.

Given the rapid deterioration in the state of affairs in Haiti, the Protestant Federation of Haiti is urging the international community to demonstrate more clear-sightedness and commitment. The Federation reminds one and all of the reality of the situation: all Haitians are in the same boat. No one should imagine that some of us will come out safe and sound and escape the peril of this boat. Even our neighbouring countries will be affected. The national and international communities have a vested interest in examining the catastrophic situation in Haiti in the name of globalisation. In the absence of action, Haiti runs the risk of becoming a serious thorn in the flesh of the region. Interdependence of countries increases all the more the relay of adverse consequences from country to country and region to region. Let us therefore stop deluding ourselves.

Leaders and citizens of Haiti, our case is very serious. Disaster lies at our doorstep. The time left for repentance and reprieve is running out. Let us buy back time before the dice are cast for good. President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, you are at the helm of the nation. The ship is sinking. Have the manly courage to take the decision which these grave times demand. The Protestant Federation of Haiti proposes two options: either the complete, sincere and concrete implementation of OAS Resolutions 806 and 822 or the magnanimous decision for you and your team to step down voluntarily before the 2004

general elections. Whatever your choice, the nation would be very grateful to you. The Protestant Federation of Haiti is willing to play the card of forgiveness in the face of genuine repentance. This in keeping with its ministry of reconciliation as enunciated by the Apostle Paul in his second epistle to the Corinthians 5:16-19. Any assumptions on your part would be foolhardy. Indeed it would be a foolhardy act with serious consequences.

**Port-au-Prince, 7 August 2003**  
**PROTESTANT FEDERATION OF HAITI**

## APPENDIX FOUR

### **PROPOSAL BY THE HAITIAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDCH):**

#### **OUR ROAD MAP**

- Ten (10) minimal demands must be met before 4 September 2003.
- A **new framework** including:  
  
**Strategic disengagement of OAS and the Special Mission** to give way to direct involvement of a four-nation team: USA-France-Canada-Dominican Republic.
- A **roadmap** with the US playing the **leading role** by consensual mandate.
- An **international conference on national reconciliation**: the four-nation team under the chairmanship of the US to ensure follow-up.

The Haitian Christian Democratic Party (PDCH), considering OAS Resolutions 806 and 822, and as a result of the recent Resolution of 12 June 2003 voted in Santiago de Chile by 34 Members of the Organisation, and supporting the statements made by the American Secretary of State, Colin Powell, has noted and retained that, in the eyes of the democratic opposition of Haiti, a number of conditions, ten to be exact, must first be met by the government before September 2003 in order to foster in Haiti an environment of trust and security that is conducive to the establishment of an elections commission which will be called on to organise genuinely democratic elections in the country.

These minimal demands are:

1. Establishment of an international commission of enquiry on the politically motivated crimes as requested by and enshrined in Resolution 806, for which we would be pleased to appoint two criminologists and criminal investigators from our Co-ordinating Committee of the other Non-aligned Parties of the Opposition or of the PDCH.
2. Release of all political prisoners and all unjustly imprisoned former soldiers, beginning with the release of the more well-known figures such as:

**a) General Prosper AVRIL**, former President of the Republic and President of one of the opposition parties, CREDO, released by the justice system but held hostage by the Lavalas administration;

b) **Ephraïm ARISTIDE**, member of MOCHRENA, abducted from his home in Gonaïves on 28 April 2003 and imprisoned at the National Penitentiary for several months by order of the Lavalas government;

c) **Hébert CERUPHIN**, member of PANPRA, abducted from his home in Plateau Central on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2003, beaten and thrown into jail at the National Penitentiary since early June 2003 by order of the Lavalas government.

