



AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

December 20, 2025

Intelligence for Haiti's Democratic Transition

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Haiti Libre confirmed that the Haitian National Police supported by Gang Suppression Force units launched a large-scale anti-gang operation with helicopter support the night of December 18 in Port-au-Prince coinciding with United States Embassy security alerts documenting operations in Pernier, Torcel, and Croix-des-Bouquets. European aid shipments face mounting risk as a port standoff deepens at key maritime facilities with the Varreux-TVB terminal awaiting customs officer deployment since 2020 despite 60 million euro investment. The Provisional Electoral Council maintains complete opacity two days before December 22 candidate list publication with no interim updates on registration totals or contestation outcomes. Eighteen countries have now formally pledged personnel and resources toward the 7,500 troop Gang Suppression Force ceiling announced December 19.



QUICK SUMMARY FOR STAKEHOLDERS

PNH-GSF launched large-scale operation night of December 18 with helicopter support in Port-au-Prince operational zones south of US Embassy.

European aid at risk as port standoff intensifies with Varreux-TVB terminal inoperative since 2020 awaiting customs officers.

CEP provides zero public information two days before December 22 candidate list publication maintaining electoral process opacity.

Eighteen countries formally pledged resources toward 7,500 GSF troop ceiling with January 2026 deployment of first 1,000 personnel.

Gangs control over 80 percent of Port-au-Prince driving 1.4 million internally displaced persons and severe food crisis.

DEVELOPMENT 1: HAITIAN NATIONAL POLICE AND GANG SUPPRESSION FORCE EXECUTE JOINT OPERATION

Haiti Libre confirmed December 20 that the Haitian National Police supported by Gang Suppression Force personnel launched a large-scale anti-gang operation with helicopter support on the night of December 18 in Port-au-Prince marking the first publicly documented joint PNH-GSF operational deployment with aviation assets. The operation coincides precisely with the December 18 United States Embassy security alert warning of ongoing security operations in Pernier, Torcel, and Croix-des-Bouquets south of the embassy with heavy gunfire and explosions reported throughout the tactical zone and key arteries including Rue des Freres blocked by Haitian National Police forces. The confirmation that Gang Suppression Force units participated in the operation represents a significant escalation from previous Kenyan-led GSF activities which focused primarily on static security missions protecting critical infrastructure rather than offensive combat operations against gang-controlled territories.

The deployment of helicopter support during the December 18 operation indicates either United States provision of aviation assets or Haitian government activation of remaining rotary-wing capabilities suggesting coordination

AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

at senior command levels between PNH leadership, GSF force commanders, and potentially United States military advisors embedded with the mission. Helicopter-supported operations enable rapid insertion of assault forces, aerial reconnaissance of gang positions, and extraction of casualties creating tactical advantages that ground-only operations cannot achieve in urban combat environments where gangs employ rooftop observation posts and maintain prepared defensive positions across multiple buildings. The operational tempo of launching a large-scale helicopter-supported operation within days of Secretary Rubio's December 19 announcement of 7,500 troop pledges suggests either the operation was pre-planned to demonstrate GSF offensive capacity to international donors or United States diplomatic pressure accelerated operational timelines to show tangible security progress before the critical December 22 candidate list publication.

The absence of official casualty data, arrest figures, or territorial control assessments following the December 18 operation creates analytical uncertainty about whether the mission achieved tactical objectives or represents symbolic action designed to project government strength without substantive territorial gains. If the operation successfully cleared gang positions and established PNH control over Pernier, Torcel, and Croix-des-Bouquets corridors the government would likely publicize tactical victories to demonstrate state capacity restoration and justify continued international support for the Gang Suppression Force expansion. However the lack of public reporting suggests either the operation remains ongoing with incomplete results, casualties were too high to announce without triggering public criticism, or tactical gains proved temporary with gangs reoccupying positions after PNH-GSF forces withdrew. The pattern of previous PNH operations including the December 15 Albert Schweitzer Hospital defense demonstrates that even successful defensive actions rarely translate to sustained territorial control without continuous force presence that Haiti's 9,000-person police force cannot maintain across multiple operational zones simultaneously.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Gang Suppression Force deployment began with Kenyan-led contingents arriving in late 2024 focused on static security missions protecting Toussaint Louverture Airport and critical government facilities but avoiding offensive operations until sufficient force strength and logistics infrastructure could support sustained combat operations against entrenched gang positions.

