

<b>Forum:</b>	Advisory Panel on the Question of the Caribbean
<b>Issue:</b>	The Question of Haiti
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<b>Position:</b>	President Chair

## Introduction

Haiti has been colonised first by Spanish and then French forces after its discovery by Christopher Columbus. In 1804, Haiti, being influenced by the French Revolution, became an independent republic with the Haitian Revolution (Gibson). However, its independence didn't last for long. In 1915, the United States of America invaded Haiti and remained there until 1934, leading to slavery and dictatorship. Haiti was ruled by brutal dictators until the military coup of the country's military elite (Gibson). Following another coup in 1990, the political instability in Haiti continued. Always having a conflicted government, Haitians suffered from torture, economic instability, and poverty. These instabilities were followed by natural disasters and spread of cholera. These factors forced Haitian people to flee away from their countries and seek asylum in Dominican Republic, a country coexisting on Hispaniola island in the Caribbean. Even though at first Haitian- Dominican relations were helpful for the Haitians affected by the natural disasters and poverty, unfortunately, over the recent years Haitian refugees were unable to live peacefully in Dominican Republic. Discrimination towards the Haitians arose in the country, and Haitians were unable to access basic needs such as health care, education, and source of income. Haitians are currently working in factories or fields without inspection and without a proper paycheck. Furthermore, Dominicans with Haitian descent lost their citizenships and were left stateless. These situations created tension in the Dominican Republic and sometimes resulted in violence. Today, approximately 200,000 Dominicans of Haitian descent are stateless (CNN). This is a very important unresolved issue that relates to the refugee crisis in the world and the issue of discrimination.

## Definition of Key Terms

**Xenophobia:** The fear of foreigners or strangers. This is a rather political term rather than a medical term related to phobia. Strangers in this definition can be regarded as everyone that belongs to a foreign culture and descent.

**Discrimination:** An unfair treatment towards people from different gender, race, religion, country,

or age due to prejudices and belief that they do not deserve the equal treatment and rights as others deserve.

**Being Stateless:** The state of not being a citizen of any country. This is different from being an immigrant since it also means that a person is lacking a citizenship to any country.

**Refugee:** A person who forcefully left his or her country and seeking asylum in another country. A person becomes refugees due to many reasons such as natural disasters, war, or prosecution.

**The Right of Asylum:** The right of a person to be protected by another country in the case of leaving forcefully his or her own country. Refugees seek asylum in the countries that they go to after leaving their country.

**Deportation:** Expelling someone from a country in the case of committing a crime or an illegal status. This term is usually in relation to expelling a foreigner from a country.

## General Overview

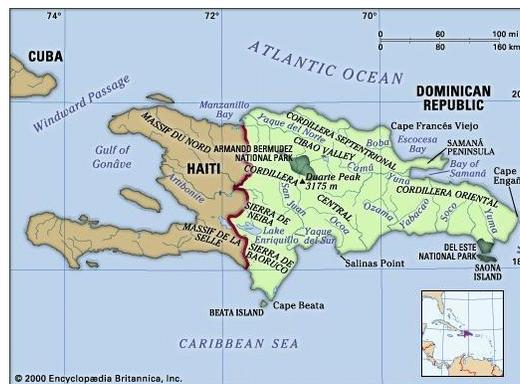
### History of the domestic conflict in Haiti

