

**United Nations and Haiti: UNDP, MINUSTAH and Civil Society**

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The Republic of Haiti has received aid from the United Nations for over a decade. It has also been occupied by the United States from 1915-1934.<sup>1</sup> Intervention after intervention has taken place in the struggling country, but long-term positive results have yet to be reached due to a combination of political and societal difficulties stemming from Haiti's past as well as persistent problems with United Nations interventions. The United Nations Stabilization mission to Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have been the most active missions in Haiti to date. The following paper will discuss their successes, failures, interactions with Haitian civil society and their role in shaping the future of the country.

The interaction of civil society, United Nations missions and historical events are all involved with cycles of poverty, violence and the prevention of development. In order to give an adequate analysis of these topics, it is necessary to present some of Haiti's political and social history. A brief discussion of Haiti's history after independence will help explain the origin of the aforementioned cycles.

The Caribbean nation gained its independence from France in 1804 and since then has had a post-colonial history riddled with suffering and corruption which has left many Haitians in despair and the government and the international community with a huge burden to shoulder.

The country did not start out as a democracy immediately following independence but was ruled by emperors and dictators until 1988. The last dictator, Jean Claude Duvalier, son of

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<sup>1</sup> Library of Congress. Federal Research Division. Country Profile: Haiti, May 2006. 2006. November 30, 2008. < <http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/thematic/conflict/Haiti.pdf>>

previous dictator Francois Duvalier, was ousted in a military coup in 1986. The dictatorships of the Duvaliers that lasted for three decades were the reason for many of Haiti's current problems. Due to the government's preference towards the interests of the upper class, the foreign aid coming into the country was given to the rich instead of those in need. Carrol Faubert, author of "Case Study: Haiti, Evaluation of UNDP Assistance to Conflict-Affected Countries, Human Security" reported that the dictatorships "devastated the economy, destroyed tourism, drove out foreign investors and ruined rural production."<sup>2</sup> The actions of the Duvaliers trickled down to affect civic values. According to Faubert, "the situation was so bad that analysts claimed that for the Duvaliers and their clients, Haiti's only real remaining economic asset was its poverty."<sup>3</sup>

In 1990, Jean Bertrand Aristide became the first democratically elected president but was overthrown in another coup in 1991. However, in 1994, Aristide's presidency was restored once again and ended for the last time in 2004. After the elections of 2006, Rene Preval was elected President of Haiti and is currently in office.<sup>4</sup>

Preval and his government have a large agenda of unresolved issues that need to be addressed. Not much progress has been made, however, due to continued corruption and inefficiency within the administration. The country is faced with extreme poverty, gang violence, food shortages, constant natural disasters, political corruption and other issues that are

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<sup>2</sup> Faubert, Carrol. Evaluation of UNDP Assistance to Conflict-Affected Countries, Human Security, Case Study: Haiti. 2006. November 30, 2008. <<http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/thematic/conflict/Haiti.pdf>>

<sup>3</sup> Faubert, Carrol. Evaluation of UNDP Assistance to Conflict-Affected Countries, Human Security, Case Study: Haiti. 2006. November 30, 2008. <<http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/thematic/conflict/Haiti.pdf>>

<sup>4</sup> Library of Congress. Federal Research Division. Country Profile: Haiti, May 2006. 2006. November 30, 2008. <<http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/thematic/conflict/Haiti.pdf>>

created by the interplay of all of these issues.<sup>5</sup> Haiti is the poorest country in the Western hemisphere, with 80% of its population living below the poverty line and 56% living in abject poverty.<sup>6</sup>

Exacerbating the high poverty rate are the extremely high food prices and fuel shortages due to hurricanes Fay, Gustav, Hanna and Ike hitting in the Atlantic hurricane season of 2008. The hurricanes, soil erosion and deforestation have and wiped out much of Haiti's agricultural abilities. Most of the food is now imported and most Haitians cannot afford it. "The prices of staple foods such as rice, beans, flour and corn have almost doubled in the past six months [and] the price of fuel has also skyrocketed, leaving small businesses unable to cope..."<sup>7</sup> Haiti already has a high rate of deforestation because of unsustainable farming practices and dependence on firewood and coal as the primary source of heat and fuel.<sup>8</sup> At least 800 people perished during the time span of the hurricanes, and deadly food riots have added to the death toll.<sup>9</sup> Haiti is geographically located in an area vulnerable to natural disasters such as hurricanes, floods, earthquakes and mudslides, but this 2008 hurricane season has brought an already struggling nation to its knees.

