

URGENT ACTION

THOUSANDS MORE AT RISK OF FORCED EVICTION

Approximately a hundred families have been forcibly evicted from an informal settlement known as Canaan in continuance of an illegal eviction process which started in December 2013. Thousands more people may be at risk of being made homeless.

The same justice of peace (*juge de paix*) who led the forced eviction of more than 200 families from the settlement of Mozayik in Canaan, Port-au-Prince, between 7-10 December 2013 returned to the area on the morning of 30 January. He was accompanied by police officers and a group of men armed with machetes and sticks who proceeded to forcibly evict approximately 100 families from a neighbouring area known as Village Grâce de Dieu. Residents said that the police fired their guns into the air and also used tear gas against them. At least three people are reported to have been injured, including a 4 year-old child and an 84 year-old man. A makeshift structure which was being used as a school was torn down and a water tank which served thousands of people was also destroyed.

The police returned at 5am on 3 February and reportedly fired their guns into the air once more. In order to stop further forced evictions, the residents blocked the highway which runs between their community and the Caribbean Sea. The police used tear gas to try to disperse them and there are reports of two people requiring hospitalization after having been beaten by the police. No further evictions were reported.

Residents stated they were given no notice of the eviction and that the justice of peace claimed he was completing the eviction process which started in Mozayik on 7 December, which was based on a court order issued in June. However, Mozayik residents stated that they were not given prior notification of the 7 December eviction and therefore they did not have the opportunity to challenge the decision. The court order apparently only mentions 10 of the residents, while over 300 families have now been evicted. Several thousands of people living in the area concerned by the order are now at risk of forced eviction.

Please write immediately in French or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to ensure that residents of Canaan are not evicted without due process, adequate notice, consultation and that all those affected have access to adequate alternative accommodation;
- Calling for an investigation into the participation of state authorities and a group of armed men in an illegal eviction, and into the apparent excessive use of force, including use of firearms, employed by the police officers;
- Urging them to seek durable solutions to the housing needs of Canaan residents as well as thousands of others still living in makeshift camps.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 18 MARCH 2014 TO:

Minister of Justice and Public Security
(Ministre de la Justice et de la Sécurité
Publique)

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
(Directeur Général de la PNH)

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

Salutation: Monsieur le directeur / Dear Director

And copies to:

Minister for Human Rights and the
Reduction of Extreme Poverty
Roseanne Auguste
33, Boulevard Harry Truman
Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Email: rosanne.auguste@primature.ht

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. This is the second update of UA 327/13. Further information:

www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR36/023/2013/en

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

More than 200 families were forcibly evicted between 7-10 December 2013 from Mozayik, a sector of an informal settlement known as Canaan, located on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince. A justice of peace (*jugé de paix*) from the municipality of Croix-des-Bouquets carried out the eviction, accompanied by police officers and a group of armed men. They used excessive force, as the police reportedly used tear gas grenades and fired shots into the air to intimidate residents who tried to resist the operation. A dozen people were assaulted, including a woman who was four months pregnant. The eviction reportedly occurred in execution of a court order issued in June. However, residents stated that they were never notified the order nor received notice for the eviction.

The land where the settlements of Mozayik, Village Grâce de Dieu and Village des Pêcheurs are located is reported to have been identified by local entrepreneurs for the construction of a gas terminal.

Canaan, an informal settlement several kilometres away on the northern outskirts of Port-au-Prince, has no running water or sanitation and continues to grow as more victims of forced evictions arrive. It is located on an extensive tract of land that former president René Prével declared for “public use” two months after the January 2010 earthquake. But in 2012 a second decree was issued by the government of president Michel Martelly which reduced the area declared for public use. Therefore, the status of the land remains unclear and the families resettled there do not have any security of tenure. Many, including residents of Camp Mozayik, were forcibly evicted from an internally-displaced persons (IDP) camp or moved out of an under threat camp in order to seek a more secure place to live. Many residents of Canaan face forced eviction from people claiming ownership of the land, including residents of Lanmè Frape (for further information please visit www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR36/020/2013/en).

Four years after the devastating January 2010 earthquake, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimate that 146,573 individuals are still living in makeshift camps. A third of them are under risk of forced eviction. However, this figure does not include 52,926 residents of Canaan which the IOM removed from its list of IDPs in September 2013, due to the fact that the Haitian government believes the area to be “new neighbourhoods needing urban planning with a long term view” and not IDP sites.

The destruction of the community’s water source is of particular concern given the ongoing cholera epidemic. The latest available figures from Haiti’s Ministry of Public Health and Population from 17 January show that there have been 363,117 cases of cholera and 8,539 deaths since the outbreak started in October 2010. 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.”

Name: families at risk of forced eviction

Gender m/f: both

Further information on UA: 327/13 Index: AMR 36/005/2014 Issue Date: 4 February 2014