

# URGENT ACTION

## WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS THREATENED

**Several members of KOFAVIV, a Haitian women's rights organization in Port-au-Prince, the capital, have been repeatedly threatened and harassed. Their safety remains at risk.**

Several members of the Haitian women's rights organization Komisyon Fanm Viktim Pou Viktim (**KOFAVIV**), including its secretary general **Marie Eramithe Delva**, have received threatening telephone calls and text messages, including death threats since March 2014. On 7 June a threatening text message was sent to KOFAVIV's secretary general and the organization's lawyer. In the early hours of 28 April several gunshots were heard outside the organization's office after three armed men were seen hitting the stairs' bannister.

These threats began after the arrest of a woman on 24 February whom the police holds responsible for earlier threats and harassment against Marie Eramithe Delva, Malya Vilard Apolon (KOFAVIV's coordinator) and other members of the organization. This includes the attempted kidnapping of Malya's and Marie Eramithe's children in June 2013, the firing of several gunshots against the external gate of Malya's house in August 2013 and several anonymous calls made to the organization's phone number. Distressed by these threats, Malya Vilard Apolon left Haiti with her children in March 2014. Complaints were lodged with the police on 2 May for the gunshots and on 22 May for one of the threatening text messages. No steps are known to have been taken to initiate investigations into the incidents and no protection measures have been provided to Marie Eramithe or other targeted staff, despite their repeated demands.

KOFAVIV was established by and for rape survivors from the poorest areas of Port-au-Prince, the capital. It provides rape survivors with critical and immediate support, including accompanying them to the hospital and the police station. In recent years KOFAVIV has established a shelter service for rape survivors and a hotline to report cases of sexual violence. Since the devastating 2010 earthquake, their work has been crucial to ensure the safety and well-being of women living in the displacement camps. Many human rights defenders in Haiti have suffered attacks in recent months. The Haitian authorities must immediately take steps to provide adequate protection to the defenders and their families.

### Please write immediately in French or your own language:

- Expressing concern for the safety of Marie Eramithe Delva and other members of KOFAVIV and calling on the authorities to provide effective protection to them in accordance with their wishes;
- Calling on the authorities to immediately and independently investigate the accusation of threats and intimidation against members of KOFAVIV, to make the results public and to bring those found responsible to justice;
- Reminding them of their duty to guarantee that human rights defenders can carry out their work without fear of violence and threats, as established in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 25 JULY 2014 TO:

Minister of Justice and Public Security

Jean Renel Sanon  
18 avenue Charles Summer  
Port-au-Prince, Haiti  
Email: secretariat.mjsp@yahoo.com,  
jrsanon@mjsp.gouv.ht

**Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear**

**Minister**

General Director of the Haitian Police

Godson Orélus  
Police Nationale d'Haiti  
Port-au-Prince, Haiti  
Email: godore68@hotmail.com

**Salutation: Monsieur le directeur /**

**Dear Director**

**And copies to:**

KOFAVIV

12A Route de Maïs Gâté, a l'entrée de la  
rue Moise,  
à l'étage de Florida Quincaillerie  
Port-au-Prince, Haïti  
Email: info@kofaviv.org

**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.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Several threats and attacks against human rights defenders have been reported recently in Haiti. The Inter-American Commission of Human Rights issued precautionary measures in favour of human rights lawyers Mario Joseph and Patrick Florvilus respectively in October 2012 and November 2013 requesting the Haitian state to adopt any necessary measures to guarantee the life and personal integrity of the lawyers.

On repeated occasions in 2013, members of Kouraj, a LGBTI rights group, have been threatened and intimidated during public demonstrations held in Port-au-Prince (see UA 186/13, <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR36/014/2013/en>). A direct attack against organization's office also took place in November (see UA 320/13, <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR36/021/2013/en>).

On 8 February 2014, human rights defender Daniel Dorsinvil and his wife were killed by a gunman in the residential neighbourhood of Canapé Vert, Port-au-Prince. The circumstances and the motives of the killings remain unclear. An investigation was opened and various people are currently held in pre-trial detention. In February Amnesty International called for a thorough investigation into the killing (see <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR36/006/2014/en>).

On 2 April Pierre Espérance, executive director of the National Human Rights Defence Network (Réseau National de Défense des Droits Humains, RNDDH), one of Haiti's leading human rights organizations, received a threatening letter at the organization's office. The letter contained a gun bullet and accused Pierre Espérance and the RNDDH of publicizing false reports aiming to destabilize the government. It also mentioned the attack on Pierre Espérance in 1999 when he escaped a shooting by gunmen in Port-au-Prince. The letter concluded that "in 99 we missed you, this time you won't escape it, stop speaking bullshit". For more information, see UA 87/14, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR36/009/2014/en>.

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 a duty to guarantee that human rights defenders can carry out their work without fear of violence or reprisals.

Name: Marie Eramithe Delva and other members of KOFAVIV

Gender m/f: f

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