

# Background Guide



WAMUNC XXVI

UNITED NATIONS  
SECURITY COUNCIL



## Letter from the Chair

Delegates,

Welcome to WAMUNC's United Nations Security Council. My name is Parth Badhwar, and I will serve as your Chair. This is my 3rd WAMUNC; I was the Under-Secretary-General of International Bodies during WAMUNC 2023 and a Chair for WAMUNC 2022. Additionally, I spend most of my MUN time serving as the Head Delegate of GW's Model United Nations Travel Team, which has been consistently ranked among the Top 10 teams in the world. At GW, I am a third-year majoring in Political Science and Criminal Justice.

I have competed on the high school and collegiate Model United Nations circuit for seven years. I truly believe that MUN is one of your resume's most useful extracurricular activities. On top of being a great way to gain public speaking and research skills, the interpersonal skills you gain as a MUN delegate truly prepare you for any career path you might choose. It's also a great way to meet interesting people from across the country; I've made friends from around the world through MUN, which is always a great asset when you need free housing when traveling internationally!

The United Nations Security Council will be among WAMUNC's most competitive committees. I hope that by the end of the weekend, you learn a lot and have lots of fun competing at such a high level! If you have any questions, email me at [bparth@gwu.edu](mailto:bparth@gwu.edu). Looking forward to seeing everyone on campus this spring.

Cheers,

Parth Badhwar

## Letter from the Crisis Director

Delegates,

Welcome to WAMUNC's United Nations Security Council. My name is Zach Zhang and I will serve as your Crisis Director. I'm a third-year student majoring in international affairs with a concentration in conflict resolution. This is my 8th year doing MUN and my 2nd WAMUNC. At GW, I serve as the vice-head delegate of its Model United Nations Travel Team and as its crisis trainer. I mostly compete in the collegiate UNSC circuit.

Model UN has always been a home to me and this will likely be my final semester doing Model UN (although I've said this like 3 times before:) ) It has taught me so much about international relations, generated my aspiration to work in the UN and allowed me to meet some of my best friends. I truly believe what you get out of MUN depends on how much you put into it, so I sincerely urge you to read this background guide well and come to the conference prepared.

When I'm not doing Model UN, I enjoy traveling around the world and learning about different languages and cultures. I've recently returned from a semester abroad in Geneva where I worked with the UN. I'm happy to talk more about this after the sessions.

In terms of crisis notes, I'm looking for creative realism. I hope to see clearly thought-out plans supported by evidence. However, feel free to get creative with these plans, it's all about how you justify them. Please ask yourselves the questions: what are my national interests in this topic? What would be a good outcome I want to walk away with? Why does this action help me get there? You should make explicit answers to these questions in your crisis notes. Since we are the UNSC, magic will not be allowed but unrealistic advancements in technology will.

If you have any questions, email me at [zachziyezhang@gwu.edu](mailto:zachziyezhang@gwu.edu). Looking forward to seeing everyone on campus this spring.

Cheers,

Zach Zhang



## Introduction to Committee

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC), charged with maintaining international peace and security, is regarded as the most powerful organ of the UN. UNSC has regularly debated issues of immediate international importance, such as military conflicts, humanitarian disasters, and political crises.

This committee will run similarly to collegiate-level UNSCs, where Thursday and Friday will function as a standard Crisis committee, and Saturday will run as a double-delegate General Assembly. This will be a double-delegate committee. This means that, for Crisis, both delegates will always remain in the room on Thursday and Friday, writing directives, working on crisis notes, and making speeches together. Starting Saturday morning, the committee will shift into a standard double-delegate General Assembly committee, where one delegation member can be outside working on draft resolutions. At the same time, another delegate remains in the room to make speeches. All resolutions will be written on Saturday, and no work will be allowed outside of committee sessions.

All directives and crisis notes will be written on paper on Thursday and Friday. Draft resolutions will be written on laptops and through Google Docs on Saturday. There will only be one round of resolution writing on Saturday and only one author's panel session. There will be no working papers, mergers, or allotted time for amendments to draft resolutions. Expect to have a cap of 2-3 draft resolutions in the committee. The number of delegates able to participate in the author's panel will be revealed during the committee session on Saturday.

If you have any questions regarding the committee procedure, please email us directly. Regarding preparation, we would recommend having a crisis arc and a few clause ideas coming into the committee.

