

## Feminists say NO to orchestrated escalation of national crisis

Feminist organizations condemn in the strongest terms the cowardly assassination on August 28 of Me Monferrier Dorval, President of the Bar Association of Port-au-Prince. They extend their sympathies to the parents, colleagues and friends of Me Dorval and salute the notable and courageous contributions of this citizen to the construction of a democratic rule of law.

This heinous crime takes place in a deleterious context in which we observe a wave of assassinations, kidnappings and repeated attacks by armed gangs against the population in several regions of the country, particularly in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Abuses and victims are countless, even babies are not spared. On August 31, the population of Bel-Air in Port-au-Prince suffered further assaults from gangs, without benefiting, as it should, from the protection of the authorities. Basic rights to life and security are denied and violators can act with impunity, under the complacent, or even complicit, gaze of the power in place.

Violence against women is increasing due to this armed violence. The bodies of women and girls are treated like war territory, with a string of individual and gang rapes. Economic violence further weakens vulnerable women who are often forced to flee with their children, for whom they generally bear sole responsibility.

Feminist organizations denounce the accelerated worsening of the crisis, fueled by the arrogance of a power that ignores the national refusal to see it continue. President Jovenel Moïse claims to build a new Provisional Electoral Council (CEP). Feminists have deliberately stonewalled solicitations from the executive to designate a woman to take part in the CEP. Today, after having contacted civil society sectors separately without result, the government is trying to put together its tailor-made CEP and is sponsoring a demand for a new Constitution. Feminists elevate their voices against the obvious intention of the government to atomize and divide sectors, to create an environment aimed at breaking down any form of popular mobilization, in order to organize elections which, in the current context, cannot be inclusive, credible or beneficial to democracy.

Feminist organizations stand firmly alongside the forces of change to demand justice for Me Dorval and all the other victims of abuses, in particular the many women and girls abused by gangs. Feminists persevere in their commitment to human rights, the specific rights of women and the right of citizens to choose, control and sanction their leaders.

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The petitioners:

1. Kay Fanm - *Women's house*
2. SOFA - *Solidarity of Haitian women*, Sabine Lamour, General coordinator
3. AFASDA - *Association of Sun Women of Haiti*, Elvire Eugène, Executive director
4. Fanm Deside - *Determined women*, Marie Ange Noël, Coordinator
5. REFRAKA - *Haitian community radio women's network*, Marie Guyrleine Justin, Executive director
6. GADES - *Southern Development Support Group*, Mutsuka Charles, Coordinator
7. Fanm Yo La - *The women are there*, Eloïse Massini Dorléans, General coordinator
8. Nègès Mawon - *Maroon Black Women*, Pascale Solages, General coordinator
9. Fondation TOYA - *TOYA Foundation*, Nikette Lorméus, President of the Board of Directors
10. Sabine Manigat, independent feminist.