

**CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

**ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION
WITH**

**AMBASSADOR EDMOND MULET,
UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN HAITI
(MINUSTAH)**

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2007
2:00 PM – 3:30 PM**

*Transcript by:
Federal News Service
Washington, D.C.*

PETER DESHAZO: We're delighted to have you here for this presentation by Ambassador Edmond Mulet, the other distinguished colleagues, who are at the head table, are Johanna Mendelson Forman, senior associate at CSIS and Dan Erikson, who is director for the Caribbean at the Inter-American Dialogue and I'm delighted to ask Dan to make some opening remarks on behalf of the Dialogue. Thank you.

DAN ERIKSON: Thank you very much, Peter. I want to keep this very brief but just to say that Dialogue is absolutely delighted to be here today, helping to co-host this session with CSIS, with Ambassador Edmond Mulet, I think no one can doubt that he has one of the most important and challenging jobs in the hemisphere today and the Dialogue has been a strong supporter of Haiti and also trying to help the international community, help Haitians to find the solutions that will assist them in their efforts to develop the country.

All of you probably know the saying, in Haiti, mountains beyond mountains: every time you see a mountain, there's more mountains beyond. And our message to Haitians is listen, you have friends in the mountains, and whether they are with you, we're trying to work together with you to help Haiti move forward. And without further ado, I will turn it back to Peter. Thank you.

MR. DESHAZO: Thanks, Dan. This is a really important event. I don't think there's nearly enough attention that's been paid to Haiti in Washington recently, this is an excellent opportunity for all of us to get an update on a country and on issues that are very important.

Ambassador Edmond Mulet is the United Nations' special representative in Haiti – the special representative of the United Nations' secretary general and is head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti – MINUSTAH. Ambassador Mulet has served as ambassador of Guatemala to the European Union in Belgium, he's been a member of Guatemala's National Congress, he's been important in other peacemaking efforts in Central America, and has been ambassador of Guatemala to the United States. A very distinguished diplomat from his own country, and now distinguished international public servant in a very demanding and important job. We all very much look forward to hearing what Ambassador Mulet has to say and then we'll have an ample opportunity to ask questions afterwards of him, something I'm sure many of you are very much interested in doing. So I give the floor to Ambassador Edmond Mulet. (Applause.)

AMBASSADOR EDMOND MULET: Thank you, thank you very much. Thank you, Peter. Thank you for having me here today. I am also very happy to see how many people are here attending this gathering today, and I'm also very pleased and happy

seeing so many old friends amongst all the friends we have today, so I'm very happy about that.

I'm also very pleased that Haiti is very much in the radar screen nowadays. I was in New York last Friday on Monday and Tuesday with the Security Council meetings for the troops and police contributing countries to MINUSTAH. We had a very important meeting last night in the House of Representatives here, this meeting today, we have the State Department tomorrow; there's big meeting at the Carter Center in Atlanta on Haiti on Saturday and Sunday, and there's another big meeting on Haiti in Brasilia on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. There's another one in Lima, Peru, of the Latin American countries contributing troops to Haiti, on the 12th of February. So it's a never ending series of meetings on Haiti. But this is a good signal. I mean, this is encouraging.

And one of the things I've been noticing right now, and it is very different from previous conferences or meetings or seminars or encounters on Haiti, is that I don't see this polarization we saw before – nor ideological, nor political and nor inside Haiti, nor outside and the fact that there has been all these series of elections in Haiti during 2006 and the way the government is conducting this political process in Haiti is proving to be a unifying process and I think that is also very, very good.

I have so many things to tell you about Haiti. I've been there for seven months, I took over after my good friend Juan Gabriel Valdes from Chile – he was a head of the UN mission over there for two years – and I've been there for seven months now. And I've been everywhere – everywhere in Haiti: in all the different departments, the provinces, not only visiting our troops and our civilians, who are doing a wonderful job over there, sometimes – or most of the time – under very, very difficult circumstances. You have some big cities in Haiti, 80,000, 200,000 people living in those – 100,000, 200,000 people living in those cities without electricity ever – ever. And that means without refrigeration ever. And it is a sad thing when you see these children coming near our camps – MINUSTAH's camps, at night because we have all these lights at night and they come next to our fences to be able to read and study at night. The children lined up against our fences, because there's never electricity there.

Haiti has the highest rate of AIDS in the Western Hemisphere. There are some important issues that at some point will have to be addressed by the Haitians themselves, which is the birthrate. In rural areas – not in urban areas but in rural areas, it's seven children per woman, which is enormous. The levels of poverty and misery are incredibly high. Life expectancy also: a baby boy being born today in Haiti will have 53 years of life expectancy. In the Dominican Republic, just next door, just the same island but just next-door, that same baby boy would be living 71 years, not 53 like in Haiti.

In all my visits I've been making everywhere, I always make a point of visiting the mayors' offices and institutions in Haiti and I see that there was a country, there was a state in Haiti some years ago. I can see some remnants of asphalt or pavement on old roads that were never repaired and now they're, I mean, just dirt roads. But they had big roads and important roads in the past. I can see that even though they're crumbling

down, but they had hospitals built in the 1920s, in the '40s, in the '50s maybe, big institutions, big hospitals and clinics, but they're not functioning anymore. So you can see that there was something going on.

So what happened? What happened in Haiti? When I visit these city halls and mayor's offices I always make a point of visiting the birth registry or the civil registry in all of these places. And once in these town departments – once I found a desk in one place and two or three other places I found some kind of tables, the other ones had probably a chair, but in none of them – in none of them did I find one single piece of paper, nor a book, nor a registry book, nor anything. Babies are being born and they're not registered. People are dying and they're not being reported. The basic institution in any state, in any government, in any country, which is the birth registry, the civil registry, even that is absent in Haiti right now, so you can imagine all the other institutions.

A country that has 1,700 kilometers of coastline with 12, 14, 15 different ports of all kinds of sizes and things and in most of them you will never find a port authority, nor a policeman, nor a customs official. A country that has in its functioning budget – 65 percent of its functioning budget comes from international budget support. They have not one red cent of their own for investments and for salaries, for functioning budget; 65 percent comes from abroad.

So I mention all these things because Haiti is a very special – very special case. And if you can see the history of Haiti during the last 20 years, we have been able to identify eight or nine international interventions in Haiti. The United States alone with Marines and then the Organization of American States and the OAS with the UN, the U.S. with the OAS, the U.S. with the UN and the OAS and then, just before MINUSTAH, you had the international multilateral force, interim force – France, Canada and the U.S. – and now MINUSTAH, again the UN in and out, in and out, in and out during these last 20 years.

And when you see not the amounts of millions, but the amounts of billions of dollars that have been poured into this country and when you go on the field and they don't even have birth registries or civil registries, so one wonders if the international community shouldn't really examine the way we do business and invest and work in Haiti. I also think that our Haitian friends should also examine the way they have been absorbing this international help and presence in Haiti.

