



# CARDH

Centre d'analyse et de recherche en droits de l'homme

*Cellule d'observation de la criminalité - COC*

## Kidnapping

Newsletter July, August and September 2022 (#9)

**Decrease of kidnappings**



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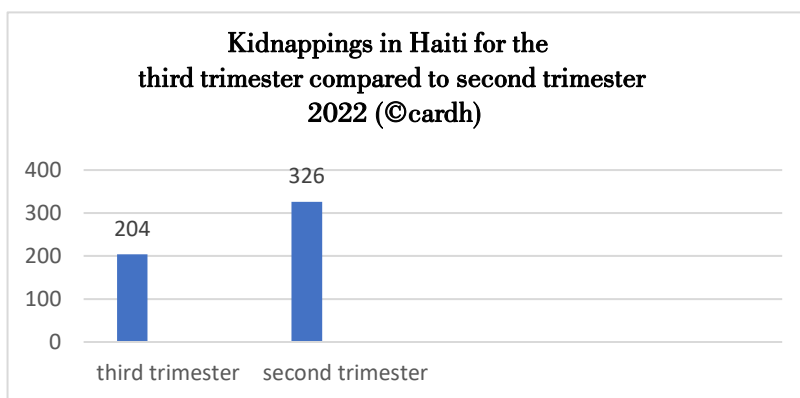
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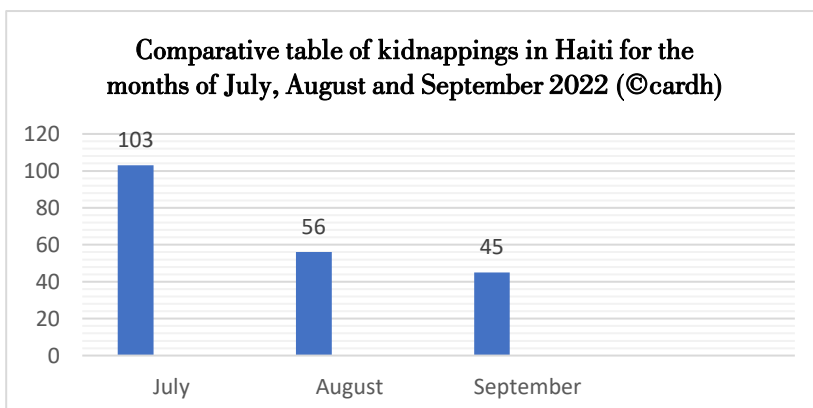
## I. Kidnappings for the third quarter of 2022 and comparative analysis with the previous quarter

### 1. Kidnappings for the third quarter of 2022

1. For the third quarter of the year 2022, the Crime Observation Unit (COC) of the Center for Analysis and Research in Human Rights (CARDH) recorded 204 kidnappings compared to 326 for the second quarter, a decrease of 37.42%. Three collective kidnappings were recorded compared to 15 in the previous quarter.

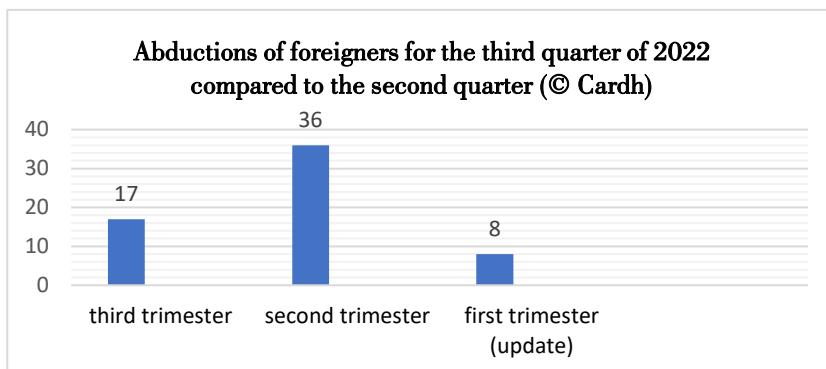


2. One hundred and three (103) abductions were recorded for the month of July, compared to 56 for the month of August, a decrease of 45.63%, and 45 for the month of September, a decrease of 56.31%.