3. Unconditional return to Haiti of all political exiles, particularly persecuted journalists and victims of criminal acts who were forced to flee the country following threats and repeated and systematic violations of their rights and civil liberties by the government's henchmen.
4. Official cessation of the policy of targeted killings and all forms of political persecution (arbitrary arrests, kidnappings, illegal detention, threats and blackmail, abuse of power and authority, political manipulation of the justice system to settle political scores, etc.) by henchmen or close elements of the administration perpetrated against members and political leaders of the opposition. The Ministry of Justice, through specific measures, including circulars and administrative sanctions, can redress and rectify the situation as necessary.
5. Establishment of a tripartite administrative body comprising the Ministry of Justice, OAS and representatives of the democratic opposition, to avoid the politicization of the justice system and intervene in cases where measures or decisions are taken that are likely to hinder the independence of the judicial system, particularly with a view to monitoring the illegal actions of the notorious Clifford LAROSE, Director of APENA (National Penitentiary Administration). This body could serve as a sort of **joint expert commission on judicial reform in Haiti**.
6. Financial compensation for those individuals and institutions that were victims of the unfortunate events of 17 December 2001 as provided for and recommended by OAS Resolution 806 "before 31 March 2002 [sic.]", which were completely flouted in spite of the work conducted by the **OAS Legal Commission**, the very body that had identified those recommendations.
7. Removal and arrest of perpetrators and accomplices of the events of 17 December 2001 who had been officials and/or public servants, as requested by OAS Resolutions 806 and 822.
8. Technical, financial and concrete oversight by the international community, via the Special OAS Mission, of the Haitian police service, based on a plan for which terms of reference should be discussed and approved **also** by the opposition. Such a plan would extend to all police stations in the Republic via

the presence of international police security units. This would be the price of correcting the hasty dismantling of the Haitian military and the armed forces of Haiti (FADH) without any consideration for the psychological and political ramifications of such an act. The ensuing violence and unrest are, in part, a direct result of the unforeseen vacuum left by their unplanned absence.

9. An end to repressive practices, such as threats, judicial blackmail and/or acts of intimidation carried out by a criminal band of officials against journalists, human rights advocates and leaders or members of the opposition considered to be troublesome.
10. Official establishment under the aegis of the Special OAS Mission prior to September 2003 of a **Forum for Meeting and Dialogue** among the following: 1) Fanmi Lavalas; 2) the Jean Bertrand ARISTIDE government; and 3) members of the various opposition parties (Democratic Convergence, Coordinating Committee of Other Non-aligned Opposition Parties and the Patriotic Union) to deal with specific questions such as:
  - National defense and domestic security.
  - Commemoration of the bicentenary of 18 November 1803 and 1<sup>st</sup> January 1804.
  - Combating drug trafficking.
  - Illegal immigration.
  - Justice and upholding the independence of the judiciary.
  - National police service, security and respect for human rights.
  - National governance and combating corruption.

**If by September 2003 these ten demands are not met, the PDCH considers that it will be necessary to adopt a new proposal in order to redefine the role that the OAS will be called on to play in the crisis. Such a proposal will also take into account the formulation of a road map for Haiti, on the basis of which the US should play a leading role, for instance, as designated Chair of an International Conference on National Reconciliation with the support of countries such as France, Canada and the Dominican Republic as well as organisations such as, *inter alia*, OAS, CARICOM, the European Union and the United Nations. The working document of that Conference will be a legal instrument, follow-up of which will be entrusted by the participants to the United States.**

#### **Justification**

**The PDCH's proposal for a road map for Haiti with the USA playing a leading role is based on this statement of enlightened political realism as follows:**

***Today, one can be against the United States of America.***

***One can be for the United States;***

***But, as responsible political leaders who respect our people and have a vision for our country, we can neither do nor plan anything without the United States***

**which, nowadays, dominates the world, and is involved in our Haitian crisis and our social and political problems since Monday 19 September 1994 when they decided to send 25,000 soldiers to “implant democracy” in our country.**

**Having been part of the problem, one cannot avoid being part of the solution!**

Therefore, the PDCH proposes the strategic disengagement of OAS and the Special Mission from the Haitian crisis, with the United States playing a leading role, elaboration of a road map and establishment of a new framework of discussions where the four-nation team comprising the USA, France, Canada and the Dominican Republic will play a determining role in preparing this International Conference on National Reconciliation. That Conference should necessarily result in the formation of a government of national reconciliation called on to establish a neutral, credible and independent elections commission, which in turn will be entrusted with organising genuinely democratic general elections in Haiti.

Port-au-Prince, 25 June 2003.

