

# Haiti in Crisis: What Role for a Multinational Security Support Mission?

Updated December 27, 2024

Haiti's political and security situation continued to deteriorate in 2024. According to the United Nations, more than [5,350 people were killed and more than 2,155 others injured](#) by gang violence in 2024, compared with an estimated [4,789 killed](#) in 2023. The gangs—some of which are aligned with political elites—amassed control over territory and illicit markets amid the [deeply unpopular](#) government of former Prime Minister Ariel Henry, who [assumed office](#) following the July 2021 assassination of then-President Jovenel Moïse. Henry resigned in [April 2024](#) after the formation of a [Transitional Presidential Council](#) (TPC).

The TPC initially [selected Garry Conille](#) to serve as acting prime minister until elections could be convened, if possible, by [2026](#). The TPC has been plagued by [corruption allegations](#), which have challenged its [perceived legitimacy](#). In November 2024, the TPC removed Conille and appointed [Alix Didier Fils-Aimé](#) as prime minister, amid worsening violence and alleged power struggles between Conille and the TPC. Some [Members of Congress](#) have expressed concerns about the gang violence (including attacks on commercial aircraft) and political instability in Haiti.

The Biden Administration has sought to [support](#) Haiti, in part, by helping fund a UN-authorized, Kenya-led Multinational Security Support Mission (MSS) to address gang violence and promote security. Some Members have [supported the MSS](#); others have criticized what they viewed as [inadequate planning](#) for the mission. Six months after the first Kenyan police officers [arrived](#), experts [assess](#) that the MSS remains underfunded, undermanned, and unable to quell gang-related violence.

## Origins of the Multinational Security Support Mission

In October 2022, then-Prime Minister Henry [requested](#) the deployment of an international force to help the Haitian National Police (HNP) quell insecurity and facilitate humanitarian aid. [Canada, Brazil, and other Western Hemisphere countries](#), some of which participated in the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH; 2004-2017), declined U.S. requests to lead such a force. MINUSTAH remains controversial in Haiti due to alleged [sexual abuse](#) by some of its forces and its inadvertent [introduction of cholera](#) into the country.

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In July 2023, Kenya announced it would [consider](#) leading a multinational force in Haiti and sending up to 1,000 police, if authorized by the UN Security Council (UNSC). Whereas [U.S.](#) and Caribbean Community ([CARICOM](#)) officials praised Kenya, some analysts [questioned](#) the human rights record of the Kenyan police and whether they could overcome language and cultural barriers. Others [opposed](#) any international security force, arguing that previous foreign interventions in Haiti had failed.

In October 2023, the UNSC adopted [Resolution 2699](#) authorizing a non-UN-conducted multinational force, financed by voluntary contributions, to provide security for critical infrastructure and operational support to the HNP for 12 months.

## Current Status

Kenya's deployment of the MSS was delayed until June 2024 amid debate in Kenya about the deployment's [constitutionality](#) and the need to conclude a court-ordered bilateral security agreement with Haiti. Kenya also [delayed deployment](#) until a new Haitian government took power.

As of November 2024, the MSS [consisted](#) of over 380 personnel from Kenya, some 25 from Jamaica, and 2 from Belize. In addition to U.S. funding (see below), UN officials report at least [\\$96.8 million](#) in donations, primarily from Canada.

MSS leaders have developed an operational plan and created an oversight mechanism to monitor the mission's conduct. Participating personnel are subject to UN vetting, and those receiving U.S. support are to complete U.S. human rights vetting pursuant to the Leahy Laws ([22 U.S.C. §2378d](#) and [10 U.S.C. §362](#)). Some human rights experts have [advocated](#) additional training and mechanisms to prevent and punish human rights violations. Others have [raised](#) concerns about a perceived lack of transparency on the MSS's rules of engagement.

Some [observers](#) express concerns about Haiti's increasingly complex security situation, suggesting the MSS mission may need to be strengthened. The MSS's partner, the HNP, is weak, and at times [allegedly complicit](#) with criminal groups. In September 2024, a top UN expert on Haiti [stated](#) that the MSS has been inadequately equipped and insufficiently resourced.

The Biden Administration discussed the possibility of transitioning the MSS into a [traditional UN peacekeeping operation](#) (PKO) with Kenya, Haiti, and others at the UNSC. On September 30, 2024, the UNSC adopted [Resolution 2751](#), extending the current MSS mandate for another 12 months. At a November 2024 UNSC meeting, Russia and China [opposed](#) conversion of the MSS into a PKO.

## U.S. Funding and Congressional Considerations

The United States has pledged at least \$380 million to support the MSS. In October 2023, Secretary of State Antony Blinken [announced](#) \$100 million in foreign assistance for the MSS and \$100 million in Department of Defense (DOD) funds for enabling support; in March 2024, Blinken [announced](#) the DOD commitment had doubled to \$200 million. Additionally, via presidential drawdown authority ([22 U.S.C. §2318\(a\)\(2\)](#)), President Biden authorized the transfer of at least \$70 million in defense articles and services from U.S. stocks to Haiti—[\\$10 million](#) in March and [\\$60 million](#) in April. Haiti and/or Kenya may receive additional DOD funding. U.S. support for the MSS is intended to complement assistance provided to train and equip the HNP through bilateral U.S. programs and the multi-donor [UN Basket Fund](#).

The United States allocated [\\$230.9 million](#) to Haiti in FY2023, including \$45 million in International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE) assistance focused primarily on the HNP. The Administration requested [\\$356.7 million](#) in bilateral aid to Haiti in FY2025, including \$169 million in INCLE funding—\$100 million of which would support the MSS.

In addition to evaluating the FY2025 budget request, Congress may consider whether to provide funding for Haiti and the MSS and/or whether to shape how prior year appropriations are used in Haiti.

The House-passed version of the FY2025 Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs (SFOPS) Appropriations act, 2025 (H.R. 8771/H.Rept. 118-554), recommends the Department of State continue building the HNP's capacity to counter violent gangs, among other recommendations and reporting requirements. The Senate-introduced version of the FY2025 SFOPS bill (S. 4797/S.Rept. 118-200) would require the Secretary of State to submit a report on the MSS detailing the funding, cost, duration, objectives, exit strategy, U.S. national interest, objectives achieved, lessons learned, and any allegations of misconduct and steps taken to hold perpetrators accountable.

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