

Haiti has chance to solidify stability before UN mission's drawdown, Security Council told

18 July 2017 – With three months left before the current United Nations peacekeeping mission in Haiti transitions to a smaller one, a UN envoy stressed today that the Caribbean country faces the “window of opportunity” to solidify stability, following recent elections.

“Haiti has remained on the path of stabilization and democratic consolidation,” the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Sandra Honoré, told the UN Security Council today.

“Looking ahead, for the country to make full use of the window of opportunity that emerged following the electoral process, additional measures will be needed to consolidate the security and stabilization gains of the past few years, create greater social and political cohesion and truly reinforce State institutions so that they can meet the needs of the Haitian people,” the Special Representative added.

Ms. Honoré noted that political space has opened up for the new Government to start addressing the many challenges facing the country, using this unique opportunity to tackle the root causes of instability, poverty, exclusion and impunity.

“Since then, initial steps aimed at overcoming longstanding problems in the areas of governance, rule of law and socio-economic development have been taken,” she said.

Those steps include a flagship development programme, the “caravan of change” in five of Haiti’s 10 departments, and the launch of legislative review to improve the investment climate, reinforce governance structures and restore State institutions.

However, it is “troubling” that the third branch of power – the judiciary – has not been brought to full functioning, she said, urging that key positions must be filled without further delay.

The senior UN official also repeated her calls to modernize the penal system: “Without a properly functioning justice system, the Haitian National Police cannot effectively deliver security for all Haitian citizens and the domestic and international investments in the national police force will not develop to their full potential.”

She underscored the vital importance of inclusive national dialogue to forge a common vision for progress and articulate an institutional reform agenda.

“Ultimately, Haiti’s security, political, social and development agenda can only be shaped by the national authorities and the Haitian people themselves;

and the responsibility for the further consolidation of the stabilization gains rests with the Haitian people," Ms. Honoré said, adding that donor support can complement Haitian-led efforts where needed.