



AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

February 15, 2026

Intelligence for Haiti's Democratic Transition

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Haiti enters its first week under single-executive governance following the February 7 dissolution of the Transitional Presidential Council. Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aime now governs without a collective presidency, backed by Washington but facing domestic political fragmentation among 220-plus registered parties. Security conditions are deteriorating despite planned international force deployment, with kidnappings surging in Port-au-Prince and gang leader Izo openly financing carnival activities. The August 30 electoral timeline faces critical obstacles including 23 gang-controlled communes and a 137-million-dollar unfunded budget. A US court ruling on Temporary Protected Status for 350,000 Haitians is expected before February 19, creating significant diaspora uncertainty. Actionable takeaway: Restrict personnel movements in Delmas corridor and monitor TPS ruling daily through February 19.



QUICK SUMMARY FOR STAKEHOLDERS

CPT dissolved February 7 transferring full executive authority to PM Fils-Aime with no consensus successor framework.

Kidnappings rising across Delmas corridor with priest, lawyer, and judge among current hostages.

Gang Suppression Force deployment delayed until April creating security gap as Kenya MSS winds down.

TPS court decision expected before February 19 affecting 350,000 Haitians in United States.

Elections scheduled August 30 but CEP flags 23 inaccessible communes and unfunded 137-million-dollar budget.

DEVELOPMENT 1

The dissolution of the Transitional Presidential Council on February 7 has created Haiti's first single-executive governance structure since the 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moise. Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aime assumed full executive authority after a tumultuous final month in which five of nine CPT members voted to remove him, triggering sharp US intervention including deployment of three naval vessels to Port-au-Prince and visa sanctions against five council members. The US Embassy characterized the removal attempt as illegal and warned that corrupt politicians supporting violent gangs would pay a heavy price. France and CARICOM endorsed the transition, with outgoing CPT President Laurent Saint-Cyr publicly transferring responsibility to Fils-Aime and emphasizing security, political dialogue, elections, and stability as guiding principles.



However, no domestic consensus exists on what governance structure should replace the CPT. The Patriotic Congress for National Salvation concluded that dual leadership consisting of a president and prime minister is imperative and called for a neutral technocratic government. Former CPT member Leslie Voltaire proposed a three-member presidential panel including himself, a Supreme Court justice, and a civil society representative, though the selection of a prime minister remained unresolved. CSIS analysis describes Fils-Aime as politically exposed due to the succession battle and notes that prominent Haitian journalist Roberson Alphonse warned the prime minister risks the same fate as Ariel Henry, who was forced to resign in 2024 after losing international confidence.

The transition occurred under conditions of extreme political fragmentation. Haiti has over 220 registered political parties that have proven unable to agree on interim governance arrangements despite months of negotiation. A January 2025 survey found that 52 percent of respondents did not trust the CPT and 51 percent did not trust the prime minister, indicating weak legitimacy for transitional institutions generally. CARICOM recognized the transition but emphasized it should be a short interim period focused on improving security and intensifying electoral preparations.

The absence of a collective executive body concentrates political risk in a single individual operating without clear constitutional authority beyond the transitional framework. Former CPT Conseiller-President Frinel Joseph deposited his end-of-mandate asset declaration at the Tribunal de Premiere Instance on February 13, but no details were made public and no public verification mechanism exists. This raises questions about transparency and accountability mechanisms for officials in the post-CPT governance environment.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Haiti has operated under successive transitional governance frameworks since the 2021 assassination of President Moïse. The CPT was established in April 2024 under the Montana Accord framework following the forced resignation of Prime Minister Ariel Henry. The council's nine-member structure represented an attempt to distribute executive power across political factions, but internal divisions and corruption allegations undermined its effectiveness throughout its mandate.

TALKING POINTS

PM Fils-Aime governs as sole executive authority for first time since Moïse assassination creating concentrated political risk.

No domestic political consensus exists on successor governance framework despite 220-plus registered parties.

US backing provides international legitimacy but does not resolve domestic fragmentation or legitimacy deficits.

AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

January 2025 polling showed majority distrust of both CPT and PM indicating weak mandate for transitional institutions.

Transparency mechanisms absent as former CPT members file asset declarations with no public verification.

RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

Monitor PM Fils-Aime announcements regarding governance framework consultations or unilateral decision-making approach.

Track political party coalition formation or fragmentation as indicator of domestic power balance.

Assess US Embassy messaging for signals of continued backing or emerging concerns about PM performance.



Evaluate CARICOM and regional engagement intensity as measure of international confidence.

