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Haiti: 10 steps towards human rights

Two hundred years after Haitians overthrew slavery and colonialism, human rights abuses are on the rise. Political division and violence, impunity and the reduction in international support worsen this situation, Amnesty International said while launching an action plan for human rights in Haiti.

The "10-point action plan", presented to government authorities, political leaders, civil society groups and members of the international community, is designed to give specific recommendations for confronting the gravest human rights abuses in the country.

These issues include poverty, illegal killings, torture, impunity, violence against women, violations of the right to freedom of conscience, and threats against human rights defenders and trade unionists.

"We urge Haitian leaders of all political persuasions and the international community to take these abuses seriously, and to make concrete efforts to overcome them," said Amnesty International. "The Haitian people, and their exemplary history of fighting for freedom, deserve no less."

Background Information

On 1 January 2004, the world's first black republic will mark the 200th anniversary of its birth.

Haiti is one of the poorest countries in the world, with by far the lowest life expectancy, literacy and health indicators in its region, the Americas. Moreover, according to the United Nations, the economic situation of its people is deteriorating.

For a full copy of "Haiti: Human rights and the Bicentennial -- a 10-point action plan", please see:
<http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engamr360102003>

To download a webclip with a Bicentennial message from Irene Khan, Secretary General of Amnesty International, please see: www.news.amnesty.org

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