

May 18, 2005



Sanel Joseph, murdered by the Haitian police following a massive demonstration on May 18, 2005



Haiti's flag is upside down because our country is under foreign occupation

A Time for Celebration or for Struggle?

On May 18, 1803, 202 years ago today, the liberators of Haiti created the Haitian Flag. Ever since, this flag has inspired their descendants and become a symbol of the struggle against slavery, exploitation, and oppression. Every year, Haitians celebrate the flag on this date, but this year we are demonstrating for the following reasons:

On February 29th, 2004, after years of blocking international aid to Haiti, fomenting an internal servile opposition, and waging a campaign of lies and assassinations of pro-democracy leaders, the United States, France, and Canada kidnapped Haiti's democratically elected President, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and exiled him to Africa. Those powers then militarily occupied Haiti, installed a puppet government at gunpoint, and have since thwarted the efforts of Caricom and the African Union to organize an international inquiry into the coup.

Today, Haiti is in the grips of unprecedented terror. Over 10,000 Haitians have been killed by the Haitian police, paramilitary death squads of former soldiers, and occupying UN troops. Hundreds more are political prisoners, uncharged, untried and jailed indefinitely. Haiti's constitutional Prime Minister, Yvon Neptune, is near death on day 28 of a hunger strike to

protest his illegal imprisonment.

Meanwhile, the UN Mission to Stabilize Haiti (MINUSTAH) has laid siege to the giant shanty town of Site Solèy. Residents are searched leaving or entering the area, and UN soldiers and Haitian police have gunned them down, including pregnant women, children and old men. Amnesty International says "the human rights situation has deteriorated gravely" in Haiti since Aristide's ouster.

Giant demonstrations calling for the return of President Aristide and democracy, held in the capital and regional cities almost on a daily basis, are met with deadly repression. Two weeks ago, five unarmed demonstrators were shot dead during a huge march in front of the National Palace.

Join with us to echo the demands of the tens of thousands who face bullets every day in Haiti to say:

- DOWN with the occupation and the puppet government.**
- STOP the massacres of the Haitian people by UN troops and Haitian police.**
- DOWN with the proposed sham elections; Haitians have already voted.**
- RETURN President Aristide to power in Haiti.**

Long Live a Free and Sovereign Haiti!

To get involved or for more information, contact: Fanmi Lavalas (917-337-6702); Haiti Support Network, National Popular Party (PPN) (718-434-8100); Haitian Lawyers Leadership Network (203-829-7210); KAKOLA, Komite Chalo Jaklen (718-629-4050); Lakou New York (718-907-0484); Patizan Jezikri (516-489-4365); Pawòl Fanm (718-363-1585); Vwa Lakou Lakay (718-265-6491)