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<sup>5</sup> Library of Congress. Federal Research Division. Country Profile: Haiti, May 2006. 2006. November 30, 2008. <<http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/thematic/conflict/Haiti.pdf>>; The United Nations. United Nations Development Programme. UNDP Country Programme Document for Haiti (2009-2011). December 1, 2008.

<sup>6</sup> The United Nations. United Nations Development Programme. UNDP Country Programme Document for Haiti (2009-2011). December 1, 2008. Central Intelligence Agency. CIA World Factbook, Haiti. 2008. December 1, 2008. <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ha.html>>

<sup>7</sup> McConnell, Anne. One Million US Dollars A Week on Debt Repayments. June 12, 2008. December 1, 2008. <<http://haitisupport.gn.apc.org/Debtletter.html>>

<sup>8</sup> Inside A Failed State-Haiti. Dir. Journymanpictures. 2008. <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbbM8OM9Dqw>>

<sup>9</sup> McConnell, Anne. One Million US Dollars A Week on Debt Repayments. June 12, 2008. December 1, 2008. <<http://haitisupport.gn.apc.org/Debtletter.html>>

With a combination of political corruption, poverty, gang violence and natural disasters since its independence, Haiti has shown that it is not capable of recuperating on its own. Faubert gives a short summary of the situation in Haiti since 1986:

“Since the departure of Jean-Claude Duvalier in February 1986, Haiti has been engaged in a seemingly endless political transition punctuated by several military coups, outbursts of violence and foreign military interventions. The case of Haiti cannot be described as a conflict situation. There has been no recent situation of war with a neighboring country, nor has there been a civil war between opposing Haitian factions or communities. Haiti is a case of a lingering political and governance crisis accompanied by a severe degradation of the economy, of security and of livelihoods. The country has been trapped in an accelerating downward spiral that will be difficult to halt and reverse.”<sup>10</sup>

While the situation in Haiti may not fall under the category of a “conflict situation” according to Faubert, there has certainly been internal conflict, and the country has clearly been in need of stabilization and peacekeeping before any sort of development can take place. Enter MINUSTAH. In effect since 2004, it is the longest mission to Haiti and is also considered the most comprehensive plan out of the six missions before.<sup>11</sup>

In 2004, armed conflict by the opposition party broke out in the city of Gonaives and spread to other cities, causing then President Aristide to flee the country.<sup>12</sup> This was the catalyst for the creation of MINUSTAH. MINUSTAH was created by the Security Council through Resolution 1542 in an effort to help stabilize the country and decrease the violence.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Faubert, Carrol. Evaluation of UNDP Assistance to Conflict-Affected Countries, Human Security, Case Study: Haiti. 2006. November 30, 2008. <<http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/thematic/conflict/Haiti.pdf>>

<sup>11</sup> Faubert, Carrol. Evaluation of UNDP Assistance to Conflict-Affected Countries, Human Security, Case Study: Haiti. 2006. November 30, 2008. <<http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/thematic/conflict/Haiti.pdf>>

<sup>12</sup> The United Nations. Haiti-MINUSTAH-Background. 2005. December 1, 2008. <<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/minustah/background.html>>

<sup>13</sup> The United Nations. Haiti-MINUSTAH-Background. 2005. December 1, 2008. <<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/minustah/background.html>>

In 2004, MINUSTAH set out to tackle the immediate needs of the country including setting up an interim government and quelling violence by the opposition movement against Aristide.<sup>14</sup> The Mission was to stay in Haiti for six months and to work with The Organization of American States (OAS) and The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to stabilize Haiti.<sup>15</sup> It was set to end within six months after its creation but was renewed repeatedly between 2004 and 2008. Most recently MINUSTAH was renewed in October of 2008 and will continue until October of 2009 due to devastating hurricanes that caused Haiti and MINUSTAH to take a step back in their progress.