So Haiti needs – my Haitian friends don't like the term “failed state,” they say it's a fragile state, so let's say it, it is a fragile state – but it needs a long-term commitment to build institutions and strengthen the capacity of civil servants, particularly at the middle management level. There was this report from the World Bank issued last week that estimates that more than 83 percent – 83 percent – of the most qualified members of the workforce of Haiti are out of the country. So you have a president, you have a prime minister, you have ministers, but below them there's nobody – nobody. So anybody in government right now, any president would be having the same difficulties in conducting business, in trying to govern the country.

The theme of the July donor conference in Madrid – the Haitian government said that Haiti was a country to construct and President Préval has been stressing that the international community needs to build a capacity in Haiti. In particular, the lack of capacity in planning and analysis, streamlining bureaucratic procedures, and financial management that has hampered the government's ability to disperse the money it has received or is receiving from donors.

The time has come to reassess how the international community provides and coordinates its assistance to Haiti, as I said before. Most of the money that has been given to Haiti in these past years has gone through or to NGOs and not the government, nor the state itself, and that also has – in my opinion – made the institution building more difficult.

This capacity building has to be addressed by the international community and we were yesterday, last night, with some of the members of Congress and there's this initiative of funding so far \$3 million and we'll request for more money, to convince diaspora Haitians living abroad to go back to Haiti and to work for their country with decent salaries, and that would also be an important project that would help the Haitian government to face the problems they have right now of the brain drain of the most qualified human resources.

We need a long-term vision for Haiti. We cannot have this short vision of leaving too early, as we have done before. MINUSTAH will now have, again, a renewal of its mandate for another additional six months. What is different also in this presence of the international community in Haiti right now is the component: 80 percent of the military force and the police force comes from Latin America. We have troops from Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Ecuador, Peru, my own country Guatemala. One of the first things President Evo Morales did when he arrived in power in Bolivia was to send some soldiers to Haiti, so we have 250 Bolivian soldiers in Haiti right now doing a wonderful job. So this is a South-South cooperation, it's a hemispheric effort of solidarity, continental support, in order to help Haiti overcome its problems. And you can see from Guatemala or Bolivia or Peru or any of others countries, we have similar problems to the ones in Haiti and, in spite of that, we're making enormous efforts of sending troops and contributing in many ways to help our Haitian friends.

The problem we've had with the previous missions, because they've been so short-lived and we had to leave early is that all the efforts that were made in building institutions – the police force and judiciary many others institutions just faded away. So I think right now we have to leave behind permanent and solid institutions before we even think of withdrawing. And I think you will find this commitment from the Latin American countries and from most of the troop-contributing countries also. In consultations with members of the Security Council, that kind of attitude is there and I hope that this will be a lasting one.

One other important thing right now is – and what is different from these last 20 years – is the political stability in Haiti. During his electoral campaign, as many other presidential candidates also, President Préval said that he would organize around him a government of a national coalition, of national dialogue, which he did. So he has called the five most important political parties to join with him in government. When the president proposed the name of the Mr. Alexia, the prime minister, he was approved by the Senate unanimously and when the prime minister proposed to the Senate and the House of Representatives his working plan – program – it was also approved unanimously.

So this is encouraging and you can see also from the private sector, from civil society, everywhere in Haiti this desire of working together and leaving behind these 20 years of confrontation and polarization. They can see that it is a big window of opportunity right now. And also, which is very encouraging is the intellectual level and the moral level of the people in government. I'm talking about the president, the prime minister, the ministers in government. People who really love their country, they are facing all these enormous problems and tasks, facing corruption, impunity, the lack of institutions and they really are struggling there. And that is not only a guarantee for the voters in Haiti but also for us, the international community, to have that kind of partners to work with.

One source of instability now in Haiti – and that's something that will be present for many years to come if the Haitians don't do something about that – is the constitution itself. It's the most democratic, decentralized constitution I've ever seen. Right now, on the 3rd of December, the Haitians elected more than 10,000 officials all over the country: mayors and regional assemblies and municipal assemblies and departmental assemblies and zazechsen (ph) and kazechsen (ph) and all sort of things at all levels.

This year they will have to renew the senate by one third and they need to have national elections to elect 10 people to the senate and with first round and run-off elections, each election costing \$16 million, they will have to spend – or we will have to spend, the international community – \$32 million to elect 10 people to the senate, which is ridiculous. And the following year they have to elect another third of the senate and the parliament, again municipal elections, so it's a never ending turnover of elections all the time and that cannot be really a – it's not useful and it's too costly for Haiti itself and for us also. So at one point the Haitians will have to really do something about that. If they don't, they will be again violating this constitution and generating this political instability.

Security and rule of law. MINUSTAH, as you know, it has this very clear mandate in guaranteeing the stability of the country. If you take a picture of Haiti today, it's a very complex and worrisome picture, the still picture of Haiti today. As I mentioned before, the lack of institutions, the violence, the human development index, but if you compare the picture of Haiti today with the one of a year ago just before the last presidential elections, or if you compare the picture of Haiti today with the picture of Haiti of two years ago, there's been an enormous, positive evolution. And we have to see

where we come from, but especially where we're going to, and this is very important in Haiti right now.

The criminal activity remains very high in Port-au-Prince. In many of our countries in Latin America you will have gang activities, maras (ph), all sorts of criminal activities in neighborhoods and cities but in none of our countries they are destabilizing the country like they are in Haiti. So that's why is so, so important to confront that problem in Haiti. Most of the country is calm, is peaceful but the main problems we will find sometimes in Cap-Haitien, in Gonaive, but mainly in Port-au-Prince.

Our forces receive fire every day, every day, every day. We've had 14 soldiers killed in Haiti in the last two and a half years. I lost two Jordanian soldiers now, at the end of October. And we had put in place since the 15th of August with the government –, the newly installed government in Haiti, with President Préval, a security plan for Port-au-Prince, starting on the 15th of August that was working wonders and the criminal activities were coming down and kidnappings also, August, September, October until mid-November.

In mid-November we had to redeploy the troops to go and assist these elections on the 3rd of December. We had to provide logistical support and security for these elections, as I said before, that elected more than 10,000 officials all over the place. So, as soon as I deployed my troops all over the country, the gangs occupied that space immediately and you have this surge in kidnappings and criminal activities and some of them were really horrific, terrible. This young girl, 17-year-old-girl, who was kidnapped and tortured and her eyes pierced and, even though the family had paid for the ransom she was killed; and this – another seven years old boy who was kidnapped in Port-au-Prince and tortured and his body was recovered in Cap-Haitien later on. And then, you see, we had all these kidnappings of children coming out of school and even busloads of children being kidnapped, so the whole situation was deteriorating a lot.

And just after the elections, on the 3rd of December, I had a rotation of most of my troops in Port-au-Prince – the Brazilians, the Chileans, the Peruvians, the Sri Lankans et cetera. So it was not only by mid-December the 12th - 13th of December, when I was able to redeploy my troops and secure the city again and since then – I mean, with the lid on top – all these criminal activities have been coming down. And also the president had requested from us that after the elections on the 3rd of December we would go after the big gang leaders and arrest them or neutralize them and their activities. So on the 22nd of December, we conducted this big, big operation in Bois Neuf, near Cité Soleil, in support of the Haitian national police. Then we had another big operation on the 28th of December, another one on the 5th of January, and since then the collaboration and cooperation, coordination with the PNH and MINUSTAH forces has been increasing and more effective all the time in Martissant area and many other neighborhoods also in Port-au-Prince.