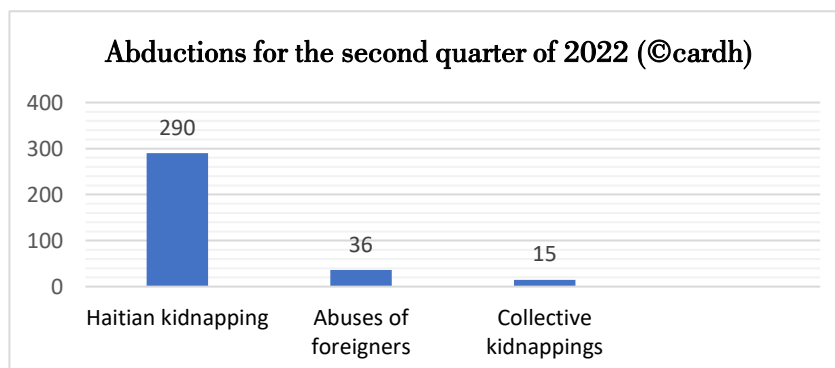
## 2. Abductions of foreigners

- Seventeen (17) foreigners were abducted in the third quarter compared to 36 in the previous quarter, a decrease of 52.77%, bringing the total to 61 for the three quarters compared to 53 for the last year. It should be recalled that diplomatic and international missions had adopted measures to protect their nationals after the wave of kidnappings in the second quarter: reduction of staff and closure of certain services; high-end bulletproof cars, travel in convoys, etc.

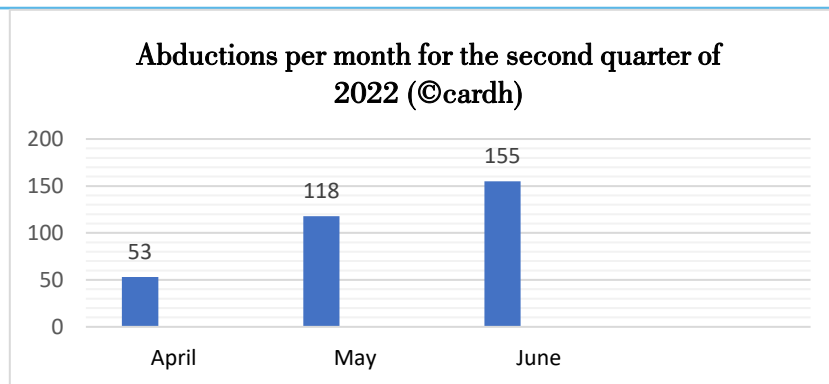


## 3. Reminders of the second trimester figures

- For the second quarter: 290 kidnappings of Haitians (15 collectively<sup>1</sup>) were recorded; 36 foreigners from nine countries (40 from January to date) totalling 326 compared to 225 for the first quarter of 2022 an increase of 44.8%.
- Fifty-three kidnappings were recorded for the month of April, compared to 118 for the month of May, an increase of 117%, and 155 for the month of June, respectively an increase of 192% and 31%.



<sup>1</sup> As mentioned in all the bulletins, collective kidnappings are counted at less than 10%. In addition, in some cases, passengers are released immediately by the perpetrators (Martissant)



6. **N.B.** As mentioned in the bulletins, the figures of the CARDH's Crime Observation Unit (COC) do not express the number of kidnappings in Haiti. But allow us to observe the trend (increase/decrease) of the phenomenon. They may be modified in the next bulletin.

#### 4. New facts

##### 4.1. New kidnapping hotspot

7. Thomassin, Laboule and their surroundings tend to become a hotspot of kidnapping and violence orchestrated mainly by the gang led by *Ti Makak*, based in Laboule 12 and Fessard.
8. Three reasons could explain this new development. Ti Makak has to strengthen his troop (weapons/minutions/members...) in order to face the 'strong' men of Jean Monsatto Petit alias 'Toto', a *Borlette* landlord and real estate investor, because of a land dispute (117 tiles of land) concerning several generations. Killings took place in this conflict.
9. Secondly, he (Ti Makak) has to pay for the rental of most of his weapons. Finally, the focus of the kidnapping industry had moved from Croix-des-Bouquets (disintegration of 400 Mawozo by the police) to Martissant (main focus of kidnapping for the first half of 2021). It has developed in Pernier and Tabarre and is now spreading to these areas (Thomassin, Laboule...). Tara's borders the third district (Gran Martissant) and the Ti Makak gang is a "son" of the Gran Ravin gang.
10. It should be noted that the Thomassin, Laboule and Tara's axis was also used to bring victims to Grand Ravin.