The mandate issued under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations in Resolution 1542 consists of three sections: “I. Secure and Stable Environment, II. Political Process and III. Human Rights.”<sup>16</sup> The Mandate gives MINUSTAH the authority to “assist with the restoration and maintenance of the rule of law, public safety and public order in Haiti” through restructuring the police force, assisting with Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) and to protect civilians.<sup>17</sup> The section on political process MINUSTAH to assist the Transitional Government in creating functioning constitutional and political processes that include assisting in the process of national dialogue and reconciliation, creating a free, fair and monitored electoral system, and to assist in expanding state authority and good governance throughout Haiti

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<sup>14</sup> The United Nations. Haiti-MINUSTAH-Background. 2005. December 1, 2008.  
<<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/minustah/background.html>>

<sup>15</sup> The United Nations Security Council. Resolution 1542 (2004). 2004. December 1, 2008.  
<<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N04/332/98/PDF/N0433298.pdf?OpenElement>>

<sup>16</sup> The United Nations Security Council. Resolution 1542 (2004). 2004. December 1, 2008.  
<<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N04/332/98/PDF/N0433298.pdf?OpenElement>>

<sup>17</sup> The United Nations Security Council. Resolution 1542 (2004). 2004. December 1, 2008.  
<<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N04/332/98/PDF/N0433298.pdf?OpenElement>>

in national and local levels.<sup>18</sup> Finally, the section on human rights mandates MINUSTAH to “support the Transitional government as well as Haitian human rights institutions and groups in their effort to promote and protect human rights...in order to ensure individual accountability for human rights abuses and redress for victims.”<sup>19</sup>

The broad and ambitious language of the mandate is in step with the style of other UN documents such as the UN Charter itself, The Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, among others, in that there is little mentioned with regard to specific actions on the ground and directions as to how exactly these ideas should be carried out. The ideas in the mandate and in Resolution 1542 consist of logical and important topics that must be addressed in order to use the improve Haiti’s current situation, but more details would help in increasing the document’s legitimacy. According to the English version of the United Nations MINUSTAH website, the Secretary General reported that after his initial August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2004 report, “the security situation in Haiti had deteriorated with a surge in violence....”<sup>20</sup>

In a September 23, 2004 article in the Brazilian newspaper “Correio Braziliense,” Brazilian General Augusto Heleno Ribeiro Pereira, commander of MINUSTAH commented on its progress. At the time, the Mission was in the process of carrying out the mandate, but General Ribeiro reported in the interview that he did not receive the amount of troops he was promised by the UN and cited this as the Mission’s main weakness. Instead of the 6,700 men promised to

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<sup>18</sup> The United Nations Security Council. Resolution 1542 (2004). 2004. December 1, 2008.  
<<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N04/332/98/PDF/N0433298.pdf?OpenElement>>

<sup>19</sup> The United Nations Security Council. Resolution 1542 (2004). 2004. December 1, 2008.  
<<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N04/332/98/PDF/N0433298.pdf?OpenElement>>

<sup>20</sup> The United Nations. Haiti-MINUSTAH-Background. 2005. December 1, 2008.  
<<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/minustah/background.html>>

him, he was provided with about 2,800, which Ribeiro said made it difficult to properly carry out all aspects of the mandate.<sup>21</sup> When asked about DDR efforts and security, Ribeiro replied,

“We are being amply covered in that respect but it is a long and by no means easy job. Intelligence work is needed but has been delayed. We also are required to have a presence all over the country. Improvements are necessary in the population’s living conditions, so that we can convince them (the Haitians) that it is not worthwhile going about armed. We are avoiding confrontation to the maximum extent, because we are a peacekeeping mission, not an occupation force. Sometimes this is misunderstood.”<sup>22</sup>

Ribeiro’s statements throughout the article including the one above are replete with indicators about the nature of MINUSTAH. As mentioned by Paul Kennedy in The Parliament of Man with reference to the UN’s missions in Kosovo, Somalia and the Congo,

“...the crucial distinction between peacekeeping and peace enforcement was repeatedly blurred. Perhaps that is because the borderline between the two is by its nature a very thin one and easily crossed; both options are, after all, offered in Chapter VII of the Charter.”<sup>23</sup>

The “blurred” lines of communication and perception of peacekeeping versus peace enforcement may also contribute to the difficulties with these missions including MINUSTAH. Peacekeeping and peace enforcement are not clearly defined in Chapter VII of the UN Charter, and much of the language is open-ended and allows the Security Council decide on what action is to be taken on a case-by-case basis.<sup>24</sup> This leaves a lot open for interpretation when missions are actually on the ground. The situation in Haiti is multi-faceted, as are the means to control it and to turn Haiti into a stable and secure place.

