

**World Bank**

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**TOPICS:** The Economic Crisis in Sri Lanka,  
Building Financial Resilience in Haiti

**CHAIRS:** Margaux Stehle, Cas Dumitrescu

*LAIMUN XXVIII*

*December 3-4*

## The Economic Crisis in Sri Lanka; Recent Updates

On July 12 of this year, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa fled the country on a private jet with his wife to the Maldives. As his replacement, he appointed Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe to take over as acting President. Sri Lankan citizens, who were angered by the crash of the national debt under Rajapaksa, quickly raided Ranil's office in disapproval, seeing Ranil is a close friend of Rajapaksa. Ranil became the official President on July 21, following Rajapaksa's resignation from his house in the Indian Ocean. He quickly faced civilian protests opposing his cabinet, most of whom served for Rajapaksa as well.<sup>1</sup>

Ranil has remained the president of Sri Lanka and has stabilized a large portion of the political unrest; however, the economic crisis has not dwindled. To combat the problem internally, Ranil requested that native stakeholders and creditors pump their financial resources back into the economy to balance the displacement of wealth between social classes.<sup>2</sup> Foreign aid has also been a critical factor in mitigating the ongoing crisis. On the 28th of September, the European Union announced that it would contribute \$1.5 million of humanitarian aid to the Sri Lankan crisis. The EU set aside this money to help with the lack of basic infrastructure and food, healthcare, and education.<sup>3</sup> Sri Lanka has also received a \$3.5 million grant from Japan, split into

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<sup>1</sup> Kugelman, Michael. "Sri Lanka's Economic Crisis Could Lead to More Protests." *Foreign Policy*, THE SLATE GROUP, 6 October 2022, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/10/06/sri-lanka-economic-crisis-protests-imf/>. Accessed 17 November 2022.

<sup>2</sup> "Sri Lanka : President Wickremesinghe calls on creditors, stakeholders to support Sri Lanka's debt sustainability." *ColomboPage*, 30 September 2022, [http://www.colombopage.com/archive\\_22B/Sep30\\_1664504475CH.php](http://www.colombopage.com/archive_22B/Sep30_1664504475CH.php). Accessed 17 November 2022.

<sup>3</sup> "Sri Lanka: EU releases €1.5 million to respond to the growing humanitarian needs - Sri Lanka." *ReliefWeb*, 28 September 2022, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sri-lanka/sri-lanka-eu-releases-eu15-million-respond-growing-humanitarian-needs>. Accessed 17 November 2022.

donations through the World Food Programme, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the United Nations Children’s Fund. As of today, Japan has sent over \$6.5 million of humanitarian aid to Sri Lanka.<sup>4</sup> Bangladesh has also recently extended its emergency currency swap of \$200 million an extra year to boost Sri Lanka’s economy.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> “Japan provides emergency grant aid of US\$ 3.5 mn for Sri Lanka.” *Daily News*, 1 October 2022, <https://www.dailynews.lk/2022/10/01/local/288299/japan-provides-emergency-grant-aid-us-35-mn-sri-lanka>. Accessed 17 November 2022.

<sup>5</sup> “Bangladesh extends currency swap option to boost Lankas depleting reservess.” *Business Standard*, 9 May 2022, [https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/bangladesh-extends-currency-swap-option-to-boost-lanka-s-depleting-reserves-122050900458\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/bangladesh-extends-currency-swap-option-to-boost-lanka-s-depleting-reserves-122050900458_1.html). Accessed 17 November 2022.

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[http://www.colombopage.com/archive\\_22B/Sep30\\_1664504475CH.php](http://www.colombopage.com/archive_22B/Sep30_1664504475CH.php). Accessed 17 November 2022.

## **Building Financial Resilience in Haiti; Recent Updates**

The United States and Haiti have continued working hand in hand to combat the everlasting economic crisis within Haiti. So far, the United States alone has contributed well over \$5 billion to the central government and through partnerships with U.N. organizations to safely distribute supplies without helping to enable the constant gang violence. On November 14, 2022, a U.S. embassy convoy fell victim to this gang violence and was attacked with gunfire. There were no casualties in the altercation.<sup>6</sup>

Fortunately for Haitians, vigilante forces partnered with local police and shut down the oil blockade to its only fuel terminal. The blockade had been carried out by members of a powerful gang known as G9 for just over two months, denying access to hospitals and local businesses during a cholera outbreak.<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately for Haitians, however, many health officials, such as Dr. Jeanty Fils, a member of Haiti's Ministry of Health, believe that increased travel permitted by their access to fuel will only exacerbate the cholera crisis. Nearly 8,000 Haitians have already been hospitalized due to this disease, and hospital supplies have been depleted. Haiti is requesting another \$146 million to help combat the spread of Cholera.<sup>8</sup>

Haitians fleeing the country have also only been met with more problems. Given that the state only shares a border with the Dominican Republic, the location has been a primary target

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<sup>6</sup> Atwood, Kylie. "US embassy convoy attacked in Haiti." *CNN*, 14 November 2022, <https://www.cnn.com/2022/11/14/politics/us-haiti-convoy-attack/index.html>. Accessed 17 November 2022.

<sup>7</sup> Isaac, Harold, et al. "Haiti police end gang blockade of fuel terminal, sources say." *Reuters*, 4 November 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/haiti-police-confront-gangs-near-blocked-fuel-terminal-sources-say-2022-11-03/>. Accessed 17 November 2022.

<sup>8</sup> SANON, EVENS. "Haiti fears spike in cholera cases as fuel blockade lifts." *ABC News*, 15 November 2022, <https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/haiti-fears-spike-cholera-cases-fuel-blockade-lifts-93332654>. Accessed 17 November 2022

for refugees and illegal immigrants. The Dominican Republic has turned away many of these migrants and has increased deportations drastically, removing around 60,000 Haitians in the span of just two months.<sup>9</sup> Dominica has been faced with requests by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to allow these migrants to settle without facing prosecution, yet has ignored them completely.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Miller, Yawu. “Dominican government deporting Haitians.” *The Bay State Banner*, 16 November 2022, <https://www.baystatebanner.com/2022/11/16/dominican-govt-deports-haitians/>. Accessed 17 November 2022.

<sup>10</sup> “Comment by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk on deportation of Haitians from Dominican Republic.” *OHCHR*, 10 November 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/11/comment-un-high-commissioner-human-rights-volker-turk-deportation-haitians>. Accessed 17 November 2022.

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