Human Rights Experts Allege UN Violated Haitians'

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<http://www.sentinel.ht/politics/articles/judicial/6130-human-rights-experts-allege-un-violated-haitians>

Complaints filed by the [Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti and the Bureau des Avocats Internationaux](http://www.ijdh.org/) have led four United Nations human rights experts to file a formal [Allegation Letter](http://www.sentinel.ht/documents/09_25_14_UNHR.pdf) against the UN for violating Haitians' human rights in its response to the cholera epidemic.

This was the first time that experts have filed an Allegation Letter against the UN itself, it is usually reserved for governments. The experts wrote:

*...we express serious concern that, allegedly, the United Nations failed to take reasonable precautions and act with due diligence to prevent the introduction and the outbreak of cholera in Haiti since 2010. We further express serious concern that to this date, allegedly, individuals affected by the cholera outbreak have been denied access to legal remedies and have not received compensation. Finally, we express concern that to date efforts to combat cholera and to improve the water and sanitation facilities in Haiti have been inadequate. A more comprehensive response is needed to properly address the situation with particular emphasis on ensuring adequate funding of the envisaged measures.*

The office of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon responded a month later with a 33-page letter, six-times the length of the experts'.

It recalled that an "independent panel" convened by the UN had "concluded that the outbreak was caused by a confluence of circumstances and that it was not the fault of, or due to deliberate action by, a group or individual."

The Secretary General's letter then reviewed a series of relief efforts within Haiti and institutional changes that had been implemented since the outbreak, including increased medical standards for peacekeepers from cholera-affected nations.

The UN's response to the Allegation Letter, "shows that they don't have a real explanation for why they dismissed the claims," according to IJDH's Beatrice Lindstrom, quoted in [Business Insider](http://www.businessinsider.com/cholera-outbreak-in-haiti-and-the-un-2015-4). The letter from the independent human rights experts was the latest of many allegations that have come from a diversity of scientists, institutions, including the U.S. Center for Disease Control and even UN insiders.

The cholera outbreak in Haiti has worsened, reaching record numbers in 2015, compared to previous years. 11,000 cases were recorded for the first quarter, slightly over the previous record, more than three times the first quarter of 2014.

A significant cut in funding in October 2014 is blamed for the surge. In the same month, then Prime Minister, Laurent Lamothe, met with Ban Ki-moon and leaders from the World Bank and Inter American Development Bank, present a $301 million plan to eradicate the disease. The group at the meeting did not agree to fund it.