



AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

January 26, 2026

Intelligence for Haiti's Democratic Transition

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United States imposed visa restrictions on two unnamed CPT members January 25 for gang collaboration, coinciding with ZED Airlines indefinite suspension after gunfire struck two aircraft approaching Port-au-Prince. CPT President Laurent Saint-Cyr and Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aime consolidated executive authority through coordinated security meetings with PNH and FAd'H leadership, projecting unified command while the five-member dismissal coalition fractures under international pressure. Pitit Dessalines leader Moise Jean-Charles alleged CPT member Emmanuel Vertilaire admitted to US Embassy pressure not to support PM dismissal, suggesting direct diplomatic intervention at individual council member level. With twelve days until the CPT mandate expires February 7 2026, no succession framework exists, Saint-Cyr and Fils-Aime control all security institutions, and Haiti faces complete aviation isolation compounding governance deadlock.



QUICK SUMMARY FOR STAKEHOLDERS

US sanctioned two CPT members for gang ties without disclosing names, likely targeting dismissal coalition signatories Leslie Voltaire and Louis Gerald Gilles or Edgard Leblanc Fils.

ZED Airlines suspended all Haiti operations after gunfire struck two aircraft January 25, leaving Port-au-Prince airport with virtually no commercial service and Cap-Haitien as sole international gateway.

Saint-Cyr and Fils-Aime held strategic meetings with PNH High Command and FAd'H leadership January 25-26, demonstrating executive control over all armed state institutions ahead of February 7 transition.

Emmanuel Vertilaire reportedly admitted US Embassy pressure not to support PM dismissal, fracturing the five-member coalition and reducing opposition bloc to potentially four members.

CPT-PM-PNH committed January 25 to unblock gang-controlled national roads and reconquer state territory, setting stage for potential security offensive with civilian casualty risks.

DEVELOPMENT 1: US Visa Sanctions Target Two CPT Members as Aviation Attacks Force ZED Airlines Suspension

The Trump administration escalated pressure on Haiti's transitional leadership January 25 by imposing visa restrictions and revoking visas of two Transitional Presidential Council members and their immediate families, accusing them of involvement in gang operations and interference with counter-gang efforts targeting Viv Ansanm and Gran Grif, both designated as Foreign Terrorist Organizations by the United States on May 2 2025. The State Department statement did not name the sanctioned individuals but given that Fritz Alphonse Jean already received visa sanctions in November 2025 for signing the January 21 PM dismissal resolution, the likely targets are Leslie Voltaire and either Louis Gerald Gilles or Edgard Leblanc Fils, the other signatories attempting to

remove Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aime. The sanctions came 48 hours after Secretary of State Marco Rubio told Fils-Aime that the CPT must be dissolved by February 7 without corrupt actors interfering in Haiti's path to elected governance, underscoring Washington's determination to prevent the five-member majority from installing a new government before the mandate expires.

The sanctions coincided with systematic aviation attacks that have effectively isolated Haiti from international air travel. On January 25, two ZED Airlines aircraft were struck by gunfire while approaching Toussaint Louverture International Airport, prompting immediate and indefinite suspension of all flight operations to Haiti. ZED Airlines becomes the latest victim of coordinated infrastructure targeting following Spirit Airlines Airbus A321 struck four times November 11 2024 during landing with one flight attendant injured, JetBlue flight hit by bullet same day discovered after JFK landing, and Sunrise Airways suspension November 23 2025. These incidents triggered Federal Aviation Administration ban on US carriers flying to Port-au-Prince through March 7 2026, leaving the capital's main international airport with virtually no commercial service beyond limited charter operations.

The operational implications create severe constraints on humanitarian logistics, business continuity, and diaspora travel. Port-au-Prince airport paralysis forces reliance on Cap-Haitien in the north, but the 150-mile overland route from the capital is controlled in segments by armed groups making access dangerous and unpredictable. The aviation attacks demonstrate gang capacity to target critical infrastructure with impunity, a capability extending to the January 24-25 fire at Cap-Haitien's historic Cluny Market that destroyed approximately 30 warehouses and over 100 small shops. While authorities have not confirmed the fire's cause, the timing and scale suggest either gang arson or deliberate infrastructure sabotage as part of broader territorial control strategy.

