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An Open letter to:

- **Mr. Ban Ki-moon**, Secretary General of the United Nations
- **Ms. Federica Mogherini**, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Vice-President of the European Commission
- **Mr. Francois Hollande**, President of the French Republic

Subject: A Request for Action from the United Nations and the European Union with Regard to Democracy in Gabon

Mr. Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Madam High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy,
Mr. President of the French Republic.

The Collective for Solidarity with Social and Political Struggle in Africa, based in Paris, has provided assistance to African democrats since 2009. The year of 2016, in which 14 presidential and 10 parliamentary elections take place in Africa¹ will determine the course of the process of democratization on the continent, which started in 1990 and has come almost to a standstill since 2005. In 2016, in Uganda, Congo Brazzaville, Djibouti, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Gambia, seven countries where a presidential election has been or will be held, the outgoing heads of state have divested their electoral processes of all democratic value. The electoral crisis in Gabon has highlighted the role of international actors. In this letter, the Collective for Solidarity with Social and Political Struggle in Africa will offer an international reaction suitable to the level of the challenge now visible.

The 2016 Electoral Coup in Gabon

The Bongo family and the Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG) have run Gabon since 1967². By rigging one election after another, they have prevented the country from becoming democratic. As in other African dictatorships it was unlikely that democratic change would be brought about through an electoral process, in spite of the clearly visible unpopularity of the outgoing Head of State and his small reservoir of electors. Before the vote, the lack of agreement and absence of dialogue between the government and opposition with regard to the electoral process was evidence that fraud would take place and that the real results would be reversed in favour of Ali Bongo. This was confirmed by repression: nearly thirty members of the opposition and civil society were arrested between 9 and 23 July.

¹ With two presidents elected by parliament. See summary of elections in Africa 54 countries from 2015 to 2016:
<https://regardexcentrique.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/151203syntheseagendalectionsafrique2015-2016limitationnombremandats.pdf>

² With Togo, in Africa Gabon is at the top of the list of accumulated number of years in power without democratic change of president or parliament 5.3.1 <https://regardexcentrique.wordpress.com/2016/03/30/apres-26-ans-de-democratisation-dictature-et-democratie-bientot-a-lequilibre-en-afrique/>

However, the alliance formed by the opposition on 16 August 2016, placed the outgoing head of state in a position that made him unprecedentedly weak in a non-democratic country. Before 16 August, against the three main opposition candidates,³ Ali Bongo was planning to take power through three stages of fraud. It was foreseen that the fraudulent score of Ali Bongo would be made up of: firstly, quite a small share of real voters; secondly, a number of foreign voters and other contentious additions to the electoral register;⁴ thirdly, on election day itself by ballot stuffing and falsification of the electoral minutes, and finally, from supplementary percentages added to the minutes as they were being compiled by the Electoral Commission (CENAP), with the complicity of a Constitutional Court obedient to the outgoing head of State.⁵

After the 16 August alliance, facing a united opposition electorate which believed in victory, these methods of fraud were no longer enough, and in the new configuration Ali Bongo was forced to take risks, especially since he had already accepted the presence of a European Union Observation Mission (EOM). Previously, non 'democratically-elected' presidents had only accepted European Observation Missions if they were confident that they had the power to neutralize them, and restrict them to making recommendations such as how to 'improve the process', which were often useless in the long term. An African Union Observation Mission, probably as fictitious as those in Chad and Djibouti in 2016,⁶ was added.⁷ This mission played hardly any role, especially as its report would only be made public if the Gabonese authorities permitted it.

The opposition united around Jean Ping easily drew attention to instances of fraud taking place. The very visible fraud which took place in the province of Haut-Ogooué was the one that allowed Ali Bongo to reverse the final result. The European Observation Mission was able to observe how the real vote was overturned. Constrained by rules of protocol, it was not part of its responsibility to determine the winner, but only to declare whether the rules had been respected. The EOM, on 25 September, regretted that⁸ "the Constitutional Court has not been able to correct satisfactorily the anomalies observed during the counting of votes."

