



Ebenezer Asiedu, Head, Democracy and Good Governance, ECOWAS

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, The holding of this Dialogue is timely because it is taking place at a time when the principal objective of entrenching democracy and sustainable peace and stability in West Africa, through the Community legal frameworks (particularly the 2001 Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance), is being put to a stern test. There is no gainsaying that the resurgence of coup d'états in West Africa has put the region in an uncomfortable spotlight as the region, at a time when many believed and hoped that coup d'états had become a thing of our unwanted past in West Africa.

The ECOWAS Community had prided itself, in the recent past, as a beacon and shining example of constitutional democracy for the rest of the African continent. However, the resurgence of coup d'états over the last three years and the concerns around the management of democratic transitions in Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso (and now Niger) are threatening to exacerbate the already fragile security situation in the Region, and in particular at a time that the region has been experiencing unprecedented youth bulge with its attendant high unemployment rates, rise in radicalization, terrorism, and transnational organized crimes.

While ECOWAS is committed to accompany the affected Member States towards return to constitutional order, the successes gained so far can be further consolidated by leveraging strategically the agency of the civil society.

As part of ECOWAS' search for sustainable solutions to the myriad of democratic reversals that is confronting Member States, the ECOWAS Commission with the support of the Authority of Heads of State and Government is poised to revisit the finalization of the draft revised Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. To this end, we expect this meeting not to only foster critical reflections and the sharing of ideas around efforts to address the ugly trend of democracy decline in West Africa, but also, to ignite a standby platform and advocacy which will accompany the process of obtaining approval of ECOWAS Member States for the adoption of the revised Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. By this, we would very much appreciate the CSOs within the democracy and governance space to do a lot of advocacy in member states on the urgent need for the adoption of the revised Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance in dealing with some of the structural causes and challenges that have occasioned the recent trend and plunged the region into its current slide in democratic consolidation.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, it is pertinent to indicate that the ECOWAS Commission's new management, through its 4X4 Strategic Objectives, is reflecting on redefining the integration of CSOs engagement into its efforts aimed at advancing democracy, good governance, promotion of human rights, adherence to the rule of law, and sustainable development as part of its efforts towards accelerating the realization of the ECOWAS Vision 2050.

ECOWAS' renewed interest in partnering with CSO is hinged on the need to reposition West African CSO platform into a more coordinated network capable of galvanizing, amplifying and harmonizing forces to addressing the prevailing democratic reversals and threats to peace, stability and security in the region. This effort will not only reflect prevailing standards at the continental and global levels, but also, will be guided through an enhanced framework for West African CSOs to play a more active role in contributing to the realization of the ECOWAS Vision 2050.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, in anticipation of some discussions that will emanate in the course of this Dialogue, there is the need for a clear and more coherent understanding of the contemporary situation of political transitions in the affected Member States. We expect and hope to get perspectives and concrete recommendations from the presentation of the political transition reports as way forward to ameliorate and consolidate existing gains and efforts ECOWAS has made in supporting democratic transition in the affected Member States.



Ebenezer Asiedu, Head, Democracy and Good Governance, ECOWAS

Your deliberations around other salient areas such as tackling tenure extensions, drivers of democratic decline, civil liberty and freedoms, and regional peace and security in the Sahel are very important as they will go along away to providing useful insights which will guide ECOWAS in its effort to address the conundrum of democratic decline in West Africa.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, finally, I would like to seize this opportunity, once more, to congratulate Professor H. Kwasi Prempeh and the entire leadership and management of WADEMOS for organizing this auspicious Dialogue. I trust that the deliberations between today and tomorrow will yield recommendations to complement ongoing efforts aimed at supporting timely return to constitutional order in the affected Member States and deter further collapse of constitutional democracy in West Africa.

I wish you all fruitful deliberations.

Thank you for your kind attention.