Canada issued parallel warning January 22 stating that any change attempt before February 7 would weaken political stability and risk compromising elections, announcing readiness to take targeted measures against persons whose actions threaten peace and the electoral process. The convergence of US and Canadian sanctions threats creates credible deterrent against the five CPT members formalizing Prime Minister Fils-Aime's dismissal, but also locks Haiti into governance stalemate with no resolution as the February 7 deadline approaches. The sanctions signal unprecedented direct intervention against Haiti's executive authority while aviation isolation compounds the Federal Aviation Administration ban and constrains humanitarian and business operations during critical transition period.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Aviation attacks against Haiti began November 11 2024 when Spirit Airlines and JetBlue flights were struck by gunfire the same day, triggering Federal Aviation Administration ban through March 7 2026 that cut Port-au-Prince off from US commercial carriers. The systematic targeting of aircraft represents strategic escalation from traditional gang tactics of roadblock extortion and neighborhood control to deliberate disruption of international connectivity and state infrastructure. US visa sanctions on CPT members follow similar measures imposed November 2025 on Fritz Alphonse Jean after he signed dismissal resolution against Prime Minister Fils-Aime, establishing pattern of

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direct diplomatic intervention in Haiti's internal governance disputes.

TALKING POINTS

US sanctions on two CPT members for gang collaboration represent unprecedented intervention in Haiti's executive decision-making, raising stakes for dismissal coalition attempting to remove Prime Minister Fils-Aime before February 7 mandate expiration.

ZED Airlines suspension leaves Haiti with virtually no commercial aviation access as Port-au-Prince airport joins Spirit Airlines JetBlue and Sunrise Airways in service cessation, forcing reliance on Cap-Haitien with dangerous overland route.

Aviation attacks and Cap-Haitien market fire demonstrate gang capacity for strategic infrastructure targeting that extends beyond traditional territorial control to systematic disruption of international connectivity and economic nodes.

Canada's parallel sanctions warning creates coordinated US-Canadian deterrent against CPT governance changes, but absence of alternative succession framework risks institutional vacuum February 7.

Federal Aviation Administration ban through March 7 2026 combined with carrier suspensions constrains humanitarian cargo access with only 24.1 percent of 908 million dollar appeal funded and 1.4 million internally displaced persons requiring assistance.

State Department language emphasizing Haitian people have had enough with gang violence and political infighting signals Trump administration hardline approach prioritizing stability over diplomatic nuance in transition management.

RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

International organizations should prepare contingency plans for complete Port-au-Prince aviation isolation through March 2026, routing cargo and personnel through Cap-Haitien with armed convoy protocols for overland movement.

Businesses should immediately audit supply chain dependencies on Port-au-Prince airport access and establish alternative routing through Dominican Republic or Cap-Haitien with timeline assumptions of 60-90 day Port-au-Prince closure.

Political actors in dismissal coalition should assess personal sanctions risk before publishing dismissal resolution in Le Moniteur, recognizing US willingness to impose visa restrictions on individual CPT members blocks international travel.

Diaspora communities should advise family members to avoid unnecessary travel to Haiti given aviation access collapse, and prepare for potential deportee arrivals through Cap-Haitien as TPS termination takes effect February 3 2026.

Humanitarian agencies should pre-position supplies in Cap-Haitien and northern departments anticipating Port-au-Prince access deterioration, with fuel and medical stockpiles sufficient for 30-45 day supply disruption scenarios.

Private security contractors should conduct aviation threat assessments for any remaining charter operations, implementing evasive approach protocols and passenger manifests limited to essential personnel given demonstrated gang anti-aircraft capability.



CONFIDENCE



High confidence based on official institutional reporting.

DEVELOPMENT 2: Saint-Cyr and Fils-Aime Consolidate Executive Control as Vertilaire Allegedly Caves to US Embassy Pressure

CPT President Laurent Saint-Cyr and Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aime executed strategic consolidation of executive authority over 72 hours through coordinated engagement with every armed instrument of state power, projecting unified command while systematically fracturing the five-member dismissal coalition. On January 25, Saint-Cyr, Fils-Aime, Justice Minister Patrick Pelissier, and PNH High Command held strategic meeting focused on unblocking national roads controlled by armed groups who extort travelers and paralyze economic exchanges. The meeting produced Prime Minister's Office communique January 26 titled Unity, Security and Stability: The State Committed to Reconquest of National Territory, signaling coordinated CPT-PM-PNH offensive against gang roadblocks on major highways. The communique's emphasis on unity and state authority carries implicit political messaging, framing Saint-Cyr and Fils-Aime as legitimate executive authority executing sovereign functions while portraying dismissal effort as illegitimate destabilization.