By proclaiming falsified results, the Constitutional Court refused to follow the requirements of the UN, the EU, and of Smail Chergui, the African Union Commissioner for peace and security. At the last moment, the African Union, in agreement with the Court, but outside the dialogue which had been agreed upon, brought in a delegation of lawyers. Some of these jurists, selected by Idriss Deby, have been themselves implicated in other electoral coup d'états and massive frauds: in Chad in 2016⁹ and in Togo in 2015.¹⁰ Idriss Déby, supported by other presidents, overstepped his AU mandate in order to work for his own interests. In the name of the AU, he began to lead the international community into illegality, by legitimating decisions made by non-democratic institutions and the diplomatic validation of a reversal of the outcome of an election.

In 2013, Idriss Déby had already shown that he was ready to use all sorts of extreme means to help non-democratic regimes in Central Africa to stay in power, all of which are threatened by populations which want properly organized elections. On 14 February 2014, François Hollande summoned the Chadian president to Paris to make him withdraw his troops from the Central African Republic (CAR) when they were obviously there to support the Seleka.¹¹ They had been accused of numerous massacres, and their withdrawal permitted democratic transition in CAR. Today, above and beyond the question for the second time about the role of the African Union, a strong stand is needed against the Chadian model of military-based power.

The Constitutional Court coup of 22 and 23 September 2016, supported by the Chadian President, was followed by the failure of the international community to act responsibly. The International Community did not condemn the opaque way in which the Constitutional Court examined the appeal made by Jean Ping. The Court violated several legal provisions, and did not respect the need for exact and transparent verification of

³ Jean Ping, Guy Nzouma Ndama Heritage and Modernity, and Casimir Oye Mba of the National Union

⁴ Complaint lodged against Gemalto and quality of electoral register, Marc Ona, 3.3.15, Paris, <http://regismarzin.blogspot.fr/2015/06/3-mars-2015-paris-conference-de-presse.html>

⁵ Presidential election 27 August in Gabon: repression increases before a probable electoral coup, Collective for Solidarity with Social and Political Struggle in Africa, 07.31.16, <https://electionsafrique.wordpress.com/2016/08/01/presidential-of-27-August-au-Gabon-the-repression-increases-before-a-probable-coup-detat-electoral/>

⁶ Regis Marzin, 5.7.16, <https://regardcentrique.wordpress.com/2016/07/05/les-elections-sans-democratie-de-mars-et-avril-2016-en-afrique/>

⁷ Observers of the OIF and NDI will also be present, <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20160729-gabon-observateurs-internationaux-elections-scrutin>

⁸ http://eeas.europa.eu/election-observation-missions/eom-gabon/10432/la-moe-regrette-que-la-cour-constitutionnelle-nait-pas-t-en-mesure-de-rectifier-Manire-of-the-satisfactory-anomalies-observed-at-the-census-of-votes_fr

⁹ <https://electionsafrique.wordpress.com/2016/05/04/congo-brazzaville-djibouti-tchad-le-cercle-vicieux-des-processus-electoraux-sans-democratie/>

¹⁰ <https://electionsafrique.wordpress.com/2015/05/19/togo-election-presidentielle-et-soutien-international-a-la-democratisation-de-lafrrique/>

¹¹ <https://regardcentrique.wordpress.com/2014/03/05/influence-et-implication-didriss-deby-en-centrafrique-de-mi-2012-a-janvier-2014/>

the vote according to a comparison of the polling station minutes, especially those of Haut-Ogooué. In addition, the Gabonese government even went so far as to listen in to the telephone conversations of members of the European Observation Mission and tried to stop this mission from observing what was happening.¹²

2016 International Reactions to Fraudulent Elections and Electoral Coups d'Etat in Africa

In 2016, when taking into account only the presidential elections held, the international community has found itself confronted with the need to support the organisation of an end-of-war election in CAR; an electoral masquerade in Uganda; an electoral coup d'état in Congo-Brazzaville (i.e. an electoral process with inversion of the final outcome, preceded by a violent and unconstitutional revision of the constitution); a violent electoral coup d'état in Djibouti; an electoral coup in Chad; a totally worthless masquerade in Equatorial Guinea; and a very violent electoral coup d'état in Gabon. It is also supporting the organization of an after-war election in Somalia and observing the preparation of a masquerade in Gambia. It is providing political support to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), sparing no effort to help the DRC towards a democratic transition.

In advance of each of these polls, the presidents of these countries, and their parties, which have been in power, sometimes controlled by one family, for abnormal lengths of time have made all democratic change impossible; many of them by removing constitutional limits on the number of presidential terms. They use repression to prevent the population, civil society and democratic parties from opposing them. Since 27 December 2002 in Kenya, no president who came to power and who has managed to extend that power through non-respect of the rules of democracy has accepted to lose a presidential election.

