

United Nations Welcomes Appointment of Interim Haitian Prime Minister



United Nations, December 24 (RHC-NNN) -- The United Nations and its international partners on Tuesday welcomed the designation of Florence Guillaume as Haiti's interim Prime Minister.

Guillaume, who was previously serving as Minister of Public Health and Population, was appointed by Haiti's president in accordance with Article 165 of the country's Constitution, according to a news release issued by the United Nations.

Guillaume replaces Laurent Lamothe, whose resignation a week ago came after international warnings from the United States and the United Nations that the impoverished Caribbean nation was again on the brink of political chaos.

The Secretary-General's Special Representative in Haiti and other members of the Core Group -- comprising the Ambassadors of Brazil, Canada, France, Spain, United States, and the European Union, as well as the Special Representative of the Organization of American States -- commended the president's efforts to implement the Presidential Advisory Commission's recommendation.

It also commended the work undertaken by the Haitian president, together with the presidents of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, the representatives of political parties and other political stakeholders “to forge the necessary consensus” for the nomination of a Prime Minister and the formation of a consensus government.

Guillaume's temporary appointment is part of an effort to resolve a mounting political crisis over long-delayed elections. A career health worker, she has overseen efforts to rebuild the country's frail medical services, including new hospitals and combating a cholera epidemic and long-running HIV-AIDS treatment.

Haiti's capital Port-Au-Prince has endured a growing number of violent demonstrations in recent weeks during which protesters have demanded the holding of elections that were expected in 2011 and the resignations of Lamothe as well as President Michel Martelly.

Parliament will shut down if elections are not held before January 12th, leaving the country without a functioning government until presidential elections in late 2015.

Haiti, the poorest and most unequal country in the western hemisphere, is still recovering from an earthquake five years ago that leveled much of Port-Au-Prince.

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