##### 4.2. Sea route, new kidnapping mechanism

11. Gangs are starting to use the sea route for kidnapping. Victims have been abducted from their boats and coastal residents from their homes.

## II. Factors that would explain the decrease in kidnapping

12. A number of factors explain the drop in kidnapping in Haiti in the third quarter of 2022. The Crime Observation Unit (COC) of the Centre for Analysis and Research in Human Rights (CARDH) has highlighted four of these as being objective.

### 5 Internal factors

#### 5.1. New police leadership

13. **Towards trust, cohesion, sanitation...** With the appointment of Frantz Elbé as head of the national police force and the changes that have been made, a new institutional dynamic has been observed. Although the structural problems of the police have not yet been resolved, it seems that the police are beginning to have trust in the institution, especially its hierarchy, and operations are better supervised.
14. On 1 July, a decree instituting "a special risk allowance for PNH officers engaged in special police operations" was published (it was reissued on Wednesday 20 July for clerical errors). 5,622 cheques and 1,313 debit cards from the National Credit Bank (BNC, in French), equivalent to 267,308,183 HTG, were returned to the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF). More than 1,000 police officers were dismissed for abandoning their posts. The families of police officers who died or were injured during the operations are visited and supported by the high command.
15. **Regular operations in Croix-des-Bouquets, arrests of gang leaders...** The constant operations carried out by the police in Croix-des-Bouquets, particularly against the 400 Mawozo gang, responsible for approximately 50% of the kidnappings in 2021, including the 16 American missionaries on 16 October 2021, have largely contributed to the reduction of the phenomenon. Most of these members have been 'stopped' (killed), others arrested ... This gang has been, to some extent, disintegrated. Its leader is said to have taken refuge in Thomazeau.
16. The arrest on 26 June 2022 of Ézéchiel Alexandre, alias Ze, head of the Pilate base, made up mostly of police officers and former police officers and a member of the G9, appears to have been decisive. Located between Grand Ravin and Village-de-Dieu, this base controls, amongst other things, the five Avenues of Bolosse, part of the coastline, Portail Léogane and its surroundings, Bas Peu de chose and part of Fouchard. It should be remembered that Ézéchiel Alexandre was arrested in the company of Junior Claude, a former police officer of the 21st promotion, assigned to Port-de-Paix (North West Department).
17. **Kidnap attempts diverted, hostages freed...** In its efforts to contain crime, the police have diverted numerous kidnapping attempts. Victims have also been freed (examples will be given in the next newsletter).



18. **Increased police presence in the streets.** There is a stronger police presence in many of the red zones considered by the COC: Bois Verna, Lalue, Bourdon, Turgeau, Champ-de-Mars, Portail Léogane... These areas had frequently experienced kidnappings and had also served as passageways for those from Pétion-Ville (northern part) and others towards Grand-Ravin. These constant deployments have, to some extent, helped to deter abductions.

## 5.2. Combating trafficking in arms and ammunition

19. The measures taken by the Ariel Henry administration to curb trafficking in arms, ammunition and smuggling are important in reducing kidnapping and crime in general, much of the ransom money from which is used to purchase arms and ammunition and to make up for the loss of income from drug trafficking.

20. The General Director of the General Administration of Customs (AGD, in French), Romel Bell, reportedly fled in May 2022 after his US visa was cancelled for illegal arms trafficking... On 1 July, Julcène Edouard was installed as Director General of the AGD.