**Haitian Christian Democratic Party (PDCH), by:**

**Osner H. FEVRY, Attorney**

- President, Political leader and official spokesperson of the PDCH
  - Legal Adviser of the Democratic Convergence Party
- Member of the Co-ordinating Committee of the other Non-aligned Opposition Parties
  - *Ad hoc* Co-ordinator of the Centre-Right Front (GFCD)

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APPENDIX FIVE

**GROUP OF 184 INSTITUTIONS, ASSOCIATIONS AND ORGANISATIONS  
FROM 13 ESSENTIAL SECTORS OF HAITIAN SOCIETY**

**(CITIZEN ACTION)**

**WHY A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT?**

**OUR DESIRE TO LIVE AND PROGRESS TOGETHER**

**Document presented to the Nation for reflection**

*The group of 184 hereby invites the Haitian people to participate in a process of concerted action aimed at taking up the challenge of the historical stumbling blocks that have hampered national unity et blocked our country's development.*

**For further information, please contact us at:**

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## WHAT DOES THIS NEW SOCIAL PACT CONTRACT CONSIST OF?

A **contract** is a voluntary act through which the signatories decide my mutual agreement to carry out certain activities or pursue certain goals. A **social contract** is a commitment of this type made by members of a community to define together the principles by which they will be guided in order to achieve their collective objectives.

This new social contract should allow us, based on a sound evaluation, to:

1. Make a new start together
2. Define the new rules of the game which will govern our life as a nation
3. Constitute a genuine community with a new type of statehood which serves the interest of the nation, and of all Haitians

This new social contract is not a political party manifesto. Its scope is broader and it is a civil society undertaking of the citizenry. Its safeguards are its voluntary nature and its expression of the desire to live and progress together while placing the emphasis on the greater good. It aims to achieve the economic, social and political inclusion of all classes of Haitian society.

It is a two-fold undertaking based on:

- The role of citizens: what, at our level, we undertake to do: reform our own practices
- The role of the State: what is the responsibility of the State and what civil society should require of those in authority

Our struggle, at these two levels, should lead progressively to a real revolution of mentality and behaviour. In this regard, we consider ourselves as an essential sector in the modernisation of our society.

## THE MAJOR PHASES OF DEVELOPING A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT

Development of our new social contract involves three major phases, namely:

- Identification of overall objectives
- Action to be taken with a view to conducting various activities and consultations throughout the country
- Conduct of these activities and consultations, drafting and signature of the new social contract

### 1. Definition of overall objectives

The first step in drafting the new social contract consists, **today**, of proposing to the nation the major objectives to be pursued through this citizen exercise. These objectives have been identified on the basis of the fundamental problems and major difficulties for which, at a later stage, we will seek **together** a solution.

The group of 184 has identified nine objectives on which the nation should reflect between now and the end of March 2003 via the organizations concerned throughout the country and in the diaspora. We would like to stress that these objectives are linked to the *major issues of the nation*. Moreover, we invite these organisations to propose any other point which, in their view, should be added to these nine and to make useful comments or suggestions.

Once an adequate consensus is established on the objectives to be pursued, the process of drafting the new social contract will move on to phase two.

## **2. Prerequisites of drafting**

Once the major problems and overall objectives have been identified, we will need to determine appropriate methods, prioritise needs, identify our aspirations, analyse the problems and causes and collectively find a solution to them. We will need to find the means and ways of facilitating the participation of all sectors, appreciating their contributions, setting up coordination and research mechanisms, establishing an implementation schedule and finally, identifying necessary resources.

Implementing these measures will be carried out through a process of consultation at the level of the organisations comprising the group of 184 and all other institutions and associations which, starting from today, express an interest in contributing to the development of this new social contract. The outcomes of this second phase will be presented to the nation within two months. They will be finalised based on relevant proposals made by all sectors.

## **3. Drafting the new social contract**

The third phase will consist mainly of sector-wide or region-wide discussion groups, national seminars on the major issues, technical studies to elaborate on the various issues and proposals for possible solutions. It will lead ultimately to the presentation and signature of the new social contract at a solemn, patriotic ceremony.

Today, we present to the nation the nine objectives that the group of 184 has identified for the first phase of the process.

## PROPOSAL TO THE NATION

### OBJECTIVES OF THE NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT

1. ***Construct a new State*** - Since our country achieved independence, the State as we know it has never been able to serve the people or elaborate a collective project and still less, foster a sense of belonging to one nation in all Haitians. To date, the new State as defined in the Constitution of 1987 has not been able to take shape.

The new social contract should identify concrete measures for applying the provisions of the Constitution of 1987 and redefine the relations between the State, society and the citizenry. In particular, it should find the appropriate channels for applying sound and equitable justice.

