

URGENT ACTION

200 FAMILIES EVICTED, MORE AT IMMINENT RISK

Around 200 families have been forcibly evicted from their homes in an informal settlement in the area of Titanyen on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti. Hundreds of other families living in nearby areas are facing a similar threat. Many of them are victims of the January 2010 earthquake who had already been forcibly evicted.

Following the eviction of around 60 families on 7 December from an informal settlement in Titanyen on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince, on 9 and 10 December a justice of peace (*juge de paix*) from the municipality of Croix-des-Bouquets accompanied by police officers and a group of armed men returned to the area to complete the eviction. It happened despite the outcry provoked by the first eviction and the violence used against the residents. More than 200 families have been made homeless following both evictions. Many of them were forcibly evicted in May 2012 from Camp Mozayik in Delmas municipality and relocated in Titanyen.

The eviction in Titanyen reportedly occurred in execution of a court order issued in June. However, residents stated that they were never notified the order nor received notice for the eviction. The court order covers a much wider area than Titanyen. Several thousands of people live in the area concerned by the order. Many of the residents are people internally displaced after the earthquake in March 2010. People living in the area called Village des pêcheurs and Village grâce de Dieu (also known as Madamoi) are believed to be at imminent risk of forced eviction.

Titanyen, Village des pêcheurs and Village grâce de Dieu are parts of an area commonly known as Canaan, a large tract of land which was believed to have been declared for "public use" (*utilité publique*) by the government two months after the earthquake in March 2010. Tens of thousands of people who lost their homes in the earthquake have subsequently relocated there. However, confusion remains about the exact portion of land having been declared of "public use" and about the completion of the expropriation procedure. People living there have no security of tenure and many face eviction from people claiming ownership of the land.

Please write immediately in French or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to ensure that residents of Canaan are not evicted without due process, adequate notice, consultation and that all those affected have access to adequate alternative accommodation;
- Calling for an investigation into the participation of state authorities in an illegal eviction, and into the apparent excessive use of force employed by the police officers;
- Urging them to seek durable solutions to the housing needs Canaan residents and the hundreds of thousands of others still living in makeshift camps.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 29 JANUARY 2014 TO:

Minister of Justice and Public Security
(Ministre de la Justice et de la Sécurité
Publique)

Jean Renel Sanon
18 avenue Charles Summer
Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Email: secretariat.mjsp@yahoo.com
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

General Director of the Haitian Police
(Directeur Général de la PNH)

Godson Orélus
Police Nationale d'Haiti
Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Email: godore68@hotmail.com
Salutation: Monsieur le directeur / Dear Director

And copies to:

Minister for Human Rights and the
Reduction of Extreme Poverty
Rose-Anne Auguste
33, Boulevard Harry Truman
Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Email: rosanne.auguste@primature.ht

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 327/13. Further information:

<http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR36/022/2013/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On the morning of 7 December, a justice of peace (*jugé de paix*) from the municipality of Croix-des-Bouquets accompanied by 17 police officers and a group of men armed with machetes and sticks forcibly evicted around 60 families from Titanyen. The residents stated that the justice of the peace did not present an eviction order and that they had no prior notice of the eviction and therefore had no opportunity to appeal against it. The armed men began to tear down their dwellings without allowing residents time to collect their belongings. These belongings were then stolen as police fired their weapons in the air in order to intimidate the residents. According to the residents over a dozen people were assaulted, including a woman who is four months pregnant. Residents were told that the remaining families living on the site would also be forced off the land.

The land where the settlements of Titanyen, Village des pêcheurs and Village grâce de Dieu are located is reported to have been identified by local entrepreneurs for the construction of a gas terminal.

Nearly four years after the devastating January 2010 earthquake, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimate that 171,974 individuals are still living in makeshift camps. A third of them are under risk of forced eviction. However, this figure does not include 52,926 residents of Canaan which IOM recently removed from its list of IDPs, due to the fact that the Haitian government believes the area to be “new neighbourhoods needing urban planning with a long term view” and not IDP sites.

Canaan, an informal settlement several kilometres away on the northern outskirts of Port-au-Prince has no running water or sanitation, continues to grow as more victims of forced evictions arrive. It is located on an extensive tract of land that former president René Préval declared for “public use” two months after the earthquake. But in 2012 a second decree was issued by the government of president Michel Martelly which reduced the area declared for public use. Therefore, to date the status of the land remains unclear and the families resettled there do not have any security of tenure. Many, including residents of Camp Mozayik, were forcibly evicted from an IDP camp or moved out of an under threat camp in order to seek a more secure place to live. Many residents of Canaan face forced eviction from people claiming ownership of the land, including residents of Lanmè Frape (for further information please visit www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR36/020/2013/en).

On 4 May 2012, 126 families who lived in Camp Mozayik in Delmas municipality were forcibly evicted by local officials accompanied by armed members from the Delmas’ Streets Control Brigade (Brigade de Contrôle des Rues, BRICOR) and officers from the Haitian National Police. The land where the internally displaced people built their makeshift shelters in the wake of the earthquake was set aside for a commercial development. The alleged owners did not initiate any legal proceedings to obtain an eviction order from the courts, as required under national law; they instead regained possession of the property through the involvement of the local municipal authorities and private individuals.

Name: Around 200 families forcibly evicted

Gender m/f: both

Further information on UA: 327/13 Index: AMR 36/023/2013 Issue Date: 18 December 2013