In Central Africa, apart from Sao Tome and Principe, populations and opposition parties have been waiting for democracy since 1990, especially since 2005, the year when the process of democratization across the continent became blocked and since which many negative examples of elections have accumulated. The heads of state, elderly for the most part, have accumulated fraudulent elections in which real results have been reversed. The more these presidents and their clans feel threatened by elections, the more violently they defend themselves. In Congo Brazzaville, in DRC, in Gabon, the violence is also that of the clan which will have no negotiating position after democratic change. Central Africa is heading towards predictable tension between its peoples and those in power.

The International Community has learned how to prevent military coups d'états. Respecting the Responsibility to Protect Populations norm (R2P), intervening at the start of crises, it has learned how to limit the severity of armed conflicts and the number of crisis victims. The case of Burundi in 2015 showed the current limits of such prevention. However, when it comes to electoral coups d'état, the International Community has never properly experimented with dissuasion and prevention. Yet, fraudulent elections result in tens, and sometimes hundreds, of victims. The number of Republican Guard victims in Gabon has not yet been correctly estimated.¹³ If the numbers of rebellions and wars, other than those conducted against terrorist groups, are going down, the number of state massacres during electoral conflicts are going up, without the international community putting in place appropriate prevention and deterrence mechanisms.

Victims of States during electoral coups have special political importance. They signal the entry of a country into a vicious spiral of impunity, repression, and fraudulent elections to ensure further impunity. The example of Togo after the 2005 massacres is a good illustration of this. Djibouti could also go down this path after the massacre at the end of 2015 which preceded the electoral coup d'état.

AU, EU, UN: analysis of international reactions to the electoral coup in Gabon

Over and above the illegal workings of the Constitutional Court, which did not require effective inspection of the Gabonese polling station minutes, the international community has begun to accept the semblance of legality (or 'false legality') of African dictatorships. In doing this, it is leading Gabon into the same vicious spiral of impunity, repression, and fraudulent elections to ensure indefinite impunity. Gabon's first electoral

¹² <http://www.rfi.fr/emission/20161004-mariya-gabriel-deputee-ue-afrique-observateurs-presidentielle-gabon-bongo-ping>

¹³ Estimates of the number of victims range from 50 to just over 200, bodies found or missing, this could be even higher.

coup d'état in 2009 pushed the country onto this path.¹⁴ The population is thrown back on its own means to resist the dictatorship, and this brings the risk of uncontrolled deterioration of the situation.

The international community pushed Jean Ping to appeal to the Constitutional Court, and then, subsequent to Idriss Déby's manipulation of the Court, abandoned him. It has thus put itself in the position where it can be blamed for continuing deterioration of the situation. This abandonment has taken place at a time when governments will soon be up for renewal in France, the USA, the UN, and the AU, and thus several of the deciders will not be around to handle the aftermath of the crisis. This may recall the way Libya was abandoned when France had a change of government after 2011.

The international community is trying to respect the principles of subsidiarity and complementarity: in Africa, the UN and the EU give priority to the AU. These principles are at the moment applied more or less correctly in the case of security and military crises. They do not work at all when it comes to electoral disputes because the AU is not composed of a majority of states whose leaders have been elected according to real democratic rules. These principles would require the AU to become the driving force with regard to the rule of law, legality and democracy. It is, however, currently known for its passivity or disrespect of democracy. In theory, these principles will only work as intended when the AU is made up of a majority of democratic states.

The EU, often taken as an example, was built patiently over time. The International Community did not leave the AU enough time to construct itself effectively through a process that would gradually connect it to its different populations and all aspects of politics. The construction of the AU took place in parallel with a process of democratization which did not start before 1990, and only in 2016 managed to attain a near equilibrium between democracies and dictatorships. Presidents who came to power through wars, coups d'état, and French neo-colonial interference are still in power after many fraudulent elections.

Meanwhile, use of the rules of subsidiarity and complementarity in favor of the AU has, in the case of Gabon, created solidarity among non-democratically elected Heads of State. If, as in Gabon, the misuse of these principles prevents the democratization of a country, it also prevents the continental democratization process from restarting. This 'misunderstanding' will lead to a rapid increase in tensions between populations and heads of state, especially in Central Africa.

