

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 399/93 Fear for Safety/Threats/Harassment
Possible Extrajudicial Execution

11 November 1993

HAITI Emmanuel LAURENT, journalist with Radio Tropic FM
Venel REMARAIS, journalist, Director of the *Agence Haitienne de Presse*, Haitian Press Agency

Orelia JOSEPH (female)

Amnesty International is extremely concerned for the safety of Emmanuel Laurent following his abduction on 8 November 1993 after repeated threats and harassment. According to reports he was forced into a car in central Port-au-Prince by two armed men, who ordered him to take them to the home of Venel Remarais. Emmanuel Laurent apparently misdirected them to a different location and then managed to escape by throwing himself into a ditch, but was shot in the hand as he did so. Amnesty International is now also concerned for the safety of Venel Remarais.

The organization is also concerned that the killing in October of Orelia Joseph, who worked as a nanny for a prominent President Aristide supporter, may have been an extrajudicial execution. According to the testimony of her daughters, Orelia Joseph was beaten and dragged from her home in Cité Soleil by armed men. Subsequently, her head and her legs were found in different places, while the rest of her body was not found.

Prior to his abduction, Emmanuel Laurent had broadcasted an interview with Orelia Joseph's daughters on Radio Tropic FM. According to Emmanuel Laurent, he received a telephone call the next day from a lieutenant at the *Service d'investigation et de recherches anti-gang* (Anti-gang investigation and research service), announcing that a Commission of Inquiry was being initiated into the killing of Orelia Joseph and that he was invited to give information on this matter. When the journalist refused to, the caller thanked him and hung up the phone. Subsequently, following a conversation at the radio station with the Head of the anti-gang service, Emmanuel Laurent was reportedly telephoned by the lieutenant and accused of asking impertinent questions and of doubting the work of the military. On 21 October Emmanuel Laurent received a letter requesting his presence at the anti-gang service on 25 October.

Emmanuel Laurent recently received two other letters, both from the Chief of Police and Commander of the military department of the metropolitan zone of Port-au-Prince, Lieutenant-Colonel Michel François. The first letter, dated 4 November, requested that the journalist present himself at the police headquarters on 9 November. The second letter, dated 5 November, requested that he present himself at the anti-gang service on 8 November, in connection with the killing of Orelia Joseph.

The anti-gang service has been notorious in Haiti for human rights violations, while Michel François has been widely cited as orchestrating the recent wave of abuses afflicting the country.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 8 September 1993, after a ceremony had just taken place in the City Hall to reinstate Mayor Evans Paul, five people were killed and at least 30 wounded, apparently by *attachés* (armed auxiliaries to the security forces). Emmanuel Laurent was reportedly severely beaten on the back and the arm when he tried to intervene between some foreign journalists and some *attachés* who were insulting them. He subsequently had to be taken to the Red Cross hospital for treatment. Emmanuel Laurent was also beaten and threatened with death by armed men on 5 October at a Press Conference called by the *Front Révolutionnaire pour l'Avancement et le Progrès Haitien* (FRAPH), Revolutionary Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti, a group which is the political mouthpiece of the *attachés*.

President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was due to return to power on 30 October, according to the 3 July 1993 agreement signed by him and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, General Raoul Cédras. However, this did not happen and there has been no indication of any other date being set for his return. General Cédras and Police Chief Michel François are effectively ruling the country. As the date when President Aristide was to have returned drew nearer there was a marked upsurge in human rights violations, including the killings of Aristide supporter Antoine Izméry and Justice Minister Guy Malary. Widespread threats and attacks against President Aristide's supporters continue to afflict the country.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes and airmail letters either in French or English or in your own language, or call by telephone:

- expressing concern at the reported abduction on 8 November of journalist Emmanuel Laurent and that he has suffered repeated threats and harassment;
- expressing concern that the life of Venel Remarais may be in danger, given that the abductors of Emmanuel Laurent were actually looking for journalist Venel Remarais;
- urging that the physical security of both men be guaranteed;
- expressing concern about the killing of Orelia Joseph;
- urging that prompt and impartial investigations into these events be carried out, that the findings be made public and that those found responsible be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

1) Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces:

Monsieur le Générale Raoul CEDRAS

Commandant-en-Chef des Forces Armées d'Haiti

Grand Quartier Général des Forces Armées d'Haiti

Rue Geffrard, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Telegrams: Commandant-en-Chef des Armées d'Haiti Cedras, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Telephone: + 509 22 3935

Telexes: 20391 qqfadh

Faxes: + 509 23 9007, + 509 23 9407

Salutation: Monsieur le Général / Dear General

2) Chief of National Police:

Monsieur le Lt.Colonel Michel FRANÇOIS

Chef de la Police Nationale
Grand Quartier Général de la Police
Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Telegrams: Chef, Police Nationale, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Salutation: Monsieur le Lt. Colonel / Dear Lt. Colonel

3) Anti-gang investigation and research service:

Monsieur le Capitaine Joanis JACKSON

Chef du Service d'investigation et de recherches anti-gang

Port-au-Prince, Haiti

**Telegrams: Chef du Service d'investigation et de recherches anti-gang,
Port-au-Prince, Haiti**

Salutation: Monsieur le Capitaine / Dear Captain

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

1) Haiti en Marche

173 N.W. 94 St

Miami, FL33150, USA

2) Radio Métropole

Boîte Postale 62

Port-au-Prince, HAITI

and to diplomatic representatives of Haiti accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 December 1993.