

# *UNICEF requests solidarity with Haitian youth over gang attacks*

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Port-au-Prince, March 6 (RHC)-- Bruno Maes, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) representative in Haiti, has called for solidarity with young Haitians from Port-au-Prince and Artibonite, where violent gang attacks have considerably increased.

"We need to express your solidarity with your brothers and sisters in Port-au-Prince and Artibonite, who are currently suffering from unnamed violence," Maes said.

The UNICEF representative participated in a three-day workshop organized by the Haitian Education Ministry (MENFP) to discuss communication strategies that guarantee children's right to education amid the violence crisis.

Over forty school principals, Port-Salut and Coteau towns school board representatives, teachers, youth associations directors, and Jeremie and Des Cayes municipalities U-Reporters social engagement platform for the youth members participated in the workshop.

"A painful discovery has called us for three days of reflection and sharing. Over the past five years, the education sector has been the victim of violent attacks," Haitian southern departments education director Sylvain Desir stated.

Since October last year, armed groups have attacked about 13 Haitian schools, killing a student and kidnapping at least two staff members. Besides stealing food supplies, gangs have also looted school supplies, including desks, blackboards, laptops, photocopiers, and solar panels.

Therefore, many school principals closed their centers to protect children and staff from these attacks. As a result, one out of four schools has remained closed since then.

"We take the opportunity to encourage participants on the need to sensitize communities on children's inalienable right to education," Haitian education officers Jean Nelson Pierre and Jean-Marcel Jeanty agreed on the workshop.

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