

June 3, 2016

Michael Gayle
Deputy Political Counselor
Embassy of the United States of America
Blvd. du 15 Octobre, Tabarre 41
Port au Prince, Haiti

Dear Michael:

On behalf of the delegation from Task Force on the Americas who visited you on April 22, 2016, we'd like to thank you again for the time you took to meet with us. We have since then been following with great interest the developments in Haiti's electoral crisis. On April 28 provisional President Privert convened the election verification commission that had been widely demanded by nearly all constituencies, giving it 30 days to complete its investigation. Interim reports we received from various observers of their investigation indicated that the commission was rigorously applying Haitian election law throughout the process as it examined documents from a random sample of 25% of polling places throughout the country.

On May 30, the election verification commission issued its report, finding such widespread and unacceptable irregularities in over 90% of the sample that their only option under Haitian election law was to recommend annulling the Oct. 25, 2015 presidential election results and re-starting the entire process with better safeguards for ensuring a fair outcome.

Although the election verification commission focused on the presidential election and was not mandated to examine the process and results of parliamentary elections in 2015, we are aware that numerous parliamentary candidates have raised similar concerns and that many Haitian voters are calling on a re-examination of those seats as well. Since the fraud appears to have been so widespread, the integrity of both the executive and the legislative branches of government are at stake.

We recall a question you posed to us during our meeting with you: "When capabilities are so low and challenges are so great, where do you draw the line about how flawless the process has to be?" Based on the report of the election verification commission, we trust you'll agree with us that the flaws in this case were of a magnitude to warrant a re-do of the entire process. A commitment to democracy would demand no less.

Furthermore, we'd like to remind you that Haitians have clearly demonstrated the ability to conduct elections conscientiously and with no major problems, as personally observed by one of our delegation members in the 1995 and 2000 presidential elections.

As US citizens who value democratic principles of fairness, inclusion and respecting the will of the people, we would expect the US State Department, as a matter of policy, to respect the recommendations of the election verification commission and endorse efforts by Haitians to carry out truly free and fair elections.

Sincerely,

Teri Mattson
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