TALKING POINTS

Haiti Libre confirmed PNH and GSF launched large-scale operation night of December 18 with helicopter support marking first documented joint combat deployment.

Operation coincides with US Embassy December 18 security alert documenting heavy gunfire and explosions in Pernier, Torcel, and Croix-des-Bouquets.

Helicopter support indicates United States aviation asset provision or Haitian government activation suggesting senior command coordination.

Absence of official casualty or territorial control data creates uncertainty whether operation achieved tactical objectives or represents symbolic action.

Operational timing within days of Rubio 7,500 troop announcement suggests either pre-planned demonstration or

AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

accelerated timeline for December 22 credibility.

Pattern of previous operations shows successful defensive actions rarely translate to sustained territorial control without continuous force presence.

RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

Obtain operational after-action reports from PNH or GSF command determining casualties, arrests, and territorial control outcomes.

Assess whether helicopter assets remain deployed for follow-on operations or represent one-time mission support.

Monitor Pernier, Torcel, and Croix-des-Bouquets zones through weekend determining if PNH maintains presence or gangs reoccupy positions.

Evaluate GSF transition from static security to offensive operations determining if force posture shift reflects adequate personnel and logistics capacity.

Coordinate with United States Embassy security officials regarding aviation support continuation and future joint operation planning.

Prepare assessment whether December 18 operation success or failure influences December 22 candidate list credibility with opposition figures.



CONFIDENCE



High confidence based on official institutional reporting.

DEVELOPMENT 2: EUROPEAN AID SHIPMENTS THREATENED BY PORT INFRASTRUCTURE STANDOFF

Miami Herald reporting amplified by Haitian-Truth on December 20 warns that European aid to Haiti faces mounting risk as a port standoff deepens at key maritime facilities creating access and security constraints that threaten humanitarian supply chains dependent on seaport cargo delivery. The port crisis centers on the Varreux-TVB container terminal near Cite Soleil representing a 60 million euro European investment that has remained inoperative awaiting customs officer deployment since 2020 according to French Ambassador Antoine Michon's December 18 complaint documented by Haiti Libre. The five-year operational paralysis of a major port facility designed to handle hundreds of containers daily and create hundreds of jobs exemplifies the state capacity deficits that undermine both economic development and humanitarian logistics even when international investment capital and infrastructure exist.

The Varreux-TVB terminal standoff demonstrates how bureaucratic dysfunction and personnel deployment failures create cascading humanitarian consequences independent of gang violence or security threats since the

AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

facility's proximity to Cite Soleil gang-controlled territory did not prevent its construction completion but Haitian government failure to assign customs officers renders the infrastructure useless regardless of physical security conditions. European donors including France face strategic decisions whether to continue investing in Haitian port infrastructure when previous investments remain non-functional due to government administrative failures or to redirect aid flows through Dominican Republic land corridors and alternative regional ports that bypass Haitian institutional bottlenecks entirely. The timing of Ambassador Michon's public complaint coinciding with the AmeriJet cargo suspension and December 22 electoral deadline suggests French diplomatic pressure to demonstrate that infrastructure investments must become operational before additional European financial commitments to electoral processes or post-election reconstruction programs can be justified to European Union member state parliaments.

The broader port standoff narrative extends beyond Varreux-TVB to encompass ongoing gang extortion at Port-au-Prince main seaport facilities where criminal organizations reportedly levy tolls on cargo movements and conduct armed robberies targeting commercial shipments creating additional costs and delays that European humanitarian organizations cannot absorb without reducing aid volumes or shifting resources from program delivery to security premiums. If European donors determine that Haiti's combination of gang territorial control, government administrative paralysis, and customs deployment failures creates insurmountable logistics barriers the resulting aid reduction could trigger severe humanitarian deterioration during the critical pre-electoral period when food security and medical supply continuity become essential for maintaining minimal population stability. The Carnegie Endowment assessment noting that Haiti attracts cocaine trafficking because state weakness creates permissive operating environments applies equally to humanitarian logistics where institutional failure enables gang interference that functional customs and port security could prevent even amid broader security crises.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Haiti's port infrastructure has historically suffered from corruption, inefficiency, and political interference with customs officers frequently deployed based on patronage networks rather than operational requirements creating persistent bottlenecks that predate the current gang crisis but intensify amid territorial control collapse.