2. ***Identify new points of reference*** - Certain values of respectability, mutual respect and harmony are gradually disappearing. Haitian society is evolving in an environment where cheating, deception, lies, mistrust, wanton violence, pettiness, open corruption, flagrant disrespect for the law and the fundamental rules of morality run rife.

The new social contract must find the ways and means of reversing this trend, promoting civic responsibility, transparency, tolerance, self-esteem, accountability, valuing of effort, respect for private and public property and brotherhood.

3. ***Combat discrimination and exclusion*** - *The country is fuelling too much discrimination and exclusion which is manifested in economic, social, political and language barriers, thereby creating a deeply divided society.*

To promote this new social contract, we will undertake to combat all forms of discrimination and exclusion, particularly those linked to prejudice based on colour, social or regional background, age, appearance, religious beliefs and cultural practices. We will work to eliminate all sorts of discrimination and abuse of which women are victims.

4. ***Develop the country*** – *Although the population is growing, national production is steadily decreasing. Unemployment is rising, affecting women and young people in particular. Farmers make up more than half of the working population and are left to fend for themselves. Fewer and fewer people have access to basic amenities such as security, health care, sanitation, drinking water, electricity, etc. The country is not equipped to face the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

The new social contract should allow us to develop an economic plan to promote investment, thereby increasing national production and promoting job creation. In spite of our ideological and political differences, we will have to arrive at a

consensus on what strategy to adopt to engage the country in a process of sustainable development.

5. ***Combat poverty*** - *Too many Haitians live in conditions of poverty, destitution, hunger and illness. Our country has the most alarming health indicators in the Americas. Fundamental rights and basic amenities are a luxury even though they are essential for the well-being of our people and the development of our country. The gap between the rich and the poor is too wide. The disparity between our urban and rural sectors is too stark.*

All the sectors involved in preparing the new social contract should engage in national solidarity through concrete action. This new social contract will require the State to implement the measures within its reach to combat poverty, destitution, hunger and disease. It should promote the creation and equitable distribution of wealth, the development of an economy based on solidarity, the provision of basic services to the most needy and the reduction of disparities between the social classes.

6. ***Democratise knowledge and combat ignorance*** – *Too many children of school age cannot go to school and will therefore add to the growing numbers of illiterate persons. The difference in quality of education in schools is too great. The overall level of teaching is falling to dangerous levels. Programmes and curricula are, for the most part, outdated and ignored. The country, through its universities, does not produce enough know-how to face the major challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

The new social contract should define the conditions needed for all the nation's children to access quality education and for each and every one of them to access equal opportunities. Through education, the citizens of tomorrow should be fully developed and the country's development needs should be met within the context of globalisation. The new social contract will seek to ensure the conditions necessary for academic excellence, particularly by restoring value to the teaching profession. It will define citizen participation in all sectors with a view to conducting a national literacy and civic education campaign.

7. ***Preserve the environment*** – *The mountains are bare because of deforestation. Plains are suffering from desertification, arable land is going to the sea, engendering a rural exodus. Towns lack adequate infrastructure and an urban development plan, the quality of life is deteriorating, refuse is piling up and lack of sanitation are constant threats to health. The country cannot withstand a natural disaster.*

The new social contract should enable us to identify strategies, find resources and collectively adopt appropriate behaviour to reconstruct our country.

- 8. *Strengthen the rights of workers*** – *Work relations are too often based on arbitrary criteria, be it in the private sector, the public service, in the fields or in the home.*

The new social contract should guarantee trade union freedom as well as respect for workers' rights, including the right to fair remuneration and the right to social security.

- 9. *Normalise the political system*** – *The current system of political representation is incapable of carrying out its mission, which consists of defending the higher interests of the nation and the interests of the various sectors of society. The significance of political parties is underestimated, the principle of alternation is flouted and the opposition is often persecuted.*

The new social contract will reach out to political parties and present them with the expectations of civil society regarding their mission and functioning. It will attempt to define the collective effort needed to establish a system of structured and valued parties that can develop efficient and effective management skills. The new social contract should engage civil society in concerted action aimed at establishing a dependable electoral system and the holding of free and democratic elections.

- 10. *To be decided on the basis of exchange*** with other sectors not yet represented in the group of 184.