WADEMOS Network Engages Liberia's Electoral Commission, Political Parties, CSOs and Other Stakeholders Ahead of the Country's Elections

The West Africa Democracy Solidarity Network (WADEMOS), embarked on a pre-election solidarity mission to Liberia from August 28 – September 4, 2023, ahead of the country's presidential and legislative elections which took place on October 10, 2023.

The mission, which follows WADEMOS pre-election and election-day missions in Nigeria and Sierra Leone, involved a series of meetings with election stakeholders to deepen learning, experience sharing, and knowledge exchange among civil society and other election stakeholders, particularly with the emerging realities of elections in recent times in the sub-region.

Access the statement from the visit here - <https://bit.ly/3sHDwLi>

WADEMOS Embarks on a Campaign to Popularize Liberia's Elections

WADEMOS Network produced infographics to disseminate essential election-related information as part of efforts to regionalize Liberia's general elections.

Details about voting, electoral systems and the parliamentary system were among the topics highlighted.

The information, which was distributed to the members of the Network, was also shared on various social media platforms in French and English languages.

Facts about Liberia's 2023 Elections



The legislature is bicameral (Senate & House of Representatives)



The Senate has 30 seats & House of Representatives has 73 seats



In the Senate, two members are elected to represent a county



In the House of Representatives, members represent electoral districts



Members of the Senate serve a nine-year term



House of Representatives members serve a six-year term

WADEMOS Joined Calls for Macky Sall to Pull Senegal Back from the Brink of Ruin as Pressure Heightened Over a Possibility of a Third Term Bid

President Macky Sall addressed the people of Senegal, and by extension, the world, on, July 3, 2023, on his intention not to extend his term in office beyond its constitutional limit.

Prior to this, CSOs, development partners, political activists mounted a sustained campaign to convince President Sall to publicly state his stance by declaring an end of his term in office.

Given the carnage on the streets of Dakar and the lingering prospect for further destruction of lives and property, WADEMOS noted in its statement that it is imperative that President Sall uses the rare opportunity of addressing the country to de-escalate the situation and begin to restore confidence in Senegal's democratic systems.

Read the statement here - <https://bit.ly/3SID0aZ>



WADEMOS Calls for Swift Action on the Review on the ECOWAS Protocols and Presidential Term Limits

Ahead of the 63rd Ordinary Session of the Authority of ECOWAS Heads of States and Governments on July 9, 2023, in Guinea-Bissau, WADEMOS Network entreated the sub-regional body to discuss the urgent issue of reviewing the ECOWAS Protocols on Democracy and Good Governance.

At the Summit in Accra, in September 2021, and as part of urgent measures taken to stem the resurgence of coup d'états in the ECOWAS region, the Heads of States instructed the President of the ECOWAS Commission to "initiate the process of reviewing the 2001 Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance in order to ensure democracy, peace and stability in the region." Nine months later, there was no evidence that ECOWAS leaders are prepared to tackle the root causes of unconstitutional changes of government, insecurity and democracy retreat in West Africa.

The WADEMOS Network therefore called on ECOWAS Heads of States to walk their talk and take on the reforms that will restore hope in democracy including the proposal to limit terms to two for presidents in member countries of the ECOWAS.

Read the statement on our website via - <https://bit.ly/3ss7DGR>

Statement Delivered by the Acting Network Coordinator of WADEMOS on behalf of West African CSOs During the Second PSC, ECOSOCC and Civil Society Consultative Meeting

Paul Osei-Kuffuor, the Acting Network Coordinator of the West Africa Democracy Solidarity Network has reaffirmed the Network's commitment to continental peace and security, particularly on Terrorism and Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa.

Paul Osei-Kuffuor made this known when he delivered an address at the second Peace & Security Council, ECOSOCC and Civil Society Consultative Meeting held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on July 6, 2023.