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<sup>21</sup> Dantas, Claudio. “Brazilian Head of UN Force in Haiti Complains Again of Lack of Men, Money.” Newsbank Access International News. Correio Braziliense. September 23, 2004. November 30, 2008.

<sup>22</sup> Dantas, Claudio. “Brazilian Head of UN Force in Haiti Complains Again of Lack of Men, Money.” Newsbank Access International News. Correio Braziliense. September 23, 2004. November 30, 2008.

<sup>23</sup> Kennedy, Paul. The Parliament of Man. P.99 New York: Vintage Books, 2006.

<sup>24</sup> The United Nations. Charter of the United Nations, Chapter VII. November 30, 2008.  
<<http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/chapter7.htm>>



As Ribeiro mentioned, it is important to improve living conditions as a first step to decrease the number of armed Haitians. While the main goal of disarmament is to literally remove weapons from demobilized soldiers, it will only be successful if people have a reason to give up their weapons. In this way, Ribeiro and MINUSTAH have an idea of what could be effective; the problem lies in taking action and in having the ability to take action. Kennedy also states,

“while there were many (often unsung) successes...one can conclude that the practice of announcing (through a Security Council resolution) a new peacekeeping mission without ensuring that sufficient armed forces will be available has usually proven to be a recipe for humiliation and disaster.”<sup>25</sup>

The lack of “sufficient armed forces” is precisely what Ribeiro was complaining about in the interview. As in other UN missions such as in Rwanda and the Congo, lack of troops, supplies, aid and principally funds have inhibited the effectiveness of MINUSTAH.<sup>26</sup>

MINUSTAH continued to operate until October 2008 and was renewed for another year by the Security Council that same month. Following severe flooding from the four successive hurricanes that hit Haiti in the 2008 hurricane season, many Haitians were left without food, water or shelter.<sup>27</sup> According to [haitisupport.gn.apc.org](http://haitisupport.gn.apc.org), “the top envoy in Haiti...warned...that ignoring the plight of the Caribbean country and leaving its population hungry and angry could lead to a new wave of social unrest there.”<sup>28</sup> The top envoy, Hedi Annabi, also said that hurricane relief was “beyond the financial resources of either Haiti or the United Nations.” The

<sup>25</sup> Kennedy, Paul. The Parliament of Man. P.110 New York: Vintage Books, 2006.

<sup>26</sup> Inside A Failed State-Haiti. Dir. Journymanpictures. 2008.  
<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbbM8OM9Dqw>>

<sup>27</sup> Inside A Failed State-Haiti. Dir. Journymanpictures. 2008.  
<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbbM8OM9Dqw>>

<sup>28</sup> Haiti Support Group. The UN Security Council Extended the Mandate of the UN Peacekeeping Mission for a further Year on Tuesday and Also Called for a Donor Conference to Aid the Hurricane-Ravaged Nation. October 14, 2008. December 1, 2008. <[http://haitisupport.gn.apc.org/fea\\_news\\_index.html](http://haitisupport.gn.apc.org/fea_news_index.html)>

Security Council concluded that the situation in Haiti as of October 2008 constituted a threat to international peace and security and thus still required MINUSTAH's presence.<sup>29</sup> The October 14, 2008 Security Council Resolution 1840 kept the main structure of MINUSTAH as laid out in previous resolutions, particularly the most recent resolution before 1840, Resolution 1780 of 2007.

While UN Humanitarian and Resident Coordinator for Haiti, Joël Boutroué agrees that there have been some successes in the Mission as evidenced by the temporary stabilization of Haiti in October of 2008, there are still many objectives that have yet to be accomplished, and there still is not enough money or supplies and Haitians are still suffering.<sup>30</sup> Todd Howland, author of "Peacekeeping and Conformity with Human Rights Law: How MINUSTAH Falls Short in Haiti" (2007), said that with regard to overall performance MINUSTAH reported in 2007 that "many benchmarks were not reached." Howland's article provides insight into the obstacles of UN operations using MINUSTAH as a case study. He cites a "growing division between the UN's academic understanding and practice" and states that although the UN is aware of the interconnectedness of the issues on the ground, their ability to deal with them comprehensively is "trumped in practice by the way in which money flows in the UN system and...by the tendency of the UN bureaucracy to prioritize the protection of 'turf.'"<sup>31</sup>