So that is going very well and you can see now that these criminal activities and kidnappings are almost zero. We still have some incidents, but not as many as we had

before. And now we are surrounding these neighborhoods, no traffic is allowed, no vehicles, no motorcycles, everybody who comes in and out is searched and that has helped too to control these activities.

We've had also our own DDR program – Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reinsertion – and the government created its own DDR commission, but I'm not very pleased with the results. I don't think the traditional approach in Haiti with a DDR program is the right one, so we are changing that because there's nobody to negotiate with. I mean, it's not guerilla group. It's not another army you can negotiate a disarmament plan. So this is more like a individual approach by gang members who are willing to give up their weapons and be trained to be reinserted into society.

In some of the cases, or a lot of the cases of the gang members, even this approach is very, very difficult. You know that some of the gang leaders are 22, 23, 24-year-old. They've been members of gangs for the last 10, 12 years since they were 8, 10 years old. They've been killing people, kidnapping people, torturing people, raping girls – it is very difficult to reinsert into society someone like that. So I need more like a psychiatric institution would be the best place to place them in the future after we arrest them because it's going to be very, very, very difficult.

What is also very important is not only to conduct security operations or police actions, or military actions against the gang leaders and members of gangs in these neighborhoods, but it also important for the state, for the government to just come behind us, for the people to see that there is some kind of peace dividend, that if we secure an area or a neighborhood, that if there is a school that was not operating, for the government to come in and have this school functioning again, or if there is a hospital or a clinic or for humanitarian agencies or development agencies to just come along with us to benefit the people. And we've been working with NGOs, with Canadian government, with the American government, the French Embassy also, with UN agencies to put in place all these actions in support of the population and these red zone task forces we have put in place.

We're also very much in support of what the government is doing in the customs front. As I said before, the state, the government doesn't have any revenues, 65 percent of its budget comes from international budget's support, so any efforts government is doing right now, in trying to collect taxes, really merits all our support. And we are even providing personal security to some of these customs officials that have been trying to collect taxes in border crossings, in some Ports, et cetera, because, since people are used to not paying taxes, and so they are under a lot of threats and a lot of pressure. So we have to provide that personal security for them also.

I must say also that the United States have been very, very supportive of this process in Haiti. I don't have one single American soldier in my forces – as I said, they're mainly Latin American – but the United States currently contributes with 47 police officers, including Haitian Americans as part of as UNPOL, component of MINUSTAH. The U.S. is the sixth largest police contributing country to our mission

there. Most of them are Haitian Americans, because it is important for them, since they speak Creole, to work with us. We also – as I said – are working very closely with the American embassy in the implementation of the reform plan for the PNH, the national police.

The vetting process of the PNH has started. We are certifying all the members of the police force, we have more 6,000 now we have certified but not vetted yet, but I believe that more than 1,000 of those will have to leave the police force, because they are linked to criminal activities, groups, kidnappers, drug traffickers et cetera. And this will cause an additional problem security-wise, because if there are criminals inside the police force, they will go outside to also continue those kind of activities, but in the same time, we are working very closely with the government in the police academy – three classes have been graduated now, we had 547 new policemen graduated on the 15th of December, we have recruited an additional group right now, will be graduating in August, and that is also going very well. The United States provided motorcycles and patrols and pickups for the new police force, so that is also going pretty well.

I'm still a bit concerned because of the judiciary reform program is not advancing as fast or as effectively as we would like to and it would be a pity if we can only reform the PNH with the government and not do the same with the judiciary. Those two pillars are fundamental in order to establish the rule of law in Haiti, as the basics for many other things. I don't see any Diaspora, Haitians living abroad, going back to Haiti, investing or any other investors or job creation in Haiti or tourists arriving or investments in tourism in Haiti, the potential is there for that, unless this basic rule of law is established to give guarantees to investors and to the population and for everybody. There's no cadastre in Haiti, there is no registry of private property, so that kind of legislation is still missing and, until we have that established, then – I think – we'll see interest in investing in the country. So this is really absolutely fundamental. I don't see how we can address the reform of the judiciary without vetting the members of the judiciary. The judicial system in Haiti is extremely corrupt, judges and magistrates are involved – not all of them but many of them – involved in all sorts of illegal activities and, if we really want to reform that, we have to address that in a profound way.

So this is the vision of Haiti right now, what we're trying to do, we have now this new mandate for the next six months. We're working very hard; we are under fire every single day. I had two Bolivian soldiers injured three weeks ago, I had two more Brazilian soldiers injured last week, we're under fire every day. I wonder where all the ammunition comes from, where all the weapons come from. Drug trafficking is becoming more and more a problem in Haiti. I think that some member states should pay more attention to that, since the United Nations, we don't a mandate to address that problem but that is really destabilizing the whole situation, as it has happened in many other countries, drug trafficking, money laundering and those kinds of people are seeping into society and political sectors, administration and to extract that, later on will be even more difficult, so I think we have to work on that quickly.

So the task is enormous, but there is a big window of opportunity: we have emplaced a government that is the result of democratic elections, we have a parliament, and we have local authorities that we have to work with to reinforce their capacities in a decentralized way. So – and everywhere I go in Haiti I can see possibilities in development, in tourism and services, in exports, in agriculture. The potential is there. Of course I have the big advantage of traveling by helicopter. I have several helicopters, and I do that by helicopter. I don't have to go on those roads. It would take two or three days to go from one place to another. But now investment is coming, the World Bank, IDB, the European Union, many other countries bring money to develop the country to build roads, the infrastructure. And this will also help in creating a better framework for the development of many other issues and questions.

So I am optimistic about the future of the country, I can see that Haitians are working together, but I have no option. I think we have to be optimistic. And I think we have to support the Haitian Government, the Haitian people right now in this very special moment in their history. They deserve that – I think – because they are doing a great job down there and working hard on that. So now I will be more than happy to hear comments and answer questions from all of you. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

MS. JOHANNA MENDELSON FORMAN: Yes, okay. (Off mike.) Thank you Ambassador Mulet for what is clearly a very thorough briefing of this current situation. But let me just have the prerogative of the co-chairs here and just start out with – to throw you a question and I want to just go onto some specifics. When the MINUSTAH was established, Kofi Annan, then secretary general then said that this was a 20-year process. But the development community was only going to give it five to 10 years. And you've made reference to the fact that this is always a short-term vision with a long-term need. If you had a wish list, what would the three things that you would like accomplish in 2007 that would advance the agenda for stabilizing Haiti, obviously renewal of the mandate on the 15th of February would be – I think – a priority, but going beyond the UN Mission, if you had the three wishes, what would they be?

AMB. MULET: At this point I think the – to start, to begin with the reform of the judiciary. I think that is very, very important. We have done that, we are doing that with the Police reform program, but as I said before, if we don't do the judiciary one, I mean, it is worthless. I mean, what we are doing there on the police, we have to do it at the same pace with the judiciary. That is absolutely fundamental. Then I think that we need a better coordination between us, the international community, to avoid overlappings of efforts, projects – that is also very important. But I think that the coordination mechanism should be done by the Haitians themselves, not by us. I think that the international community should be coordinated by the Haitians themselves, because they really know where the problems are, where the priorities are, and I think that would be also the second on my wish list.