Moreover, as with French policy in Africa, the AU has put priority on war and security crisis management, a priority that has the favour of both properly elected presidents and those who stay in power through fraudulent elections. This priority is justified but is unfortunately accompanied by an abandonment of the debate in the AU about democracy, which should have continued. This priority without a quid pro quo has benefited presidents who are military leaders, even if they are not democratically elected. It slows down the modernization of the AU with regard to democracy and the rule of law.

The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) norm, frequently discussed in the UN Security Council, is also put into question. Is there a balance sheet kept for the victims of electoral coups kept, and, if so, how? Tensions will increase between populations and the heads of state that accumulate fraudulent elections. In Central Africa, the crisis in Gabon concomitant to a new massacre in Kinshasa is more important than other crises. How will Idriss Déby, Paul Biya, Teodoro Obiang Nguema, or Sassou Nguesso eventually leave power, if not by democratic change through the ballot box? In what state will their countries find themselves after the deaths of some of those in power? The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) norm, applied informally with the support of those now in power (provided they manage to limit the number of their victims), slows down the process of democratization, because the international community has never made it a priority to demand technical quality in electoral processes, preventively and as a deterrent.

The monitoring of the implementation of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance has been abandoned or is without effect. The Cotonou Agreement is in trouble. The AU attacks the International Criminal Court without first proposing how to improve the prevention of crime, particularly state massacres during electoral state coups d'état. All of this, taken together, makes impossible the resumption of continent-wide democratization that has been halted since 2005.

¹⁴ R Marzin, 2.1.15 <https://regardexcentrique.wordpress.com/2015/01/02/gabon-du-coup-detat-electoral-de-2009-au-depart-anticipe-dali-bongo/>

During an electoral conflict, when facing up to a dictator, the African people expect nothing from the AU. They know the low political value of AU observation missions, in spite of their budding technical value. The population and the Gabonese press barely mention the intervention of the AU's pseudo-lawyers in the deliberations of the Gabonese Constitutional Court; Constitutional Court members themselves or friends of Idriss Déby who have participated in other elections in which the results were reversed; their hypocritical intervention was considered too obviously partisan. Through its respect of an international protocol unfit for the Gabon national purpose, a part of the international community let itself be tricked into waiving its requirements without counterparty.

The AU, divided internally and led by Idriss Déby with the support of other presidents, some of whom attended the inauguration, including the presidents of Senegal, Mali and Niger, ultimately supported the Constitutional Court's working outside the rules of democracy. At first, as was correctly observed by the EU, only the President of the AU agreed to sign off on Ali Bongo's electoral coup. Agreeing to endorse this manipulation in its semblance of legality, implicitly or explicitly (as did the international players Michaëlle Jean for the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF) on 26 September¹⁵ and the French Foreign Minister, Jean-Marc Ayrault, on 29 September¹⁶), amounts to complicity in electoral crime, pushing the rest of the international community towards acceptance of the semblance of legality of dictatorships that are the result of previous illegal and criminal acts.

The possibility of reconciliation between the perpetrators of the electoral coup and its massacred victims should never have been uttered. It reinforced an Ali Bongo power that is now illegal, according to Gabonese law. It is contrary to the reality on the ground. It underestimates the motivation of the population to find methods of resistance against the dictatorship.

On 24 February, 2016, in Bujumbura, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon said¹⁷ "We must stop prioritising crisis management and turn towards an Early Action Culture and preventive diplomacy." In this sense, the electoral coup in Gabon marks a new failure for the international community, the EU and the UN in particular. Putting a stop to post-electoral crisis management, and to preventing electoral conflicts held under the influence of presidents who mock democracy, can only be done by supporting democracy ever more clearly, more globally and, especially, more firmly. Politically, this means putting the emphasis on the technical quality of electoral processes.

Democrats and African populations are watching to see whether the international community will manage to overcome its contradictions, and they question its willingness to genuinely support democracy. While the EU streamlines its migration policy, the peoples of Africa, in particular, question the future of the Europe-Africa relationship. Will the EU continue to support Africa on its path to democracy? This would involve restarting the now stopped process of democratisation in Africa, through stronger European policy, built around new initiatives.