Prepare contingency plans for potential governance disruption if domestic opposition intensifies.



CONFIDENCE



High confidence based on official institutional reporting.

DEVELOPMENT 2

Security conditions are materially deteriorating across Port-au-Prince and surrounding areas despite ongoing police operations and planned international force deployment. Haiti Libre reported on February 15 that kidnappings have been rising for several weeks in the capital with Delmas 19, 31, 33, and 75 particularly affected. Current hostages include a priest, a lawyer, and a judge, indicating that gangs are targeting high-value individuals without concern for professional or religious status. Most alarmingly, video circulating on social media shows Johnson Andre, alias Izo, leader of the 5 Segond gang, openly participating in and financing carnival activities in the Village de Dieu neighborhood with no official government response or law enforcement action.

The Viv Ansanm gang coalition, which controls approximately 85 to 90 percent of Port-au-Prince, carried out a new attack in Kenscoff on February 12 killing at least one person and burning several houses. Kenscoff has been characterized as one of the capital's last safe areas, making this

incursion a significant indicator of expanding gang territorial ambitions. Between July and September 2025 alone, at least 1,247 people were killed and 710 injured, with security force operations responsible for 61 percent of casualties, gang attacks 30 percent, and self-defense groups 9 percent. The overall murder rate in 2025 rose approximately 20 percent compared to 2024, while homicides in Artibonite and Centre departments surged 210 percent with 1,303 victims versus 419 in 2024.

Haiti is experiencing a critical security force transition gap that creates vulnerability during the first half of 2026. The Kenya-led Multinational Security Support mission has approximately 1,000 personnel, primarily the 735 Kenyan police officers who deployed in multiple contingents through December 2025. Kenya Foreign Affairs Principal Secretary Korir Sing'Oei announced that Kenya will begin reducing its deployment after achieving the primary objective of stabilizing the country. The Gang Suppression Force authorized for 5,550 personnel under UN Security Council Resolution 2793 is not expected to begin arriving until April 2026 with full deployment completed by October 2026. This creates a three-to-six-month window during which Haiti's security depends on a drawdown force and a not-yet-deployed replacement.

The Haitian National Police has launched operations dubbed San Kanpe aimed at definitively dismantling gangs and clearing national highways, with Secretary of State for Public Security Mario Andresol previously stating that access to National Highways 1 and 2 could be restored by February 7, 2026. Current status of this target remains unconfirmed. Meanwhile, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk assessed that most drone strikes conducted by a PNH task force with US private military contractor support since March 2025 are likely unlawful under international human rights law. These strikes killed at least 547 people including 20 civilians and 11 children between March and September 2025.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Haiti's gang crisis escalated dramatically after the 2021 assassination of President Moïse as state authority collapsed in Port-au-Prince. The Viv Ansanm coalition formed in 2024 to coordinate gang operations across the capital, achieving unprecedented territorial control. International security responses have evolved from the Kenya-led MSS authorized in October 2023 to the Chapter VII-mandated GSF authorized in September 2025, but deployment has lagged behind deteriorating security conditions.

TALKING POINTS

Kidnappings surging in Delmas corridor with high-value targets including priest, lawyer, and judge.

Gang leader Izo openly financing carnival activities with no government response demonstrating operational impunity.

Viv Ansanm coalition now attacking Kenscoff previously considered one of last safe areas in capital region.

AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

Security force transition gap exists as Kenya MSS draws down before GSF arrives in April 2026.

Murder rate rose 20 percent in 2025 with Artibonite and Centre departments seeing 210 percent increase.

UN human rights commissioner assessed most drone strikes likely unlawful killing 547 including 20 civilians.

RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

Restrict personnel movements in Delmas 19, 31, 33, and 75 until kidnapping wave subsides.

Avoid Village de Dieu and areas with visible gang carnival financing activities during February 16 to 18 period.

Prepare for potential Kenscoff displacement and humanitarian needs if Viv Ansanm attacks continue.

Monitor GSF deployment timeline closely as any April delays extend vulnerability window.

Assess whether PNH San Kanpe operations achieve highway clearance objectives or stall against gang resistance.

Evaluate legal and reputational risks of any association with drone strike operations or supporting entities.



CONFIDENCE



High confidence based on official institutional reporting.

