

Dr. Santiago Canton
Executive Secretary
Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
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January 10, 2011

Re.: Letter in Support of Precautionary Measures to Stop Imminent Deportations of Haitians from the United States

Dear Dr. Canton:

We, the undersigned human and civil rights advocates, write to express great concern about the recent announcement by the United States government to resume deportations to Haiti beginning January 2011. In the one year since the January 12, 2010 earthquake devastated Haiti, the United States has laudably set in place several humanitarian policies to respond to the catastrophe, including granting temporary protected status (TPS) for many Haitian nationals living in the United States, humanitarian parole for certain orphans, and, until recently, an indefinite stay of deportations to Haiti until conditions improve.

Far from improving, conditions in Haiti are equally bad, if not worse, than one year ago. A cholera epidemic is raging across the country. Over 100,000 people have contracted cholera and 3,333 have died as a result of the disease. The World Health Organization and Pan-American Health Organization expect another 650,000 cases within the first 6 months of 2011. Over 1.2 million people are living in temporary shelters in internally displaced persons camps. These people and countless others in Haiti lack basic sanitation, adequate food, potable water, and lighting, and basic security. Haitian detention centers, where deportees would undoubtedly be held, are widely-documented as unsanitary, rodent-infested spaces where detainees have little to no access to food or drinking water and are exposed to disease. Cholera has already claimed at least 48 lives in detention centers.

In light of these grim conditions, the deportation of Haitian nationals by the U.S. is inhumane and impracticable.

We therefore write to express our support of the request for precautionary measures submitted to this Commission on January 6, 2011 by the University of Miami School of Law Human Rights and Immigration Clinics, the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center, the Center for Constitutional Rights, Alternative Chance, and the Loyola Law Clinic and Center for Social Justice to halt the roundups, detention, and imminent deportations of Haitian nationals by the United States government.

We ask that this Commission act decisively and quickly bring the full weight of its authority to bear on the United States Government, so that it will fulfill its legal responsibility to protect the rights of vulnerable Haitian individuals who are at risk of serious harm, even death, and who, if deported, will place an impossible burden on a detention and justice system in Haiti that is broken.

Sincerely,

Organizational Sign-Ons

1. Partners in Health
2. American Friends Service Committee
3. You.Me.We
4. Grassroots International
5. Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti
6. Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice & Human Rights
7. American Civil Liberties Union, Florida
8. The Society of American Law Teachers
9. National Lawyers Guild
10. MADRE: Demanding Rights, Resources & Results for Women Worldwide
11. Task Force for the Homeless
12. Drum Major Institute for Public Policy
13. La Fuente: NY and Long Island Civic Participation Projects
14. Utah Health and Human Rights Project
15. The National Lawyer's Guild, New York
16. Secular Jewish Humanists
17. Trail of DREAMs
18. Coalition of African, Arab, Asian, European, and Latino Immigrants of Illinois (CAAELII)
19. Maurice & Jane Sugar Law Center for Economic & Social Justice
20. WE Count!, Miami, Florida
21. Black Law Students Association, University of Miami School of Law
22. Florida Immigrant Coalition
23. Scott D. Pollock & Associates, P.C.
24. Florida Immigrant Coalition
25. Immigration Law Clinic, Michigan State University College of Law
26. N'Cobra
27. KINDRED Afro Americas Alliance
28. Rising in Support of Ayiti (RISA), Chicago, Illinois
29. Cidadao Global
30. New Jersey Forum for Human Rights
31. The All Peoples Democratic Club, Democratic Caribbean Caucus of Florida Democratic Party

32. Executive Director, Georgia Latino Alliance for Human Rights
33. General Counsel, International Indian Treaty Council
34. New York City Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild's Anti Racism Committee
35. Chair, Social Responsibilities Council Unitarian Society of Ridgewood
36. New Jersey Advocates for Immigrant Detainees
37. Washington Defender Association's Immigration Project
38. Middlesex County Coalition for Immigrant Rights
39. Legal Aid Service of Broward County
40. Georgia Detention Watch
41. Amigos Center
42. Just Cause, the Union of St. Peter's Housing Committee & Just Cause Oakland
43. Human Rights Advocates
44. Virginia Coalition of Latino Organizations
45. Global Justice Program/Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race & Ethnicity
46. Foreign Policy in Focus, Institute for Policy Studies
47. Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
48. Immigrant Rights Clinic, Florida Coastal School of Law
49. New York Immigration Coalition
50. Urban Justice Center
51. University of Houston Immigration Clinic
52. IRATE
53. First Friends
54. New Jersey Advocates for Immigrant Detainees
55. Immigration Law Clinic, University of California, Davis, School of Law Clinical Programs
56. American Jewish World Service
57. Church World Service, Haiti
58. Legal Aid Society, New York, New York
59. Capital Area Immigrants' Rights Coalition
60. Pax Christi New Jersey
61. Vermont Medical Response Team
62. The Legal Aid Society of the Orange County Bar Association, Inc.
63. Immigrant Defense Project
64. Worker's Rights Law Center of NY
65. Immigrant Rights Clinic, New York University School of Law
66. Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR Florida)
67. South Asian Americans Leading Together
68. Tampa Chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-Tampa)
69. Immigration Law Society, UCLA Law School
70. Center for Gender & Refugee Studies, University of California , Hastings College of the Law
71. Political Asylum/Immigration Representation Project
72. Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition
73. Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office
74. World Organization for Human Rights USA
75. December 12th Movement International Secretariat

76. International Association Against Torture
77. United We DREAM
78. Presente.org
79. The Post-Deportation Human Rights Project, Center for Human Rights and International Justice, Boston College
80. Vermont Medical Response Team
81. United Confederation of Taino People
82. The New Sanctuary Movement of NYC

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