



AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

January 12, 2026

Intelligence for Haiti's Democratic Transition

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Medecins Sans Frontieres suspended operations in Bel Air after January 6 clashes between Haitian National Police and armed groups killed a community volunteer, with only 40 percent of Port-au-Prince medical facilities operational. Secretary of State Andresol promised routes to the South and North will reopen before February 7, setting a measurable legitimacy test. The January 6 Bel Air clashes and January 9 Varreux terminal closure clarify that the 31-day operational pause refers to gang-initiated attacks, not PNH counteroffensives. Gonaieves Deschaos neighborhood remains paralyzed since January 8. Haiti commemorates the 16th anniversary of the 2010 earthquake. Twenty-six days remain until February 7.



QUICK SUMMARY FOR STAKEHOLDERS

MSF suspends Bel Air operations after January 6 clashes kill community volunteer; only 40 percent of capital medical facilities operational.
Andresol promises routes to South and North will reopen before February 7, directly addressing National Route No. 1 impassability at Montrouis.
January 6-9 PNH counteroffensives in Bel Air and Varreux area demonstrate 31-day pause refers to gang attack restraint, not security force operations.
Gonaieves Deschaos neighborhood paralyzed since January 8 after death of armed man; Cap-Haitien demolitions on January 9 generate OPC condemnation.
Haiti observes January 12 earthquake commemoration marking 16th anniversary of disaster that killed over 200,000 people.

DEVELOPMENT 1: HEALTHCARE COLLAPSE ACCELERATES AS MSF SUSPENDS BEL AIR OPERATIONS AFTER JANUARY 6 CLASHES

Medecins Sans Frontieres issued an alert on January 11 reporting that clashes between the Haitian National Police and armed groups in Bel Air on January 6 forced MSF to suspend operations in the area. Seven community health workers were trapped during the clashes but eventually escaped. One former community volunteer was struck by a stray bullet and died due to lack of prompt medical attention. MSF stated that only 40 percent of medical institutions in the capital remain operational. The organization urged all parties to uphold the sanctity of medical establishments, respect healthcare personnel, and safeguard patients and civilians. This represents a public rebuke of both gangs targeting facilities and PNH operations producing civilian casualties through stray bullets.

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The 40 percent healthcare capacity threshold creates severe shortages for routine medical care including injuries, childbirth, and chronic diseases. Port-au-Prince, with a population of 2.6 million, faces no trauma care in gang-controlled areas for gunshot wounds and explosion injuries. The suspension of MSF mobile medical operations in Bel Air eliminates healthcare access in one of the last functioning services in gang-controlled neighborhoods. This aligns with the BINUH October report noting that 22 percent of casualties during security force operations were residents struck by stray bullets at home or during daily activities. With 26 days until February 7, any violence escalation from resumed gang attacks or intensified PNH operations will produce mass casualties with no medical response capacity.

The healthcare collapse compounds Haiti's multidimensional crisis ahead of the February 7 constitutional deadline. The 350,000 Haitians facing TPS deportation on February 3 may return to a country with no functional healthcare system. The CPT and government lack capacity to respond to public health emergencies including disease outbreaks or natural disasters. The MSF alert that violence during security measures is affecting healthcare facilities and the civilian population directly criticizes PNH operations for indiscriminate effects. The organization's statement represents the first institutional humanitarian actor to publicly document the January 6 Bel Air clashes and their impact on medical services during the operational pause period.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Bel Air has been a contested neighborhood in Port-au-Prince since 2018 when gang territorial control began expanding. The January 6 clashes represent PNH attempts to retake gang-controlled areas ahead of the February 7 transition deadline.

TALKING POINTS

MSF suspended Bel Air operations after January 6 clashes trapped seven health workers and killed one volunteer struck by stray bullet.

Only 40 percent of Port-au-Prince medical facilities remain operational, creating severe capacity shortages for 2.6 million residents.

Healthcare collapse means any violence escalation will produce mass casualties with no trauma care capacity in gang-controlled areas.