21. In the month of July, at least four shipments of arms and ammunition were seized<sup>2</sup>, with arrests made particularly of senior members of the Episcopal Church of Haiti<sup>3</sup>. The Port-de-Paix port, a hotbed of arms and ammunition trafficking, smuggling and other activities, has been closed. The boats Miss Lilie One and El Shaddai, involved in the said trafficking,

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<sup>2</sup> On 1 July, Customs and the National Haitian Police (PNH, in French) seized 120,000 rounds of ammunition in 157 cases, three handguns (two 9mm pistols and a 38 calibre revolver), 30 magazines and 20 Ak-47 rifle cases, as well as 3,890 US dollars and 814,343 gourdes. These items were seized at the port of Port-de-Paix, transported by the ship Miss Lili, from Florida (USA) and at Edy Lafrance's home by Customs and the Haitian National Police (PNH).

On the night of Tuesday 12 to Wednesday 13 July 2022, another shipment of 25,000 cartridges was seized in Port-de-Paix (North West of Haiti) on board a public transport bus, travelling between Port-de-Paix and Port-au-Prince, driven by Churchill Petit-Frère.

On 14 July 2022, customs officers seized 14,646 rounds of ammunition, 140 magazines, 18 weapons of war, 4 9mm pistols, 1 sight and counterfeit banknotes worth 50,000 dollars at the Port-au-Prince wharf,

On 21 July 2022, an operation led to the seizure of 7 pistols, 2 of which were 9mm calibre, 4 of which were 40mm calibre, 1 of which was 38mm calibre, 2 9mm magazines and 4 40mm magazines. A total of 434 cartridges were found, including 197 9mm cartridges, 182 40mm cartridges and 55 38mm cartridges.

<sup>3</sup> Reverend Father Frantz Cole, 17 August, Jean Gilles Jean Mary, Accountant of the Episcopal Church of Haiti, Jean Gilles Jean Mary, 23 August. A warrant has been issued for the arrest of Father Jean Mardoché Vil, president of the Church's permanent committee.

Following the discovery of the cargo of arms and ammunition on 1 July in the port of Port-de-Paix, the public prosecutor's office of this jurisdiction arrested and detained Fritz Jean Relus, who was in charge of receiving the cargo, and Jonas Georges, owner of the boat Miss Lili One. Marie Guilène Estimable, Wilfrid Estimable, Eddy Lafrance and Nènè, who were also known, were sought. The two men were subsequently released by the government commissioner of the Port-de-Paix Court of First Instance, Michelet Virgile, on 6 July 2022. The latter and Robinson Pierre-Louis, secretary general of the Port-au-Prince Bar Association and the Federation of Haitian Bars (FBH, in French) were subsequently arrested by the Central Directorate of the Judicial Police (DCPJ, in French) and brought before the courts.





were seized by the National Port Authority (APN, in French). The revenue collected for the month of August was 8 billion gourdes compared to 5 billion for the previous month.

### 5.3. Locked country (peyi lòk)

22. **The country's blockage during August and September also explains the decrease in kidnappings.** The months-long fuel crisis, the persistent insecurity and the accelerated depreciation of the gourde, the national currency, have served to fuel the political crisis. The displacement of socio-professionals is limited to the essential. From June onwards, the country saw the start of mobilisation (Gonaïves/Hinche), reinforced by the Prime Minister's address to the nation on 20 July, his first anniversary in power, announcing the upward adjustment of the price of petroleum products. The huge demonstration On 22 August in Cap-Haitien provoked a cascade of movements in different regions of the country. The adjustment of petroleum product prices was used by certain political and economic actors to sow chaos to the point of worrying international cooperation (bilateral/multilateral) announcing sanctions.
- 5.4. Résistance de la population au kidnapping

23. **The multiple forms of population resistance to abduction are an important factor to be considered in their decrease.** These could be considered at two levels. In many areas, the citizens have erected barricades using the remains of cars and other objects until they are isolated: Rue de l'enterrement (Saint François de Salle hospital area, Rue Roy, Magloire Amboise...) Demonstrations followed by street blockades to protest and demand the release of the victims should also be taken into account (Nazon, Bois Verna, Lalue...)
24. The other factor is the resistance of people in their cars, which in some cases resulted in death. The most recent example is the murder and subsequent burning on 22 August of a woman and her two daughters (Desanclos family) in Tabarre (entrance to Cité Doudoune, not far from the Grey River bridge).

