

Report of the
Haitian Senatorial Delegation to Mexico
November 26-30, 2007



SECRETARÍA DE
RELACIONES EXTERIORES



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From November 26 to 30, 2007, a delegation of eight senators from the Senate of the Republic of Haiti visited Mexico City on a fact-finding mission to exchange views with Mexican decision-makers and raise awareness of the situation in Haiti. The delegation, which was led by Senate vice-president, Madame Edmonde Supplice Beauzile, consisted of representatives from six different provinces and each of Haiti's four principal national political parties.

At the request of the delegation, the visit was organized by the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL) and the Mexican Secretary of Foreign Affairs (SRE), with support from Ambassador Andrés Rozental of the Mexican Council of International Affairs.

During a series of meetings, the senators discussed recent gains in security and stability in Haiti as well as the growing strength of its parliament. At the same time, the delegation also cautioned that there are issues that could impede Haiti's continued progress such as the lack of trained human resources, the country's incapacity to absorb funds and the need to hold elections to renew one third of the senate.

Discussions with representatives from the Mexican legislative and executive branches were fruitful. Both sides made promises to strengthen inter-parliamentary relations. There were also discussions on the possibility of sharing Mexican expertise in terms of the tourism industry, public transit, and the fight against corruption and drug trafficking. Two tangible areas of potential collaboration were put forward: 1) transferring "Plataforma", a system that allows police data bases and civil registries to be brought together so that authorities can gain more complete and timely access to information; 2) provision of technical assistance from the SRE Institute of Mexicans Abroad to the Haitian Ministry of Haitians Living Abroad (Ministère des Haitiens Vivant à l'Étranger - MHAVE).

In the course of the visit, the Haitian delegation met with the six Mexican senators who sit on the Mexican Senate Foreign Relations Committee as well as representatives of the Secretariat for External Relations, the Institute of Mexicans Abroad, the Secretariat for Public Security, the Office of the Attorney General, the Federal Electoral Institute, the Mexican Council on International Affairs, the College of Mexico, the United Nations Regional Office of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Embassy of Canada in Mexico, the Embassy of Haiti in Mexico, and the Mexican Human Rights Commission.

The trip followed two similar visits carried out in the fall of 2007 to Washington, D.C. as well as to Ottawa and Montreal. As Haiti transitions from peacekeeping to development, the delegation intends to continue its mission to strengthen ties with partner countries by undertaking further trips across Latin America.

MEETINGS

Legislative Branch

Senate

Jorge Morfín, Vice-President of the Senate, Maria de los Angeles Uregas, Fernando Baeza Meléndez, Irma Martínez Manríquez, Jorge Andre Ocejo Moreno, Carlos Sotelo García, Eduardo Tomas Bolana

Senator Beauzile served as spokesperson for the delegation and related the current situation in Haiti, including the 2006 elections –for which Mexico offered support– and President Préval’s efforts to achieve political consensus in order to reach sustainable development. She mentioned unemployment, infrastructure and trade as urgent priorities for Haiti.

The Mexican senators expressed their enthusiasm for the delegation’s invitation to begin closer collaboration between the two countries. The Mexicans raised the issue of the perception of wide-spread insecurity in Haiti as a potential obstacle to deeper cooperation and exchanges between the two countries. The Mexican side suggested culture, tourism and training for businesspeople as spheres for possible cooperation. Furthermore, Mexico is strengthening its South-South relations and the Mexican senators suggested that increasing inter-parliamentary relations between Haiti and Mexico would fit in well with this initiative. In this regard, the Haitian delegation reminded the Mexican senators that one third of the Senate of Haiti must be re-elected shortly and that support from Mexico would be greatly appreciated to help ensure the current renewal of democracy in Haiti from being threatened. Finally, the Haitians broached the subject of the Haitian judiciary system, which is outdated and must be separated from the other two state powers, as another area of potential Mexican support for Haiti.

Executive Branch

Secretariat for External Relations (SRE)

Javier Estrada Villalva, Director-Caribbean ; Raul Martínez, Director General-Regional Organizations and Mechanisms for the Americas ; Edgar Rodriguez Rudich, Coordinator of Advisors to the Undersecretary for the Americas and Caribbean

SRE officials informed the delegation that bilateral relations between Mexico and Haiti fall under the legal framework of the Mexican-Haitian Joint Committee, which was established in 2007. Accordingly, SRE officials paid special attention to the points raised by the senators in order to include them in the agenda of the joint committee’s next meeting on December 6-7.