The question of Haiti refers to all of the conflicts occurred in Haiti from its discovery by Christopher Columbus in 1492 until today. Beginning with the establishment of the Haitian Republic, Haiti faced many difficulties politically which were later reflected upon the life of Haitians. The United States of America invaded Haiti in 1849 and remained in the borders until 1913 (Gibson). Along with the US invasion, slavery was brought back to Haiti and the dictators that ruled the government were supported. In 1950, Francois Duvalier known as Papa Doc became the dictator and his dictatorship lasted until he died (Gibson). He was replaced by his son Jean-Claude Duvalier known as Baby Doc. Both of them were brutal dictators who made the Haitian people suffer. Under Papa Doc's rule, many people were executed, exiled, and imprisoned due to suspicions of treason. His son Baby Doc also showed the same attitude of presidency. Under his rule, many people were again killed or tortured. Also, due to Baby Doc's extravagant expenses, people suffered from poverty. With a revolt in 1983, Baby Doc flew away from the country and Jean-Bertrand Aristide won the country's first elections (CNN). However, in less than a year, a military coup occurred and the governance was taken over by the country's military and economic elite. During this period of time, Haitians suffered violence and forced to flee the country and became refugees in the Dominican Republic. Aristide came back to power and tried to improve the economy of the country. However, the working class of the country was suffering from poverty, and human rights violations became the number one problem of Haiti ever

since. UN peacekeepers replaced the US force present in Haiti however the conflict remained unresolved. Human Rights Watch observed a lack of legislature and many human rights violations. Crime rates and drug trafficking became a widely spread issue in Haiti when the level of poverty became increasingly high. Also, gender-based violence, child labor, and poor education remain to be a major concern. After the earthquake in 2010, tens of thousands of people were dead and more suffered due to the outbreak of cholera (Human Rights Watch).

### The conflict with the Dominican Republic

Facing many conflicts for a very long period of time, Haitians started to become refugees and seek asylum in their neighboring country Dominican Republic. Haiti and the Dominican Republic



are the only two countries located on the island of Hispaniola.

Picture 1: The map of island of Hispaniola

The two countries have a conflicted history. In 1937, Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo slaughtered Haitians in the country who had dark skins, believing that they didn't have any relation with Dominicans (Human Rights Watch). His actions and attitude towards the Haitians, hindered the improvement of the relationship between the two countries. Today, there are still tensions between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Haitians who fled to the Dominican Republic have been migrant workers, such as seasonal employees in sugar cane fields, and have had a low salary. After the earthquake in 2010, more and more Haitians became in need of a job and a place that would provide them with their essential needs. That's why the number of refugees has increased after 2010. Even though the Dominican Republic have let them into their borders, throughout the years, Dominicans became unsettled by this situation. Haitians faced racism and discrimination, and this situation has gone as far as violent actions targeted at Haitians. Some workers were deported from the country, and this conflict started to affect the Dominicans with Haitian descent as well. The government of Dominican Republic started to take away their

citizenships and even deport them out of the country. Dominicans were forced to prove that they were born in the Dominican Republic by the government. These stateless people's access to healthcare, education, jobs, and legal rights were cut off. Therefore currently, there is an intense Anti-Haitianism in the region and more and more people suffer from this situation.

## Major Parties Involved and Their Views

**Haiti:** Haiti is the main country that the issue is focused on. Haitians suffered from poverty, violence, governmental oppression, natural disasters, and diseases for many years now. However, the current situation in Haiti remains unresolved. Each year, more and more Haitians became refugees in the Dominican Republic. However, in the recent years, the Dominican government and people intensely show xenophobia towards the Haitians. Therefore Haitians have no place to go at this point.

**Dominican Republic:** Haitians that suffer in Haiti become refugees in the Dominican Republic since it is the only country that geographically close to Haiti. Dominicans accepted refugees in, however, currently there is an Anti-Haitianism in the country. The government started to take away the citizenships of the Dominicans with Haitian descent. More and more people are being stateless today.

**The United States of America:** The USA was involved in the issue of Haiti for a long period of time. USA occupied Haiti in 1915 with the authority of President Wilson (CNN). The occupation ended in 1934. The reason of the occupation was to settle the instability in Haiti, therefore, to prevent it to be ruled by a foreign state. USA was involved in the governance of Haiti and also provided some help to Haitians through USAID.

## Timeline of Events

<b>1492</b>	The discovery of the island Hispaniola by Christopher Columbus
<b>1804</b>	Haiti becomes an independent republic.
<b>1915</b>	The US invades Haiti.

