

URGENT ACTION

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER FEARS FOR SAFETY

On April 26, two unknown men on motorbikes, presumably belonging to a local gang, circled the office of Pierre Espérance, a prominent Haitian human rights defender, in Port-au-Prince. He reported that different sources advised him about recent death threats made against him and stated that the police were aware of them. Pierre Espérance received previous threats in 2018, and in 2014 when a letter containing a gun bullet was sent to the organization's offices. We demand that the Haitian authorities provide him with effective protection according to his wishes and that authorities immediately and independently investigate these threats.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

M. Jean Roudy ALY
Minister of Justice and Public Security of Haiti
18 Avenue Charles Sumner,
Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Email: rudly@yahoo.com

Dear Mr. Minister,

I write to you to raise my concern about the safety of Mr. Pierre Espérance, human rights defender and Executive Director of the National Human Rights Defence Network (Réseau National de Défense des Droits Humains, RNDDH).

*On April 26, **unknown men on motorbikes, presumably belonging to a local gang** circled his office in Port-au-Prince. He reported that different sources advised him about death threats made against him and that the police were aware of them. Pierre Espérance received previous threats in 2018, and in 2014 when a letter containing a gun bullet was sent to his offices.*

I therefore demand that your office, along with the National Police of Haiti, fulfil their obligation to protect Pierre Espérance in accordance with his wishes. I also demand an immediate and independent investigation to prosecute those responsible for the recent threats and intimidation against him.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In recent months, the National Human Rights Defence Network (*Réseau National de Défense des Droits Humains*, RNDDH), organization led by Pierre Espérance, released reports on the killings of at least 71 people in La Saline slum occurred on 13 November 2018. RNDDH alleged that the killings were carried out by armed gangs with the complicity of the state.

The organization also released a report on the human rights violations committed during the past February protests in Haiti, organized after information surfaced that senior officials were implicated in the diversion of billions of dollars in proceeds from oil provided to Haiti by Venezuela. The RNDDH found that at least 40 people were killed, including 17 from bullets to the head. In March, the UN High Commissioner stated that they documented 41 deaths and 100 injuries in the context of the protests.

In early May 2019, the RNDDH issued another report which detailed the loss of lives of police and community members and attributed the killings principally to gang members.

In accordance with the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, authorities in Haiti must fulfil their obligation to protect human rights defenders and to fully investigate attacks against them and bring those responsible to justice. They also have the duty to guarantee that human rights defenders can carry out their work without fear of reprisals.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: French; English.

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 27 June 2019

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Pierre Espérance (He/Him/His)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/4000/amr360092014en.pdf>