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**STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR GERT ROSENTHAL
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GUATEMALA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE OF THE SITUATION IN HAITI**

(28 August, 2013)

Mr. President,

We are grateful to the Argentinean delegation for organizing this debate on a topic that is important for our region. We value your personal participation in this meeting, Mr. President. We also appreciate the presence of the new SRSG, Ambassador Sandra Honoré. We wish her much success in her endeavors, and have no doubt that she will continue the excellent performance of her predecessor. We also thank the Secretary-General for his Report, the basis of today's debate.¹ We would also like to extend a warm welcome to our new colleague, Ambassador Denis Regis of Haiti.

Mr. President,

In the current phase of the evolution of MINUSTAH, we find encouraging indicators, as well as risks that could destabilize the real but fragile progress made in Haiti. That is why, in order to maintain a positive trend, Haiti must continue occupying a privileged place in the international agenda, including that of this Council.

More specifically, I would like to refer, in the first place, to the carrying out of local, municipal and legislative elections. On January 28 of this year, the Security Council underscored the importance of holding elections – free, just, inclusive and reliable – before the end of the year. Meeting that commitment in a timely manner is of fundamental importance for the process of democratization and at the same time for the process of stabilization; both central elements in the mandate of MINUSTAH.

Although some steps have been taken towards holding the elections, these apparently are insufficient. There is an almost 18 month delay, and we still do not have a precise time-line on the horizon. This is extremely worrying, since it relates to fundamental aspects of the Haitian Constitutional system. Preserving the integrity of the electoral process is crucial for the legitimacy of the Government, the future stability of the country, and the development of Haitian society. For these reasons, we trust in the prompt approval of the electoral framework.

In the second place, we continue to believe that it is necessary to define a Governability Pact that fosters a propitious climate for a transparent, democratic and participatory management of public policy. Without an understanding among Haitians that puts in place a true national accord, it is difficult to imagine that the present political impasse can be overcome.

¹ S/2013/493.

Third, I would like to refer to the Haitian National Police, which tends to be the main yardstick against which MINUSTAH's performance is measured. To maintain the operational capacities of the HNP is certainly essential to develop the needed institutions required to consolidate the rule of law. However, professionalization of the police force by itself is not enough; strengthening of the judicial system is also required. We acknowledge that some promising steps have been taken in that regard.

Fourth, the next mandate renewal offers a unique occasion to carefully analyze the priorities and critical tasks of the Mission. We continue to examine the consolidation plan of MINUSTAH and reiterate that its evolution must be flexible and adapted to the realities on the ground. From the Report of the Secretary-General we glean that the Mission has ample work from now until the year 2016, including the task of meeting specific targets related to the capacity of the HNP and the preparation for Presidential elections. While the current consolidation plan remains in place and we lack certainty regarding the logistical requirements for the elections, we trust that any additional reduction in capacity of the forces assigned to the Mission is based on objective criteria, and that said reduction be applied in a gradual and progressive manner.

In the fifth place, the level of security personnel has remained relatively stable since 2004, now that the abrupt increase provoked after the earthquake has been annulled. This constitutes an explicit acknowledgment on the part of the Security Council that long-term stability can be attained only if individual rights are protected and collective threats to the more vulnerable populations are eliminated. Experience has shown us that the United Nations must maintain an adequate level of presence in the country, both through MINUSTAH as well as the Country Team. Thus, our withdrawal from the country must be responsible, to insure that when that moment arrives, the Mission will never have to return.

At the same time, it should be recalled that the crux of the problems of instability in Haiti do not respond only to military solutions; one must seek the root causes of instability and poverty, unemployment and social inequalities that exist.

Mr. President,

The socio-economic dimension cannot be overlooked. The Government of Haiti, both in the Executive and the Legislative branches, and the international community must demonstrate that they have the political will and the capacity to combat extreme poverty and to improve the socio-economic conditions that prevail in Haiti.

As we can observe, the architecture of international support has changed, and now reflects the transition from a crisis phase to that of fashioning the institutional mechanisms that allow for the assistance provided for development to be adapted to the national priorities of the country. In that respect, we decidedly support the coordination framework for external assistance under the guidance of the Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation. It is of special importance to our commitment to assist Haiti in the different phases of implementation of said framework to build capacity aimed at improving the absorption of the external assistance received. We are pleased at the recent designation of the new Special Deputy Representative of the Secretary General, who is at the same time the

Resident Coordinator and Coordinator of Humanitarian Affairs, who will have these important topics under his purview.

In the humanitarian context, it should be acknowledged that, after long delays, at present nearly 82% of the 1.5 million displaced persons after the earthquake have returned to their neighborhoods or been resettled. It is necessary to normalize the situation of the displaced persons by the catastrophe of three years ago. With the beginning of the hurricane season, it is of particular importance for us to pay attention to and support the Plan of Humanitarian Action for 2013; we note that only 28% of the goal set had been financed up to June of 2013. In the same vein we deem it important to highlight the initiative of the Secretary-General to finance the elimination of cholera from Haiti.

Mr. President,

We face, now and in the future, challenges to maintain peace and security in the country to guarantee the continuity of an irreversible stabilization process. Guatemala is honored to have formed part of MINUSTAH since its inception. We will continue to be committed with Haiti as well as the peacekeeping operation of the United Nations as long as is considered necessary. Hopefully, by acting jointly, we can return to Haiti the future that all Haitians deserve.

Thank you.