## Historical Background and Current Situation

Haiti is in a state of political and economic chaos. Its history is one of constant revolution, moves towards democratization and independence, and then a fall back into instability<sup>1</sup>. While the historical factors of Haitian instability, including French colonial rule and the Duvalier era, play a significant role in the current situation, much of the pressing factors for the current crisis can be traced back to the election of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who became Haiti's first democratically-elected President in 1990. While his election promised a new wave of stability for the troubled nation, he was ousted in a military coup a year later. The United States, in conjunction with the United Nations, conducted a military operation to return Aristide to power, which was ultimately successful. Aristide returned to power and was elected to a second term in 2000, but by the beginning of the term, Aristide was dogged by allegations of corruption and election fraud. Specifically, opposition party members in Haiti accused Aristide's second election victory of being marred with fraud, resulting in protests and increased political unrest. At the same time, Haitian gangs increased in their scope and political support and began supporting the idea of getting rid of Aristide. This unrest coalesced into a coup d'état in 2004, resulting in the removal of President Aristide.

In response to the 2004 coup, the United Nations began its intervention efforts in Haiti. The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) was established to facilitate a peacekeeping mission in the region, used to both monitor Haiti for human rights concerns and ensure political stability<sup>2</sup>. Eventually, after having an interim president and former Supreme

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<sup>1</sup>"Haiti's Troubled Path to Development." Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed December 8, 2023. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/haitis-troubled-path-development>.

<sup>2</sup>"MINUSTAH Peacekeeping." United Nations. Accessed December 8, 2023. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/minustah>.

Court Justice Boniface Alexandre in power, Haiti held a general election in 2006 and elected René Préval.

Préval presided over one of Haiti's most tumultuous periods as President, largely due to the 2010 earthquake and its aftermath. The earthquake, occurring in January 2010, resulted in the deaths of approximately 160,000 - 316,000 Haitians. Additionally, large amounts of damage to Haitian infrastructure occurred, estimated at nearly \$10 billion<sup>3</sup>. The earthquake's main effect was an increased international spotlight on Haiti and further scrutiny of its government. Immediately following the earthquake, many nations and international organizations worked collectively to fundraise for humanitarian aid and relief efforts. This included the United States creating a special envoy to Haiti position held by former President Bill Clinton and the creation of a charity telethon titled "Hope for Haiti Now," which became the most profitable and widely distributed telethon in history.

On the flip side of this international support, increased scrutiny of Haiti's government and political leadership also came after the earthquake. Much of this began because of the lack of support being given to Haitian citizens through relief efforts, even with the large number of humanitarian funds flowing into the nation; according to The Guardian<sup>4</sup>, the typical earthquake survivor only received a tarp for shelter, immediate medical attention for a deep wound or broken bone, and perhaps a hygiene kit and a few days' worth of food and water. This came even with billions of dollars being poured into relief efforts, and international organizations and watchdogs largely blamed this lack of support on Haiti's political corruption. Specifically, many

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<sup>3</sup>"Haiti in Ruins: A Look Back at the 2010 Earthquake." NPR, January 12, 2020. <https://www.npr.org/sections/pictureshow/2020/01/12/794939899/haiti-in-ruins-a-look-back-at-the-2010-earthquake>.

<sup>4</sup>"Haiti's Earthquake Has Compounded Years of Corruption and Political Crisis | Jonathan M Katz." The Guardian, August 26, 2021. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/commentisfree/2021/aug/26/haiti-earthquake-corruption-political-crisis>

blamed President Preval for corrupt practices when it came to distributing aid and spending money given by the United Nations and IOs. This blame manifested itself into a political earthquake during Haiti's 2010 election; Michel Martelly, an unknown political outsider, was elected President, beating out Preval's handpicked successor candidate. While this election proved itself to be an indictment of Haiti's political establishment, it was also marked by a surprising show of democratic strength. The transfer of power between Preval and Martelly was the first time in Haiti's history the nation saw a peaceful transfer of power between two opposing parties<sup>5</sup>.