The consolidation intensified January 26 when Saint-Cyr and Fils-Aime met with Armed Forces of Haiti High Command, reinforcing executive command demonstration pattern. Over four days spanning January 23 police graduation ceremony, January 25 road security meeting, and January 26 FAd'H coordination, Saint-Cyr and Fils-Aime systematically engaged PNH, Multinational Security Support mission forces, and FAd'H to build institutional loyalty ahead of February 7 transition. The operational pattern suggests calculated strategy to position themselves as continuity option if CPT dissolves without successor framework, leveraging security coordination to project stability against dismissal coalition's governance disruption.

A political crisis erupted January 26 when Pitit Dessalines leader Moise Jean-Charles alleged on Radio Caraibes that CPT member Emmanuel Vertilaire admitted the US Embassy called him to pressure him not to support Prime Minister dismissal. Jean-Charles framed the allegation as foreign interference undermining Haitian sovereignty, claiming Vertilaire ceded to external pressure. The allegation remains unverified and Jean-Charles has clear political motives, but Vertilaire's recent

positioning supports the claim's plausibility. Vertilaire attended the January 23 police graduation ceremony with Saint-Cyr and Fils-Aime, coordinated with the Prime Minister on relief for Cap-Haitien market fire victims January 24-25, and reportedly participated in the January 25 road security meeting, demonstrating alignment with Saint-Cyr and Fils-Aime rather than the dismissal coalition led by his own party leader.

The significance of Vertilaire's defection cannot be overstated. If Jean-Charles' allegation is accurate, it reveals direct US intervention at individual CPT member level through private diplomatic pressure to fracture the five-member majority. Vertilaire's participation in executive coordination meetings suggests he now functions as part of the Saint-Cyr-Fils-Aime governing axis rather than opposition bloc, reducing the dismissal coalition from five members to potentially four if Vertilaire's shift formalizes. The Compromis Historique party has already disavowed its representative Smith Augustin for signing the dismissal resolution, creating parallel internal party-representative conflicts that weaken the coalition's cohesion and political legitimacy.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Transitional Presidential Council was established under the April 3 2024 political agreement facilitated by CARICOM following President Jovenel Moise's July 7 2021 assassination and subsequent governance vacuum. The nine-member council with seven voting members and two observers was designed to govern until February 7 2026 when elected authorities would assume power, but persistent political infighting, corruption allegations, and security deterioration have prevented electoral preparation. Previous attempts to remove Prime Minister Fils-Aime in November 2025 failed when three CPT members received US visa sanctions, establishing precedent for direct diplomatic intervention in Haiti's internal governance disputes through individual targeting of council members.

TALKING POINTS

Saint-Cyr and Fils-Aime consolidation through PNH and FAd'H engagement positions them as de facto executive authority controlling all security institutions with twelve days before CPT mandate expires February 7 2026.

Vertilaire's alleged admission of US Embassy pressure reveals direct diplomatic intervention at individual CPT member level, suggesting Washington strategy to fracture dismissal coalition rather than merely issue public statements.

Four-day pattern of security coordination meetings demonstrates calculated strategy to build institutional loyalty and project stability as continuity option if CPT dissolves without successor framework.

Vertilaire's shift from opposition bloc to Saint-Cyr-Fils-Aime axis reduces dismissal coalition from five to potentially four members, undermining political leverage to formalize PM removal before mandate expiration.

Compromis Historique disavowal of Smith Augustin combined with Vertilaire defection creates cascading coalition fragmentation that benefits Saint-Cyr and Fils-Aime continuity scenario.

Moise Jean-Charles faces credibility crisis as Pitit Dessalines participates in governance through Vertilaire's CPT seat and Agriculture Ministry control while party leader criticizes transition his party helps govern.

RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

International organizations should prepare for Saint-Cyr-Fils-Aime continuity scenario post-February 7 given control over PNH, FAd'H, and Multinational Security Support mission coordination with no alternative governance framework emerging.

Political actors in dismissal coalition should assess whether Vertilaire defection reduces quorum for valid CPT decisions, potentially invalidating any future dismissal resolution publication in Le Moniteur.

Businesses should factor Saint-Cyr-Fils-Aime continuity into February-March planning assumptions, recognizing institutional capture of security apparatus creates path dependency for international recognition even without legal succession framework.

Diaspora organizations should monitor whether Jean-Charles produces evidence of US Embassy pressure on Vertilaire, as confirmation would validate sovereignty concerns and potentially shift international community stance on transition management.