<b>1934</b>	The US withdraws its troops from Haiti.
<b>1956</b>	Papa Doc Duvalier seizes power with a military coup.
<b>1971</b>	Duvalier's son Baby Doc takes the power.
<b>1986</b>	Baby Doc flees from Haiti.
<b>1990</b>	Jean-Bertrand Aristide elected as president.
<b>1991</b>	Aristide loses power with a coup.
<b>1995</b>	UN Peacekeepers replace the US troops.
<b>2000</b>	Aristide becomes president again.
<b>2004</b>	Severe floods causing many Haitians to die.
<b>2010</b>	An Earthquake occurs that kills many and cholera disease outbreaks.

## **UN Involvement**

One of the United Nations organisations that actively took part in the issue is the MINUSTAH (United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti). MINUSTAH was established in 2004. The United Nations formed a Multinational Interim Force with the Security Council after Aristide departed Haiti. After the earthquake occurred in 2010, the force of MINUSTAH was increased to be able to provide support of recovery and stability. MINUSTAH also actively took part in the fight with cholera disease in Haiti. The main aim of the organisation is to achieve stability in the region.

However since MINUSTAH officials started to operate in Haiti, they were accused of many human rights violations.

Also, United Nations Environment Disasters and Conflicts program was helpful in the situation in Haiti. UNEP is fighting against environmental degradation, extreme poverty, and disasters in the country. UNEP created a five-year plan for Haiti which was later on changed to medium term projects with the earthquake in 2010. UNEP is working for sanitation, energy, resettlement and also internally displaced people.

Apart from these, United Nations were involved in the conflict by providing UN Peacekeepers to the region to achieve stability in the region.

## **Relevant UN Documents**

Resolution 1542 - Security Council- (30 April 2004)

MINUSTAH was established by this resolution of United Nations.

Resolution 2313- Security Council- (13 October 2016)

MINUSTAH's missions were settled by this resolution.

## **Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue**

As mentioned before in this research report, United Nations have attempted to resolve the issue in Haiti many times and is also currently trying to solve the issue by different means. MINUSTAH is the most influential organisation today on the issue of Haiti. However, this organisation was not successful enough to prevent the Haitians suffer from poverty and discrimination. In addition, MINUSTAH officials have been alleged by human rights abuse in Haiti. According to the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services, at least 102 allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation was made against MINUSTAH officials since 2007 (Human Rights Watch). Many of these assaults were done against children. Besides the sexual assaults, MINUSTAH officials were also alleged of violence against Haitians. Many people were attacked and beaten by the officials with the intention of keeping the peace and order.



## Picture 2: Uprising against MINUSTAH in Haiti

The American Red Cross, which is one of the largest Non-Governmental Organisations, collected 255 million dollars after the earthquake (Human Rights Watch). Even though this is a huge amount of money, only half of it was allocated to Haiti. Therefore, it is evident that the American Red Cross failed to provide the adequate aid to the Haitians.

### **Possible Solutions**

There were many attempts to resolve the issue, however as it can be seen today, there are still very major problems in Haiti that need help to be resolved. First of all, delegates should focus on the internal conflicts in Haiti. To be able to decrease the number of Haitians that becoming refugees, internal conflicts such as the lack of education, lack of adequate payments, lack of health care, and etc. should be resolved. Also, better infrastructures should be implemented in the country with the aim of protection against the natural disasters.

About the conflict between the Haitians and the Dominicans, the prejudice that Dominicans have should be resolved. Haiti and the Dominican Republic are the only two countries that exist in the island therefore their relationship is very important for the future of Haiti. In order to establish a better relationship, help from other countries is needed. If the relations become closer, the conflict regarding the discrimination of Haitians by Dominicans can be tackled.

Also, due to the allegations of human rights abuse, ending or regulating the control of MINUSTAH in Haiti can be a solution. Instead of the MINUSTAH, another body with the peacekeeping mission can be created.

### **Notes from the Chair**

Delegates should keep in mind that the conflict in Haiti is a conflict that was present since the beginning of its discovery. Therefore the resolutions should aim to eradicate these problems once and for all so that Haiti can be a peaceful home for its people.

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