The senators put forward the urgency of the senatorial elections, investment, road and sanitary infrastructure, managerial training, mechanization of agriculture and tourism as sectors to prioritize.

Secretariat for Public Security

Salvador Mercado González, Director for Latin America

During this meeting, the representative for Public Security explained how Mexico manages the problem of organized crime. In addition, he detailed the “Plataforma” project that joins police data bases and civil registries for migration and immovable property so as to give authorities more complete and timely access to information necessary for investigations. “Plataforma” is already in use in Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Guatemala and can be shared among countries.

Over and above the police training Mexico already supplies, the delegation dealt with the issue of border control. In this regard, the parties discussed the possibility of sidestepping Mexico’s inability to provide troops and equipment abroad.

Office of the Attorney General

Fernando Mendoza

In this meeting, the delegation discussed the security problems that Haiti is confronting and for which the country would benefit from Mexico’s expertise. The senators wished to stress that despite its reputation, Haiti is not a violent country and is not used to fighting drug trafficking. The parties also discussed the reinstatement of the army in order to fight against kidnappings and drugs as well as the renewal of the penal code. The senators mentioned three laws recently passed and aimed at reducing corruption among the judiciary.

The representative for the Attorney General assured the senators of Mexico’s continued support in regard to police training and informed them of trilateral collaboration (Mexico, France and Haiti) in fiscal, legal and border training. Mr. Mendoza ended by detailing the Mexican experience in constitutional reform and transparency.

National Commission for Mexicans Abroad

Ivan Sierra

During this meeting, the senators were briefed on the make-up and functioning of the commission as well as on the type of project it manages among the Mexican diaspora. It was a very informative session for the delegation in terms of the potential management of the enormous amount of remittances that are sent to Haiti by the diaspora.

Federal Electoral Institute (IFE)

Manuel Carillo, coordinator of international affairs

This was one of the most dynamic exchanges of the visit and enabled both parties to get to know the electoral history and processes of each country. More specifically, the delegation inquired about the policies regarding the number of eligible parties, the distribution of campaign funds, the time allotted to the media, the diaspora's right to vote and transparency at IFE. Finally, the senators urged IFE to continue its electoral support in Haiti, particularly in view of the upcoming senatorial elections, and inquired about IFE providing direct support to the Senate to enable the institution to review and develop new electoral legislation in Haiti.

Other Institutions

Mexican Council on International Affairs (COMEXI)

Carlos Heredia

Mr. Heredia gave the senators a general overview of the current political situation in Mexico in terms of legislative power and foreign policy. Contrary to his predecessor, President Felipe Calderon has demonstrated an intention to reinforce Mexico's relations with Latin America and the Caribbean. However, Mr. Heredia stated to the senators that Haiti is not a priority for Mexico, which neglects the Caribbean except when looking to obtain something from the UN, the OAS or other international organizations. That said, when it comes to Haiti, Mexico generally follows Canadian policy.

The delegation was aware of Mexico's lack of interest towards Haiti, but given the current situation in which the international community is turned to Haiti, the senators inquired about how to stimulate Mexican interest, notably in foreign investment in Haiti, scholarships, reforestation, and anti-corruption measures. Questions were also asked concerning public transit in Mexico and the role of COMEXI.

Economics Institute

Dr. Raúl Fernández

The Economics Institute runs several bilateral projects with Haiti in agriculture, natural resources, environment and health. The senators detailed the current situation in Haiti and insisted on the lack of managers and technicians and the absence of electricity in most of the country. Energy, health and staff training are the subject of project proposals by Mexico, which is waiting for a response from Haiti.

National Commission for Human Rights (CNDH)

Javier Moctezuma Barragan, secretary general

Since Haiti does not have an institution such as CNDH, the delegation was very interested to learn the commission's functions as well as its ties to international counterparts. The CNDH representative was very enthusiastic about the plan to create a similar commission in Haiti and pledged his support to this endeavour.

