

President Danilo Medina
Presidential Office
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

Dear Mr President,

The (.....) is writing to express its firm condemnation of the serious attack on human rights in the Dominican Republic, affecting thousands of Haitian migrants and Dominicans of Haitian descent and their families.

In September 2013, the Dominican Constitutional Court (Ruling 168-13) established that the Dominican children of irregular migrants, born in the Dominican Republic between 1929 and 2010, had never been entitled to Dominican nationality and should be stripped of it.

Since then, the government has been conducting a regularisation procedure for migrants on Dominican territory and Dominicans of Haitian origin, governed by Naturalisation Law 169-14, adopted without any form of disclosure, which establishes obstacles and bureaucratic hurdles that are made all the more insurmountable by the increase in the cost of these procedures and the lack of public hospitals able to deliver birth certificates. As a result of these hurdles, the vast majority of those affected were not able to apply for civil registration before the 1st February 2015 deadline.

The authorities have already announced the deportation of over 22,000 people, to Haiti in the main.

On 3 February 2015, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and its Dominican affiliate CNUS were informed that a number of Haitian workers or their relatives had been stripped of proof of their residence or birth in the Dominican Republic whilst processing their application, exposing them to the risk of imminent and unfair deportation.

We have also been informed of the forced deportations in the Solares de Milton district of Barahona. It has, furthermore, been reported that military personnel are detaining immigrants and Dominicans of Haitian descent and forcing them at gunpoint into vehicles that then take them to the border with Haiti, where they are abandoned to their fate.

The Dominican government has shown a clear lack of political will to tackle this humanitarian crisis affecting thousands of Haitian immigrants and Dominicans of Haitian descent, who are currently faced with an uncertain future, being classed either as 'residents' or 'stateless', without legal citizenship, and deprived of access to education, healthcare and decent work, among other human rights.

Mr President,

We express our most firm condemnation of this serious attack on human rights in the Dominican Republic and urge your government to put an immediate end to the mass and arbitrary deportations and to establish a fair and transparent regularisation procedure.

Thank you for the attention given to this matter.

Yours sincerely,