Martelly's Presidency was divisive; some believed it was a continuation of Haiti's move towards democracy, while others saw it as a slide towards authoritarianism. One of his first acts was to reinstate the military of Haiti, seen as controversial due to the military's previous human rights violations within the nation. Additionally, Martelly was quickly accused of corruption related to the reconstruction phase of the 2010 earthquake; some accused him of accepting bribes from construction companies asking him to guarantee money and contracts for rebuilding Haiti. The most egregious allegations of democratic backsliding came during the 2012 elections; these elections, seen as midterm Senate elections for Haiti's legislature, were delayed on the day they were to be held due to political disagreements between Haiti's ruling and opposition parties. After the elections were delayed, protests broke out, and many called for the President's resignation. During the 2015 parliamentary elections a few years later, violence broke out on election day, resulting in the closure of polling stations. When it came time for the 2015 Presidential election, the loser of the election, Jude Célestin, claimed fraud and encouraged his supporters to protest and use violent tactics. Controversy over the elections resulted in the

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<sup>5</sup>"Martelly Wins Haiti Presidential Election." NBCNews.com, April 4, 2011. <https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna42421207>.



week-early resignation of President Martelly, the appointment of interim President Jocelerme Privert, and a new election in November 2016, leading to the election and swearing-in of President Jovenel Moïse in February 2017<sup>6</sup>.

The Moïse Presidency brings us to the current situation in Haiti. While the first few years of Moïse were relatively uneventful, filled with minor allegations of corruption and new initiatives by President Moïse, like a new agricultural program to bring hydropower to Haiti, 2019 brought a wave of civil unrest to the region. These protests were led by political opposition leader Jean-Charles Moïse (not related to President Moïse), who claimed that large amounts of corruption within the nation's present government had stifled Haiti's prosperity. After a wave of economic woes and increases in gas prices due to the removal of tax subsidies and a lack of oil shipments from Venezuela, protests began in 2019. These protests quickly turned violent and destructive, destroying many properties owned by wealthier members of Haitian society. They also included calls for President Moïse to resign, which he resisted. Protests continued throughout 2019 and 2020, culminating in an attempted coup de'tate in 2021. After this attempt, President Moïse ordered the arrests of 23 people in response to this attempted coup, which resulted in increased protests, violence, and calls for Moïse's resignation. One of the most famous chants from the opposition was, "We are back to dictatorship! Down with Moïse!".

In July 2021, President Moïse was assassinated in his residence in Port-au-Prince<sup>7</sup>. The assassination was conducted by 28 armed mercenaries, many of them coming from Colombia. First Lady Martine Moïse was injured during the attack and was sent to the United States for her safety and medical treatment. This brings us to the current developing situation in Haiti...

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<sup>6</sup>Domonoske, Camila. "14 Months after Elections Began, Haiti Finally Has a President-Elect." NPR, January 4, 2017. <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/01/04/508171191/14-months-after-elections-began-haiti-finally-has-a-president-elect>.

<sup>7</sup>"Haiti President's Assassination: What We Know so Far." BBC News, February 1, 2023. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-57762246>.

## Committee Topic 1: Haiti's Current Political Crisis

After the assassination of President Moïse, Haiti has found itself in an ongoing political crisis. The assassination resulted in the appointment of Claude Joseph to the position of President of Haiti for a few weeks until he yielded the position to Ariel Henry. Henry has been accused of being involved in the assassination of President Moïse, including having links to one of the suspects accused of masterminding the attack on Haitian democracy. Henry has flouted Haitian democratic norms and practices during his time in power; no major elections have taken place in Haiti since the 2016 presidential election, and Henry has overseen the fleeing of many democratically elected officials in Haiti<sup>8</sup>. The international community has also left Haiti behind, with the United States ordering all non-essential personnel to leave the nation in 2023. The United Nations Security Council also placed sanctions on Haiti in October 2022, including an arms embargo, asset freeze, and travel bans. The United States has pushed military deployments in the nation through a multinational to restore order and prevent further political and gang violence. However, a multitude of nations, including Canada, Russia, China, and even certain representatives of the United States government, have expressed concern over the idea of international intervention in Haiti<sup>9</sup>. Thus, Haiti's politics continues to be in limbo, with a non-elected President ruling over the nation, no democratic officials legislating, and the international community backing away from a state on the brink of total collapse.

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<sup>8</sup>Haiti only has one feasible way forward - carnegie endowment for ... Accessed December 8, 2023. <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/10/05/haiti-only-has-one-feasible-way-forward-pub-90727>.

<sup>9</sup>JF, teleSUR/. "Russia and China Reject Deployment of Foreign Force in Haiti." News | teleSUR English, July 7, 2023.

<https://www.telesureenglish.net/news/Russia-and-China-Reject-Deployment-of-Foreign-Force-in-Haiti-2023-0707-0014.html>.

