The Head of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), María Isabel Salvador, told the Security Council that “some of the worst scenarios for Haiti have become realities in recent months and weeks.” UNIFEED

Description

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Shotlist

FILE - NEW YORK CITY

1. Wide shot, UN Headquarters

22 APRIL 2024, NEW YORK CITY

2. Wide shot, Security Council, Special Representative María Isabel Salvador on screen

3. Med shot, Haiti’s Ambassador Antonio Rodrigue

4. SOUNDBITE (English) María Isabel Salvador, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, and Head of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH):

“Today, it pains me to note that all speeches by colleagues have not avoided that some of the worst scenarios for Haiti have become realities in recent months and weeks.”

5. Med shot, delegates

6. SOUNDBITE (English) María Isabel Salvador, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, and Head of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH):

“In early March, gangs mounted coordinated attacks in targeting key state infrastructure, including multiple police stations and two of the main prisons in Port-au-Prince, as well as educational and health facilities and religious sites. Just last week, the medical school of the Université d'Haiti was attacked and looted. Gangs have been constantly launching attacks against the presidential palace, which resulted in fierce confrontations with the Haitian National Police, leading to multiple casualties. Since 3rd March, gang confrontations around the international airport in Port-au-Prince forced all commercial airlines to hold services, a situation that continues to this day.”

7. Wide shot, Council, Salvador on screen

8. SOUNDBITE (English) María Isabel Salvador, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, and Head of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH):

“Gang leaders and other spoilers have stated their intention to violently disrupt the current political process, and I cannot stress enough the need to assist Haiti with its efforts to re-establish security. One-and-a-half years since Haiti requested assistance to enhance security, and more than six months since the council authorised the deployment of the MSS, we must continue to stress the importance of its urgent deployment.”

9. Wide shot, Council, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Ghada Waly on screen

10. SOUNDBITE (English) Ghada Waly, Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC):

“Firearms and ammunition continue to flow into Haiti, and a recent criminal trial in the United States gave some important insights into how this happens. According to information released by the US Department of Justice, a former leader of the 400 Mawozo gang, Mr. Joly Germine directed trafficking operations from his cell in prison. Using unmonitored mobile phone calls, Germine instructed the transfer of funds to criminal associates in Florida, who were given sufficient specifications for the armaments required, and went on to procure them from gun shops acting as straw buyers. The firearms, which included automatic and high calibre weapons, were then smuggled to Haiti from containers disguised as food and household items.”

11. Med shot, UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell addressing Council

12. SOUNDBITE (English) Catherine Russell, Executive Director, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF):

“Families continued to be displaced by the violence. In fact, we estimate that more than 180,000 children are now internally displaced. Armed groups have also strangled major transport routes from port au Prince to the rest of the country, destroying livelihoods and restricting access to services. And as the armed groups gain more territory, neighbourhoods are setting up barricades and self-defence teams to defend against the violence. The result is that hundreds of thousands of children and their families in besieged communities are largely cut off from humanitarian aid, and essential services.”

13. Med shot, Haiti’s Ambassador Antonio Rodrigue addressing Council

14. SOUNDBITE (French) Antonio Rodrigue, Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Haiti”

“Given the increase in violent gang related activity in Haiti, we can draw the conclusion that these gangs continued to access illegal weapons and ammunition. It's fairly easy for them. We'd like to ring alarm bells. We'd like to alert the international community to the necessity to significantly bolster efforts so as to ensure respect for the arms embargo as per resolution 2700.”

15. Med shot, Dominican Republic’s Minister for Foreign Affairs Roberto Álvarez Gil addressing Council

16. SOUNDBITE (Spanish) Roberto Álvarez Gil, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dominican Republic:

“There is an urgent need to more rigorously implement the embargo on arms, munitions and equipment, which are flooding into Haiti. Allow me to recall that the Dominican Republic does not produce no import any kind of weapons. The widespread violence and insecurity have forced us to take exceptional measures to fight the arms trafficking as a very high cost for our national budget. Because this diverts resources which are required by the Dominican people. We urge exporting countries to take effective measures so as to help to this illegal traffic into Haiti.”

17. Zoom out, end of Council session

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Storyline

The Head of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), María Isabel Salvador, today (22 Apr) told the Security Council that “some of the worst scenarios for Haiti have become realities in recent months and weeks.”

Briefing via video teleconference from Port-au-Prince, Salvador said, “in early March, gangs mounted coordinated attacks in targeting key state infrastructure, including multiple police stations and two of the main prisons in Port-au-Prince, as well as educational and health facilities and religious sites.”

Just last week, she said, “the medical school of the Université d'Haiti was attacked and looted.”

Gangs, Salvador continued, “have been constantly launching attacks against the presidential palace, which resulted in fierce confrontations with the Haitian National Police, leading to multiple casualties,” and since 3rd March, “gang confrontations around the international airport in Port-au-Prince forced all commercial airlines to hold services, a situation that continues to this day.”

Salvador, who is also the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, said, “gang leaders and other spoilers have stated their intention to violently disrupt the current political process, and I cannot stress enough the need to assist Haiti with its efforts to re-establish security.”

She said, “one-and-a-half years since Haiti requested assistance to enhance security, and more than six months since the council authorised the deployment of the MSS, we must continue to stress the importance of its urgent deployment.”

In her briefing to the Council, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Ghada Waly, said, “firearms and ammunition continue to flow into Haiti, and a recent criminal trial in the United States gave some important insights into how this happens.”

Waly said, “according to information released by the US Department of Justice, a former leader of the 400 Mawozo gang, Mr. Joly Germine directed trafficking operations from his cell in prison. Using unmonitored mobile phone calls, Germine instructed the transfer of funds to criminal associates in Florida, who were given sufficient specifications for the armaments required, and went on to procure them from gun shops acting as straw buyers. The firearms, which included automatic and high calibre weapons, were then smuggled to Haiti from containers disguised as food and household items.”

Also briefing, UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell told the Council that “families continued to be displaced by the violence,” estimating that “more than 180,000 children are now internally displaced.”

Armed groups, Russel said, have also strangled major transport routes from port au Prince to the rest of the country, destroying livelihoods and restricting access to services.”

As the armed groups gain more territory, she said, “neighbourhoods are setting up barricades and self-defence teams to defend against the violence,” and as a result, “hundreds of thousands of children and their families in besieged communities are largely cut off from humanitarian aid, and essential services.”

Haiti’s Ambassador Antonio Rodrigue told the Council that “given the increase in violent gang related activity in Haiti, we can draw the conclusion that these gangs continued to access illegal weapons and ammunition. It's fairly easy for them.”

Rodrigue rang “alarm bells” alerting the international community “to the necessity to significantly bolster efforts so as to ensure respect for the arms embargo as per resolution 2700.”

For his part, the Dominican Republic’s Minister for Foreign Affairs Roberto Álvarez Gil said there was “an urgent need to more rigorously implement the embargo on arms, munitions and equipment, which are flooding into Haiti.”

Álvarez Gil said, “allow me to recall that the Dominican Republic does not produce no import any kind of weapons. The widespread violence and insecurity have forced us to take exceptional measures to fight the arms trafficking as a very high cost for our national budget. Because this diverts resources which are required by the Dominican people. We urge exporting countries to take effective measures so as to help to this illegal traffic into Haiti.”