

## LATEST TRENDS

Gang violence remained rampant in the capital Port-au-Prince and beyond despite efforts by the Kenya-led multinational security mission, together with Haitian police, to counter the threat. The U.S. announced a partial freeze on funds to the mission, raising concerns about its future. Meanwhile, tensions within the Transitional Presidential Council persisted as discussions about holding elections in late 2025 heated up.

## WHAT TO WATCH IN THE COMING WEEKS AND MONTHS

### 1 Gangs could launch new offensives, tightening their grip on Haiti

Coordinated gang assaults could intensify in light of uncertain U.S. assistance. In particular, gangs could lay siege to the few parts of Port-au-Prince not already under their control, such as Pétion-Ville.

Gangs will also seek to consolidate control of essential roads across the country, including Route Nationale 1, Route Nationale 2 and Route Nationale 8.

More civilians could establish community brigades to resist these criminal groups.

**TO WATCH** Gang efforts to exploit political disarray; flashpoints for violence, which include Port-au-Prince, Artibonite department and communes of Kenscoff, Ganthier, Gressier, Arcahaie, Cabaret, Saut-d'Eau and Mirebalais.

### Potential Consequences

Gang attempts to besiege the remaining areas of Port-au-Prince not under their control could again paralyse the capital, as in early 2024, while territorial gains elsewhere would allow these groups to increase extortion and drug trafficking activities.

The proliferation of well-armed self-defence groups forming to counter gangs raises concerns of a descent into an even more violent civil war, which could worsen the humanitarian crisis and trigger another exodus of Haitians, including to the Dominican Republic and the U.S.

### 2 The cash-strapped security apparatus will struggle to address violence

The Haitian police will remain reliant on the Kenya-led mission to quell rising violence. But the mission, which currently numbers around 1,000, will struggle to reach its full capacity of 2,500 officers without more assistance from abroad, especially at a time when future U.S. support for the force is in doubt.

It remains unclear whether the U.S., which has urged other countries to increase funds for the mission, will endorse the UN Secretary-General's proposal to provide additional assistance through the creation of a UN logistics office or consider other options, such as establishing a blue-helmet operation.

**TO WATCH** UN Security Council debates about Haiti and the mission; international funding and other forms of support for Haiti, including from the U.S.

### Potential Consequences

Failure to combat the gangs' growing power could undermine what little hope civilians have left in the security forces, propelling more people to enlist in a self-defence group or flee their homes. It might also reduce foreign governments' willingness to support Haiti, especially if more international staff are killed or injured.

### 3 The transitional government could collapse or be overthrown

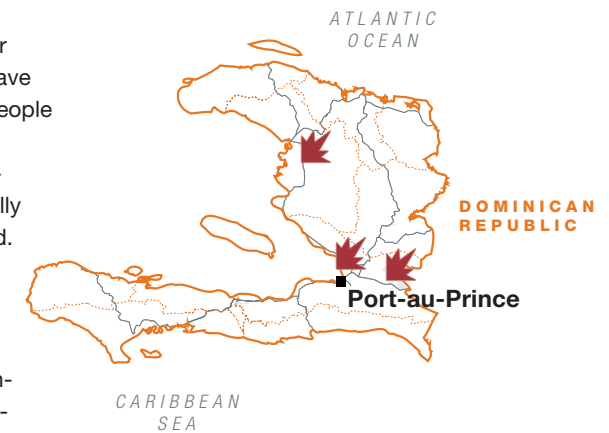
Tensions involving members of the presidential council and the political groups they represent, along with corruption allegations against three councillors, will continue to undermine the council's credibility and ability to operate.

Gangs may exploit the political turmoil to expand their footprint and/or attempt to overthrow the government.

The gang coalition Viv Ansanm could step up efforts to create a new political party, aggravating political tensions.

The transitional government appears determined to press ahead with a constitutional referendum, currently scheduled for July, and then elections in November, though the country is woefully unprepared for either vote.

**TO WATCH** Political moves on and around 3 April – which will mark one year since the signing of a political agreement that laid the foundation for the transitional government; gang violence targeting the government; constitutional referendum; preparations for general elections.



FLASHPOINT

### Potential Consequences

The council could collapse should partisan infighting persist, prolonging political dysfunction while impeding already delayed preparations for polls and efforts to restore security.

Conducting elections without the necessary conditions in place would make it easier for gangs to influence the vote, further entrenching their power and potentially triggering a post-electoral crisis.