MSF publicly rebuked both gangs and PNH for affecting medical establishments and producing civilian casualties during security operations.

TPS deportations scheduled for February 3 will return 350,000 Haitians to country with collapsed healthcare infrastructure.

RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

International donors should establish emergency medical surge capacity for Port-au-Prince ahead of February 7 deadline.

CARICOM and UN should demand PNH modify operations protocols to prevent civilian casualties during counteroffensives.

CPT should publicly address healthcare crisis and outline plans to restore medical facility operations before mandate expiration.

MSF and ICRC should coordinate mobile medical units to serve gang-controlled areas where fixed facilities are closed.

US should delay TPS deportations beyond February 3 given healthcare system collapse documented by MSF.



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High confidence based on official institutional reporting.

DEVELOPMENT 2: ANDRESOL SETS FEBRUARY 7 LEGITIMACY TEST WITH PUBLIC PROMISE TO REOPEN ROUTES BEFORE DEADLINE

Secretary of State for Public Security Mario Andresol promised on January 12 that routes leading to the South and North will reopen before February 7. This represents the first explicit government commitment linking infrastructure restoration to the February 7 CPT mandate expiration deadline. The promise directly addresses National Route No. 1 impassability at Montrouis documented by OCHA since January 6 and National Route No. 2 periodic blockages in Artibonite and Leogane. By setting February 7 as the deadline for route reopening, Andresol establishes a measurable performance metric that the public, international actors, and opposition groups will use to evaluate government credibility. If routes remain closed on February 7, the government's claims of retaking control of territory will be operationally disproven.

The promise suggests the government views infrastructure reopening as a prerequisite for legitimizing potential CPT mandate extension beyond February 7. The logic appears to be that if routes reopen before February 7, the government can argue progress is being made and

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extension is warranted to consolidate gains. If routes remain closed, the government lacks credible justification for extension. With 26 days remaining, Andresol's promise requires clearing gangs from Montrouis on National Route No. 1 and Leogane and Artibonite checkpoints on National Route No. 2, establishing security perimeters to prevent gang re-infiltration, and demonstrating sustained access rather than temporary clearance. The January 8-12 Gonaieves Deschaos paralysis demonstrates that security forces struggle to restore order quickly even in major urban centers.

If Andresol's promise fails and routes remain closed on February 7, it will undermine government credibility ahead of the transition, strengthen opposition arguments from MORN and Montana Accord that the CPT has failed and must not be extended, and weaken international support for CPT extension particularly from Canada which declared unconditional end on December 16. The promise appears operationally unrealistic within 26 days given PNH capacity constraints documented throughout the operational pause period. Le Nouvelliste reported on January 12 that the state reaffirms determination to retake control of territory, but this messaging contradicts operational realities including Montrouis blockage, Gonaieves paralysis, and Varreux terminal closure requiring police operations.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

National Route No. 1 connects Port-au-Prince to the North and Cap-Haitien. National Route No. 2 connects the capital to the South. Both routes have faced periodic gang blockages since 2021 when territorial control expanded beyond Port-au-Prince.

TALKING POINTS

Andresol set February 7 deadline for reopening routes to South and North, creating measurable legitimacy test for government.

Promise directly addresses National Route No. 1 Montrouis impassability documented by OCHA since January 6.

If routes remain closed on February 7, government claims of retaking territorial control will be operationally disproven.

Promise suggests government views infrastructure reopening as prerequisite for justifying CPT mandate extension.

Operational feasibility appears unrealistic within 26 days given PNH capacity constraints and Gonaieves paralysis example.

RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

International community should demand detailed PNH operational plan for Montrouis and Leogane route clearance by January 20.

CARICOM should establish independent monitoring of National Route No. 1 and No. 2 status ahead of February 7 deadline.

Opposition groups should prepare public accountability campaign tracking Andresol promise against February 7 reality.

Private sector should develop contingency plans assuming routes remain closed through February 7 transition period.

UN should pre-position humanitarian supplies in Sud and Nord departments assuming continued route impassability.



