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Greece's Statement delivered
by H.E. Ambassador Aglaia Balta,
Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations, New York

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At the outset, I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary General, Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, the Special Representative for the Gang Suppression Force, Mr. Jacques Christofides, as well as the head of the United Nations Support Office in Haiti, Miss Daniela Kroslak. Thank you for your briefings. I welcome the presence of Haiti, Mexico, Saint Kitts and Nevis, the Dominican Republic and El Salvador at this meeting.

At the outset, we'd like to express our deep disquiet following the incident that occurred yesterday. We condemn the ambush against the Salvadorian forces of the gang suppression force. We sincerely hope that they will be located as soon as possible, and would like to express our unstinting solidarity with El Salvador.

Ongoing gang violence is undermining a return to stability in Haiti, and above all, it is compromising the future of Haitians. We've taken note of Haitians' decision to postpone the elections that had previously been scheduled for the 13th of December, so as to allow for the security situation on the ground to stabilize.

We'd like to underscore that it's necessary to guarantee credible, inclusive and participatory elections, all the while maintaining the progress that's already been made on electoral preparations and also the need to promote broad based national support for the restoration of democratic institutions.

Following the successful renewal of the GSF mandate last month, the international community should spare no effort in supporting the GSF as well as the Haitian authorities as they combat the gangs.

In view of the above, I would like to make three points:

First, the security situation remains deeply alarming. The massacre in Kenscoff in August and the ongoing killings and human rights abuses perpetrated by gangs are appalling. We condemn all such incidents, including kidnappings, sexual and gender-based violence as well as the recruitment and use of children.

We commend the Government's efforts to advance Disarmament, Dismantlement and Reintegration, including the six-month pilot initiative in Kenscoff aimed at preventing violence at a community level.

We also welcome the release of 13 hostages following the Kenscoff incidents and we call for the immediate and unconditional release of all those who remain unlawfully detained.

Moreover, we support Haitian efforts to advance justice reform and ensure accountability for perpetrators of serious human rights abuses and financial crimes.

Second, we reiterate our full support for the GSF and believe in its potential to tackle gang violence in Haiti, provided it is fully and swiftly deployed. We welcome the expansion of its operations beyond the capital and we thank UNSOH for the critical logistical support it provides to enable the full deployment of the GSF.

We also welcome the establishment of the GSF's operational presence in Gonaïves and underline the importance of predictable deployment planning and continued logistical support to ensure the full and effective deployment of the Force.

Similarly, we commend all contributing countries and those member states that provide airlift and deployment capacities.

We reiterate the need for strict compliance with human rights due diligence, particularly regarding children, who must always be recognized and protected as victims. In this regard, we welcome the transfer agreement between the Haitian Government and the GSF, which regulates the treatment and transfer of individuals apprehended during operations, while upholding the Handover Protocol with regard to children.

Third, we welcome the renewal of the sanctions regime last week and call for its full implementation as the country moves towards elections.

The strict enforcement of the arms embargo through robust border and port controls is essential to restricting illicit arms trafficking and depriving gangs of weapons and ammunition.

In parallel, criminal activity must be curtailed and links between gang leaders and aspiring political figures need to be severed. We also emphasize the need to strengthen the justice system and the specialized judicial units to

combat impunity for serious human rights abuses, financial crimes and corruption.

In concluding, Greece believes in a sustainable and prosperous future for Haiti, free from gang violence, political instability and socioeconomic constraints. In this endeavor, the role of BINUH and its SRSG is of paramount importance.

We renew our commitment to working closely with BINUH, the GSF and UNSOH to accompany Haiti on its path toward democratic transition, peace and prosperity.

I thank you.