The event was attended by representatives of CSOs from Western, Eastern, Southern and Central Africa. Read the speech via - <https://bit.ly/3MET6OM>



WADEMOS Commences Next Gen Initiatives for Young Leaders in West Africa

The West Africa Democracy Solidarity Network has kickstarted its flagship program, the Next Gen Initiative, in August, 2023. The Network has concluded the opening of applications, interviewing of applicants and shortlisting of the first cohort of Young Leaders.

The Initiative, a six-month mentorship program, is designed to empower and engage young leaders and activists in West Africa, to promote and strengthen democracy in the region. The program is thoughtfully designed to encompass a four-week intensive virtual learning sessions, followed by a two-month mentoring program with a recognized civil society organization, a research and project work, and a culminating camp meeting that brings all participants together in Ghana.

Through this comprehensive approach, the Network aspires to equip the next generation of leaders with the necessary skills and knowledge to promote positive change and strengthen democracy in West Africa.



Niger Coup: WADEMOS Network Supports Calls for the Immediate Hand Over of Power to a Civilian Government

The West Africa Democracy Solidarity Network deeply regrets the unfortunate development in Niger with the unconstitutional takeover of power through a coup d'état by security forces in the country, making it the fifth successful coup since the country's independence in 1960.

As a Network of civil society organizations in the ECOWAS sub-region, we are appalled by the coup and consider it both illegitimate and a threat to regional security and efforts to restore democracy in all countries in West Africa following the suspension of Guinea, Burkina Faso, and Mali from ECOWAS.

WADEMOS therefore finds the coup in Niger an unwarranted disruption that will only worsen the plight of the people of Niger and the ECOWAS sub-region. This troubling incident adds a new avenue of distress to the pile of challenges confronting the ECOWAS region and comes at a time when democracy in the ECOWAS region is already facing severe and dire threats.

Read the full statement here - <https://bit.ly/3syOpzh>

WADEMOS Attends AU-ECOSOCC National Chapter Formalization Workshop in Accra

David Asante-Darko, Research Analyst at WADEMOS represented the Network at the African Union and the AU Economic, Social and Cultural Council (AU-ECOSOCC) two-day popularization and awareness raising workshop on National Chapters in Accra.

The workshop sought to formalize the establishment of the ECOSOCC national chapter in Ghana, and enhance civil society engagement and collaboration with the African Union and ECOSOCC.



WADEMOS Supports Calls for Empowering the Next Generation on #InternationalDemocracyDay

The WADEMOS Network recognizes the efforts by democracy actors, defenders, activists, and the rest of the world as we mark this year's International Day of Democracy. We solidarize with people across the globe in the hope of living in a world of unity, peace, and prosperity. Read the statement here - <https://bit.ly/3relZc8>

WADEMOS Partners WACSI to Organize Maiden West Africa Civil Society Week 2023

The maiden West Africa Civil Society Week, organized by the West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI) in partnership with West Africa Democracy Solidarity Network (WADEMOS), took place in Nigeria from August 29-31, 2023.

The event occurred on the backdrop of alarming democratic recession, growing authoritarianism, shrinking civic space, increasing public disaffection over bad governance and recurring coups d'état in West Africa. Incidentally, during the convening, there was a military coup in Gabon, Central Africa, further underscoring the relevance and urgency with which the prevailing challenges must be addressed.

While recognizing that our region is at a crossroads, with citizens increasingly expressing frustration due to unfulfilled democratic dividends and a lack of responsive governance, participants unequivocally opposed coups and military interventions in politics as a panacea to the governance challenges facing the region.

Read the 8-point resolution here - <https://bit.ly/3Lk5kff>



WADEMOS Convenes Regional Conference on Democratic Decline & Political Transitions in Francophone West Africa

The West Africa Democracy Solidarity Network held a two-day high-level conference in La Cote d'Ivoire focused on the political climate within the ECOWAS sub-region.

The conference, which was on the theme, "Democratic Decline and Political Transition in Francophone West Africa", took place from August 1-2, 2023. The conference brought together relevant stakeholders within the ECOWAS Sub-region to review existing mechanisms for addressing the political situation in West Africa.