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DEVELOPMENT 3: JANUARY 6 BEL AIR CLASHES CLARIFY 31-DAY PAUSE REFERS TO GANG ATTACK RESTRAINT NOT PNH OPERATIONS

The MSF alert documenting January 6 clashes in Bel Air between Haitian National Police and armed groups provides critical clarification of the 31-day operational pause from December 21 through January 12 documented in this briefing series. The pause refers specifically to gang-initiated large-scale attacks including massacres, mass kidnappings, and territorial offensives, not PNH counteroffensives in gang-controlled areas. This distinction is operationally significant for understanding gang tactical restraint and government offensive operations. The absence of gang-initiated attacks for 31 days demonstrates strategic discipline consistent with Crisis Group December 15 warning that gangs seek amnesty as part of the February 7 transition. Gangs are withholding offensive operations as leverage for negotiations.

The January 6 Bel Air clashes, January 9 Varreux petroleum terminal closure due to police operations against gangs, and ongoing downtown Port-au-Prince operations demonstrate that PNH and GSF are conducting active counteroffensives to retake gang-controlled neighborhoods, secure critical infrastructure, and demonstrate state authority ahead of February 7. The Varreux terminal is Haiti's primary petroleum import terminal supplying fuel for electricity

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generation, transportation, and humanitarian operations. Its closure on January 9 due to police operations indicates PNH is conducting active counteroffensives in downtown Port-au-Prince Varreux area. These operations affect critical infrastructure operations and compound Haiti's energy crisis with fuel supply disruptions.

The January 6-9 PNH operations suggest the government is attempting to create facts on the ground ahead of February 7 by demonstrating territorial gains in Bel Air and downtown, securing critical infrastructure at Varreux terminal, port, and airport, and fulfilling Andresol's January 12 promise to reopen routes before February 7. However, the Gonaieves Deschaos paralysis from January 8-12, National Route No. 1 continued impassability at Montrouis since January 6, and MSF operations suspension on January 11 demonstrate that PNH counteroffensives are not achieving sustainable territorial control. With 26 days until February 7, the government strategy appears to be short-term demonstrations of authority rather than long-term stabilization.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The 31-day operational pause from December 21 through January 12 represents the longest period without gang-initiated large-scale attacks since ACLED began tracking gang violence patterns in 2023.

TALKING POINTS

January 6 Bel Air clashes and January 9 Varreux closure clarify 31-day pause refers to gang attack restraint not PNH operations.

Gang tactical restraint consistent with Crisis Group warning that gangs seek amnesty as February 7 transition leverage.

PNH conducting active counteroffensives in Bel Air, downtown Port-au-Prince, and Varreux area attempting territorial gains.

Gonaieves paralysis, Montrouis blockage, and MSF suspension demonstrate PNH not achieving sustainable territorial control.

Government strategy appears focused on short-term authority demonstrations rather than long-term stabilization ahead of February 7.

RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

International actors should recognize gang attack pause as tactical restraint for amnesty negotiations not capacity degradation.

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CARICOM should establish contact group to explore gang amnesty framework as component of February 7 transition resolution.

PNH should shift from counteroffensive operations producing civilian casualties to sustained territorial control operations.

CPT should publicly address gang amnesty question before February 7 to clarify whether negotiations are occurring.

Opposition groups should monitor PNH operations for human rights violations including stray bullet civilian casualties.



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DEVELOPMENT 4: GONAIEVES PARALYSIS AND EARTHQUAKE COMMEMORATION MARK JANUARY 12 AS GOVERNMENT FACES CREDIBILITY CRISIS

The center of Gonaieves, specifically the Deschaos neighborhood, has been paralyzed since the beginning of the week following the death of an armed man on January 8. The paralysis continues through January 12, at least four days. Gonaieves is the capital of Artibonite Department and Haiti's third-largest city. The Deschaos neighborhood paralysis demonstrates that gang and armed group control extends to major urban centers beyond Port-au-Prince. Single incidents such as death of one armed man can paralyze entire neighborhoods for days. Security forces lack capacity to restore order quickly even in population centers. This compounds the credibility crisis for government claims of retaking territorial control.