## 6. External factors

25. The results obtained are intimately linked to external factors, notably China's growing "interest" in Haiti, forcing the United States to intensify its efforts to achieve tangible results on the ground.

### 6. 1. "Fight" at the Security Council level

26. The diplomatic battle in the run-up to the renewal of the UN Office in Haiti (BINUH , in French) between China, opting to put Haiti back under Chapter VII, and the United States, pleading to keep it under Chapter VI, is said to have played an important role in the early results achieved in the fight against crime in Haiti, particularly kidnapping.



27. China had asked the Security Council for an embargo on small arms to Haiti, individual sanctions against gang leaders and a regional police force to contain their violence.
28. The majority of weapons and ammunition used in violence in Haiti come from the United States. Moreover, in geopolitical terms, Haiti remains their territory. The form and content of peace missions in Haiti depend largely on the United States.
29. From this double point of view, the United States must intensify its efforts in the fight against crime in Haiti, particularly against the illicit trafficking of arms and ammunition as well as smuggling... by targeting their true "master". Especially as many US nationals have been kidnapped in Haiti and released for ransom.
30. The extradition on 3 May 2022 to the United States of Germaine Joly, alias "Yonyon", leader of the 400 Mawozo group, for kidnapping for ransom of American citizens, is a catalyst helping the United States to track down the intellectual authors of crime and kidnapping in Haiti.
31. A compromise was reached on 15 July for the renewal of BINUH's mandate by unanimously adopting Resolution 2645, which requires Member States to "prohibit the transfer of small arms and light weapons and ammunition to non-State actors engaged in or supporting gang violence, criminal activities or human rights violations in Haiti".
32. The resolution also provides for "sanctions within 90 days against gang leaders" but also against people involved in crime. China saw the resolution as a "warning".
33. At China's request, a Security Council meeting was held on 26 September on the Haitian crisis. There was a consensus that gang leaders, but especially those involved in arms trafficking and others who support and finance them, should be sanctioned. China specifically asked the head of BINUH to provide the Security Council with a list of gang leaders in Haiti. In addition, a closed-door meeting followed.

## 6.2. US government efforts

### 6. 2. 1. Romel Bell's US visa cancelled for illegal arms trafficking

34. The cancellation in May of the US visa of the Director General of the General Administration of Customs (AGD, inb French) Romel Bell, for illegal arms trafficking, leading to his flight, was decisive. Today, such trafficking is decreasing considerably.

## 6. 2. 2. Better internal control and creation of a permanent Homeland

### Security Investigations (HSI) office in Haiti

35. Measures are being taken in the US to contain trafficking to Haiti. At a press conference on 17 August, HSI authorities in Miami (Florida) announced the seizure of a shipment of weapons headed for Haiti: pistols, assault rifles, including a 50-calibre gun capable of piercing some armour and firing up to 1,800 metres.
36. Anthony Salisbury, special agent in charge of Homeland Security Investigations in the Miami office, stressed that there was "definitely an increase in the flow of weapons, both in number and in types of firepower, to Haiti" (Miami Herald quoted by Le Nouvelliste).
37. In an interview with the Miami Herald, Brian A. Nichols, assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere affairs, said the US government was "carefully monitoring the licensing of arms sales to Haiti. The challenge is to track the smuggling of weapons to gangs and other illicit persons<sup>4</sup>. »
38. In addition, it should be noted that a press release dated 2 March 2022 from the US Embassy in Haiti officially announced the opening of a permanent office of Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) in Haiti. This office is part of the reinforcement of the American policy for the control of arms and ammunition trafficking and smuggling in Haiti.

## 6 .2. 3. Sanctions announced against gangs and the political and economic actors who support them

39. **Brian A. Nichols' announcement on 22 September** that a Security Council resolution would be introduced to sanction 'gang leaders', those who support them, supply them with weapons, facilitate them and finance their activities is decisive in reducing kidnapping in Haiti. These sanctions would target their financial resources and their ability to travel. It should be noted that this move follows US President Joe Biden's speech on 21 September at the UN General Assembly, reaffirming his administration's support for Haiti while acknowledging that "violence is fuelled by politics<sup>5</sup> ».
40. Speaking at the US Institute of Peace in Washington, D.C. on 19 September, Juan Gonzalez, senior director for the Western Hemisphere at the White House National Security Council and special assistant to President Joe Biden, said that the violent protests

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<sup>4</sup> Le Nouvelliste : « ONU : Les Etats-Unis veulent sanctionner les chefs de gangs et leurs appuis », 23 September 2021.

