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## *The hands that push Haiti to the gates of hell*



**Sources:** Rebellion

*For decades, Haiti, the "poorest country in the northern hemisphere," has been mired in continuous instability and near-permanent chaos.*

Imperialist interventions, more than thirty years of Duvalier dictatorship, military coups, revolving doors (political-economic) have been drawing a bleak picture: poverty and crime accompany the almost zero hope of economic growth in the current conditions.

Since last summer, the situation has been getting worse. The violent death of then-President Jovenel Moise at the hands of US and Colombian mercenaries has opened the door to a political and institutional vacuum, provoking popular rejection of the "permanent" interim of the current prime minister, Ariel Henry, and his tactics to avoid or delay the call for elections.

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In recent weeks, thousands of people have taken to the streets of Haiti to demand Henry's resignation, to protest against rising fuel prices and the cost of living, and to voice their opposition to further foreign intervention.

As one local politician points out, "Haiti has gone beyond characterizing a fragile state to becoming a chaotic state. Our country has never experienced this level of chaos, not even during the 2010 earthquake that claimed the lives of more than 200,000 people."

**The curse of foreign imperialist intervention is at the root of the country's situation.** Imperialism has developed relations of domination in Haiti's modern history, making it a subordinate and disadvantaged country.

From independence in the early nineteenth century until the US military intervention in 1915, the imperialist forces were weaving a network of domination that would be the root of the system of domination in Haiti to this day: an unequal exchange trade, loans with a high interest, forced indemnities ... All this served to block and condition the economic development of the country, opening the door to an "atrophic and deformed capitalism".

Esas fuerzas imperialistas y colonialistas también harán uso de las alianzas con algunos sectores locales partidarios de la dominación, y al mismo tiempo vía diferentes intervenciones militares, asentarán esa alianza.

Tras la intervención estadounidense de 1915, se materializará la política de Washington del llamado "control del patio trasero", combinando el modo de producción feudal con un incipiente modo de producción capitalista. En ese período se consolidará también las relaciones con las clases dominantes locales, a través del diseño de una burocracia estatal que seguirá reforzando esos pactos y la represión contra los movimientos populares antiimperialistas. El estado francés y EEUU habían comprendido que "la humillación es necesaria para imponer la dominación".

**In recent decades this imperialist domination has also used** the collaborative role of the different governments, the state and bureaucratic apparatus and the ruling classes and oligarchs. Thanks to this gear, it has managed to take over the exploitation of natural resources (bauxite), as well as the use of "economic and humanitarian aid", blocking the alternative development of Haiti and allowing to maintain and reproduce the current status quo.

In recent years, they have used religious apparatuses, drug gangs, paramilitaries, political parties and NGOs to control and subdue any attempt at change and transformation. From the West some measures developed have sometimes been presented as an important advance for change, but in reality they have been tools of imperialism and foreign

intervention. An example is represented by the attempt to develop the tourism industry, however, a popular militant has correctly defined it as "the parasitic creation of an oasis in the middle of a desert hell for the majority of the population"

Another "breakthrough" has been presented around the unusual development that banks have experienced in the country. However, through these, the money of foreign troops, NGOs and so-called "humanitarian aid" has been controlled, not being difficult to locate in which private and powerful pockets they have ended up.

The imperialist forces have shown a double face in their interactions, on the one hand, competing for greater weight, and, on the other hand, collaborating and closing ranks. Thus, everyone closes ranks when it comes to supporting the different collaborationist governments, until they cease to be useful to them; they continue to consolidate the state apparatus (with systemic corruption) and the network of influences woven for decades; before the world they maintain and support a "façade" of democracy for the country; And they also lobby for governments to fight corruption.

Violence and the weight of armed gangs **has skyrocketed** since the death of Jovenel Moïse, coming to dominate and control well apart from the capital, Port-au-Prince, and waging an indiscriminate war against other gangs, police forces and civilians in general. Around this reality it is not difficult to find politicians who use it to attack political enemies and repress the popular classes. Other sectors also use them as an excuse to request a new foreign military intervention.

The power of these paramilitary gangs has been forged around the absence of an army (barely 500 soldiers), a weak police force and sometimes important connections with the gangs, and a corrupt state structure, with unproductive economic production. As one local analyst put it, "Their main source of income is extortion. This takes various forms, from open predation to criminal governance. On the one hand, there is the collection of "protection payments" to local businesses, stalls of street vendors and public transport drivers, in addition to kidnapping. On the other is the absorption of public services, such as electricity and water supply in exchange for payments."

A popular activist has pointed out the coming panorama: "today, food cannot continue to be a luxury, water cannot be a luxury, security, health, cannot be in the hands of a small group of people. If Haiti is a paradise, it must be for everyone. If it will be hell, it will be for everyone."

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