## Committee Topic 2: Haiti's Economic and Humanitarian Crisis

Haiti has continually suffered through economic shocks and crises. A constant source of economic pain for the citizens of Haiti has been fuel prices; in September 2022, Acting President Henry announced that the government was ending fuel subsidies, which would lead to price increases for gas products across the nation. This announcement was also met with an increased cost of living crisis worldwide, marked by the global recession caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. As a result, Haiti experienced widespread economic decay; the overall Haitian economy has contracted for four straight years, calculated through gross domestic product (GDP). Poverty in the nation is widespread, with an estimated 63% of the nation being considered impoverished by the World Bank's 2023 estimations.

These economic issues have taken a real human toll on the nation as well; according to the Human Capital Index, over 20% of children across Haiti are at risk of developing serious physical and cognitive limitations throughout their lives, and only 78% of children will live till the age of 60. Cholera remains a lasting threat in Haiti, with flare-ups of the deadly virus occurring regularly in the nation. Additionally, the lack of stable economic development in Haiti, coupled with the constant corruption and misuse of public funds and international aid, has led to the nation being extremely vulnerable to natural disasters. 96% of its population remains vulnerable to hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes. This was evident in the recent 2021 Haiti earthquake, which resulted in the deaths of over 2,000 civilians and the destruction of nearly 150,000 buildings. Even though the earthquake occurred over 10 years after the devastating 2010 earthquake, Haitian infrastructure was still crippled by its effects, and over 600,000 required humanitarian assistance<sup>10</sup>. Much of the blame for this weak improvement was directed toward

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<sup>10</sup>"Overview." World Bank. Accessed December 8, 2023.  
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/haiti/overview>.

Haiti’s political leadership and economic stewardship. Without a strong economy promoting development in the nation, Haiti remains vulnerable to humanitarian collapse.



## Committee Topic 3: Haiti's Violence and Gang Crisis

With the political collapse of Haiti, violent gangs have risen to become both a governing force and a constant threat within the nation. In September 2023, a report was released claiming that approximately 80% of Haiti was under the control of violent gangs<sup>11</sup>. There are about 200 gangs known to operate across Haiti; the most influential of these gangs is known as the G9 Alliance, an alliance of multiple smaller gangs. G9 has recently moved to transition itself from a gang alliance to a new revolutionary force within the nation, working to create a nationwide network of gangs. These gangs, on top of taking over much of Haiti and becoming a new form of government, have been known to use violent tactics such as kidnappings and murders, on top of working directly with politicians/democratically elected officials to achieve their own political goals.

Currently, G9 still dominates much of Haiti's gang activity<sup>12</sup>. After the assassination of President Moïse, G9 allied themselves with the government and worked to hunt down the suspects. At the same time, the rival gang G-Pep began to rise in prominence, resulting in violent clashes between the two gangs throughout Haiti. While these gangs continued to rise, groups of vigilantes began to emerge, vowing to take down gang members to save Haiti from their influence. Gangs responded to these vigilantes with increased violence, resulting in further violent clashes. For example, in April 2023, a clash between G-Pep and G9 in Port-au-Prince's Cité Soleil resulted in approximately 70 deaths. As these violent conflicts continue to occur, the

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<sup>11</sup>Sanon, Evens, and Dánica Coto. "Un Human Rights Official Is Alarmed by Sprawling Gang Violence in Haiti." PBS, November 1, 2023.

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/un-human-rights-official-is-alarmed-by-sprawling-gang-violence-in-haiti>.

<sup>12</sup>Al Jazeera. "Haitian Gang Leader Warns Potential Foreign Force against Any Abuses." Al Jazeera, August 17, 2023.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/8/17/haitian-gang-leader-warns-potential-foreign-force-against-any-abuses>.

United Nations Security Council recently authorized the deployment of an international force led by Kenya to target violent gangs specifically. So far, these threats of international intervention have gone unnoticed by Haitian gangs, and violence continues on a daily.



## Guiding Questions

1. What is your nation's policy on international intervention?
2. Would your nation support intervening in Haiti?
3. What is the role of the United Nations in intervening in Haiti's political crisis? What are some possible solutions to promote long-term democratic development within the nation?
4. How can the international community support Haiti economically? What are some short and long-term solutions to help Haiti's economy?
5. How can the international community aid with the increased violence and prevalence of gangs in Haiti?



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