In using the word "turf," Howland is referring to the UN's strong emphasis on maintaining a nation's sovereignty that is mentioned throughout the UN Charter, UN Resolutions

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<sup>29</sup> Haiti Support Group. The UN Security Council Extended the Mandate of the UN Peacekeeping Mission for a further Year on Tuesday and Also Called for a Donor Conference to Aid the Hurricane-Ravaged Nation. October 14, 2008. December 1, 2008. <[http://haitisupport.gn.apc.org/fea\\_news\\_index.html](http://haitisupport.gn.apc.org/fea_news_index.html)>

<sup>30</sup> The United Nations. UN News Centre. Haiti in Desperate Need of Investment and Contributions, Warns Top UN Official. October 15, 2008. December 1, 2008. <<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=28581&Cr=haiti&Cr1=hurricane>>

<sup>31</sup> Howland, Todd. "Peacekeeping and Conformity With Human Rights Law: How MINUSTAH Falls Short in Haiti." International Peacekeeping. P.463. December 2006: 462-476.

and other documents. Sovereignty concerns a country's ability to make their own decisions and take their own actions. Due to the UN's emphasis on sovereignty, the effectiveness of any type of mission lies principally in the hands of the host country. If the country does not wish to have UN intervention, there is nothing the UN can do about it unless the situation is a threat to "international peace and security," as indicated under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. In the case of Haiti the government has complied with missions to Haiti, but when hurricanes and flooding occurred, members of the government did not appear to be present in the affected areas.<sup>32</sup> The definition of "international peace and security" is not clearly defined, but under Chapter VII the Security Council is the authority on determining what constitutes a threat. The UN missions including MINUSTAH can provide ambitious plans on paper, but when the bureaucracy and respect for sovereignty come into play, the actions that a mission can take are limited, not to mention its constraints on budget and personnel already posing a problem.

As for the average Haitian's perception of MINUSTAH's work, Howland said that "so many Haitians have been disappointed or disillusioned with the UN peacekeeping mission that advocates are looking for ways to make it more effective."<sup>33</sup> According to Howland, the situation in Haiti has actually deteriorated since the arrival of MINUSTAH, mainly in the areas of government, which due to the interconnected nature of the issues can only also mean that the Haitian people are also experiencing increased suffering.<sup>34</sup> He also made the point that Haitians

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<sup>32</sup> Inside A Failed State-Haiti. Dir. Journymanpictures. 2008.  
<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbbM8OM9Dqw>>

<sup>33</sup> Howland, Todd. "Peacekeeping and Conformity With Human Rights Law: How MINUSTAH Falls Short in Haiti." International Peacekeeping. p.470. December 2006: 462-476.

<sup>34</sup> Howland, Todd. "Peacekeeping and Conformity With Human Rights Law: How MINUSTAH Falls Short in Haiti." International Peacekeeping. p.469 December 2006: 462-476.

have not been participants in their own recovery or the decision-making process which would help give Haitians a sense of control and empowerment in the fates of their own lives.<sup>35</sup>

Unfortunately, similar problems can arise in non-peacekeeping missions as well. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has also implemented programs to aid in the development of Haiti and currently operates both separately and in conjunction with MINUSTAH. The UNDP is a branch of the UN that works mainly in the areas of democratic governance, poverty reduction, crisis prevention and recovery, environment and energy, HIV/AIDS and the Millennium Development Goals. The UNDP in Haiti has published the “UNDP Country Programme Document for Haiti (2009-2011),” which outlines the background of the situation and proposes a plan for Haiti concerning the UNDP’s aforementioned focuses.<sup>36</sup> The UNDP program in Haiti has been criticized as acting as too much of an administrative and technical support entity to MINUSTAH.<sup>37</sup> The integrated mission between the UNDP and MINUSTAH is cited as one of the causes of this, as MINUSTAH is in theory a more action-oriented operation, whereas the UNDP focuses on “soft” issues not primarily dealing with immediate security matters. Faubert has noted that there are two distinct perceptions of the UNDP’s work in Haiti:

“On the one hand, some feel that UNDP is playing a much too political role and is too close to the Government of Transition. Others feel, on the contrary, that UNDP has not only lost visibility through its participation in the United Nations integrated mission, but that it has also moved away significantly from its core traditional development mandate

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<sup>35</sup> Howland, Todd. “Peacekeeping and Conformity With Human Rights Law: How MINUSTAH Falls Short in Haiti.” International Peacekeeping. p.470 December 2006: 462-476.

