

Amid judicial crisis, war of words erupts in Haiti

By [JACQUELINE CHARLES](#)

The Miami Herald

Published: Saturday, Sep. 29, 2012 - 1:00 am

MIAMI-While Haiti President Michel Martelly and Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe made the rounds in [New York](#) this week, a judicial crisis erupted at home with the firing of a chief prosecutor, the swearing-in of another and an alleged resignation in less than 24 hours.

Former Chief Prosecutor for Port-au-Prince Jean Renel Senatus said Haiti's Justice Minister Jean Renel Sanon fired him Thursday because he refused to execute an order to arrest 36 government opponents.

Senatus also said that Josue Pierre-Louis, a presidential legal adviser and head of the six-member electoral council, asked him to serve warrants against two attorneys - Newton St. Juste and Andre Michel - who have brought corruption complaints against the presidential family and members of Haiti's government.

"I told him, 'No, I don't have a case against them in my hand,'" Senatus said. "It's not democratic. It's not democracy."

Senatus said he had previously refused to execute several "illegal" arrest orders, including one against prominent human rights lawyer Mario Joseph.

Asked if the president had issued the orders, Senatus said in a telephone interview from Port-au-Prince that Sanon was responsible but added that Sanon "told me you would make the president happy."

Senatus spent Friday calling in to Haitian [radio stations](#) and blasting Sanon for the "attacks" against him by the justice minister.

In the job for nine months, Senatus was the sixth and longest serving Port-au-Prince chief prosecutor in Martelly's 18-month presidency. He had earned the nickname "Zokiki," which refers to juvenile delinquency, because of his campaign against underage prostitution and clubbing and men who have sex with underage girls.

Sanon could not be reached for comment. But on Haitian radio he called Senatus a liar and said that he was fired because of insubordination and his failure to produce results.

Several Haitian government spokesmen did not respond to requests for comment on this week's events.

Senatus said he was informed of his firing by local journalists and found that his replacement had already been named. The replacement, Elco St. Amand, was sworn in late Thursday

But by Friday, St. Amand too was holding a press conference declaring that he was still in the job despite assertions that he had resigned. St. Amand also defended himself against Internet allegations of [drug trafficking](#) saying, "If I were a trafficker, why didn't the United States revoke my visa?"

However, a former government official, who declined to be identified, told The [Miami Herald](#) St. Amand was fired in 2001 by Haiti's justice minister after he was implicated in a [drug trafficking](#) scandal.

The firing, said the source, came after much consultation.

Late Friday, [text messages](#) were circulating, indicating that yet another new chief prosecutor had been named. The Miami Herald was unable to confirm this.

Sorting out the judicial quagmire is just one of the problems awaiting Martelly and Lamothe when they return from the [United Nations General Assembly](#).

On Friday, thousands of government supporters took to the streets in the city of Gonaives in the Artibonite region in support of Martelly. That followed a day in which thousands of Haitians protested against Martelly in Cap-Haitien.

On Sunday, members of former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's Fanmi Lavalas political party are expected to take to the streets with others to protest against [government corruption](#) and rising prices. A general strike also has been called in Cap-Haitien on Monday.

Read more here: <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/09/29/4864671/amid-judicial-crisis-war-of-words.html#storylink=cpy>

JUDICIAL

Senatus says He Was Asked to Make Illegal Arrests

FRIDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 2012 20:47

WRITTEN BY DH STAFF



By A [Website Design](#)

Jean Renel Senatus [file]

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (defend.ht) - "The president will be happy," Jean Renel Senatus was told this by the Minister of Justice, Jean Renel Sanon, when he was given a list of 36 names of people to arrest, on the same day three journalists from Le Nouvelliste were arrested.

Former Government Commissioner Jean Renel Senatus who was removed from his post on Thursday initially did not want to speak to the press about the circumstances of his dismissal but since the Minister of Justice, Jean Renel Sanon, was going on the radio and saying that he revoked Senatus for insubordination and corruption, he decided to be forthcoming with the press and answer any questions regarding the matter.

Audio

09.28.2012: Minister Jean Renel Senatus interviewed by Fritzner Michel for Radio Kiskeya

09.28.2012: Minister Jean Renel Sanon interviewed by Mildred Laguerre, Anchorwoman Lilliane Pierre Paul for Radio Kiskeya



"The minister was in the press and he said, firstly, he revoked the government commissioner for insubordination and secondly for corruption."

"For the insubordination I will say that I don't take orders from him. I will respond to this rapidly to say I came to the head of prosecutions in Port-au-Prince under Minister Brunache (Oct 2011 - May 2012). Minister Brunache never gave me orders and I never collaborated with him."

"When Mr. Jean Renel Sanon arrived, I awaited his policy agenda, which he hasn't given to me even to this day. Mr. Sanon, is only doing advocacy-type things at the head of the ministry, and me, since I began my fight against juvenile delinquency and child exploitation, I continued to do my work."

Senatus says that during the time Sanon was Minister of Justice he was asked to go to the law offices of Mario Joseph and arrest him. Mario Joseph who works for the Institute for Justice and Democracy and is representing over 5,000 victims of cholera against the United Nations.

The former government commissioner says the last straw was when he was handed a list of 36 names of people to arrest.

Among those names were also lawyers, Newton Saint Juste and Andre Michel who have filed criminal grievances against First Lady Sophia Martelly and son Olivier Martelly for corruption.

"After the arrest of the three journalists from Le Nouvelliste, he called me to his office and handed me a list of 36 people to put warrants for arrest on them."

"I asked the minister why? He said it is for plotting against the state and criminal association."

"I told the minister, at this moment do you think it is good to do this because we can't be in the government and taking hits. If we do this, it will give people a place to hurt us."

"And this is where the minister told me 'do it, do it, do it, there president will be happy'"

"He said, 'the president will be happy.'"

Jean Renel Senatus said he did not execute the warrants because they were illegal.
