

URGENT ACTION

FAMILIES IN HAITI FORCIBLY EVICTED

Some of the families who were evicted from a makeshift camp in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, have been relocated to alternative accommodation, which falls well below adequate sanitary or security conditions.

On 14 July more than 500 families were evicted from a makeshift camp outside the Sylvio Cator sports stadium in the centre of the capital, Port-au-Prince. Approximately a fifth of them have been relocated to an alternative site which does not fulfil basic minimum sanitary and security requirements.

103 families have been relocated to a small plot of marshland in the area of Bicentenaire. This site has no electricity, running water or established shelters and only has a few toilets. The families have tried to rebuild shelters with the materials they already had or have had to buy new materials. Each family received compensation of 10,000 Haitian gourdes (US\$ 250), although some families have yet to receive any money. One evictee told a local NGO that she had already spent most of the money to pay for the transportation of her family's belongings and for the construction of a new makeshift shelter. No assistance was given by the mayoral authorities for transportation or new construction materials. 39 other evicted families have also entered the camp as they have nowhere else to go and have been threatened with removal.

On 22 July around a dozen portable toilets were installed outside the camp. To reach them, the families have to cross a busy road, which is very dangerous for young children and leaves women and girls vulnerable to sexual assault, particularly after dark as there is no electricity. There is serious concern about their security as the site has no perimeter fence and also no lighting at night. Reports of sexual violence and of robbery are frequent in camps in Port-au-Prince.

It is not known where the other 400 families have gone. They are among the hundreds of thousands of people left homeless by the earthquake and who had no alternative but to make their own shelters wherever they could.

Please write immediately in French or your own language:

- Urge the authorities to ensure that the basic sanitary and security needs of families relocated to the camp in Bicentenaire are met and comply with Haiti's obligation to provide adequate alternative accommodation for all evicted families;
- Urge them to comply with the precautionary measures issued by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights which call for a moratorium on all evictions from Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps and the transfer of anyone unlawfully evicted to places with minimum sanitary and security conditions;
- Remind them that UN Guiding Principles on Internally Displaced Persons state that such persons have the right to an adequate standard of living, including basic shelter and housing and protection against arbitrary displacement.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 6 SEPTEMBER 2011 TO:

Mayor of Port-au-Prince

Monsieur Muscadin Jean Yves Jason
151, Angle Avenue Jean Paul II et
Impasse Duverger
Turgeau
Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Email:
mairiedeportauprinced@gmail.com
Salutation: Monsieur le Maire / Dear Mayor

President

Monsieur Michel Martelly
Palais National
Rue Magny
Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Fax: + 1 202-745-7215 (via Haiti
embassy in the USA)
Email:
communications@presidentmartelly.ht
Salutation: Monsieur le Président, / Dear President Martelly

And copies to:

NGO
Groupe d'Appui aux Rapatriés &
Refugiés
69, Rue Christ-roi
P.O. Box 19273
Port-au-Prince, Haiti
E-mail: garr@garr-haiti.org

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 217/11 (AMR 36/008/2011). Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR36/008/2011/en>.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 18 November 2010 the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights issued precautionary measures calling on the Haitian authorities to adopt a moratorium on all evictions from camps housing people internally displaced after the January 2010 earthquake. The precautionary measures also called for anyone who is unlawfully evicted to be transferred to places with minimum sanitary and security conditions. States are obligated to adopt and implement the precautionary measures issued by the Commission.

Sexual violence was widespread in Haiti before January 2010 but has been exacerbated by conditions since the earthquake. Women and girls live with the constant threat of sexual violence as makeshift camps and shelters do not provide sufficient security from intruders. Amnesty International has also documented several cases of women and girls being sexually assaulted while using portable toilets. The perpetrators of sexual violence are often members of youth gangs who operate after dark.

A recent situation report from the Pan American Health Organization stated that as of 20 June 2011, Haiti's *Ministère de Santé Public et de la Population* (Ministry of Public Health and Population) had reported 363,117 cases of cholera and 5,506 deaths since the outbreak started in October 2010. Cases have increased since the start of the rainy season. According to the World Health Organization "[p]rovision of safe water and sanitation is critical in reducing the impact of cholera and other waterborne diseases". Prior to the installation of around a dozen portable toilets in the area of Bicentenaire, families were forced to dispose of human waste in a large drainage canal at the entrance to the site or inside a local abandoned building which contains pools of stagnant water, raising the risk of cholera infection.

Name: n/a

Gender: n/a

Further information on UA 217/11, Index: AMR 36/010/2011, Issue Date: 26 July 2011