TALKING POINTS

Miami Herald reports European aid at mounting risk as port standoff deepens threatening humanitarian supply chains dependent on maritime cargo.

Varreux-TVB terminal represents 60 million euro European investment inoperative since 2020 awaiting customs officer deployment.

Five-year operational paralysis demonstrates state capacity deficits undermine development independent of gang violence when bureaucratic dysfunction prevents infrastructure activation.

French Ambassador public complaint suggests European diplomatic pressure linking infrastructure functionality to future financial commitments.

Gang extortion at main Port-au-Prince seaport creates additional costs forcing humanitarian organizations to

AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

reduce aid volumes or shift resources to security premiums.

European donor decisions whether to continue Haitian port investment or redirect through Dominican Republic corridors carries strategic humanitarian implications.

RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

Assess European donor willingness to maintain Haiti aid flows amid port infrastructure paralysis or shift to Dominican Republic land corridor alternatives.

Determine customs officer deployment barriers identifying whether personnel shortages, political interference, or security concerns prevent Varreux-TVH activation.

Evaluate gang extortion impact on seaport cargo costs quantifying security premium increases that reduce humanitarian purchasing power.

Monitor French diplomatic messaging post-December 22 candidate list determining if European support remains contingent on infrastructure functionality.

Coordinate with UN humanitarian logistics cluster regarding alternative port facilities in northern Haiti or regional transshipment options.

Prepare contingency assessment if European aid reduction triggers food security deterioration during pre-electoral period requiring emergency intervention.



CONFIDENCE



Moderate confidence based on partial institutional reporting.

DEVELOPMENT 3: PROVISIONAL ELECTORAL COUNCIL MAINTAINS OPACITY BEFORE CANDIDATE LIST PUBLICATION

The Provisional Electoral Council continues complete information opacity two days before the critical December 22 candidate list publication with no interim communique released regarding registration totals, contestation challenges filed, or dispute resolution outcomes as of December 20. The CEP's December web updates focus exclusively on mobilization, sensitization, and training of women around equitable and inclusive elections signaling ongoing efforts to meet gender inclusion benchmarks but providing no party-by-party breakdown of women candidacy levels to assess compliance with the 30 percent quota requirement. The absence of any public electoral process updates during the three-week period encompassing December 1 through 15 registration, December 16 through 19 contestation, and pre-publication review creates maximum uncertainty about whether the August 30 2026 electoral timeline retains credibility among opposition political actors whose participation remains essential for democratic legitimacy.

AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

The strategic calculation underlying total electoral opacity may reflect Provisional Electoral Council deliberate risk management to prevent premature opposition mobilization by delaying confirmation of candidate participation until all procedural mechanisms close eliminating opportunities for last-minute withdrawal campaigns or boycott coordination. However the opacity approach creates massive institutional credibility vulnerabilities if the December 22 candidate list disappoints stakeholder expectations by revealing only government-aligned candidates, unknown political newcomers, or minimal opposition representation since the lack of transparency throughout preceding phases prevents the CEP from demonstrating procedural integrity when challenged by skeptical international observers or civil society organizations. The publication represents the definitive checkpoint determining whether Haiti's constitutional timeline remains viable with fourteen months to complete electoral campaigning, voting operations, potential runoff elections, result certification, and power transfer before the Transitional Presidential Council mandate expires February 7 2027.

Political actors appear to be waiting for the candidate list before publicly committing to participation or opposition according to December 20 reporting with no significant party rallies, coalition announcements, or boycott declarations emerging in the 24-hour period reviewed. This silence suggests either opposition figures registered privately and await list publication before mobilizing campaign infrastructure or major political actors coordinated boycott strategies but delay public announcement until the empty or government-dominated candidate list provides justification for withdrawal from a process they consider illegitimate. The December 22 publication will instantly resolve this analytical uncertainty by revealing actual opposition participation levels creating either retrospective validation of the private registration system if credible candidates appear or exposing the electoral process as controlled exercise lacking democratic competition if the list confirms boycott patterns. The timing coordination between Secretary Rubio's December 19 announcement of 7,500 Gang Suppression Force troop pledges and the December 22 electoral deadline suggests United States diplomatic strategy links security commitments to electoral legitimacy requirements creating pressure on opposition figures to participate rather than boycott since American investment in Haiti's democratic transition depends on credible political competition justifying continued international support.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT



Haiti's Provisional Electoral Council has historically operated with limited transparency during candidate registration and contestation periods with previous electoral cycles in 1990, 2010, and 2015 demonstrating how opacity creates opportunities for manipulation while undermining public confidence in process integrity regardless of actual procedural compliance.

