

The OAS immediately took action. Economic, military and diplomatic sanctions were recommended. The OAS agreed to send a committee of Foreign Ministers to Haiti to express the OAS' rejection of the action of the military.

Over the period of four days, our committee travelled to Port au Prince three times and met with all sectors of Haitian society for more than 23 hours.

Canada was an active participant in this mission because we are absolutely convinced that this military coup is a grave threat not only to democracy, human rights and economic growth in Haiti, but also to the strength and preservation of democracy in our hemisphere. We, in this hemisphere, must not permit the military to have a veto over the democratic will of the people. All members of the OAS clearly feel the same way and have dedicated unprecedented time, effort and resources to resolving this situation.

The situation in Haiti is difficult and could deteriorate rapidly. Many Haitians have died as a result of this coup. The possibility of many more dying will be greatly enhanced if nations fail to act.

What happened in Haiti last week has deep roots in Haitian history, which is one of poverty, dictatorship and systematic abuses of human rights. The inauguration of President Aristide last February raised high expectations that decisive steps would be taken by the President to strengthen the rule of law, protect human rights and to respect the separation of powers as provided for under the constitution. These expectations were not realized. Rather, the continuation and even encouragement of mob rule provoked the coup.

But a coup is an illegal act, one that pulls democracy up by its roots. We cannot accept that military intervention is the means to an end and that the people's will is overturned by the interests of the few.

Mr. Chairman, when a coup has overturned a democracy, member nations of this Assembly must act to protect principles wherever they are threatened. I urge all countries to join with the OAS to try to restore constitutional stability in the region.

On Tuesday, OAS Foreign Ministers met again to consider the report of our ministerial mission and to consider what further actions should be taken. We recommitted ourselves to implement the actions put forth in our earlier resolution. We condemned the use of violence and military coercion used to illegally replace the constitutional President of Haiti. All OAS members will refuse to recognize any government set up under these