

Haiti: Bullets and hunger

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By Roberto Morejón

The din of the local war unleashed by gangs, the disarticulation of the State's power and the panic of the suffering inhabitants, characterize Haiti's present in the eyes of the international community, to the point that acute poverty takes a back seat.

The actions of the armed gangs and the power vacuum, which CARICOM, the Caribbean Community, is now trying to fill following its meeting in Jamaica, have been widely publicized.

The departure of the Prime Minister, Ariel Henry, and the creation of a Transitional Council appear to be the way forward, although if the weapons silence their diabolical language, other emergencies will have to be addressed.

Shaken by natural disasters, foreign invasions, colossal debts, political rivalries, dictatorships, coups d'état, soil erosion, indiscriminate logging and a fragile health service, Haiti is much more than a black and white description of the settling of scores between armed groups.

It is true that since the 2010 earthquake, when many gang members escaped from prisons, irregular groups began to gain strength, until they formed two large mini-armies, the G-9 and Family, of the publicized Jimmy Chérizier, and the G-Pep, led by Gabriel Jean-Pierre.

But the first nation in Latin America to become independent is also identified by the rise of hardship, malnutrition, unemployment and housing shortages.

In the midst of the chaos initiated in the last months, now the World Food Program warns about the food insecurity of at least four million Haitians.

With the predatory action of the gangs, the already accentuated phenomenon of displacement has increased, to which 15 thousand people have now been added at the beginning of March, for a grand total of 360 thousand.

The UN agency warns of the danger of famine for a million people in a country that even without the violence of the last year was ranked 163 out of 191 in the UN Human Development Index.

This translates into dire living conditions, a life expectancy of just over 64 years, high rates of tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS and incidence of cholera.

Haiti requires international aid both to restore order and silence the guns, and to feed three million children.

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