TALKING POINTS

CEP maintains complete opacity two days before December 22 candidate list publication with no updates on registration totals or contestation outcomes.

December web updates focus on women mobilization and training but provide no party-by-party breakdown assessing 30 percent quota compliance.

Opacity strategy may reflect deliberate risk management preventing premature opposition mobilization but

AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

creates credibility vulnerabilities if list disappoints expectations.

Political actors remain publicly silent with no rallies, coalitions, or boycott declarations suggesting await list publication before committing strategies.

December 22 publication represents definitive checkpoint determining constitutional timeline viability with fourteen months to complete electoral processes before February 7 2027.

Timing coordination between Rubio 7,500 troop pledge and electoral deadline suggests US links security commitments to opposition participation requirements.

RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

Prepare rapid response assessment frameworks for multiple December 22 candidate list scenarios ranging from robust opposition participation to complete boycott.

Coordinate with international observer missions establishing threshold criteria distinguishing acceptable from unacceptable candidate list composition.

Monitor opposition political networks December 21 for preliminary positioning statements signaling anticipated reactions to list publication.

Assess whether CEP opacity violated constitutional transparency requirements creating legal grounds for opposition challenges to electoral process legitimacy.

Evaluate United States diplomatic pressure effectiveness determining if security commitment announcements influenced opposition participation calculations.

Prepare contingency analysis if boycott confirmed requiring reconsideration of August 30 2026 electoral viability and February 7 2027 mandate extension scenarios.



CONFIDENCE



High confidence based on official institutional reporting.

DEVELOPMENT 4: GANG SUPPRESSION FORCE FORMALIZED AT 18 COUNTRY COMMITMENT

Haiti Libre reported December 20 that eighteen participating states have now formally pledged personnel, resources, and technical support toward the Gang Suppression Force following Secretary of State Marco Rubio's December 19 announcement that the United States secured commitments for up to 7,500 security personnel representing a 37 percent increase from the 5,500 troop ceiling announced December 12. The formalization of 18 country participation confirms the force generation diplomatic campaign succeeded in expanding beyond the initial seven countries identified at the December 9 Force Generation Conference through intensive United States

AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

bilateral engagement with potential troop-contributing nations during the ten-day period between conference and Rubio's announcement. The deployment timeline previously indicated remains operational with approximately 1,000 personnel scheduled to arrive January 2026 and roughly half of the total force projected operational by April 1 2026 aligned with the start of the new United Nations support office for Haiti.

The 18 country commitment structure creates complex command and control challenges requiring coordination across multiple national contingents with varying rules of engagement, language barriers, equipment standardization requirements, and operational doctrine differences that could undermine tactical effectiveness if not managed through robust multinational headquarters structures. Previous multinational force deployments in Haiti including the 2004 through 2017 MINUSTAH mission demonstrated that troop-contributing nations often impose caveats limiting when and how their personnel can be employed in combat operations creating force employment constraints that gang leadership can exploit by targeting contingents known to have restrictive engagement rules. The question of which specific countries beyond the initial seven pledged the additional personnel to reach 7,500 total commitments remains unanswered with strategic implications for force composition since regional Latin American and Caribbean contributors bring cultural and linguistic advantages while extra-regional African or Asian contingents may offer specialized counterinsurgency experience but face adaptation challenges to Haitian operational environment.

The financial sustainability of maintaining 7,500 troops through the United Nations Multi-Donor Trust Fund mechanism represents a critical vulnerability since the fund has historically suffered from pledge shortfalls with donor nations committing resources rhetorically but failing to disburse funds according to operational timelines creating equipment shortages, delayed rotations, and morale problems among deployed personnel. If the 7,500 force cannot be sustained beyond initial deployment phases due to funding constraints the tactical gains achieved during early operations could be lost as personnel withdraw and gangs reoccupy cleared territories replicating the pattern of previous international interventions where insufficient duration undermined initial successes. The Haiti Libre reporting reiterating that gangs control more than 80 percent of Port-au-Prince driving 1.4 million internally displaced persons provides operational context for the 7,500 troop requirement demonstrating that force sizing reflects assessment of territorial control challenges rather than arbitrary diplomatic compromise since recovering and holding such extensive gang-controlled urban terrain requires sustained combat operations beyond current Haitian National Police capacity.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The United Nations MINUSTAH mission deployed approximately 9,000 military and police personnel at peak strength between 2004 and 2017 providing historical precedent for multinational force requirements in Haiti but operating under different mandate authorities and Rules of Engagement than the current Gang Suppression Force structure.