And the third I think, for all of us to realize that this is a long-term project. The fact that we have a six-month mandate right now, this will be renewed later on, and even though the mandate will eventually evolve and change accordingly to the capacities of

the Haitian State and probably moving from a pure security mission to a more developing one, we have to know and realize that this is a very long-term commitment, and we have to be aware of this, not only us, troop contributing countries, police contributing countries, countries that are providing money and assistance like the United States and I think that is also very, very important.

MS. FORMAN: Okay, we have a few hands up, and I am going to recognize you as I see them. Would you please state your name and organization? I saw Mark Schneider first, Howard -- (unintelligible) -- the second, two gentlemen here and we will go from there. Thank you.

Q: Mr. Ambassador, thank you very much. Mark Schneider, International Crisis. As you know we've just put out a report that today on the justice reform in Haiti and some of the needs. Now please proceed to tell us one of your highest of priorities. And let me ask a question that is sort of directed to that. The ministry of justice has a strategy, a plan of reform that he's presented two or three pieces of legislation that are critical to the cabinet, which ultimately have to go to the parliament. One of those relates to -- I believe -- the creation of judicial council which will have the authority back (the bet?). Given what you have described as President Préval's outreach, you expect that to pass the parliament? Has there been any discussion? What's the timing for that? And is that crucial to in fact, any chance of judiciary reform succeeding? We know from the past decades that if we try to reform the police and fail to reform justice, it is simply not going to work.

Let me just ask one other thing if I could: you mentioned the countries which are assisting, and you mentioned the United States was sixth in the list of police. I think it is important to emphasize that we'd be very critical, because we don't think that is a very strong commitment. Nineteen hundred police review and the U. S. is currently contributing 48. China is contributing 130. Maybe sixth on the list, but below sixth. I am curious whether or not there has been any indication of (unintelligible) to increase that that number. And also increase the level of support for interdiction of drugs on the south side of the island. You've mentioned drugs as a problem. It relates both to organized crime and to the gangs, and I'm curious whether or not is there indication of an increase in the U. S. commitment with respect to DEA, with respect to Coast Guard interdiction, with respect to air interdictions of small planes coming into Haiti.

AMB. MULET: Thank you, Mark. On the judicial reform, the minister of justice with assistance from the U. S. and MINUSTAH and others they have drawn, they have written these three proposals: one is Conseil Supérieur de la Magistrature, one is the École de la Magistrature and the other one is the Statute de la Magistrature. And these three laws, I mean draft laws have been presented to the cabinet right now, ministerial cabinet by the minister of justice and we are waiting, expecting that this should be approved today, tomorrow by the government. And then it has to go to parliament. And there we will have some problems, because the people who benefit from impunity, people who benefit from the disorder we have now in Haiti would not like these laws to be approved the way they are, because this will really regulate the work and the role and the functions

of the members of the judiciary. So we will have to make a big effort there, but not only MINUSTAH, many other people, many other sectors, NGOs?, countries also collaborating on this with political parties and with parliament to have this approved as soon as possible. We were expecting this to happen since August, September last year. And it has been delayed, delayed, delayed. It has been consulted with civil society so far, with most of the political parties, so in that sense we some kind of guaranties.

The problem in Haiti also is that the political leadership, the presidents of political parties, secretary generals of political parties, the big leaders of the political parties are not in parliament. I mean there is a dysfunction there. And sometimes the communication between the political leadership of these parties and their own deputies and senators is not there. So we are working also in order to establish some kind of connection there. So you'll find from the political leadership support for these three laws, but sometimes that is not reflected in the Senate, nor in the House. So there is a big work to be done there. But I am confident that the political leadership of the president, the prime minister and other members in the House of Representatives and in the Senate will probably facilitate this, but is it not going to be an easy task. But this is the base, really the basic, what we need in order to build the reform there.

On the UNPOL, the United Nations Police and the U. S. participation: we still have a deficit of about 150,160 UNPOLs right now. We have a ceiling authorized by Security Council and we never reach that ceiling because it is not easy to find adequate French speaking, Creole speaking, or qualified people to go to Haiti and work with this. And we've been requesting the United States through the State Department to find more UNPOLs for us there. And on the drug issue, we will have your DEA head visiting Haiti – she was coming one of these days, now it has been postponed for March, but that is also an important step.

More and more will have to be done by member states that are concerned by the drug traffic and because it is not a MINUSTAH mandate but it is related to security and that is affecting the effectiveness of what we are doing there. As I said before 1,700 kilometers of coast line with no coast guards, no air protection, no nothing, so anything comes in and out. The Uruguayans that I have in the south, they take pictures of all these illegal landing strips all the time, and I look at these pictures, and then two weeks later they bring these pictures back, they build holes and trenches to avoid these traffickers to use these landing strips. But two weeks later they'd been filled up again and be used again. So that in an ongoing problem, and it is getting more and more complicated, so some kind of maritime control, air control will be needed and necessary, not only on behalf of Haiti but the Dominican Republic also – the whole island of Espanola. And I hope that this summit that has been organized by President Uribe of Columbia and President Fernandez of the Dominican Republic and President Préval of Haiti on the 15th of March in Santo Domingo will bring this to the attention of the relevant players. Thank you.

MS. FORMAN: Okay, thank you. I think for the sake of time, I'm going to – Howard you have the next question and the gentlemen, and then maybe two or three questions at a time to move things along. So Howard?

Q: Mr. Ambassador, I'm Howard -- (off mike) – from -- (off mike). Thank you for a very honest – if I may say – brutally honest assessment of the situation (we find out there?). And I have to tell you many of the anecdotes that you related struck very close to home, particularly the ones about disintegrating (curves?) and (road ways?). I could have (left?) Haiti in 1962 if (he understood?) me. When -- (unintelligible) -- and he is the one that built those (curves?) as it turns out disintegrated. (Off mike.) So that gets me to my question. In many ways your role is one that must reconcile the irreconcilable to build institutions but must do it within a democratic context. In many ways those are contradictory. Institutions require a strong government and democracy requires limited and weak government. And maybe the two are not compatible although it's not possible in the present circumstances even the domestic and international pressure is to avoid the democracy issue. But how do you yourself reconcile what may be incompatible roles for you and for your institutional -- (unintelligible) -- in Haiti.

AMB. MULET: Thank you. As I mentioned at the beginning of my presentation, you can see everywhere this renewed interest for Haiti. All these meetings and conferences and seminars, we are here today and all over the place in Lima and Brasilia, everywhere. This is renewed interest. And you can see from the International Community. I mean from the World Bank, IMF, IDB, working on Haitian reduction of its debts and providing more money and assistance, and donations and all that, and political support also for Haiti, which you had not seen until now. And this is the result of the democratic process. Now there is a political stability. There is a five year mandate. So people know that they can – first of all, they can trust the situation in Haiti, the leadership, the government, it is a legitimate government. Why didn't we have this kind of interest during the two years of the interim government or during these 20 years before that? It's because we had all the instability and ups and downs, and it was very difficult to work with Haiti in that way. For the International Community, for the donors, for the financial institutions, for the United Nations, for the OS but now we have that in front of us so I think it is easier for us to build institutions in this democratic framework than in the other one, which was very, very unstable. So the fact that there is political stability and the fact that there is this will in the Haitian society of working together, this I think is a very positive step and I think it facilitates more our work than hindering it.

