

# *CARICOM Chastises Dominican Republic on Deportation Policy*

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Santo Domingo, June 26 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Caribbean nations in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) have called on the Dominican Republic's government to immediately stop the planned deportation of people of Haitian descent.

The 15-member grouping said it was reiterating the human rights of those people who had been made stateless by a ruling of the Dominican Constitutional Court in 2013, which had been made retroactive to 1929, revoking their nationality.

"The very real possibility that they could be expelled to Haiti, a country of which they are not citizens and with which many have neither family nor language links was an additional cause for concern," said a CARICOM statement.

Haiti is a member of CARICOM, while the Dominican Republic is not. The Dominican government has however applied for membership.

This week, Jamaica's foreign minister told his country's senate that Jamaica will not support the Dominican Republic government's bid for membership until it resolves this issue. "For some time, there has been discussion as to whether the Dominican Republic should become part of CARICOM ... if this Dominican Republic/Haiti matter is not resolved in the spirit of full adherence to human rights and

adherence to acknowledged international norms, Jamaica will not support the Dominican Republic,” said Senator AJ Nicholson.

Meanwhile, the prime minister of Dominica Roosevelt, Skerrit told a press conference in Roseau that this is a serious human rights issue. “The Dominican Republic has taken a decision to deport tens of thousands of Dominican Republic citizens back into Haiti, with no address in Haiti, with no family links in Haiti because some of them have been there for so many years, the children are out of school because they are not allowed to attend school,” he said, calling on citizens of the world to raise their voices in condemnation of the denationalization and deportation policy.

CARICOM said that it had initiated discussions on the issue during the recent European Union-CARIFORUM High-Level Meeting in Brussels, held in early June. It said CARIFORUM, consisting of Caricom and the Dominican Republic, met with officials from the EU and that the “meeting was informed of the plight of the Dominicans of Haitian descent rendered stateless, both those who were documented and those who were not.” The body called on the Dominican Republic to desist from expelling Dominicans of Haitian descent and to “avoid creating a humanitarian crisis in our region.”

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