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Haiti's Transitional Council Appoints Former Sports Minister as Interim Prime Minister

With a new leader at the helm, Haiti's transitional council aims to stabilize the country and prepare for democratic elections

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Fritz Bélizaire

Fritz Bélizaire is the man to lead Haiti to new elections and a return to democratic rule, after he was appointed on Tuesday as Prime Minister by the country's transitional council.

Mr. Bélizaire will replace Michel Patrick Boisvert, who had been acting on behalf of former Prime Minister Ariel Henry during international travels. Upon finding himself unable to return to the country and realizing that he had been forced almost into a de facto exile, Mr. Henry agreed to resign his position, leaving Mr. Boisvert as the country's nominal head while a transitional

council was assembled to determine a path forward.

Four members supported Mr. Bélizaire as the council's choice of interim prime minister, while the remaining three reportedly cited a lack of familiarity with the man and his work. Mr. Bélizaire headed the Ministry of Sports during President René Préval's second term in office, from 2006 to 2011. Haitian politics analyst at the University of Virginia Robert Fatton told the Associated Press that the new interim prime minister was an "unknown figure" in the country. Dr. Fatton speculated that Mr. Bélizaire's relative obscurity could be a positive. "Maybe that made him the likely prime minister so different parties can accept him as prime minister," he said.

However, president of the transitional council Edgard Leblanc Fils said that the right decision was made. "This is a very good choice for prime minister," Mr. Fils declared during his remarks on Tuesday. "The important thing for us is this will, this determination to go beyond divisions, to overcome conflicts and to reach a consensus."

The council hopes to be able to stabilize the country enough to finally hold elections before February 2026, when the group is mandated to dissolve.