

Jovenel Moïse
President of the Republic of Haiti
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Dear Mr. President,

I write to you to raise my concern about the safety of Mr. Milostene Castin, a human rights defender and coordinator of AREDE (Action pour la Reforestation et la Défense de l'Environnement), an organization based in Trou-du-Nord, that defends the rights of subsistence and small-scale farmers from land seizures, forced displacement and violent attacks.

For nearly a decade, Mr. Castin has been the subject of repeated attacks and intimidation, which he believes are due to his activism. Such attacks intensified in the last two months of 2020, when a group of armed men repeatedly went to his house and fired gunshots. They smashed the windows on two occasions, once causing injury to one of his children. An unidentified man also went to the school of one of his children, in an apparent kidnapping or intimidation attempt. As a result, Mr. Castin and his family have been forced to leave their home, fearing for their safety.

Despite reporting the attacks to the authorities, Mr. Castin has received no protection and the attacks continued. Most recently on 12 May of 2021, Mr. Castin was told that government officials "want him dead" in reaction to his defence of farmers in a community facing expropriation.

I therefore demand that your government, along with the National Police of Haiti, fulfil their obligation to protect Mr. Castin in accordance to his wishes so that he may feel safe and return to his home and legitimate activities as a human rights defender. I also demand an immediate and independent investigation to find and prosecute those responsible for the recent acts of intimidation against him and his family. I remind the Haitian authorities of your duty to guarantee that human rights defenders can carry out their work without fear of reprisals, as established in the 1998 *UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders*.

Yours sincerely,