



GLOBAL AFRIKAN CONGRESS – NORTH AMERICAN REGION
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26th October 2020

H.E. President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi
President of Egypt and Chairperson of the African Union
c/o H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat
African Union Commission
Bureau of the Chairperson
African Union Headquarters
P O Box 3243, Roosevelt Street W21K19
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Email: chairperson@africa-union.org

Your Excellency,

OPEN LETTER REGARDING UNREST IN NIGERIA

The Global Afrikan Congress (GAC) and its allies wish to put on record that we unflinchingly support the right of Nigerians to protest as it is their democratic right to so do. We express our deep concerns about the ongoing crisis that has led to multiple deaths and arrests of hundreds of Nigerians who are simply exercising their constitutional right to protest. We believe, that activist citizens have the inherent right to demand accountability from all organs of State as they fund the Government their taxes. The funding of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) that has reportedly abused the human rights of hundreds of Nigerian citizens with impunity is not one of the purposes for which Nigerians pay their taxes. For that reason, the SARS should be abolished.

As Pan-Afrikanists on the Continent and the Diaspora, we are appalled at what is happening to our brothers and sisters in Nigeria in the name of public security. Generations of Nigerians have fought and died during the anti-Colonial struggle for the right to freedom of conscience, association, movement and holding government accountable. These rights are now enshrined in the constitution and yet, they are being attacked on the streets of Nigeria. GAC and its allies, therefore, demand that the army be taken off the streets and sent to their barracks immediately. Nigeria is not at war so the army should not be deployed. Further, we demand, that no live ammunition should be used in Lekki or elsewhere in Nigeria. We believe that professional police should be the only ones in charge of maintaining law and order in Nigeria and only with non-lethal weapons. We are appalled at the loss of life and demand that the Nigerian Authorities direct the police to protect citizens and their right to protest free from intimidation, harassment and arrest.

We note with grave concern that this is not the first time that there have been calls to #EndSARS. We understand that SARS was banned in 2017, 2018, 2019, and yet, it continues to terrorise the population. Further we note, that on 11th October 2020, the Inspector General of Police ordered that SARS should be disbanded and its staff redeployed to other police units with immediate effect. Despite this, SARS continued to operate. In any case, we are uneasy about not holding an investigation into the reported extrajudicial killing of unarmed

peaceful protesters by SARS personnel. We firmly believe that all those responsible for unlawful action against Nigerians must face justice as promptly as possible.

We in GAC and our allies, unapologetically expressed our solidarity with our Nigerian brothers and sisters who are confronting the bullets and clubs of SARS on the streets of their country. Therefore, we demand the release of all protesters who are being held in custody, whether they were arrested by the army, police or other bodies.

GAC and allies demand:

- Justice for the victims of State Violence. We believe that there should be a full investigation into the reign of terror which led to the massive protests in Nigeria.
- Compensation for the victims and their families which reflects the impact of the disruption on their lives. The grief, medical costs and loss of income that this state violence has imposed on them must not be underestimated.

We are also seeking reassurance that no funding from Western Aid Agencies (whether the UK's Development Budget or the US State Department's Aid Budget or Canada's aid budget or other country's budget) is being used to facilitate human rights abuses.

We take this opportunity to commend the AU for the resolute stance it took with regards to the US government, holding it accountable for the racist police violence against Afrikan people particularly in light of the daylight police murder of George Floyd. Clearly, the AU took a principled stance that Black Lives Matter. Afrikan Lives Matter. Nigerian Lives Matter. We therefore respectfully call on the AU to display the same admirable principle in defence of Black lives in Nigeria in the wake of the state police violence against defenceless Nigerian protesters.

We, the GAC and our allies, firmly believe that as Africans at home and abroad our lives must matter whether we are being killed and maimed by racist states in Europe and North America or by African states as in the current police violence against Nigerian lives in Nigeria.

We feel compelled to take this stance as Africans and hence our determined and urgent call for the AU to play a diplomatic role in the crisis in Nigeria which itself is a manifestation of our commitment to repair ourselves as Africans by not only holding ourselves accountable but also for ending the colonial state of mind which devalues our lives as Africans.

We in the GAC and our allies, are mindful of the horrors of the Rwanda genocide, which played out from 7th to 15th July 1994, unleashing its horror on civilians while the world stood by and did virtually nothing to protect unarmed civilians. The GAC and allies strongly reject foreign intervention as we believe Nigerians and Africans are more than capable of resolving their internal conflicts. We believe that Nigeria's sovereignty should be respected even in the midst of a crisis.

In light of the foregoing, we in the GAC, urge cooler heads to prevail. The wise counsel of Eminent Persons from the Global Afrikan Family which includes the African Union, CARICOM and ECOWAS should be sent immediately to Nigeria to begin the reconciliation process.

Yours sincerely,

Original signed by:

Cikiah Thomas
Co-Chair, Global Afrikan Congress

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RAS Wolde Selassie, aka A.R. King,
Resident Country Representative

Organisation

GAC Barbados
GAC Belgium
GAC Canada
GAC Ghana
Global Afrikan Congress - Guyana Chapter

GAC Jamaica
GAC Namibia
GAC Tanzania
GAC USA
GAC Youth International and
Africans For
Africa Solidarity Centre Ireland
African Voices Forum (AVF) Ltd, Bristol
An Umbrella For Sixteen (16) Local Associations.
Air du Sud asbl
Black Action Defense Committee Inc. (BADC)

Black Inmates and Friends Association, Canada
Black Ontario Public Service Employees Network
Toronto, Canada

Caribbean Movement for Peace and integration,
Barbados
Dagarti CIC

ENPAD – European Network of People of African
Descent `(27 member organisations)

IDPAD Coalition UK

Instituto Búzios, Brazil

Jamaican Peace Council (JPC)

Keep6ix non-profit organization

NEEDS TRUST

Nyahbinghi National Council Uk

Organization for the Victory of the People(Guyana),

PAD Business Network Foundation

Pan African Council

Pan-African Movement - Guyana.

Salifu Dagarti Foundation

Save the Woman

TAOBQ

The A-Connexion's Global Village

The African SANG, UK

The Ethiopian World Federation Inc.

Addis Ababa

CC:

The Honourable Ralph E. Gonsalves Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Chairperson of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

HE Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of Ghana and Chairperson of ECOWAS