MS. FORMAN: There's a question over here and then over here.

Q: (Off mike.) Quick question regarding the Chinese (residence?) in Haiti. There was some talk, and maybe you can update us on this about the Chinese taking the reinforce out of here, they were unhappy with the way Haiti – (off mike) – UN commissions. Can you update us on that? Is that issue resolved? The Chinese have recommitted themselves to their reinforce in Haiti?

AMB. MULET: Yes, the issue has been resolved between Haiti and China. That is something that concerns the two countries. And China will support the presence of MINUSTAH in Haiti, and will support the renewal of the mandate. And as far as I know, today they will keep their police contingent in Haiti in support of our mission. I must say that is the only peacekeeping operation in the world where you have a Chinese presence in Haiti. We have 18 peacekeeping operations in the world and this is the only one where China is present, and I think they will continue supporting us.

Q: First I would like to thank CSIS for allowing me to be here today. This is what – Ambassador Mulet, this is democracy in action. (Off mike.) I have heard you talking about a lot of the things that I – are just country hated. It's sad and it is a terrible, terrible situation. Let me remind you though that I am a bit disappointed in a way because you have not touched the real problem in all your nice presentation. You have said a lot of nice things. And you and I have had some exchanges, if you recall I sent you some e-mails, my name is Robert Louisier (ph), and I can tell you that those exchanges were not credit, and might be this problem. Today, Haiti is like this exactly because of the international community. You are here – you are trying to tell us that you are the savior, when you are the ones responsible for the problems.

First of all, the first question I want to ask you, what day in February the UN – (off mike) – when to get out of Haiti? That is number one. If you choose to do that it will be better for the Haitian people, it would be better for me. If you will not do that you will be forced out. Now, having said that, this is not a threat, and as an American citizen I cannot (lay foot in here ?). What I will do, if you force me, I will give up my citizenship to go fight over there to resolve the problem. Even if we have two Haitians left in Haiti – one boy and one girl – the situation must be resolved.

This gentleman earlier has said something very important about democracy. Yes, you are exactly correct. In order to fix things up, we will need a strong hand, we will need to make some tough decisions. But I can tell you, the U.S. does not have the stomach to help Haiti through this.

MS. FORMAN: Can you state your question please?

Q: In fact, the U.S. is responsible for the current problem in Haiti. You talk about the current president. You talk about (20-years figures ?). What about President Aristide, who was forced out? My question is this: if Mr. Bush is not in jail, why is Mr. Aristide out of the country?

MS. FORMAN: I think we can take another question?

AMB. MULET: Yes.

MS. FORMAN: Okay. George?

Q: Mr. Ambassador, George Galler (ph), Associated Press. I can remember about 20 years ago you were in the second – (off mike) – period. There were about 100,000 Haitians working for American assembly plants. During – (off mike) – as I understand it, there were some 100,000 Haitians who were employed on the payrolls of American companies and in factories that produced finished goods for the American market. And I remember that there was talk about those jobs of being recreated once stability returned. Can you tell us anything about this kind of investment going back into Haiti?

AMB. MULET: The Hope Bill that was approved by the U.S. Congress opened a door for those investments again. What really damaged the economic situation in Haiti was the embargo at one point, and that really destroyed the capacity of the industry in Haiti and many of these companies that were producing goods and exporting mainly to the United States were not allowed to do so. And now you can see many, many factories have closed down and have not been able to reopen.

In order to reopen, you'll need investments – investments from the Diaspora, from the Haitians themselves and from international businessmen, investors. And as I said before, I don't think that will happen immediately or so soon unless the rule of law is really established and we have some kind of guarantees.

We have seen already the Haitians in Haiti investing in tourism, reopening hotels, the Port St. Louis right now, there was this big event last Sunday near Les Cayes. Some efforts of that kind, but the big – the creation of jobs I think will take again some time, and I hope that the Hope Bill, L'Espoir Bill, will open the door for that. Again, I insist on the rule of law as the basics for that, as an important element to achieve that.

MS. FORMAN: Richard Downie next.

Q: Yes. I'm Richard Downie from the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies. Ambassador, you talked about showing the need for judicial reform and the importance of that earlier, but you also mentioned about the positive progress that Haiti has seen at least from year to years in terms of violence and security. Not long ago, I was talking with the Haitian ambassador to the U.S. and he was very optimistic about the possibility of reducing violence because, he said, although there's a lot of violence, that is very localized in various key areas.

AMB. MULET: Yes.

Q: And much in the way that Boston for example when they recently assessed their security situation and their violence, they found there's a lot of violence going on, but it was committed by a relatively small number of perpetrators. And I'm wondering if you share that kind of optimism with that incremental improvements in the effectiveness of say the police or perhaps judicial reform could in fact, if they were approached in a systematic way against these relatively localized numbers of perpetrators, would have dramatic improvements.

AMB. MULET: Yes. Yes, absolutely. As I said also in many of our countries, many cities in the U.S. you have gang activities, criminal activities, and things like that, but in Haiti they are the factor that are – they are destabilizing the whole process. That is the difference, and that's why it's so important to face this problem and to resolve it.

And the national police has been building it's own capacities to face this, and as I said also these recent operations we've been conducting answering the government's request in support of PNH actions have been more and more well coordinated, well done and so that capacity is building. So I think that in the following weeks and before the – I wouldn't say by in June or July of this year we will have kind of controlled most of the neighborhoods in Cité Soleil hopefully. And we will be able also to allow the humanitarian and development agencies to do their work in these neighborhoods.

Right now these agencies, these NGOs cannot go in there. The people living in those neighborhoods are completely terrorized under the terror of these people. I've heard these horror stories: you have these Spanish nuns that live in Cité Soleil and they have a clinic and a little school there, and they have been witness of incredible things, I could not even repeat here publicly how these gangs they rape young girls, five, six, seven-year-old, thirty of them gang raping, doing all sorts of things, extorting money. So the rich people in Haiti, they live up there on the hills. They're very well protected, they have armored cars, they got to their offices, their businesses, they have bodyguards around them. They're not the ones suffering from this. It's the poor people in Cité Soleil and the slum areas that are the victims of this situation.

And even though in the beginning maybe perhaps originally, they were politically or ideologically motivated, that is not the case anymore. These are thugs, these are criminals, these are killers, these are kidnappers and they have to be addressed that way. And the president has requested from us this kind of assistance, and we're working together to resolve that.

And when we do so, which we are doing now and we will have good results, and we're already having good results and more and I can tell you in the next weeks and months we'll be liberating more of these neighborhoods. This will definitely change the vision, the attitude towards Haiti, and these thugs and these criminals will not hold Haiti hostage anymore.

Q: That is not true, sir. That is not true.

MS. FORMAN: Okay.