Civil society groups should demand transparency on CPT member contacts with foreign embassies, establishing accountability mechanism for external influence on council decision-making during final twelve-day mandate period.

Media outlets should investigate Vertilaire's attendance at Saint-Cyr-Fils-Aime coordination meetings January 23-26, documenting participation pattern that confirms or refutes Jean-Charles allegations of alignment shift.



CONFIDENCE



Moderate confidence based on partial institutional reporting.

DEVELOPMENT 3: CPT-PM-PNH Commit to Road Security Offensive as Cap-Haitien Market Fire Destroys Critical Commercial Infrastructure

The January 25 strategic meeting between CPT President Laurent Saint-Cyr, Prime Minister Alix

Didier Fils-Aime, Justice Minister Patrick Pelissier, and PNH High Command produced operational commitment to unblock gang-controlled national roads and reconquer state territory, setting stage for potential security offensive against armed groups who extort travelers and paralyze economic exchanges on major highways. The Prime Minister's Office communique emphasized State commitment to end armed occupation of road axes, guarantee freedom of movement, and reestablish authority across national territory. The operational framing positions road security as immediate priority that, if successful, would deliver tangible security win just days before February 7 mandate expiration and demonstrate executive capacity for territorial control.

The road security offensive carries significant operational risks replicating civilian casualty patterns from earlier January 2026 operations when PNH actions killed 50 civilians and displaced 5,800 people. PNH Director General Vladimir Paraison issued ultimatum January 20 calling on gang members to surrender and announcing security plan targeting departments most affected by armed violence, but without reformed rules of engagement, intensified operations may generate humanitarian costs that undermine the legitimacy Saint-Cyr and Fils-Aime seek to project. The Multinational Security Support mission has only 1,200 of 5,550 authorized personnel deployed as of January 26 with first Gang Suppression Force contingents not expected until April 2026, leaving PNH as primary enforcement instrument with limited international backup for major territorial operations.

Simultaneous infrastructure targeting demonstrates gang capacity for strategic economic disruption beyond traditional roadblock control. The January 24-25 fire at Cap-Haitien's historic Cluny Market destroyed approximately 30 warehouses and over 100 small shops, eliminating critical commercial node in Haiti's second-largest city. While authorities have not confirmed the fire's cause, the timing and scale suggest either gang arson or deliberate sabotage as part of broader territorial control strategy. The market destruction follows pattern of systematic attacks on critical infrastructure including November 2024 aviation strikes, ongoing gang control of National Route 1 connecting Port-au-Prince to northern departments, and occupation of fuel distribution points that constrain economic activity and state capacity.

The operational challenge facing Saint-Cyr and Fils-Aime is executing road security offensive that demonstrates state authority without generating civilian casualties that would erode international support and domestic legitimacy during final twelve days before mandate expiration. National Route 1, National Route 2 to southern departments, and National Route 3 to Artibonite remain partially or fully controlled by armed groups who collect extortion payments, control commercial transit, and enforce territorial boundaries. Successful road clearance operations would enable economic exchanges, humanitarian access, and population movement, but gang retaliation capacity through infrastructure attacks, civilian targeting, and renewed roadblocks creates high probability of pyrrhic victory that delivers short-term gains at unsustainable humanitarian cost.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Gang control of national roads intensified throughout 2024-2025 as armed groups consolidated territorial authority following President Jovenel Moise's assassination and subsequent state

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collapse. The roadblock system functions as revenue generation mechanism through extortion payments, territorial boundary enforcement preventing rival gang expansion, and strategic economic weapon that constrains Port-au-Prince access to fuel, food, and commercial goods. Previous PNH offensive operations including January 2026 actions in Cite Soleil and Carrefour generated significant civilian casualties and displacement without achieving durable territorial control, establishing pattern of short-term gains followed by gang reconsolidation once security forces withdraw.

TALKING POINTS

CPT-PM-PNH January 25 commitment to unblock national roads and reconquer territory signals potential security offensive within final twelve days before February 7 mandate expiration.

Road security operations carry high civilian casualty risk replicating January 2026 pattern when PNH killed 50 civilians and displaced 5,800 people without achieving durable territorial control.

Cap-Haitien Cluny Market fire destroying 30 warehouses and 100 shops demonstrates gang capacity for strategic economic infrastructure targeting beyond traditional roadblock control.

Multinational Security Support mission has only 1,200 of 5,550 authorized personnel deployed with Gang Suppression Force not arriving until April 2026, leaving PNH as primary enforcement instrument.