DEVELOPMENT 3

Haiti's electoral timeline faces existential obstacles despite the Conseil Electoral Provisoire maintaining its published calendar for August 30, 2026 first-round voting. The CEP explicitly stated that the calendar is contingent upon an acceptable security environment and access to all municipalities, but 23 communes currently remain under gang control including 12 in West Department, 8 in Artibonite, and 3 in Centre. The electoral campaign is scheduled to begin May 19, 2026, just weeks after the Gang Suppression Force is expected to start arriving in April 2026, meaning candidates would be campaigning before the international force has launched substantive anti-gang operations.

AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

The electoral budget is estimated at approximately 137 million dollars but funding has not been secured. CSIS analysis notes that key US institutions with election-organizing experience including IFES, NDI, and IRI appear to be playing little if any role, while Trump administration cuts have slashed democracy assistance budgets. This creates a funding vacuum at precisely the moment when electoral preparations should be intensifying. The CEP assessed that holding elections before February 2026 was materially impossible due to insecurity and lack of funding, and those conditions have not fundamentally changed despite the transition from CPT to single-executive governance.

The electoral legal framework contains contested elements that could undermine legitimacy. The electoral decree published in *Le Moniteur* on December 1, 2025 includes two additions made without CEP consent: barring UN-sanctioned individuals from candidacy and establishing 10 Departmental Vote Tabulation Offices. While the decree includes a 30 percent women candidate quota and diaspora participation provisions, the unauthorized additions raise questions about executive interference in electoral administration. Over 220 political parties have been approved for participation as of October 2025, but this fragmentation complicates coalition formation and coherent campaign messaging.

The timeline assumes security improvements that current trends do not support. The first round is scheduled for August 30 with results published October 3, a second round on December 6, final results on January 7, 2027, and inauguration of a new president on February 7, 2027 exactly three years after the CPT mandate began. This assumes the GSF will achieve sufficient territorial control to secure 23 currently inaccessible communes within a four-month operational window, a timeline that experienced security analysts consider extremely optimistic given gang entrenchment and coalition coordination.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Haiti has not held national elections since 2016 when Jovenel Moïse was elected president. The CEP was reconstituted in September 2024 after years of non-functionality, and launched party capacity training on electoral legislation and political ethics in November 2025. Previous electoral processes in Haiti have been marked by fraud allegations, low turnout, and international observer concerns about credibility, creating skepticism about the viability of the August 2026 timeline even under optimal security conditions.

TALKING POINTS

CEP maintains August 30 first-round timeline but explicitly states calendar contingent on acceptable security.

23 communes remain under gang control including 12 in West Department where most voters concentrated.

Campaign scheduled to start May 19 just weeks after GSF begins arriving before anti-gang operations launch.

AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

137-million-dollar electoral budget unfunded as US democracy assistance budgets slashed under Trump administration.

Electoral decree contains unauthorized additions raising questions about executive interference.

Timeline assumes security improvements current trends do not support within four-month operational window.

RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

Track CEP announcements for any signals of timeline reassessment or postponement discussions.

Monitor international donor pledges for electoral funding particularly from US, EU, and CARICOM sources.

Assess whether political parties begin practical campaign preparations or adopt wait-and-see approach.

Evaluate GSF deployment pace in April and May as critical indicator of security timeline viability.

Prepare for potential timeline collapse if funding gap or security obstacles prove insurmountable.



CONFIDENCE



High confidence based on official institutional reporting.

DEVELOPMENT 4

A US federal court ruling on Temporary Protected Status for approximately 350,000 Haitians in the United States is expected before February 19, 2026, creating significant uncertainty for the diaspora community. On February 2, Judge Ana C. Reyes of the US District Court blocked the Department of Homeland Security's termination of TPS, and on February 13 she upheld her decision despite receiving death threats. The Trump administration has filed an appeal and argued that Judge Reyes lacks jurisdiction to block the termination. A final decision is expected within days, and the outcome will determine whether hundreds of thousands of Haitians can continue working legally in the United States or face deportation proceedings.

The timing coincides with Carnival closures of Haitian diplomatic facilities across North America from February 16 to 18. The Embassy in Canada is closed February 16 through 18 reopening February 19, the Embassy in Washington is closed February 16 through 17 reopening February 18, the Embassy in Mexico is closed February 16 through 17, and the Consulate in Montreal is open

until noon February 16 then closed February 17 through 18 reopening February 19. This reduces consular service availability precisely when diaspora members may need legal guidance regarding TPS status, work authorization renewals, or contingency planning.

