

PRESS STATEMENT

December 12, 2025

WEST AFRICAN CSOs INTENSIFY DEMANDS FOR DEMOCRATIC RESTORATION IN GUINEA-BISSAU

Following our November 27, 2025, statement condemning the military takeover in Guinea-Bissau, the West Africa Democracy Solidarity Network, a network of over 45 civil society organizations in West Africa, and its partners have continued to closely monitor developments. We hereby issue this follow-up call reiterating our demand for the immediate restoration of democratic order, in accordance with regional legal and normative frameworks.

We welcome the early engagement of ECOWAS, including the Extraordinary Virtual Summit held on November 27, 2025, and the high-level delegation led by the ECOWAS Commission Chair in discussions with the transitional authorities toward a peaceful resolution of the current political crisis. These regional diplomatic efforts are critical, and we urge their intensification and the maintenance of sustained pressure to ensure that the will of the people is upheld.

The takeover in Guinea-Bissau constitutes a blatant violation of the electorate's mandate. Unlike several recent coups in the Sahel, that often claim pseudo-popular justification, this intervention lacks genuine public support and sympathy and is self-serving. It is essentially a power-retention maneuver that undermines both the principle and substance of democratic choice.

The network of civil society organizations therefore demands:

1. Immediate release or reconstruction of certified election results, including the use of data from domestic observer groups and AU/ECOWAS monitoring teams to accurately reflect the true will of the people.
2. Full publication of election observation reports by ECOWAS and the African Union to promote transparency and reinforce public trust in the electoral process.
3. An independent investigation into the events surrounding the coup, including the roles of former President Umaro Sissoco Embaló and his close associates, with accountability measures and targeted sanctions for those found responsible, in line with Article 23 on Unconstitutional Changes of Government under the Africa Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG).
4. Protection of civic space, political rights and freedoms, including the safety and security of opposition figures and civil society actors. We acknowledge, in this regard, the gesture by the authorities of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in providing asylum to the opposition candidate.

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Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) | Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) | West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI) | WANEP | Center for Democracy and Development-West Africa (CDD-West Africa), Nigeria | StatView International, Guinea | Center for Democratic Governance (CDG), Burkina Faso | Africivistes, Senegal | Sindicato de Jornalistas e Técnicos de Comunicação (SINJOTEC), Guinea-Bissau | Association Femmes Leadership et Développement Durable (AFLED), Mali | Network of Women Leaders for Development (RFLD), Benin

5. Inclusion of civil society organizations in all transitional and oversight processes, consistent with regional commitments under the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. CSOs must be an integral part of any roadmap or negotiation framework guiding Guinea-Bissau's return to constitutional order.

The Network further emphasizes that unconstitutional changes of government violate regional and continental treaties, including the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance and the ECOWAS Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. We call on ECOWAS, the AU, and member states to uphold their obligations, reject normalization of power grabs, and defend the sovereign choice of the people, ensuring full implementation of the declaration on UCGs in Africa

We urge foreign powers with interest in Africa to desist from interfering in the transition and mediation process, as parts of the Sahel, and to avoid actions that may legitimize unconstitutional changes of government. Such interference fuels instability and fragmentation in the region instead of fostering collaboration and cooperation the region urgently needs. West Africa stands at cross-roads and requires complementary efforts that advance the collective security and stability through integration.

As the ECOWAS Heads of State Summit approaches on December 14, 2025, the region faces a critical moment. The decisions taken and the pressure applied will determine whether democracy in Guinea-Bissau and by extension West Africa prevails in the face of this crisis.

We remain vigilant, committed to democratic restoration, and ready to work with regional actors and civil society to safeguard the people's will.

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About WADEMOS

WADEMOS is an independent and non-partisan network of diverse national and transnational civil society organizations and civic groups working to promote and defend democracy, good governance, and inclusive development in the West Africa region. WADEMOS mobilizes, coordinates, and leverages the collective voice and power of civil society and other pro-democracy actors, resources, and opportunities within the West Africa region to advance its mission. The current membership of WADEMOS stands at 47 spread across West Africa. The WADEMOS Secretariat is based in Accra, Ghana.

For more information and media interviews, please contact:

Name: Jonah Eledi

Designation: Communications and Digital Platforms Officer

Email: j.eledi@wademosnetwork.org

Phone Number: +233 26 373 5330

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