Embassy of Haiti

Amb. Idalbert Pierre-Jean

The Ambassador informed the delegation that two agreements were signed by Haiti and Mexico in 2003, the first on technical and scientific cooperation and the second concerning education and culture. In order to strengthen aid in education, exchange agreements with the Monterrey technological university and Mexico City's national independent university (UNAM) are being negotiated. Relative to the agricultural sector, Ambassador Pierre-Jean is personally overseeing a proposal made by the University of Chapingo in 2004 to send nopal seedlings (a vegetable common in Mexico) to the Haitian-Dominican border. Regarding trade relations, despite the volume of commercial exchanges attained in 2003, trade between the two countries is virtually nonexistent due to contraband.

Mr. Pierre-Jean ended by stating that the first meeting of the Haitian-Mexican Joint Committee would be held on December 6 and 7 and that the following themes would be broached: education, agriculture, trade, tourism, technical and judicial framework, policing and transnational organized crime.

CONCLUSION

The senate delegation's visit to Mexico was crucial for both the development of the Senate as a key institution in Haiti's capacity to develop a robust and democratic foreign policy and for the development of stronger Haitian-Mexican relations. The visit resulted in deeper understanding within key Mexican institutions on the problems in Haiti and also raised confidence amongst these institutions about the progress of democratic development in the country and the viability of the Haitian legislature.

The visit produced concrete results in terms of specific promises by Mexican authorities to provide technical assistance and the potential for added support to the Senate from IFE and the Colegio de Mexico.

The senators look to continue expanding channels of dialogue with Latin American countries that have troops in the MINUSTAH forces in order to urge their continued support as Haiti transitions from peace keeping to development. The delegation hopes to resume its tour of South America in the first half of 2008, notably with a visit to Brazil.

APPENDIX I
Delegation Biographies

Sen. Edmonde Supplice Beauzile, vice-president of the Senate

Senator Beauzile was elected in 2006 from the department of Centre for a six-year term under the party *Fusion des socio-démocrates*. She is a member of the following commissions: Education, Finance, and Foreign Affairs. She was previously elected and served as a member of the *Chambre des Députés* from 1990 to 1994. Born on October 14, 1961, Senator Beauzile, a former teacher, has been very active in the field of education. She is married with three children.

Sen. Jean Hector Anacassis, president of the Commission on Public Works and Transportation

Senator Anacassis was elected in 2006 from the department of Ouest for a six-year term under the party Lespwa which has the largest number of senators and is the coalition under which President Préval was elected. He is an engineer by training and has spent a great deal of his younger years working for grassroots organizations. He received the second largest number of votes in the country after President Préval.

Sen. Riché Andris, president of the Commission on Labour

Senator Andris was elected in 2006 for a four-year term under the party OPL for the department of Grand'Anse. He has run in several elections, but is serving his first term as senator. As a pastor he is very active in the community, he is married and has four children.

Sen. François Fouchard Bergrome, member of the Commissions on Education, Justice, Agriculture and Agrarian Reform

As second secretary of the senate bureau, he is a member of the senate leadership. Senator Bergrome was elected in 2006 from the department of Artibonite for a two-year term under the party *Artibonit an Aksyon*. He is a member of the following commissions: Education, Justice, Agriculture and Agrarian Reform. He was previously elected senator in 1987. Born on October 6, 1951, Senator Bergrome is an attorney. He is married with children.

Sen. Rudolph Boulos, member of the Commission on Agriculture, Commerce and Tourism, and Education

Senator Boulos was elected in 2006 from the department of Nord-Est for a six-year term under the party *Fusion des Socio-démocrates*. He is a member of the following commissions: Agriculture, Commerce and Tourism, and Education. Born on April 28, 1951, he is pharmacist and studied at the Harvard Business School. He is a very successful businessman and industrialist and a founding member of Centres pour le Développement et la Santé, Haiti's oldest

and most important health organization, with locations in Cité Soleil, in the Nord-Est, and in many other departments in Haiti. Senator Boulos is married with two children.

