

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



STATEMENT BY

AMBASSADOR EMILIA NDINELAO MKUSA,

OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA TO ETHIOPIA AND THE AU

AND

CHAIRPERSON OF THE AU PSC FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2024

**AT THE 2ND AU REFLECTION FORUM ON UNCONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES OF
GOVERNMENT**

18-19 MARCH 2024

ACCRA, GHANA

Your Excellency, Nana Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana,

Your Excellency Shirley Ayorkor Botschwey, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of Ghana

Your Excellencies, Members of the Peace and Security Council

Your Excellency, Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union,

Distinguished representatives of various AU Organs and RECs/RMs present,

Distinguished partners and invited guests

Ladies and gentlemen, all protocols observed.

First of all, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Ghana for the warm reception accorded to the PSC members and other participants since our arrival here in Accra. We thank you Mr. President for enabling that.

It is my honor to speak during this Forum today, in my capacity as Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council for the month of March 2024, to contribute to this critical issue of Unconstitutional Changes of Government, a challenge that has been hampering our Continent for more than three years now. The continent has witnessed the resurgence of military coups in the past three years. This 2nd Accra Forum thus, provides an opportunity for all of us to take stock and assess the implementations of the Declaration of the first Forum which was held in March 2022.

Since the adoption of the Declaration of the first Accra Forum, we have made some progress in addressing the issue of unconstitutional changes of government, including the convening of an extra ordinary summit on unconstitutional changes of government in May 2022 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea.

But you will agree with me that we are still facing a serious challenge of unconstitutional changes of government. In March 2022, when we met for the first Accra Forum, we had four AU Member States under suspension from the activities of the Union due to the unconstitutional changes of government. As we meet today, two more Members have been suspended, making it a total of six Member States. This means that since we last met, coup d'états have increased on the Continent. Also, several attempted coups were made which did not succeed. Thus, this requires from us, to redouble our efforts in addressing this challenge.

As we convene this second session of the Forum, (*on Unconstitutional Changes of Government*), it is critical to objectively take stock of the developments in the Continent since the Inaugural Forum. Equally important is to also assess the impact of the 16th Extra Ordinary Summit of the AU held on Malabo. The ultimate aim is to effectively prevent the recurrence of the scourge, guarantee peace, security and stability, sustainable development, as well as prosperity in our continent, and looking at the root causes and main drivers of this scourge in order to bring it under control.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Peace and Security Council is deeply concerned with the resurgence of coup d'états on the Continent. As a standing decision-making Organ on behalf of all AU Member States, the PSC has been consistent and firm on issues of military take overs and any other forms of UCG, in line with the AU instruments. The AU has a zero tolerance policy for unconstitutional changes of government, and that is what is guiding the PSC. Furthermore, the PSC has been backing-up and supporting the decisions of the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms, where possible, with regard to coup d'états. I want to emphasize here that the PSC's efforts will continue to be sharpened and be enhanced.

Our Continent faces a serious number of threats in the peace and security landscape, but the most critical issue to be considered is the issue of governance at national levels. It is regrettable Your Excellencies, that in some circumstances we have been in denial and regard it as a taboo to admit that our governance structures are facing challenges that need to be addressed. This has largely been a result of the sensitivities about the interface between sovereignty and AU instruments on democratic governance particularly Article 23 (5) of the **African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance**. If we don't diagnose the problem, we will not be able to treat it.

It is important to encompass governance in all its aspects including political, human rights, constitutional, economic management and socio-economic comprehensively

If we fail to take into account the will and legitimate expectations of our citizens, or continue to manipulate our constitutions, we will continue to create recipes for more popular uprisings, military take overs and other forms of unconstitutional changes of government on our continent. All these will be as a result of the frustrations of the citizens, who are failing to find appropriate channels to address their concerns. I underline the need to prioritize the involvement of women and youth in shaping, our beloved continent.

Though, under no circumstance should the Continent embrace situations of unconstitutional changes of government, it is our responsibility to ensure that, as leaders, we adhere to values of democracy and good governance and address the legitimate concerns of our citizens, as a preventive measure. We need to reflect deeper and come up with other necessary steps. Implementation of our decisions at both national, regional and continental is key, to advance the aspirations of our people.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me conclude by emphasizing that, in this 2nd Accra Forum, we need to be as candid and frank as possible, to allow the AU to gather genuine first-hand information, including the implementation status of the 1st Accra Declaration and the Decision of the Malabo Extraordinary Summit.

Once again, I thank the AU Commission for the organization of this event which is of critical importance. In the same vein, allow me to appreciate the efforts of the Republic of Ghana for hosting this important event, an event that seeks to enhance our efforts to improve governance and democracy on the Continent and thus contribute to the elimination of the unconstitutional changes of government.

As PSC, we are ready to listen.

I thank you for your attention.