

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Legal Concern/fear of ill-treatment

12 November 1991

HAITI: Patrick Frantz BEAUCHARD
Saurel GOMEZ

Amnesty International is concerned at the arrest, allegedly without a warrant, of Patrick Frantz Beauchard and his brother-in-law Saurel Gomez.

According to the information received by Amnesty International, Patrick Beauchard and Saurel Gomez were arrested at about 11 am on Saturday 2 November 1991 in Hinche, in Haiti's Central Department, and are being detained at the military barracks there.

Patrick Beauchard, a former sergeant in the Presidential Guard *Forces Armées d'Haïti* (FAd'H), Haitian Armed Forces, had supported the *coup d'état* led by General Prosper Avril in September 1988. After the coup, however, he and a group of soldiers continued to make demands for radical changes both in the armed forces and in government administration, and were arrested a month later on the grounds that they were preparing a further coup. They were released without charges in December 1988 but were dismissed from the army. Patrick Beauchard and some of the soldiers arrested subsequently formed the *Organisation Populaire 17 Septembre* (OP-17), of which he became a leader. In December 1989 Patrick Beauchard was arrested a second time and was accused of plotting against the security of the State. Another OP-17 leader, Marino Etienne, together with political opponent Evans Paul and trade unionist Jean-Auguste Meyzieux, had been arrested one month earlier on the same charges. Upon arrest, the four men were severely ill-treated and required treatment abroad. The four were released as a result of an amnesty in February 1990.

No reasons for the arrest of Patrick Beauchard and Saurel Gomez have reportedly been given by the military, and sources in Haiti have expressed their concern that they may have been detained solely on account of the OP-17's support of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Troops overthrew the democratically elected government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who took office in Haiti on 7 February 1991, in a coup d'Etat on Monday 30 September. Since then Amnesty International has learned of widespread human rights violations committed by the security forces, including a large number of extrajudicial executions, beatings and mass arrests without warrant. Many of the victims included supporters of President Aristide and members and leaders of grassroots organizations.

The arrests of Patrick Frantz Beauchard and Saurel Gomez take place amid a wave of arrests and other human rights violations against those perceived by the military

to be supporters of deposed President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Poor districts in Port-au-Prince and grassroots organizations in the countryside have particularly been targeted. On 16 October Aldajuste Pierre, a member of the *Mouvement Paysan de Papaye*, (MPP) Papaye Peasant Movement, was arrested and severely ill-treated by soldiers in Hinche, following the destruction of the MPP office, also in Hinche, on 1 October (see UA 380/91, AMR 36/23/91, 8 November 1991).

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RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/telephone calls/airmail letters:

- asking for the reasons for the arrests, and for clarification of the legal situations, of Patrick Frantz Beauchard and Saurel Gomez;
- asking that they be charged with a recognizable criminal offence or otherwise be released;
- seeking guarantees that their physical integrity will be respected while they are in military custody.

APPEALS TO

1) Prime Minister:

Maître Jean-Jacques HONORAT
Premier Ministre,
Ministre des Affaires Etrangères
Présidence de la République de Haïti
Palais National
Port-au-Prince, Haïti

**Monsieur le Premier Ministre
Dear Prime Minister**

**Telegrams: Premier Ministre Honorat, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Faxes: + 509 22 1147**

2) Minister of Interior and Defence:

M. le Colonel Gracia JEAN
Ministre de l'Intérieur
et de la Défense Nationale
Palais des Ministères
Port-au-Prince, Haïti

**Monsieur le Ministre
Dear Minister**

**Telegrams: Ministre de l'Interieur Jean, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Telephone: + 509 22 9198 or 22 1090
Telexes: 20515 Dptindn**

3) Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces:

Monsieur le Général Raoul CEDRAS
Commandant-en-Chef des Forces
Armées d'Haïti
Grand Quartier Général des Forces Armées d'Haïti
Rue Geffrard
Port-au-Prince, Haïti

**Monsieur le Général
Dear General**

**Telegrams: Comandant-en-Chef des Forces Armees Cedras, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Telephone: + 509 22 3935
Telexes: 20391 GQFADH**

Faxes: + 509 23 9007 or + 509 23 9407

4) Minister of Justice:

Monsieur Antoine LECONTE

Ministre de la Justice

Cité de l'Exposition

Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Monsieur le Ministre

Dear Minister

Telegrams: Ministre de la Justice Leconte, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Telephone: + 509 45 0474 or 45-1626

Telexes: 20166 Justice

COPIES TO:

Chamber of Deputies:

Monsieur le Président

Chambre des Députés

Assemblée National

Port-au-Prince, Haïti

President of the Senate:

Maître Eudrice RAYMOND

Président du Sénat

Assemblée Nationale

Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Haiti en Marche

(newspaper)

173 N.W. 94 St.

Miami

FL 33150, USA

and to diplomatic representatives of Haiti in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat or your section if sending appeals after 24 December 1991.