On January 9, departmental authorities of the Nord carried out demolition of several constructions erected on the Cap-Haitien boulevard. Le Nouvelliste describes the operation as spectacular and notes it generated controversy with the Office de la Protection du Citoyen condemning aggressions committed by local authorities against citizens during operations. The demolitions suggest CPT and government are attempting to demonstrate state authority through infrastructure enforcement. Operations are generating public backlash with OPC condemnation. The timing on January 9 coincides with CARICOM warning about February 7 transition.

January 12 marks the 16th anniversary of the January 12, 2010 earthquake that killed over 200,000 people. The day is observed as Day of Remembrance for Victims of Natural Disasters.

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Official measures include national flag at half-mast on all public and private institutions and discotheques and nightclubs closed for the day. The earthquake commemoration occurs 26 days before the February 7 CPT mandate expiration, creating moment of national reflection during the transition crisis. Le Nouvelliste reports on January 12 that the state reaffirms determination to retake control of territory, but this messaging appears disconnected from operational realities including Gonaieves paralysis, Montrouis blockage, Bel Air healthcare suspension, and Varreux closure.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The January 12, 2010 earthquake remains Haiti's deadliest natural disaster. The anniversary is observed as national day of mourning each year since 2011 under successive governments.

TALKING POINTS

Gonaieves Deschaos neighborhood paralyzed since January 8 death of armed man demonstrates gang control beyond Port-au-Prince.

Cap-Haitien demolitions on January 9 generated OPC condemnation for authorities aggressing citizens during operations.

Earthquake commemoration on January 12 creates moment of national reflection 26 days before February 7 deadline.

Government messaging about retaking territorial control contradicts operational realities documented across multiple departments.

Single incidents producing multi-day neighborhood paralysis demonstrates security force capacity constraints.

RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

International community should press CPT for realistic assessment of territorial control rather than aspirational messaging.

CARICOM should demand detailed security sector capacity evaluation before considering any CPT mandate extension support.

UN should document gang territorial control patterns in Artibonite Department including Gonaieves for Security Council reporting.

Opposition groups should use Gonaieves paralysis example to counter government claims of progress ahead of February 7.

Private sector should factor persistent gang territorial control into February 7 transition scenario

planning.



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WHAT TO WATCH NEXT

NEXT 24 TO 48 HOURS

Will CPT or Prime Minister Fils-Aime issue public statements addressing CARICOM January 9 warning and Andresol February 7 promise to reopen routes or will silence continue. Monitor for government response to MSF alert regarding healthcare collapse and civilian casualties during PNH operations. Track whether Gonaieves Deschaos neighborhood paralysis extends beyond four days indicating continued security force incapacity. Observe for any gang resumption of large-scale attacks ending 31-day operational pause period.

THIS WEEK

Will PNH operations in Bel Air, downtown Port-au-Prince, and Montrouis achieve route reopening or will gang territorial control persist through final two weeks before February 7. Monitor healthcare facility operations in Bel Air to determine if MSF suspension becomes permanent or temporary. Track opposition group responses to Andresol February 7 promise as potential organizing focal point. Observe international actor statements regarding healthcare crisis and PNH civilian casualty patterns. Monitor fuel supply disruptions from Varreux terminal operations affected by security operations.

STRATEGIC HORIZON

If Andresol promise fails and routes remain closed on February 7, opposition groups MORN and Montana Accord will likely mobilize public campaigns arguing CPT has failed and must not be extended. CARICOM faces decision point on whether to support CPT extension given January 9 warning of unconditional mandate end and documented operational failures. Healthcare collapse with only 40 percent facility operations creates humanitarian crisis that will compound any violence escalation. The 31-day gang attack pause ending would produce mass casualties

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without medical response capacity. February 7 approaches with fragmented governance frameworks, compressed implementation timelines, and converging humanitarian, security, and political pressures.

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