[Le Nouvelliste | ONU : Les Etats-Unis veulent sanctionner les chefs de gangs et leurs appuis](#)

<sup>5</sup> CARDH, « L'ajustement des prix des produits pétroliers en Haïti enfonce le couteau dans la plaie ! Un accompagnement concret et durable pour les plus vulnérables est urgent », 22 September 2022, §§28.29.



in Haiti over the decision to adjust the price of petroleum products are "financed by economic actors who stand to lose money»<sup>6</sup>.

41. The draft resolution announced by the US and reaffirmed at the 26 September session should be adopted. Indeed, the US move is part of the push for international cooperation against crime in Haiti and its perpetrators (gang leaders/intellectual authors). In the run-up to the adoption of the resolution renewing BINUH's mandate, China had advocated for the sanctioning of criminal perpetrators. On 17 September, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres singled out "people linked to economic and political power" who, he said, were causing chaos in the country<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

### III. Conclusion

42. Haiti will see a reduction in kidnapping for the last quarter and overall for the year if the international cooperation efforts mentioned above are realised. Local actors must take advantage of the international momentum to address the fundamentals of the problem.
43. **Concrete reinforcement of the police<sup>8</sup>.** The police must be provided with the appropriate material and equipment: tanks, bulletproofed vehicles, equipped drones, weapons, ammunition, technology, individual equipment, etc. At the same time, units must be formed that are adapted to reality, vetting must be carried out, and police officers must be given a decent salary and a suitable working environment.
44. The US\$12 million order for police capacity building equipment placed with a Canadian company months ago is to be delivered as soon as possible.
45. An external accompanying force adapted to the current security needs should be carefully studied to re-establish order until the police can guarantee it effectively throughout the country. This force should be made up of specialists in urban guerrilla warfare with combat experience in situations similar to the Haitian reality.
46. **Continued international cooperation efforts.** It is not enough to denounce and sign memoranda indexing criminal actors, it is essential that decisions are taken against them. Efforts must be intensified. The United States and the Security Council have a role to play in this.
47. **Strengthen the justice system and control mechanisms.** Impunity is one of the causes of crime in Haiti. Justice must be strengthened so that the work of the police is effective. Often criminals arrested by the police are released by the judicial system. Control mechanisms also need to be strengthened in order to effectively combat smuggling.
48. **Economic sector, banks...** The healthy layer of the economic sector needs enlightened and progressive leadership. The focus should not be solely on profit, sometimes at any cost. This sector must also be interested in the public good, in wealth creation, in the well-being of the most vulnerable... Banks must also be involved in the fight against crime and the laundering of criminal assets.

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<sup>8</sup> It should be recalled that the Strategic Development Plan for the PNH, PSD/17-21, adopted for the period 2017-2021, envisaged making the police "a governmental public security institution of international standard" with a projected budget of US\$1,215,228.341 billion, divided as follows: 508,203,678.88 million for operations; 707,024,662.76 million for investments, divided between the Haitian state and donors by 23% (160,748,284.31 million) and 77% (546,276,378.45 million) respectively. For the first year of implementation, donors contributed 14.92% of the investment budget, i.e. 9,779,340.01 million US dollars out of 65,549,509.19 million; 4.24% for the second year, i.e. 6.269,785.51 million out of 147,824,697.89 million; 6.42% for the 3rd year, i.e. 8,520,48.34 million out of 132,751,741.02 million; 9.45% for the 4th year, i.e. 10,030,788.27 million out of 106,129,155.09 million.



49. **A civil society that is up to the task.** Today Haiti needs above all a civil society that is also committed to building the rule of law. The country's failure is shared between the government, civil society and international cooperation. It is easy to denounce the state, to accuse it... But what about the government (individuals), civil society as actors of democracy and the rule of law? A new enlightened leadership in civil society, in the broad sense, is needed.