Q: The problem is –

MS. FORMAN: If you want to have a conversation with the Ambassador –

Q: The people I want to – (off mike) – this climate of terror, all the people in – (off mike).

MS. FORMAN: Okay. Thank you. I'm going to go down my list, because a lot of people have questions. Ambassador Michael, you had a question. I see Stanley Lucas had a question, Maureen Taft-Morales, this lady over here. I have people written down. But I think Ambassador Michael was on the list before you, but right after this, Michael. Thank you.

Q: Jim Michael – (off mike). First of all, thank you. I think you conveyed both the seriousness and the difficulty of the situation, but also the existence of a moment of hope for addressing the difficulty of – (off mike). In my experience – (off mike) – governments at the international community – (off mike) – work very well in Haiti and there was a tendency to work with civil society. There were moments when there was work with the governments and while the governments were there then the civil society doesn't get the same attention.

AMB. MULET: Yes.

Q: And yet things like judicial reform which have probably spent more time on than anything else in Haiti, it's a very complex political process.

AMB. MULET: It is.

Q: Involving values, involving the demands of the civil society, involving political leadership and institution strengthening and has to come together somehow, and I wonder if you see that this priority that the international community has for the rule of law in Haiti is a shared priority with respect to the Haitian agenda and policies, so the political leadership, the civil society and within the institutions of the justice system, there's a desire for all of these things to come together – (off mike).

AMB. MULET: Yes. I do believe that within the government and the present prime-minister, the ministers of the cabinet, especially the minister of justice, they're very much committed to that and you have individuals and segments within the judiciary who are also very much involved in this and who'd like to see these changes coming along. These three laws that have been drafted have also been consulted with civil society, so that has also the consensus and the support of civil society, human rights groups, and different groups that have been very much involved in the judicial reform system in Haiti for many years. So that is also a good sign.

So I think we'll be able this time to do something about that, but facing some kind of problems in the legislative branch because that's – I fear that we'll have some resistances there under the pressure of people who are benefiting from the system of impunity we have right now, but it is a big difference now. I think that everybody working together in Haiti is going to accelerate this process hopefully.

MS. FORMAN: Stanley Lucas.

Q: (Off mike) – by international?

AMB. MULET: No.

Q: What are you doing – (off mike) – delivery papers and – (off mike) – Haiti you have the impression that – (off mike) – under government in the areas of security – (off mike).

AMB. MULET: I think it was the case during the interim government. It's not the case right now. We don't have an executive mandate. We can only go as far or as quick as the government requests us to do so. So we're very much in support of the government's initiatives and they are the ones assuming now the coordination mechanisms of the police reform program, of the judiciary. For example, on these – the 3rd of December elections, I had proposed not to have elections on the 3rd of December. I had proposed the 7th of February, because I had the rotation of my troops, I wanted to finish the job we're doing also in security sectors in Haiti and the government said, no, we'd like those elections on the 3rd of December. Okay. So we had to adapt ourselves to those requests. So that has changed, and that is a positive change, so more and more our Haitian friends are assuming those responsibilities and we're welcoming that more and more all the time.

Q: (Off mike.)

AMB. MULET: Yes, not only from the UN, but from the U.S., the U.S., the UN, the U.S. – all these different combinations. I think there's this – I don't think we had the commitment before. We knew those were short lived missions. It was going to be three months, six months, one year or something, but now what is different is the attitude of the troop contributing countries, of the Security Council that this is mid, long-term project, this is helping. You have the component also as I said before on the police and the military component is mainly Latin American.

It's not an imperialistic presence, it's not a geopolitical control of the country. I don't have any French soldiers or American soldier that could change that perception. So this is a really South-South cooperation solidarity effort, so that is different a little bit also.

What is also different is the circumstances on the ground. The fact that there is a legitimate government, that there is political stability, that it is a five-year mandate, so that also helps in working in one direction, and as I said before, the internal process of national dialogue and reconciliation and working together that is very different from what we had before when we had contradictions on political and ideological polarization.

MS. FORMAN: So Maureen Taft-Morales. You had your hand up.

Q: Maureen Taft-Morales from – (off mike). You have said there's many international barriers that – (off mike) – a long-term commitment and President Préval himself said that he felt it would be a – (off mike) – sort of nationalism – (off mike) – capable of providing their own security. So I wanted to know – (off mike) – difference vision versus reality – (off mike) – short-term thing like on this six-months mandate – (off mike) – annual budget also known as – what do you see – do you have a vision for some kind of strategy that could get commitment for long-term support and be behind – (off mike) – permanent institution that you talk about at an international level, and then question – (off mike) – 10,000 new – (off mike) – help them? Have anything – (off mike) – facilities to be able to try carry out this thing?

AMB. MULET: On these – I'm going to start by the end, what these new elected official with the UNDP and other agencies and NGOs and some bilateral assistance and MINUSTAH we have already put in place all these building capacity programs and training, courses in order to facilitate their tasks as officials – municipal and regional officials. And that we're doing especially as we said before, that 83 percent of the educated people in Haiti are not there. They're here instead of in their country. So it's going to take some time to build those local capacities, but we have the budget and we have the programs to do that in that sense.

We have these six-month mandates being renewed and we have this yearly budget, but those are the rules in the Security Council and DPKO and we have to live with that, but what is important is the commitment. We know that even though these mandates will be renewed every six months, and that the budget will be changing every year, which is normal, the long-term vision is there. The commitment is there.

And also we will be adapting, we will be transforming the mission adapting to the new circumstances and at the speed of the Haitian authorities and the Haitian institution to absorb those capacities, then will be adapting towards that. So I don't see any disparity or any contradiction in the term of our mandates, our budgets, and the long terms commitment, the political commitment we have regarding Haiti at this point.

MS. FORMAN: Thank you. There are multiple questions, and what I'd like to do, is I have some people like Alec Watson and this gentleman in the rear. Maybe what we should do is go around because we have 15 minutes left. Let me start with you, Alec Watson and then let Dan Erikson our co-chair here have the last question. Thank you.

Q: Ambassador – (off mike) – I'm a member of the board – (off mike) – and at the – (off mike) – a lot of work in Haiti. And of course, your mandate is essentially political in supporting President Préval, in the articulation of political system, but nothing gives people more self confidence than jobs – (off mike). And I'm wonder if – (off mike) – some insight into what kind of things do you think can be done in the short run to create employment for people in Haiti?

MS. FORMAN: Okay.

AMB. MULET: Employment.

MS. FORMAN: Let's get a few more and – yes. This lady here has been very patient. I'm sorry.

Q: Hi. My name is Shirley Dave (ph) and I'm with the – (off mike) – International – (off mike) – for Freedom. And Mr. Mulet, I want you address specifically MINUSTAH incursions in the Cité Soleil. I know it's no surprise to you that there are many reports that come out after there incursions in which the number of women and children that are among the dead and the injured is alarming and the stated purpose, as I understand it from the news that go into Cité Soleil is to apprehend bandits and gangs and to stop gang activity.

On the other hand there's a very dangerous gang by the name of the Little Machetes.

AMB. MULET: Yes. In Martissant.

Q: Very active in Martissant and was responsible for a horrible machete attack in a soccer stadium in 2005.

