

PRESS RELEASE

October 7, 2022

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN BURKINA FASO: A CALL FOR PEACE AND UNITY THROUGH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The West Africa Democracy Solidarity Network (WADEMOS) deeply regrets that Burkina Faso has suffered yet another coup d'état, since the beginning of this year 2022. As a network of civil society organizations committed to the peaceful, stable, and democratic development of our West African region, we are concerned that coups and counter-coups in Burkina Faso at this time will only serve to disrupt and derail the patient efforts already made by the Burkinabe people since the coup of January 2022 to reach a settlement of the security crisis caused by armed terrorist groups and an orderly restoration of democratic and constitutional government in the country. We are especially concerned, considering the sharp escalation recently in deadly extremist and terrorist attacks against the population, that a cycle of coups and counter-coups will weaken and undermine the cohesion and singleness of purpose that both the Burkinabe military and the society at large need to confront the very grave and continuing threats to the security and sovereignty of the country and its people.

We nonetheless note with satisfaction that the action of September 30, 2022, which resulted eventually in the removal of Lt. Col. Damiba as Head of State, did not degenerate into fratricidal combats or violent reprisals within the Burkinabe military or society. We commend the religious and customary leaders of Burkina Faso for their swift and patriotic intervention in brokering a peaceful and successful resolution to the crisis, thereby paving the way for a smooth regime transition and averting a potentially protracted and destabilizing conflict.

We similarly commend the incoming junta led by Capt. Ibrahim Traore for acting quickly to restore order and calm and for agreeing to the terms of the settlement for the exit of Col. Damiba, including guaranteeing the safety and non-prosecution of the leaders of the former junta and their collaborators, committing to pursue national reconciliation and to engage in broad consultations, and agreeing to honour existing commitments and plans, for an orderly return to democratic and constitutional rule by July 2024. We trust that the terms of the Seven Point agreement will be implemented in good faith in the interest of the people of Burkina Faso. We further urge the

Government of Capt. Traore to work collaboratively and constructively with the diverse segments of Burkinabe civil society, media, and the political class, as well as with regional partners, so as to build and sustain the mutual trust, united front, and regional solidarity the country desperately needs at this time to address the difficult challenges it confronts.

We are confident that the good people of Burkina Faso have the courage and determination to overcome their present challenges. On our part, we, as a network of civil society organizations working in solidarity with one another to promote peaceful democratic development across West Africa, remain steadfast in our commitment to support and assist the processes of political transition in Burkina Faso.

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About WADEMOS

WADEMOS is a transnational network of independent, non-partisan civil society organizations (CSOs) in West Africa. With a current membership of over 30 CSOs located in 15 countries in West Africa, WADEMOS mobilizes, coordinates, and leverages the collective power of its members and other pro-democracy actors, resources, and opportunities within the West African Region to advance, defend, and reinvigorate democracy and promote democratic development in the sub-region.

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