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Susan Rice
Ambassador to the United Nations
799 UN Plaza
New York, NY 10017-3505

RE: Threats Against Human Rights Defender Evel Fanfan

Dear Susan Rice:

We are writing to express our alarm about the escalation of the threats and intimidation against attorney and human rights activist Evel Fanfan of Action des Unites Motivées pour une Haiti de Droits (AUMOHD). It is urgent that the Haitian government act quickly and decisively to stop these hostilities against Evel Fanfan, and other human rights defenders who are increasingly at risk in Haiti.

Attorney Fanfan is actively engaged in human rights work in Haiti on multiple levels. As a labor lawyer in Port-au-Prince, Mr. Fanfan's recent human rights work includes working to re-structure Haiti's anachronistic labor code; initiating a public outreach campaign to pressure the Haitian government and other employers to respect the minimum wage; helping to organize workers to advocate for better wages and conditions; and submitting a request to the Haitian government to pay workers proper wages and to provide them with their lawfully-entitled benefits. His most prominent role, both domestically and internationally, has been advocating for the victims of the Grand Ravine massacre, which was committed by the Haitian police and various armed gangs in August 2005. Most recently, Fanfan has been finalizing a petition before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights accusing the Haitian government of failing to protect the rights of its citizens and failing to hold the perpetrators of the massacre accountable.

Attorney Fanfan's life has been threatened since the beginning of his advocacy for the victims and residents of Grand Ravine following the massacre. His colleague, and good friend, Bruner Esterne was murdered in September 2006 as he was coming from a meeting with Fanfan regarding the massacre. Fanfan also began to receive phone calls threatening that he would "pay for" his campaign for accountability. These intimidating messages and phone calls not only

target him, but also his staff and family, including his three children. The anonymous callers state they know where his children go to school, as well as the identity of their driver and model of the car.

As a result of Attorney Fanfan's recent press conferences and interviews, conducted on October 11 and 18, 2012, regarding the Grand Ravine massacre and the forthcoming filing of the petition before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Fanfan was the target of an assassination attempt. Late on Tuesday, October 23, 2012, as he was leaving his office after returning from a meeting with workers, Fanfan was prevented from driving home by two large vehicles blocking the street in either direction. After blowing his horn to get them to move, he called the police. One car shifted its position and opened fire on Attorney Fanfan. Thankfully, he escaped unharmed, but the shooter called out that had there not been civilians on the street, he would have murdered him in his car and that he would be back at a more appropriate time to finish the job. Attorney Fanfan filed a police report. He had been strongly supported in his work by the head of the Haitian National Police, Mario Andersol, who was, however, recently removed from his position by Haitian President Martelly. This move has caused concern.

Haiti has long struggled with corruption, instability, and impunity. As a labor and human rights lawyer who represents the vulnerable and victimized, Attorney Fanfan plays a crucial role in pushing for justice and accountability in Haiti.

As lawyers concerned with human rights in Haiti, we:

1. Urge the Haitian government to respect national and international law. Specifically, the authorities must fully investigate the assassination attempt against Attorney Fanfan and subsequent threats against him, his family, and his staff; provide justice and reparations for the victims of the Grand Ravine massacre; and send an unmistakable message that threats and intimidation of lawyers and activists will not be tolerated.
2. Urge the U.S. government, which is the government of Haiti's largest financial and diplomatic supporter, to play an active role in ensuring that the Haitian government adequately protects Attorney Fanfan, his family, and his staff, prosecutes his attackers, and provides justice and reparations to the victims of the Grand Ravine massacre.
3. Urge the United Nations, particularly the U.N. Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), which provides substantial financial, diplomatic, and security support to the government of Haiti, to provide protection to the threatened Attorney Fanfan and his family and staff who, as human rights advocates, are a vulnerable group in Haiti and to help build the capacity of the Haitian government to respect the rights of human rights activists and lawyers.

The international legal community is paying close attention.

Very truly yours,

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