AMB. MULET: And last year again.

Q: So what I'm trying to determine here is I believe you're building concerns quite frankly about collective punishment of the people in Cité Soleil and if this is not what MINUSTAH is involved in, I'd like to know why your planning director, your political affairs director, Mr. Chevalier, who was in Washington recently mentioned that among the NATO security threats in – (off mike) – were radical supporters of – (off mike). Thank you.

MS. FORMAN: Thank you. Let's take the next question. This gentleman in the back.

Q: Yes. Provincial pastor, St. Matthews Church Baltimore. I've been going to Haiti for about 13 years now about four times a year. As a matter of fact, I just flew in from Port-Au-Prince and I actually preach in Cité Soleil in the morning – (off mike). I guess my question really is that a passionate brother from here and the other gentleman over here had a question that never got answered. How can we get to the point, or are we getting to the point, because we have a country where 12 percent of people are rich and you got most of the rest of the people who are very poor. If we're going to have democracy, as soon as René Préval dies or retires or whatever, they're going to elect another Aristide, and is the United States then going to go in with more troops and then kill (off him ?) too. What are we doing to get the rich people and the poor people and everybody in between to agree to have a democracy and to agree not to let our country come in and destroy what is there?

MS. FORMAN: Thank you.

Tina?

Q: Ambassador, thank you for – (off mike). I'm Tina Balin with the Inter-American Foundation. (Off mike) – listen to you speak I'm reminded of when I worked in the media – (off mike) – and one of the research study that we've done and this is – (off mike) – specifically Barbados and – (off mike) – the salaries are much higher in those islands and obviously the salaries are – (off mike) – are underpaid, which is of course a reason for corruption. (Off mike) – going to be addressed or has it been addressed – (off mike)? Thank you.

MS. FORMAN: Thank you. There's a gentleman in the back.

Q: (Off mike). We have a – (off mike) – to prevent – (off mike) – in Haiti and are just starting to – (off mike) – funding and my question is what would be your recommendation in terms of – (off mike) – programs and – (off mike) – democratic process?

AMB. MULET: Thank you.

MS. FORMAN: And Dan, you have the last question, and I think we'll let the ambassador close. He has quite a task ahead of him, anyway, but – (laughter.)

Q: Okay. It's always dangerous to have the last question. But Ambassador, I did want to ask you to take your UN hat off for a moment and put back your politician's hat back on. I know you had a very distinguished career in Guatemalan politics. And today we have what is basically Latin America's peace mission in Haiti, but it think it depends very much on this mission be accepted by the respective publics of Bolivia, Brazil, Argentina, Chile and so on.

And so my question is, are you concerned that there may be a shift in public sentiment in some of the Latin American troop contributing countries against the mission in Haiti either in the short term or in the longer term? Is anything being done to help maintain that support at home?

Of course, we in the U.S. know very well that sometimes these open-ended missions overseas can sometimes raise questions domestically. And then when you look at Haiti and how Haitians, not just in the government or in the civil society in private sector groups, but the broad Haitian public – what's the public sentiment of Haitian vis-à-vis the UN Mission? Do they see it as a necessary evil, as something they're very happy to have in their country, or something they're waiting for the day when it can depart? And what is the UN doing to ensure there is sufficient public support in Haiti as well for the mission? Thank you.

MS. FORMAN: Ambassador Mulet, you have the floor and the obligation to answer these question.

AMB. MULET: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. On the creation of employment, you know that the government has proposed this Programme d'Apaisement Social, which I think is very important. The name in English is kind of complicated: Program for Social Appeasement, but it's to create jobs, immediate jobs for the people, for the population: collecting garbage, all sorts of different things. And I must say that the United States has been very much responding to this. The U.S. has given \$81.5 million for the Programme d'Apaisement Social. And the Department of Defense just gave to the American embassy in Haiti \$20 million only for Cité Soleil to create jobs there. So I think this will provide jobs, rehabilitating infrastructure identified by the communities, by local elect officials. It is expected that this will produce more than around 40,000 jobs in the first year.

This is the kind of peace dividends that we need to put in place for the people in Haiti to not only have the sensation, but to know that democracy is bringing them some other new opportunities, and this will help to stabilize the country I believe, and then this will also assist and help for investors to come and create stable and durable and permanent jobs in the future. So I think that the proposal by the government and this appeal they made since May of last year the Programme d'Apaisement Social, but it's only now that the international community is responding to this it is very important.

Yesterday, the World Bank, yesterday afternoon approved a program of – how much was that?

MS. FORMAN: Twenty-eight million.

AMB. MULET: Twenty-eight million dollars yesterday only for the Programme d'Apaisement Social to create these short term job projects if you will, but this is the base also for the future. The construction of infrastructure also that is being on the way, the is starting right now with all these international donors, the EU, IDB, the U.S., others will also facilitate transport of goods, exports and things like that. So also this building or re-building of infrastructure, basic infrastructure in the country will also help and also developing tourism and everything. So it's not an overnight situation, but these programs like the Programme d'Apaisement Social will bring some kind of immediate relief in order then to prepare for the other steps.

Then we have the incursion in Cité Soleil, Martissant, and the other question. On the 22nd of December, we went into Bois Neuf area. It was about seven o'clock in the morning and the action had not been finished yet. We were still in the area trying to get hold, to arrest this gang leader Belony, who was responsible for most of the kidnappings in Port-Au-Prince and he was bringing the victims of kidnappings into his own neighborhood in Bois Neuf. So the operation had not even finished when I saw already some kind of declarations or public statements or web pages saying that MINUSTAH had killed 80 people in Bois Neuf in this incursion – this action, that we were shooting people

from helicopters, that we had not allowed the Red Cross to do their job to help the injured, that we had been firing heavy artillery against the population.

All of those lies, and we had not even finished the operation when all this network of people – I don't know where they come from – they were already operating and inventing all sorts of things, so this is also a political – all sorts of political interests in this. I have a letter somewhere by the Red Cross – here it is – a communiqué by the Red Cross signed and this is official where they do state that we never, never impeded or affected their work in trying to facilitate the rescuing or assisting the wounded.

We never shot from a helicopter – never. We had one helicopter with a camera taking pictures and following the operation, but we never shoot from helicopters. We never use heavy artillery either. So all these elements were – and also, you know, that on the 5th of July 2005 in that same neighborhood and again this time, the criminals – they shoot at their own people.

We had an incident right now where a young boy of three-years-old was shot. This was not in the 22nd of December, but last week and had a witness for that. One of the criminals shot a young boy seven-year-old and just – and he said also, the MINUSTAH, the UN will be responsible for this. So they create those kind of victims, accusing us of these things. I cannot deny that there have been some – there has been collateral damage indeed, definitely, but the rules of engagement we have are extremely clear: our soldiers will never, ever shoot unless we're shot at first and we try to identify exactly where they're shooting from and then we respond.

On the 22nd of December we were shot at – on the 20, 13 or – 12 or 13 people died, most of the criminals and members of the Belony gang. On the 28th of December, only six people were injured. Nobody died, because we received less fire. So when we receive less fire, we don't shoot back as much. On the 5th of January, when we went to arrest the leader of this sub-group Belony has and responsible for the killing – he was the one who assassinated the Jordanian soldiers – even though we had criminals and gang members armed all around this area, and when we went in there and arrested these two guys, they never shot at us and we never fired back, so we arrested these two bandits with not one single shot fired. So I think that gang has learned a lesson: if they don't shoot at us, we won't shoot back and no problem.