National Route 1, 2, and 3 gang control constrains humanitarian access, economic exchanges, and population movement, making road clearance operationally critical but tactically challenging.

Successful road offensive would deliver tangible security win demonstrating Saint-Cyr and Fils-Aime executive capacity days before transition, but gang retaliation through infrastructure attacks creates pyrrhic victory risk.

RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

Humanitarian organizations should pre-position supplies in accessible zones anticipating supply chain disruption if road security operations trigger gang retaliation against fuel depots, ports, or distribution networks.

Businesses should implement 30-day inventory buffers for critical inputs and plan alternative routing through Dominican Republic if National Route 1 operations close primary supply corridor during offensive.

International community should demand PNH rules of engagement transparency and civilian protection protocols before supporting road security operations, conditioning assistance on accountability for potential casualties.

Political actors should recognize that successful road clearance delivers Saint-Cyr and Fils-Aime legitimacy boost while failure exposes governance incapacity, making operational outcome

determinative for post-February 7 succession scenarios.

Civil society groups should deploy human rights monitors to areas of anticipated operations, documenting PNH conduct and civilian casualties to ensure accountability for potential abuses during offensive.

Diaspora networks should advise families in gang-controlled zones to shelter in place during anticipated operations, avoiding movement on contested roads until security situation clarifies.



CONFIDENCE



High confidence based on official institutional reporting.

WHAT TO WATCH NEXT

NEXT 24 TO 48 HOURS

State Department may disclose names of two sanctioned CPT members, triggering immediate political fallout and potential CPT fracture if Leslie Voltaire and Louis Gerald Gilles or Edgard Leblanc Fils are confirmed as targets. Emmanuel Vertilaire public statement will signal final allegiance between Saint-Cyr-Fils-Aime axis versus dismissal coalition, with confirmation or denial of Moise Jean-Charles US Embassy pressure allegation determinative for coalition cohesion. Five-member majority may attempt to publish dismissal resolution in Le Moniteur to formalize PM removal despite US sanctions, forcing constitutional crisis over competing claims to executive authority.

THIS WEEK

PNH road security offensive may launch against gang roadblocks on National Route 1, 2, and 3 with civilian casualty risk replicating January 2026 patterns when 50 civilians died and 5,800 displaced. Gang retaliation through infrastructure attacks targeting airport, port, fuel depots, or markets would demonstrate capacity to impose costs on state territorial reconquest efforts. Canada may follow through on January 22 warning to impose targeted measures against CPT members destabilizing transition, creating parallel sanctions pressure alongside US visa restrictions. United Nations Security Council must vote on BINUH mandate renewal by January 31 with outcome determinative for political mission continuity during February 7 transition.

STRATEGIC HORIZON

Post-February 7 governance framework remains unresolved with twelve days until CPT mandate expires and no succession mechanism established. Saint-Cyr-Fils-Aime continuity scenario gains probability through institutional capture of PNH, FAd'H, and Multinational Security Support

coordination, but lacks constitutional basis creating legitimacy crisis. Gang Suppression Force first contingents arriving April 2026 miss February 7 transition window, leaving security vacuum during critical governance changeover. August 30 first-round election date contingent on security improvements and CPT-PM crisis resolution, with 23 communes under gang control rendering electoral operations impossible without territorial reconquest.

PRIMARY SOURCES

US Department of State statement on visa restrictions for two Transitional Presidential Council members, January 25 2026

Reuters reporting on US sanctions against CPT members for gang collaboration, January 25 2026

ZED Airlines official announcement of indefinite flight suspension to Haiti, January 25 2026

Haiti Libre reporting on ZED Airlines gunfire incident and flight suspension, January 25 2026

VantBefInfo reporting on CPT-PM-PNH road security coordination meeting, January 25 2026

Haiti 24 reporting on Moise Jean-Charles allegations of US Embassy pressure on Emmanuel Vertilaire, January 26 2026

Haiti Libre reporting on Cap-Haitien Cluny Market fire destroying warehouses and shops, January 24-25 2026

Zantray News analysis of Saint-Cyr and Fils-Aime control with US support, January 26 2026

Haiti Libre reporting on graduation ceremony for 877 new police officers attended by Saint-Cyr and Fils-Aime, January 23 2026

Reuters reporting on Secretary of State Marco Rubio statement that CPT must dissolve by February 7, January 23 2026

Prime Minister's Office communique on state commitment to reconquest of national territory, January 26 2026

VantBefInfo reporting on Canada readiness to take measures against instability threats, January 22 2026