<sup>36</sup> The United Nations. United Nations Development Programme. UNDP Country Programme Document for Haiti (2009-2011). December 1, 2008.

<sup>37</sup> Faubert, Carrol. Evaluation of UNDP Assistance to Conflict-Affected Countries, Human Security, Case Study: Haiti. 2006. P.20. November 30, 2008. <<http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/thematic/conflict/Haiti.pdf>>

to become merely a service provider in support of some of the objectives of MINUSTAH”.<sup>38</sup>

The nature of the “core traditional development mandate” may also be an indicator of why some believe that UNDP in Haiti has stepped into the shadow of MINUSTAH. The jurisdiction of the UNDP in Haiti is less concrete as to what can and cannot be done.<sup>39</sup> MINUSTAH operates under a specific mandate under Chapter VII whereas UNDP does not.

The UNDP Programme Document for Haiti does not contain any information about carrying weapons or being able to use self-defense for peacekeepers. This is only possible under a Chapter VII mandate by the Security Council. The Programme Document does indicate that it will “work closely” with MINUSTAH in crisis prevention and recovery through improving the legitimacy of the rule of law, reduce violence through job creation and training, and to “reduce the vulnerability of Haitians to natural disasters through early recovery and investing in aid.”<sup>40</sup> The UNDP program does not define the term “work closely,” and much of the other language also follows suit with typical, vague UN language. This type of language gives specific ideas but does not necessarily discuss the details of their implementation. Without an effective transition between paper and reality, there is a strong possibility of inaction or misinterpretation.

In Faubert’s evaluation of the UNDP in Haiti, she discussed two other main concerns: the need for prevention and the need for a long term approach. The need for prevention lies in the idea that the UNDP could have done something sooner. Violence, political oppression, poverty, etc. have been going on in Haiti since its inception, but the last 20 years have been a particularly

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<sup>38</sup> Faubert, Carrol. Evaluation of UNDP Assistance to Conflict-Affected Countries, Human Security, Case Study: Haiti. 2006. P.20 November 30, 2008. <<http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/thematic/conflict/Haiti.pdf>>

<sup>39</sup> The United Nations. United Nations Development Programme. UNDP Country Programme Document for Haiti (2009-2011). December 1, 2008.

<sup>40</sup> The United Nations. United Nations Development Programme. UNDP Country Programme Document for Haiti (2009-2011). December 1, 2008.

intense crisis. With the presence of the United Nations throughout the 20 years, could more have been done to help the struggling country? Although there have been at least seven missions to Haiti in total not counting the UNDP in Haiti, the country remains in a helpless state. Perhaps these missions didn't focus on the right issues, particularly prevention.

The majority of the missions to Haiti were peacekeeping operations with MINUSTAH being the most comprehensive in terms of its greater attention to aspects of the crisis other than peace and security, particularly in government. If the UNDP had stepped in earlier and used its specific designations and jurisdiction to help the people of Haiti, it and the international community may have had a chance to “prevent Haiti from being trapped in the downward spiral of political, economic and social degradation.”<sup>41</sup>

The second concern is the need for a long term approach. The missions to Haiti have not been extensive, long term missions. Each time a mission has ended, the progress that was made largely dissipated, and this created the need for another mission. This situation means the loss of life, wasted funds and wasted man-power. A long-term approach may cost more money, need more personnel and generally enhance the scope and commitment of the programs, but the positive impact on society and the lives saved because of the extra effort will be invaluable.

Faubert did note however that the operations in Haiti including that of the UNDP are a two-way street. They require cooperation from the international community, the government, civil society and the public. Haitians who are able to must take steps toward making change in order for this to happen. Faubert states that “Haiti’s own ruling class has often been ambivalent about its wish to receive such support, distrustful of its international partners and not totally

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<sup>41</sup> Faubert, Carrol. Evaluation of UNDP Assistance to Conflict-Affected Countries, Human Security, Case Study: Haiti. 2006. P.34 November 30, 2008. <<http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/thematic/conflict/Haiti.pdf>>

committed to change.”<sup>42</sup> According to Joel Boutroue, the international community has “been generally OK” in donating funds to the UNDP program in Haiti, but as of October 15, 2008, the UNDP was still lacking in funds and supplies.<sup>43</sup> Boutroue also warned that “if we don’t invest in the short and medium term, we’ll have additional hardship, deepening poverty and we will enter a vicious circle of instability, unrest, insecurity.”<sup>44</sup> Although investment in the short and medium term will be beneficial, it is also important to think about the positive effects of long term investment. Boutroue may realize that the international community has been jaded and is now only willing to invest in the short and medium term, so he takes that into consideration when asking for aid.