In Gabon, the European Observation Mission has produced work of exceptional quality. This technical work was initially well supported politically, even if the European External Action Service (EEAS) ultimately relied on the UN and the AU. But this European Mission could soon also symbolize the failure of the European policy for supporting democracy in Africa. European abandonment of Gabon would have consequences that have not yet been assessed. The reaction of the European Parliament is now awaited.

This is why the Collective for Solidarity with Social and Political Struggle in Africa makes the following recommendations to the UN General Secretariat, the European External Action Service (EEAS) of the European Union and the French government:

Regarding Gabon:

- Denounce the role played by the Constitutional Court in Ali Bongo's electoral coup d'état,

¹⁵ 26.9, <http://www.francophonie.org/CP-SG-Gabon-resultats-47265.html>

¹⁶ <http://basedoc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/vues/Kiosque/FranceDiplomatie/kiosque.php?fichier=bafr2016-09-29.html#Chapitre12>

¹⁷ <http://www.un.org/apps/newsFr/storyF.asp?NewsID=36687#.Vs9rQkC9E-g>

- Following the refusal of the Constitutional Court to respect the requirement for comparing the Minutes of the polling stations in a recount conducted under an adversarial procedure, in the presence of both parties, recognize the victory of Jean Ping.
- Demand the release of all political prisoners,
- Threaten with personal sanctions those in power between 31 August 2016 and 2 October 2016, who were primarily responsible for the electoral coup d'état and the massacres : Ali Bongo Ondimba; Mary Magdalene Mborantsuo, President of the Constitutional Court; Mathias Otounga Ossibadjou, the then Minister for National Defence; Pachomius Moubelet Boubeya, the then Interior Minister; Alain Claude Bilie By Nze, Minister for Communications; General Kouna Gregory, head of the Republican Guard,
- To have the United Nations human rights council pass a resolution for an inquiry into the massacres committed by the Gabonese armed forces since 31 August, 2016,¹⁸
- Support the work of the International Criminal Court,
- Following the electoral coup d'état, reassess French cooperation, especially military, and European cooperation, especially for the EU, to initiate the consultation procedure provided for in the Cotonou Agreement, including Article 96
- Require the Gabonese authorities to respect the freedom to demonstrate, freedom of expression and freedom to organize politically.

Regarding subsequent elections in non-democratic countries and without democratic change:

- Take appropriate initiatives to ensure that the processes for the legislative elections in Congo Brazzaville, Chad and Gabon, are organized in accordance with the rules of democracy, with particular emphasis on the delimitation of constituencies in which there are abnormal geographical imbalances, and thus potential or probable sources for reversal of a majority.
- Promote the need for indispensable prerequisite conditions for an electoral process:
 - No repression of the opposition,
 - Minimum rule of law conditions need to be a prerequisite: freedom of the press, freedom to demonstrate, freedom of association for civil society and the political parties,
 - Inclusive dialogue with the opposition,
 - Consensus on the composition of a neutral Independent Electoral Commission,
 - Consensus on the method for producing the electoral register,
 - The possibility of legal challenge before an uncontested Independent Court,
 - Require strict respect for human rights,
- Provide support for the political opposition when it is faced with proposals for dialogue from the government under conditions set unilaterally by that power although it refuses the rules of democracy,
- More generally, take a position on the absence of democratic change and the quality of electoral processes in countries with no limit to the number of presidential terms, especially in those countries where probable non-democratic elections are being prepared.
- Appoint special envoys and diplomats for inclusive and transparent international negotiations, mandated to work for the democratization of Africa for as long as the lack of democracy generates conflicts that involve the international community,
- To prevent electoral crises, propose ahead of time mixed international political and technical accompaniment, in addition to Electoral Observation Missions,
- For the EU, when faced with non-compliance with the indispensable prerequisites for an electoral process, and in the case of elections held outside the rules of democracy, consider the possibility of sanctions under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement, and define the modalities of economic sanctions for re-establishing partial aid conditionality (not having a direct impact on the people of the country) based on the quality of the electoral processes,
- Take into account all reversals of election results, presidential or legislative, in the history of elections since 1990, and in the diplomatic and political treatment of electoral processes.