TALKING POINTS

Eighteen countries formally pledged personnel and resources toward 7,500 GSF troop ceiling announced December 19 by Secretary Rubio.

Formalization confirms diplomatic campaign expanded beyond initial seven countries through intensive United States bilateral engagement.

AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

Deployment timeline remains 1,000 personnel January 2026 with half of force operational by April 1 2026 aligned with UN support office start.

18 country structure creates command and control challenges requiring coordination across varying rules of engagement and operational doctrine.

Financial sustainability through UN Multi-Donor Trust Fund represents critical vulnerability given historical donor pledge shortfalls.

Gang control of 80 percent Port-au-Prince driving 1.4 million displaced provides operational context for 7,500 troop requirement assessment.

RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

Identify which specific countries beyond initial seven pledged additional personnel determining regional versus extra-regional force composition.

Assess multinational headquarters capacity to coordinate 18 country contingents managing rules of engagement variations and equipment standardization.

Monitor UN Multi-Donor Trust Fund disbursement rates determining if donor pledges translate to actual operational funding at required timelines.

Evaluate whether January deployment remains 1,000 personnel or scales proportionally to 7,500 ceiling requiring revised planning assumptions.

Prepare force sustainability analysis projecting whether 7,500 troops can be maintained through 2026 electoral period or funding constraints force reductions.

Coordinate with troop-contributing nations regarding caveats and employment restrictions identifying tactical vulnerabilities gang leadership could exploit.



CONFIDENCE



High confidence based on official institutional reporting.

WHAT TO WATCH NEXT

NEXT 24 TO 48 HOURS

Provisional Electoral Council publishes final candidate list December 22 determining whether major opposition figures registered or boycotted creating definitive electoral viability assessment. Political actors issue immediate

AYITI INTEL | ONE-STOP INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

reactions to candidate list composition revealing acceptance versus rejection strategies. International observer missions evaluate list against threshold criteria for credible democratic competition. AmeriJet announces cargo suspension continuation or resumption timeline affecting humanitarian logistics contingency planning.

THIS WEEK

Opposition political networks mobilize campaign infrastructure if December 22 list shows participation or announce formal boycott declarations if list confirms anticipated government domination. Government diplomatic communications shift to promoting electoral success narratives or conducting damage control operations depending on candidate list outcomes. Civil society organizations coordinate response strategies ranging from electoral support to constitutional crisis management. Humanitarian organizations finalize alternative logistics arrangements if AmeriJet suspension extends indefinitely.

STRATEGIC HORIZON

Gang Suppression Force deployment accelerates January 2026 with first 1,000 troops arriving testing whether multinational command structures function effectively and whether initial operations achieve territorial control objectives. Constitutional timeline pressures intensify if December 22 candidate list reveals electoral legitimacy deficits forcing transitional government decisions whether to extend mandate beyond February 7 2027 or accept democratic restoration deadline failure. European donors reassess Haiti aid commitments based on port infrastructure functionality and electoral process credibility determining continued investment levels. Drug trafficking hub status triggers regional counter-narcotics escalation potentially disrupting humanitarian access throughout 2026 campaign period.

PRIMARY SOURCES

Haiti Libre PNH GSF Large Scale Anti Gang Operation December 20 2025
Haitian Truth European Aid at Risk Port Standoff December 20 2025
Council on Foreign Relations Gang Suppression Force Relief Haiti December 2025
CEP Haiti December 2025 Web Updates Gender Inclusion Mobilization
US Embassy Port au Prince Security Alert December 18 2025
Crisis Group Undoing Haiti Deadly Gang Alliance Report December 2025
United Nations Haiti Drug Transshipment Hub Warning November 2025
Haiti Libre News Zapping Varreux TVB Terminal Report December 20 2025
Relief Web Rapid Response Mechanism Alert Verrette Attack December 18 2025
Carnegie Endowment Haiti Crisis State Capacity Assessment December 16 2025
Haiti Libre Countries Pledge Up to 7,500 Troops to GSF December 20 2025
Haiti24 Dominican Republic Deportations GARR Report December 2025