The TPS decision has broader implications for Haiti's economic stability and humanitarian conditions. Remittances from the diaspora remain critical as approximately 60 percent of Haiti's population lives on less than one dollar per day. In 2025, 270,000-plus individuals were forcibly returned to Haiti, often without support systems, contributing to internal displacement and humanitarian stress. An adverse TPS ruling would dramatically accelerate forced returns at a moment when Haiti's absorption capacity is minimal due to gang control of urban areas, food insecurity affecting 5.7 million people, and 1.4 million-plus internally displaced persons representing 12 percent of the population.

The legal uncertainty also affects diaspora political engagement and potential participation in the August 2026 elections. The electoral law includes diaspora participation provisions, but individuals facing potential deportation are unlikely to engage in political processes or consider eventual return for voting purposes. This could reduce diaspora electoral engagement precisely when their financial support and political influence are most needed to support Haiti's democratic transition.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The United States granted Temporary Protected Status to Haitians following the 2010 earthquake and has renewed it through successive administrations based on ongoing extraordinary conditions. The Trump administration's first term attempted to terminate TPS for multiple nationalities but faced legal challenges, and the Biden administration restored protections. The current termination attempt represents renewed Trump administration efforts to end humanitarian immigration programs, with Haiti among several countries affected by the policy shift.

TALKING POINTS

TPS court ruling expected before February 19 affecting legal status of 350,000 Haitians in United States.

Judge Reyes upheld block on termination despite death threats but Trump administration appealing decision.

Carnival closures February 16 to 18 reduce consular service availability during critical decision window.

Adverse ruling would accelerate forced returns when Haiti absorption capacity minimal due to gang control.

Remittances critical as 60 percent of population lives on less than one dollar per day.

AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

Legal uncertainty may reduce diaspora electoral engagement despite participation provisions in electoral law.

RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

Monitor US court filings and Judge Reyes announcements daily through February 19 for final ruling.

Prepare diaspora community legal clinics or information sessions for post-ruling guidance depending on outcome.

Coordinate with Haitian consular officials to extend service hours after February 19 if TPS terminated.

Assess potential humanitarian impact of accelerated returns on displacement and food security indicators.

Evaluate whether diaspora organizations maintain electoral engagement or shift focus to deportation defense.



CONFIDENCE



High confidence based on official institutional reporting.

WHAT TO WATCH NEXT

NEXT 24 TO 48 HOURS

Judge Reyes TPS ruling expected before February 19 determining legal status for 350,000 Haitians in United States with potential for immediate work authorization termination or extended protections. Carnival period February 16 to 18 presents security vulnerability as gang leader Izo demonstrated operational impunity financing festivities in Village de Dieu with no government response. Haitian diplomatic facilities reopen February 18 to 19 after closures creating backlog of consular service requests.

THIS WEEK

PM Fils-Aime may announce governance framework consultations or signal intention to govern with international backing alone. Kidnapping pattern in Delmas corridor will indicate whether surge is temporary carnival-related spike or sustained gang operational shift. PNH San Kanpe operations should demonstrate progress on highway clearance objectives particularly National Highways 1 and 2 or reveal stalled momentum against gang resistance.

STRATEGIC HORIZON

GSF first troop arrivals targeted for April 2026 with any delays extending security gap as Kenya MSS completes drawdown. Electoral funding commitments must materialize by late March for May 19 campaign start date to remain viable. BINUH 90-day DDR report due April 2026 will shape disarmament and reintegration framework. USCG port compliance deadline could trigger vessel denials at US ports if Haiti fails to meet international security standards. Kenscoff security trajectory will determine whether Viv Ansanm consolidates territorial gains in last safe capital area or faces effective resistance.

PRIMARY SOURCES

Reuters Haiti CPT mandate transition coverage February 2026
CSIS Haiti Embarks on Another Rocky Political Transition February 8 2026
Haiti Libre daily Zapping reports February 13 through 15 2026
Le Nouvelliste US sanctions and BINUH mandate coverage February 2026
Vant Bef Info US visa restrictions and Frinel Joseph asset declaration February 2026
Gazette Haiti TPS ruling and post-CPT governance February 2026
UN News Haiti crisis at breaking point Security Council briefing January 20 2026
UN OCHA 2026 Humanitarian Response Plan 880 million dollar budget
ReliefWeb Haiti weekly situation update February 13 2026
Security Council Report BINUH mandate renewal analysis February 2026
NBC News Judge Reyes TPS ruling coverage February 13 2026
New Humanitarian Gang Suppression Force deployment analysis February 2026
Human Rights Watch World Report 2026 Haiti chapter
Miami Herald Terminal Varreux port standoff investigative reporting