Last Wednesday, this is another neighborhood in Boston – it was very important for us to get hold of this four-story house. It's the blue house on the Route National Numéro Un, this is the road, the entrance the street that leads to Evans' – the bandit Evans stronghold. We had this done at 3:00 in the morning. They did fire at us a lot, but we were finally able to get hold of this house. From there, they were shooting at us all the time. Our patrols our soldiers, victimizing the population, collecting money from tuptups (ph). The whole neighborhood was the victim of this position the bandits had in there, so it was very important for us to get hold of that. During the day, Evans called Amaral, the other bandit, and Belony, the other one, and tried to convince them to organize a movement to go and get hold of this building to get it back from us.

And Amaral and Belony said, no, thank you. We will not be involved in that, so Evans organized a group of 30 of his own people and at 6:30 PM that same day last Wednesday – Wednesday a week ago – they tried to recuperate this house. And we were under attack for over an hour and they shot more than 20,000 rounds at us – 20,000 rounds at us. And we didn't have enough ammunition for our troops in there to defend themselves, so we had to send reinforcements and armored cars to protect our own people in there. After an hour and 10 minutes, they went away, but 20,000 rounds of ammunition they shot at us. Where does that come from? Who pays for that? Where does that come from I wonder.

And also in Martissant we have had operations right now in (Soleil ?) area and as you know in Martissant, in Croix-de-Bouquet and all that area over there you have four or five gang leaders trying to get control of different areas. It's very different from Cité Soleil. In Martissant, what you have is fights against each other, against the gangs to control territory. In Cité Soleil it's very much marked and they know exactly where the border is, and the gang leader from one region, from one neighborhood will not go and act or do something in the other one's neighborhood.

That is very well defined, which is not the case in Martissant. So in Cité Soleil you don't have infightings between gang leaders which you have in Martissant and we have been conducting with PNH operations in Martissant. We have arrested some of the gang leaders. Apopan (ph), for example, one of the gang leaders there last year was arrested and these days we're doing all sorts of things there.

We have also occupied a big building in Martissant just on the line that divides Les Petit Machetes and the Gran Ravine gangs were in there, but not only with military – (unintelligible) – poles and PNH, but also with Human Rights officials from MINUSTAH, civil affairs, development agencies, and everything to assist the population in the neighborhood.

And to the Jean-Bertrand Aristide issue, when I first arrived in Haiti on 2nd of June last year, we've had different marches and manifestations – all sorts of protests demanding for the return of this ex-president and former president. In the beginning, these were expressions of 5,000 people. Then later on they became 3,000 and the last ones maybe 75, 50 people. So I see that this issue of former President Aristide is not present anymore in the political sphere in Haiti anymore, and his movement – familia Lavalas (ph) – is very much divided, weakened. You don't have a clear leadership there. It's all very much divided and has splintered into many, many groups, so it is not a political problem in Haiti anymore. And most people have recognized in Haiti that there have been elections, that there is a clear mandate from the population to this government, the national reconciliation process is advancing, the national dialogue is in place, and people just want to leave this era of confrontation behind.

The rich and the poor – that is a very important question. As I said before, the rich in Haiti are not the victims of violence and confrontation. It's the poor down where

you live where you preach. They are the ones who are the victims of this. And that's why we're very much in support of the efforts made by the government right now to collect taxes, to establish a cadastre, a registry for property which is non-existent, so those kind of institution building steps are very important for the state, for the government to have enough resources to pay salaries to the policemen and to the judges. A policeman who earns \$120 a month or a judge who has a salary of \$200 a month – I wonder why not many more are not involved in corruption.

So that is part – it's a global problem and the approach has to be a multilayered one like that. So the government right now is making big efforts in that sense to collect taxes, to establish a cadastre in the country, properties, collect revenues also from imports and that effort is being made and we are very much in support of that to try to balance a little bit the situation in Haiti. This situation will not be able to continue if you have these huge differences of the ones who have everything and the ones who have nothing, so the international presence there is certainly going to help to balance that more and more all the time, and I think that we have a big window of opportunity to address that issue right now with this government.

On the HIV, AIDS question, we have our own program and many other institutions have their own program, so I don't know if we could just join forces and to be more effective, because I see a lot of overlapping and doing tidbits here, tidbits over there in a very dysfunctional way and this is such an important problem. It is really, really grave in Haiti right now. If we could just talk to each other and work together to be more effective on the ground, I think that would be very useful, so I invite you to get in touch with us and all the other agencies and organizations dealing with this big problem in Haiti.

And the support from Latin American contributing countries. MINUSTAH and the UN will not stay forever in Haiti. That's clear. At some point we'll have to leave and we have to think about an exit strategy sometime, but there is this political commitment from these Latin American countries. And it's not only Brazil or the big ones, Argentina or Chile, sending troops there – I mean, Bolivia, as I said before, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Guatemala, Honduras will have a couple of soldiers. Honduras is working with us now. And that – you can see there is this trend of support. What the ministers of foreign affairs and the ministers of defense have been requesting from me now is until when? But they know that until we have the capacity building in its place in Haiti, they'll be staying there.

Some members of parliament – in Latin America, the sending troops abroad has to be approved by our Latin American parliaments and they're very much in support of this presence so far, but they will need to see some kind of advancements and see eventually some kind of exit strategy, but this is something that will probably be addressed by the end of this year or something like that, in an year's time and then we'll be able to discuss with them eventually how that will happen, because it will happen at some point. That is certain. It's for sure.

And then the public sentiment within Haiti. That is very important – very interesting. When I go to all these visits, all over the departments everywhere, I always invite the local parliamentarians, senators, and deputies to join me and meet with me, and privately they all tell me, you should stay, it's important for you to stay, we appreciate the work you're doing. They're always like that. But publicly, it's completely different. As soon as there's a reporter, an audience or something, they'll stand up and say, until when are you staying and when are you leaving? So the private attitude is very different from the public statements. So you would hear from most of the Haitian society, privately they don't want MINUSTAH to leave.

Publicly then, for show off a little, the attitude is a little bit different. But privately, the support is there. Of course, we in Haiti – there are many sectors who don't like our presence there. That is certain and they dislike us enormously. Of course, I have unidentified them as the ones who are involved in drug trafficking, the ones who benefit from impunity, from the disorder, from the lack of state, from lack of institutions, the people who benefit from contraband, from lack of institutions. So I think those are the ones who resist our presence there because they know that we're working with the Haitian government, with the Haitian population in order to establish these kinds of institutions and to establish the rule of law. The ones who don't like the rule of law, of course they don't like our presence there, but they're I would say a minimum expression of public opinion in Haiti.

MS. FORMAN: Well, we've gone a little over time, but I think the information that you provided in this briefing has been excellent. Thank you, Ambassador Mulet, for your time.

AMB. MULET: Thank you very much. Thank you. (Applause.)

(END)