Concerning the African Union and its relationship with the European Union and the United Nations,

- Consider the capacity of the African Union (AU) to intervene depending on the progress of the democratization process in Africa, and on the extent of equilibrium between democracies and non-democracies,

¹⁸ Along the lines of what was envisaged for Burundi 14 December 2015:

<http://www.ohchr.org/FR/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=16878&LangID=F> , <http://www.africa1.com/spip.php?article61618>

- Avoid endorsing any drift towards a semblance of legality based on already present false legality, among other things by not giving credence to institutions like Constitutional Courts in countries without democratic change and without real democracy,
- Avoid that the principles of subsidiarity and complementarity applied between the AU, the EU and the UN are not diverted to the support of non-democratic regimes during electoral coups d'état,
- Initiate a dialogue with the AU on the technical quality of electoral processes, by inclusively considering requests from opposition parties to accelerate the democratization of the continent,
- Schedule international negotiations on the subject of respect for the quality of electoral processes in Africa, especially on the independence and inclusive and technical nature of electoral commissions, the quality of electoral files, the quality of the compilation of the results contained in polling booth minutes, the possibility of making legal challenges in front of undisputed independent courts, and the implementation of international joint political and technical accompaniment,
- In the context of international negotiations, reconsider the Responsibility to Protect populations (R2P) in cases of electoral dispute, to avoid the possibility that the fear of a larger number of victims will lead to the continuation of a non-democratic regime which came to power through a fraudulent election or an electoral coup d'état.

Collective for Solidarity with Social and Political Struggle in Africa
Paris, 7 October 2016

12 Signatories: Enough is enough (Ca suffit comme ça - Gabon), Union for National Salvation (USN, Djibouti), Federation of Congolese from the Diaspora (FCD, Congo Brazzaville), Movement for Democratic Restoration in Equatorial Guinea (MRD), Union of the Populations of Cameroon (UPC), Collective of Democratic and Patriotic Organizations of the Cameroonian Diaspora (CODE, Brussels and Paris), National Republican Rally (RNR, Chad) Chadian Vital Forces in Exile, Amicale PanAfricaine, African Struggles, Left Party (Parti de Gauche), Europe Ecologie - The Greens (EELV) .

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Open letter to Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, Ms. Federica Mogherini, François Hollande, with email copies to:

- Mr. Koen Vervaeke, EEAS General Manager Africa of the European Union,
- Mr. Hans-Peter Schadek, EU EEAS Director Western and Central Africa
- Mr. Erminia Girolama Notarangelo, Head of Central Africa Division of the EU EEAS
- Mr. Neven Nimica, Commissioner for EU Development
- Mr. Elmar Brok, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament,
- Mr. Helmut Kultz, Ambassador of the European Union in Gabon
- Ms. Mariya Gabriel, Head of the European Observation Mission in Gabon.
- Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Head of the United Nations Department of Political Affairs
- Mr. Abdoulaye Bathily, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Central Africa,
- Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Husseini, High Commissioner for Human Rights of the United Nations,
- Mr. Thomas Mélonio, Africa advisor to the French presidency,
- Mr. Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister of Defence of the French Government,
- Mr. Jean-Marc Ayrault, Foreign Minister of the French Government
- Mr. Rémi Maréchaux, Director of Africa and the Indian Ocean at the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Development (MAEDI)
- Mr. Sébastien Minot, Deputy Director Central Africa, MAEDI,
- Mr. Dominique Renaux, French Ambassador to Gabon
- Ms. Fatou Bensouda, Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court,
- Ms. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, President of the Commission of the African Union,
- Ms. Aisha Abdullahi, Commissioner of the Department of Political Affairs of the African Union,
- Mr. Smail Chergui, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union,
- Ms. Michaëlle Jean, Secretary General of La Francophonie,
- Mr. Günter Nooke, delegate for Africa to the German Chancellor
- Ms. Linda Thomas Greenfield, Assistant US Secretary of State for African Affairs,
- Mr. Tom Malinowski, US Deputy Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights,
- Ms. Cynthia H Aduetteh, US ambassador to Gabon.

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With regard to the non-democratic countries in Africa which will hold elections, the Collective for Solidarity with Social and Political Struggle in Africa demands that the prerequisite conditions essential for an electoral process be met:

- No repression of the opposition,
- The prerequisite of minimum rule of law conditions: freedom of the press, freedom to demonstrate, freedom of organization for civil society and the political parties,
- Inclusive dialogue with the opposition,
- Consensus on the composition of a neutral Independent Electoral Commission,
- Consensus on the method for producing the electoral register,
- The possibility of making legal challenges in front of an undisputed independent court.

