

Monique Clesca

Monique Clesca is currently an international consultant after a career of more than 25 years specializing in high-level policy dialogue, human rights, youth and women programming, development, and crisis communication and writing. A feminist pro-democracy, pro-social justice activist, she is also a member of the civil society *Commission to find a Haitian solution to the crisis* and of *Haiti Think Tank* and a member of the Montana Agreement Monitoring Bureau.

Clesca was appointed Representative of the United Nations Population Fund in Niger in 2012, after serving as its Regional Adviser for Africa in New York and Regional Advocacy and Communication Adviser for 22 Southern African countries. In Niger, she initiated and spearheaded a country-wide movement for the elimination of child marriage, a traditional practice entrenched in centuries-old ideas of protecting women, and “Illimin,” an adolescent girl empowerment initiative now adopted as a model for West African countries. She led her team to winning a WEBBY award for the series on Niger girls empowered against child marriage as well as to record resource mobilization for the implementation of the cooperation program. The President of Niger awarded her the country’s highest honor in the Niger Order of Merit, that of Commander in 2016. She has been a trusted adviser of Traditional Chiefs in Niger and Health and Population Ministers in various African countries, and leveraged well-known artists and top influencers for girls’ and women’s rights.

Clesca was a founding member of MC Conseils, a communication and special event firm that provided services to government, civil society and international organizations in Haiti between 1996 and 2003. Previously, she served as Advocacy and Communication Officer for UNICEF Haiti from 1983 to 1996 and spearheaded the campaign on the Convention on the Rights of Children and a national network of media and journalists in favor of children.

She has been a speaker at the Yale Law School Human Rights Clinic, the Canada Parliament and a guest on Democracy Now, CNN, MSNBC, NBC News, NPR, Black News.

Clesca’s writing has appeared in major national and international newspapers and magazines, including *Foreign Affairs*, *Americas Quarterly*, the *New York Times*, the *Miami Herald*, *Huffington Post*, *Le Nouvelliste*, and *Ayibopost*. She has authored two books: a novel *La Confession* and a compilation of essays entitled *Mosaïques* and is currently writing her memoir *Celebrating My Mysteries* of her childhood under the Duvalier dictatorship. She was profiled by the French newspaper, *L’Humanité*, in 2015 and *Le Nouvelliste* in 2015 and 2016. She received a Bachelor’s Degree in Philosophy from Howard University and a Master’s Degree in Journalism from the Medill School of Journalism of Northwestern University.