



Press Release: Impact of Mass Deportations on the Banana Sector and the Dominican Economy.

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic - We have come together with various organisations and sectors of society to express our deep concern about the devastating effects that the massive deportations of Haitian workers are having on agricultural production and the economy of the Dominican Republic. Among the most affected is the banana sector, which is key to Dominican exports and the job security of thousands of people. We are joined in this call by the international NGO Banana Link, the Confederación Autónoma Sindical Clasista (CASC), the Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores del Sector Bananero y Plantaciones Agrícolas (SINTRAPBAA), the Fundación Étnica Integral (LA FEI) and the Asociación de Productores Bananeros de Exportación de Montecristi (ASEXBAM).

Crisis in the Banana Sector

The banana sector, which generates around 300 million dollars a year in exports, mostly to the European Union, is currently going through a serious crisis. According to Martin Peña, Executive Director of the Dominican Association of Banana Producers (Adobanano), the lack of Haitian labour is seriously affecting packing and shipping operations. This has generated great concern among international buyers, who depend on a steady, quality supply. It is estimated that more than 70,000 direct jobs are at risk, as Haitian workers are critical to agricultural activities. The mass detention of Haitian workers has created a climate of fear on the plantations, putting at risk not only the stability of the agricultural sector, but also the country's ability to meet its export commitments.

Impact on Other Sectors

The rice sector, another pillar of the agricultural economy, is also suffering the consequences of the lack of workers. According to Marcelo Reyes, president of the Dominican National Federation of Rice Producers (Fenarroz), labour costs have increased by 15% due to the lack of labour, which threatens the stability of production and may lead to an increase in local rice prices.

Respect for the Law and Human Rights

We respect and recognise the laws and decisions of the Dominican State in relation to migration management, however, we note that those most affected are migrants of Haitian nationality, who represent an essential workforce for national agriculture and livestock, this situation has a negative impact on the economy, national and international markets. Its impact on another pillar of the economy and development is highly worrying, and this situation has generated reactions calling for reflection and a search for solutions consistent with the national interest and the protection of the productive sectors.

Call to Action

We urgently call on the Dominican authorities to consider the following measures: 1. Resume the renewal of migration documents for those Haitian workers whose documents have expired, to avoid mass deportation. 2. Conduct a thorough review of the immigration status of detainees, ensuring that those who comply with the regulations are not deported. 3. Establish a more effective and streamlined regularisation programme, allowing Haitian workers to continue contributing to the Dominican economy without fear of deportation. These solutions will not only avoid the paralysis of key productive sectors, such as the banana, rice and construction industries, among others, but will also guarantee respect for human rights and the economic stability of the country.

Conclusion

We are at a critical juncture. The Dominican economy is heavily dependent on the work of Haitian migrants in the agricultural sector. We urge the authorities to act quickly and effectively to preserve employment, protect human rights and ensure the continuity of agricultural exports, which are fundamental to the country's economic stability.

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