

Human rights defenders condemn mass deportations of Haitians

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**Haitian citizens are loaded onto a truck for deportation, Nov. 2022. | Photo: Twitter/
@mediospanorama**

Santo Domingo, November 16 (RHC)-- The Dominican Human Rights Committee (CDDH) and other social organizations condemned President Luis Abinader's decree that expels foreigners who illegally occupy public or private property. This decision mainly affects Haitian rural workers.

"We are witnessing a very dangerous mass deportation campaign that can become a campaign of ethnic cleansing if Dominican society does not show democratic reflexes and put a brake on the government," says the CDDH manifesto, which was supported by organizations from Argentina, Colombia, United States, Mexico, and Uruguay.

"Besides denying old sugarcane workers the right to a pension, the government is now directly threatening to apply ethnic cleansing on a scale not seen since 1937," the human rights defenders said, referring to the massacre of Haitians during the regime of Rafael Leonidas Trujillo (1930-1938).

Human rights activists explained that the decree on the occupation of properties implies that the expelled persons would be permanently prevented from returning to Dominican territory. The Abidaner decree does not contribute anything new and is "a fundamentally political document, which enables the eviction of illegal precarious buildings located on land owned by the State and private sugar companies."

The tweet reads: "The United Nations said NO and the Dominican Republic said YES. Trucks full of illegal Haitians in Bani heading to be deported to the border. Migration continues deportations. President Luis Abinader announced they will increase in the coming days."

Currently, over 250,000 people of Haitian descent born in the Dominican Republic remain undocumented and "do not have legal residence due to a deliberate policy of non-regularization of migration applied by successive governments," the CDDH pointed out.

Human rights defenders denounced that the persecution against Haitian workers allows companies to exploit them and increase their profits. "Not to have a birth certificate means that the person with no documents cannot have State protection. Since the person does not exist, crimes committed against him or her do not exist either. For example, if she is raped, she cannot sign an accusation," the Jesuit newspaper EntreCulturas stressed.

"A person with no documents is not entitled to a passport to move freely, or a bank account, or a car or a drivers licence... Should he or she find a job, it would never be matching their capacities and never paid what they are worth," since they are 'illegal' -- without proper documents.

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