

AFL CIO 1990

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HAITI

The AFL-CIO urges the termination of Haiti's eligibility for trade benefits under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) because it does not respect, observe or enforce internationally recognized worker rights.

The absence of worker rights in Haiti continues to be a serious problem for the workers and remains an obstacle to obtaining true democracy in that country. As we enter the third year of an investigation into worker rights in Haiti, the situation has deteriorated.

Regarding the April 1990 report of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) Subcommittee, the AFL-CIO agrees with the Subcommittee that there is a delicate and complicated political situation in Haiti. But this does not justify further postponement of a decision to deny trading privileges. The Haitian people have been subjected to a series of undemocratic governments which have routinely disregarded worker rights. During this difficult transition period it is most important to support the Haitian people in their search for true democracy. However, the AFL-CIO does not believe that that support must come at the expense of worker rights. The delicacy of the political situation is not a justification for ignoring the serious worker rights abuses in Haiti.

The ineffective court system, the failure of the Tripartite Commission, due in part to the lack of support from the government, and the feeling that employers are unaffected by the law contribute to the lack of worker rights in Haiti. Therefore, the AFL-CIO urges the USTR to deny GSP trade benefits to Haiti.