Sen. Nénel Cassy, member of the Commissions on Education, Foreign Affairs, Labour, and Human Rights

Senator Cassy was elected in 2006 for a six-year term under the party Lespwa for the department of Nippes. This is his first term as senator and is he the youngest in the Senate. He is a member of the following commissions: Education, Foreign Affairs, Labour and Human Rights. He has a degree in sociology, is married and has two children.

Sen. Michel Clérié, president of the Commissions on Commerce and Tourism

Senator Clérié was elected in 2006 from the department of Grand'Anse for a six-year term under the party Fusion des Socio-démocrates. He is a member of the following commissions: Justice and Public Works, Transportation and Communication. Senator Clérié has run for a senate seat from his department on two previous elections. Born on September 28, 1947, he studied business and is among Haiti's leading businessmen. He is married with children.

Sen. Jean Joseph Pierre-Louis, treasurer of the Senate

Senator Pierre-Louis was elected in 2006 for a four-year term under the party OPL from the smallest and newest of Haiti's departments, the department of Nippes. As treasurer of the Senate, he is a member of the Senate leadership. An accountant by profession, Senator Pierre-Louis was born on May 13, 1965. He is married with children.

Mr. Lionel Delatour, consultant and visit coordinator

Mr. Delatour is a consultant on Haitian public policy and politics. Since 1993, he has led 28 delegations of over 150 business leaders from Haiti on fact-finding visits to Washington. He organized and participated in various other Washington visits, such as a Haitian senate delegation in 1998, Prime Minister Gérard Latortue's visit in the spring of 2004, and President Préval's visits in March 2006 and May 2007.

He is a founder and presently secretary-general of Le Centre pour la Libre Entreprise et la Démocratie (CLED). Mr. Delatour received his undergraduate degree from the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University and holds a master's degree in public administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Born on September 25, 1950, he is married with three children.

APPENDIX II
Program of the Visit

Delegation

Sen. Edmonde S. Beauzile, Département du Centre, Vice-president of the Senate of the Republic of Haiti

Sen. Jean Hector Anacassis, Département de l'Ouest

Sen. Riché Andris, Département de la Grand'Anse

Sen. François Fouchard Bergromme, Département de l'Artibonite

Sen. Rudolphe Boulos, Département du Nord-Est

Sen. Nénel Cassy, Département des Nippes

Sen. Michel Clérié, Département de la Grand'Anse

Sen. Jean Joseph Pierre-Louis, Département des Nippes

Lionel Delatour, delegation coordinator

Monday, November 26

Delegation arrival	Sheraton-Centro Histórico
Program Officer	Carlo Dade Executive Director, FOCAL
Assistant	Guenaelle Pierre

Tuesday, November 27

8:30am	Breakfast Sheraton-Centro Histórico Ambassador Idalbert Pierre-Jean
11:00am	Conseil mexicain des Affaires internationales (COMEXI) Sheraton-Centro Histórico Carlos Heredia, Board member
1:00pm	Senate-Foreign Affairs Committee Jorge Morfin, Vice-president Attending: Senators Maria de los Angeles Uregas, Fernando Baeza Meléndez, Irma Martínez Manríquez, Jorge Andre Ocejo Moreno, Carlos Sotelo García, Eduardo Tomas Bolana

Wednesday, November 28

8:30am **Breakfast**
Sheraton-Centro Histórico
Carlos Heredia, COMEXI board member

10:00am **Meetings at the Secretariat for External Relations (SRE)**
Contact Person: Patricia Pinzón, SRE
Attending: *SRE*: Javier Estrada Villalva, Director for the Caribbean; Raul Martínez, Director General for Regional Organizations and Mechanisms for the Americas; Edgar Rodríguez Rudich, Coordinator of Advisors to the Undersecretary for the Americas and the Caribbean; *Secretariat for Public Security*: Salvador Mercado González, Director for Latin America; *Office of the Attorney General*: Fernando Mendoza; *National Commission for Mexicans Abroad*: Ivan Sierra; *Economics Institute*: Dr. Raúl Fernández

8:00pm **College of Mexico**
San Angel Inn

Thursday, November 29

10:00am **Federal Electoral Institute (IFE)**
Manuel Carillo, Coordinator for Foreign Affairs

1:00pm **National Commission for Human Rights (CNDH)**
Javier Moctezuma Barragan, Secretary General