

January 27, 2023

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken  
Secretary of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

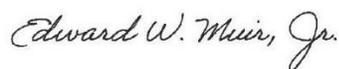
The American Historical Association expresses grave concern for Professor Pierre Buteau, president of the Société Haïtienne d'Histoire, de Géographie et de Géologie. A member of the faculty of the Université d'État d'Haïti for more than 20 years, and one of Haiti's leading historians, Professor Buteau was kidnapped from his home in Thomassin, on the eastern outskirts of Port-au-Prince, early on the morning of January 24, 2023. According to news reports, the kidnappers assaulted members of his family in the course of the abduction and have demanded a ransom for Professor Buteau's return.

The American Historical Association is the largest organization of professional historians in the world, with approximately 11,500 members spanning the globe. Together with our counterpart organizations in France, Canada, the Caribbean, and elsewhere around the world, we include historians who regard Professor Buteau as a renowned scholar, a valued interlocutor and colleague, and an essential spokesperson for the Haitian historical community.

We recognize that the crisis of domestic insecurity in Haiti goes well beyond the fate of a single individual, and that the United States is currently involved in a complicated discussion with its Core Group partners over how best to assist the Haitian people in ameliorating this crisis. Understanding Haiti's history is an essential element of any viable long-term response to this crisis, and Professor Buteau has devoted his professional life to bringing such understanding to bear on the challenge of re-founding a democratic state in his native land.

On behalf of the American historical community, we appeal to you to use your good offices at this difficult time in Haiti's history to do whatever is possible to help secure the safe release of Professor Buteau. We appreciate your attention to this important matter and look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



Edward Muir  
President



James Grossman  
Executive Director