The conference also offered stakeholders the opportunity to interact, recommend solutions and proposals and also form alliances to counter the threats to democracy.

Read the outcome document which contained recommendations for all stakeholders especially ECOWAS and CSOs here: <https://bit.ly/3PoFrNH>



WADEMOS NETWORK MEMBERS ANNUAL CONVENING

Theme: Amplifying CSO Response to Democratic Recession in West Africa



WADEMOS has stepped up preparations towards its annual Network members’ convening in Accra, Ghana, from November 28-29, 2023. This will be the first time the Network would convene as a whole since its launch in September 2022.

After a year of implementation of its inception strategy, the network convenes again to take stock of progress made as well as discuss challenges and opportunities for the future in building resilience for democracy.

The convening will enable the Network reflect on its strategies and outlook for 2024 and discuss ways to enhance its collective response, solidarity, and resilience in support of democracy in West Africa.

Engage with Us!!!



Find WADEMOS across all social media platforms. Follow us today!

- X @WADEMOSnetwork
- YouTube @Wademosnetwork
- Facebook (@WADEMOS) West Africa Democracy Solidarity Network
- Instagram @WADEMOSnetwork
- WhatsApp @Wademosnetwork
- LinkedIn West Africa Democracy Solidarity Network (@Wademos)

WADEMOS Democracy Opportunity Support Fund

The first set of beneficiaries are due to receive their funding and implementation guidelines from the West Africa Democracy Solidarity Network.

Twelve (12) civil society organizations and pro-democracy actors with activities and operations within West Africa have received a total of \$195, 000 in grants from the WADEMOS Network.

This forms part of the WADEMOS Network’s commitment to strengthening democracy in the sub-region while ensuring a concerted effort towards countering the threats to democracy. In June 2023, WADEMOS launched the Democracy Opportunity Support Fund (DEMOS-Fund), opening a call for civil society organizations and pro-democracy actors to send in applications.

The DEMOS Fund supports Network members’ (and member-supported) initiatives to address democratic backsliding and respond to time-sensitive democratic interventions within the sub-region.



Call for Contributions

WADEMOS Network's quarterly newsletter intends to dedicate a section of the publication to the activities of its members and pro-democracy actors. Please send us news, stories, and updates of your activities, upcoming events, pictures from your events, seminars, feedback, and suggestions.

These activities should be related to the priority areas of WADEMOS or our thematic areas. All submissions can be sent to info@wademosnetwork.org or to the Communications Officer, Jonah Eledi, via j.eledi@wademosnetwork.org.

For all our latest publications, press releases, reports and knowledge products, visit the following sections of the website:

News tab - <https://wademosnetwork.org/news/>

Publication tab - <https://wademosnetwork.org/publications/>

List of WADEMOS Steering Committee Members

- 1. Center for Democratic Governance - Burkina Faso
- 2. Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) - Regional
- 3. West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) - Regional
- 4. West Africa Civil Society Initiative (WACSI) - Regional
- 5. Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) - Ghana
- 6. StatView International - Guinea
- 7. Association Femmes Leadership et Development Durable (AFLED) - Mali
- 8. Center for Democracy and Development-West Africa (CDD-West Africa) - Nigeria
- 9. Africivites - Senegal
- 10. Network of Women Leaders for Development (RFLD) - Benin
- 11. Sindicato de Jornalistas e Technicos de Comunicacao (SINJOTEC) - Guinea Bissau
- ..

Knowledge Products & Convenings



WADEMOS issues a number of research, analytical and communication pieces such as newsletters, reports, publications, press releases, and knowledge products like 'Eye on West Africa' that will form the basis of regional convenings and advocacy campaigns.

The knowledge Hub products focuses on topics such as term limits, unconstitutional changes, transitional countries and ECOWAS Protocols.

We want to share your views with the world. Please send us your contributions, articles and think pieces via info@wademosnetwork.org or j.eledi@wademosnetwork.org.