An international embargo was placed on Haiti in October of 1991 after a military coup against Aristide by General Raoul Cedras, signaling the international community’s unhappiness with the leadership. Donors know that Haiti’s government is still corrupt, despite decades of UN involvement. This makes them wary to give aid to a situation they fear will never be resolved.<sup>45</sup> The Haitian government must thus convince the international community that it can become a responsible steward of financial aid.

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<sup>42</sup> Faubert, Carrol. Evaluation of UNDP Assistance to Conflict-Affected Countries, Human Security, Case Study: Haiti. 2006. P.34 November 30, 2008. <<http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/thematic/conflict/Haiti.pdf>>

<sup>43</sup> The United Nations. UN News Centre. Haiti in Desperate Need of Investment and Contributions, Warns Top UN Official. October 15, 2008. December 1, 2008. <<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=28581&Cr=haiti&Cr1=hurricane>>

<sup>44</sup> The United Nations. UN News Centre. Haiti in Desperate Need of Investment and Contributions, Warns Top UN Official. October 15, 2008. December 1, 2008. <<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=28581&Cr=haiti&Cr1=hurricane>>

<sup>45</sup> Faubert, Carrol. Evaluation of UNDP Assistance to Conflict-Affected Countries, Human Security, Case Study: Haiti. 2006. P.17 November 30, 2008. <<http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/thematic/conflict/Haiti.pdf>>

Other than the ruling elite, the government, and the international community, members of civil society must work with the UNDP and MINUSTAH to make programs more effective. There are many civil society organizations in Haiti, and collectively they comprise the Group of 184 (G-184). The groups come from many different sectors such as human rights, women's rights, student organizations, unions, business associations, rural organizations and neighborhood committees. Due to the nature of the wealth disparity in Haiti, those who have the ability to head civil society organizations often belong to the upper echelon of Haitian society. This can sometimes skew the agendas of the organizations, most of which are located in the nation's capital of Port-au-Prince, and prevent them from engaging in work outside of the capital.<sup>46</sup>

The website for the Haiti Support Group, a "British solidarity organization," has several recent articles concerning the actions of Haitian civil society as a whole. It is admittedly skewed towards supporting the work of the civil society and less so towards supporting the efforts of the UN and the Haitian government. In general the articles focus on finding a solution to Haiti's problems through advocating a bottom-up approach involving grassroots action. In an article dated October 7, 2008, members of Haiti's civil society deemed the "policies imposed by the international finance institutions" and "bad policies applied by the Haitian state" "inappropriate."<sup>47</sup>

The Haiti Support Group has also published an article outlining what should be done from civil society's point of view. Dated September 15, 2008, the article outlines the current situation as of September 15 and then goes on to describe a plan of action. Just as Faubert said,

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<sup>46</sup> Faubert, Carrol. *Evaluation of UNDP Assistance to Conflict-Affected Countries, Human Security, Case Study: Haiti*. 2006. P.16 November 30, 2008. <<http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/thematic/conflict/Haiti.pdf>>

<sup>47</sup> Haiti Support Group. *PRSP Needs a Complete Overhaul*. October 7, 2008. December 1, 2008. <<http://haitisupport.gn.apc.org/CSOsHSG.html>>



the civil society organizations are also in favor of a “long-term mobilisation.”<sup>48</sup> Civil society advocates the dissemination of information to the public, something that Faubert didn’t mention. Throughout the article the organizations seem to have more focus on the plight of the people rather than through broad, bureaucratic wording and structure, even if they are made up of elites. In an article from the Haiti Support Group, Haiti’s collective civil society has laid out main areas that they plan to pressure the government to work on:

1. “Carrying out comprehensive agrarian reform, as called for in the country’s Constitution;”
2. “Clearly defining zones for agriculture, zones for construction, zones for forest use, and zones for forest conservation;”
3. “Guaranteeing that the country takes responsibility for its own food production and exercises food sovereignty;”
4. “Reducing the economic pressure on our natural resources, and then setting up, controlling and subsidising other sources of energy for the country;”
5. “Increasing the production of wood for consumption;”
6. “Protesting against the payment of US\$5 million due for debt service in September, and insisting that it instead be added to the mere 51 million gourds (US \$1.3 million) that the State has so far allocated for disaster relief;”
7. “Demanding the State stop paying the external debt and instead uses the money for the reconstruction of the social, economic and physical environment of the country.”<sup>49</sup>

According to Faubert the civil society of Haiti has not been easy to work with and notes the need for increased cooperation with the organizations. She mainly observed that there has not been enough time to for the UNDP to develop a strong relationship with members of civil society. With short time frames for planning and action, more individual relationships have been formed rather than with the whole organization. With more time for the members of all parties to meet, the UNDP could “further develop its capacity to analyze the evolution of the situation in

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<sup>48</sup> Haiti Support Group. Progressive Civil Society Organisations Say Tackle the Root Problems Now. September 15, 2008. December 1, 2008. <<http://haitisupport.gn.apc.org/PostHurricanesPosition.html>>

<sup>49</sup> Haiti Support Group. Progressive Civil Society Organisations Say Tackle the Root Problems Now. September 15, 2008. December 1, 2008. <<http://haitisupport.gn.apc.org/PostHurricanesPosition.html>>

Haiti and be used to develop a much needed set of indicators...<sup>50</sup> In general, a long-term positive relationship is needed in order to make the UNDP more effective.

There are lessons that can be learned from the United Nation's involvement in Haiti. The UNDP conducts regular evaluations of its programs and includes them in their country program documents. In Haiti's country program document, the past missions to Haiti were generally considered lacking in terms of geographical scope (within Haiti). This, however, is not possible without enough funds or supplies. The 2009-2011 program will focus on cooperating more with Haitians and becoming more aware of their ideas and priorities. The document also says that it will keep in mind that changes in the political arena may occur, and that they will try to plan accordingly in order to anticipate conflict. They will look at the causes of destabilization in Haiti and have adopted a so-called "do no harm" approach to their work in Haiti. One interpretation of "do no harm" could be to be involved in the country's affairs while not treading on the sovereignty or free will of the Haitian people and preventing conflict as much as possible.<sup>51</sup> Overall, the situation in Haiti is still grim and there is still a lot of work to do and not enough money or time to do it in.

It is also important to note that the United Nations can only help as much as the country itself wants to be helped. In the case of Haiti, there is a will on the part of civil society and of the general public to rebuild the broken nation, but they don't have as much power as the government. The members of civil society also must use their influence to try to help areas outside Port-au-Prince. If it is true that Haitian civil society is made up of upper-class elites, they

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<sup>50</sup> Faubert, Carrol. Evaluation of UNDP Assistance to Conflict-Affected Countries, Human Security, Case Study: Haiti. 2006. P.36 November 30, 2008. <<http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/thematic/conflict/Haiti.pdf>>

<sup>51</sup> The United Nations. United Nations Development Programme. UNDP Country Programme Document for Haiti (2009-2011). P.3-4 December 1, 2008.

must realize that they run the risk of becoming like the government that failed to provide a stable and safe environment for its citizens. Haiti's government, particularly in the administrations of Aristide and Preval, have outwardly asked for foreign aid, but to date there has been little to show for the millions of dollars that the international community has pledged over the years.

Since its inception the United Nations has been trying to improve itself, though the progress comes at a slow pace. The slow progress comes at the cost of lives and many other countries including Haiti being caught in a downward spiral of self-destruction. The member states of the UN must be willing to invest money and time in the improvement of the United Nations system, particularly the organs associated with development and conflict control and prevention. They must eventually become more efficient, less convoluted and a little more powerful without violating sovereignty. Member states will then end up having to contribute less of their time and money in the long-run. This will give them more time to worry about themselves and their own issues, creating an international community that consists of more countries being able to help themselves.

Haiti is an example of how the United Nations' good intentions can be bogged down by bureaucracy, ambiguity, lack of support and disorganization. It is also an example of how cycles of poverty, violence and the prevention of development can spiral out of control without the right combination of international assistance and the work of civil society. The case of Haiti shows that the structure of the United Nations system in the realm of social and economic development and peace and security needs to be re-evaluated. If there were not as many hoops to jump through and more willingness on the part of the international community to help, Haiti would be in a better state.

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