



GMC Issues Statement on Gambia's 45th Independence Anniversary

Published 02/19/2010 - 2:42 a.m. GMT

GMC PRESS RELEASE

GMC welcomes the strong condemnation by the Acting President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan of the on-going undemocratic practices in some member countries of ECOWAS. In particular, GMC is encouraged by the determination of ECOWAS to reign in on few lawless Presidents in the region, and supporting civil society organisations against mal-governance. GMC fully endorses the quotation below contained in the forceful Statement of the Nigerian Leader at the just concluded 37th ECOWAS Heads of States Summit in Abuja.

"In a few of our countries, the will of our people and their genuine aspiration for democracy were trampled upon with impunity. Let it be stated again that no place exists in this sub-region for such rape on the rights and indeed dignity of our people. No more will there be comfort zone for political misadventure." We applaud the ECOWAS Chairman for his bold leadership, vision and sincerity, and urge for the practical application of this policy with instant effect.

As we celebrate our 45th Independence today, GMC continues to advocate for a return to those core values of democracy, which are about popular participation, consensus building, all inclusiveness and due recognition for the worth of every Gambian. We are building a Movement that recognises that the future of every Gambian aspiring for political leadership rests on the acceptability of the people, not in the hands of one man that determines the political future of everyone else, either in government or in opposition.

GMC insists that significant failures of past political efforts to effect historic electoral changes in the recent past should be courageously admitted by those political organisations responsible, instead of persistently passing the buck upon each other on a bridge to nowhere. Acknowledgment of failure with the alacrity to learn from the experiences of such failure is a mark of pragmatic leadership. Refusal to admit political failures by those involved is the clearest sign of insincerity and a mark of gross contempt for our citizens. GMC had refrained from commenting on this very negative phenomenon until now that it appears to fundamentally endanger the prospects for a united opposition which is contrary to the vital electoral interest of our suffering citizens.

While using this opportunity to welcome in principle the proposals of Hon. Haruna Darboe of the Global Democracy Project in his recent Open Letter to all Opposition Parties, GMC urges all alternative political forces to appreciate that the interests of The Gambia transcend Party or individual. To this end, GMC is ready to dissolve its Leadership in favour of a genuine united opposition, and calls on the others and their allies to put an end to their persistent bickering as to who should take blame for the fatal failures of NADD. The conduct of an opposition party is a good indicator of its future attitude to public affairs in government.

In consideration of the spirit of the said Open Letter, GMC urges our colleagues to disentangle themselves from the perilous ghost of NADD after having learnt lessons and allow genuine unity of the opposition movement a chance to flourish without delay. Our commitment to one man one vote is informed by our interest that unless politicians (both in government and in opposition) are conscious of the fact that they owe their office at the pleasure of the electorate, good governance would be impossible.