United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6226

July 15, 2016

The Honorable John F. Kerry
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry:

We write to express our concern about Haiti’s ongoing political crisis, which has intensified in recent months, creating delays that hinder the country’s ability to effectively respond to the significant challenges it currently faces.

As you know, when President Martelly completed his term on February 8, 2016, the leaders of Haiti’s executive and legislative branches signed an accord to establish an interim government for a period of no more than 120 days to oversee the completion of the electoral cycle. The accord affirmed that the second round of elections would take place on April 24, 2016 and that a newly-elected president would be inaugurated on May 14.

The failure of Haiti’s political class to comply with this accord is deeply troubling. The interim president’s term in office, as approved by the National Assembly, has expired. It is our sincere desire that Haitians will take the necessary steps to ensure the return to constitutional order. Only through the election of a legitimate and democratic government can Haiti and the international community find a constructive path forward.

The United States has provided steadfast support to Haiti over several decades, including through major reconstruction programs after the devastating 2010 earthquake. However, the continued sustainability of U.S. assistance depends on Haitian officials’ ability to be responsible for social and economic progress in their country.

Unfortunately, the absence of a democratically-elected government undermines Haiti’s ability to move ahead and has already had a deeply detrimental effect on economic growth, which, in turn, has had a harmful impact on well-being of the Haitian people. Moreover, it is an obstacle to effective future collaboration with the United States and the international community. Only legitimate representatives of the Haitian people can negotiate effective agreements with the international community on investment, trade, security and development.

The U.S. Congress approved the $33 million already invested in Haiti’s presidential election. We support your decision not to provide any further funding for the administration of elections in Haiti. We also strongly urge you to provide necessary support for international domestic election observers in order to increase confidence in the results of any future elections.

At this critical juncture, key international financial institutions are correctly questioning how much longer they can support an unelected government. As we continue to monitor the current situation, if effective steps are not taken to resolve Haiti’s political crisis, the U.S. should reexamine the provision of non-humanitarian assistance to the Government of Haiti.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Bob Corker
Chairman

Benjamin Cardin
Ranking Member