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Haiti: Opposition Party Coalition Says President's Pledge To Hold Elections Credible

by John Neagle

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On Feb. 2, the National Alliance for Democracy and Progress a coalition of political parties said in a statement published by daily newspaper Le Matin that it was satisfied with Gen. Prosper Avril's pledge to hold elections this year as promised and would participate in them. The Alliance also expressed its "satisfaction" with the government's decision to lift the state of siege. Avril acknowledged brutality by police in the crackdown and said seven exiled leaders could return. Marc Bazin, a conservative former presidential candidate, leads the National Alliance for Democracy and Progress. Several members of his party, the Movement To Establish Democracy, said they were beaten in police custody during the state of siege Jan. 20-29. Witnesses said deputy leader Serge Gilles, a socialist, and several supporters were severely beaten by plainclothes police after being arrested at his home Jan. 20. Gilles said he suffered a burst eardrum and dislocated vertebra in a second beating at the National Palace. (Basic data from AP, 02/02/90)

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