The demands that were made in the letter to the EU dated 8 March 2016 can be found at the following link (in French): [Plus de revendications dans la lettre à l'Ue du 8 mars 2016](#)

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Presidential Election electoral processes in non-democratic countries in Africa in 2016

Date of Vote	Country	President	Time in Power
18 February	Uganda	Yoweri Museveni	30 years
20 March + 10 April	Congo Brazzaville	Denis Sassou Nguesso	32 years
8 and 22 April	Djibouti	Ismaël Omar Guelleh	17 + Uncle 22 = 39
24 April	Equatorial Guinea	Teodoro Obiang	37 years
10 April + 9 May	Chad	Idriss Déby	26 years
27 August	Gabon	Ali Bongo	7 years + Father 42 = 49
1 December	Gambia	Yahya Jammeh	22 years

* * *

Comparison of the Presidential Electoral processes of Congo-Brazzaville, Djibouti and Chad in 2016 (Source R * E)

A - Background to the electoral process and history

	Congo-Brazzaville	Djibouti	Chad
Time in Power	Since 1979, 37-5 = 32 years	Since 1999, 17 Uncle since 1977, 39 years	Since 1990, 26
Violence of power	War to reconquer power 1997-1999	Constant surveillance and repression of opponents	History of war in Chad from 1990 to 2008
Electoral History	Opposition boycott after Denis Sassou's war to reconquer power in 97-99, following the democratic change of 92-97.	Since 1999, three presidential and legislative elections, fraudulent or with inverted result. Boycott 2005 presidential election, legislatives in 2008 and presidential in 2011.	Since 1990, four presidential and 3 parliamentary elections, fraudulent or with inverted result.
Number of terms	The 2-term limit was removed in October 2015.	2-term limit removed in 2010.	2-term limit removed in 2004.
Previous main methods of fraud	Upstream repression. Disorganization of opposition. Bad electoral register. Unbalanced legislative redistricting in 2012 "Buying of consciences".	2013 Legislatives: Invention of results, with no poll Minutes, inversion of the majority.	Disorganization of opposition, multiple voting substitution of minutes. Elimination of Ibni Oumar Mahamat Saleh in 2008.

Freedom of expression	Minimum press freedom. No freedom to demonstrate.	Minimum press freedom. Right to demonstrate obtained in 2013.	Minimum press freedom. No freedom to demonstrate.
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B - Steps in the Electoral Process

	Congo-Brazzaville	Djibouti	Chad
Electoral process Before Vote	Removal of 2-term limit, with massacre. Date brought forward. No updating of very bad electoral register. Electoral commission under control. No correction of the electoral process according to recommendations (e.g. OIF) EU refused to observe.	Destruction of Agreement Framework 30.12.14, USN attacked 21.12.15. Imprisonments and disorganization of the USN. Electoral Commission under control. Low collection rate of voter cards. Electoral register inaccessible Refusal by IOG a EU experts mission.	Electoral biometrics added. According to 2007 (Morpho) agreement positive, but lack of transparency. Registration of minors and foreigners. Swelling numbers of voters in some areas. Civil society repression. 2-month EU expert mission. AU only international observation.
Candidatures Campaign	Meetings prevented, repression. Disproportion of means.	USN stopped from participating as USN. Disproportion of means. Partisan use of civil service. Imbalance and censorship on national television.	Ngarlely Yorongar excluded. Disproportion of means. Internet and social networks disconnected.
Conduct of the vote	Internet and SMS cut: Country isolation and army came out.	Opposition prevented from monitoring polling stations with 'papers' and police force. Non-compliant counting procedures. Faking of unsigned minutes. "Buying of consciences" Low turnout.	Military ordered to vote Idriss Déby, some disappeared. In North: maximum fraud: opposition delegates chased away, ballot stuffing and rigging of thousands of records, voter cards trafficked
Compilation of results and appeals	Passage in round ¹ 60,39% Official announcement of false results before counting. No official results according to compilation of minutes. Internet cut to prevent real compilation. The opposition with 80% of the minutes gives Sassou Nguesso 4th. Attention diverted by violent armed repression.	Passage in round ¹ 87.07% Number of voters swollen by addition of fictitious voters to compilation. (Inconsistent between percentage figures and number of electors) Compilation of results based on the fraudulent minutes (some were 100% for IOG) Unsigned minutes shown on television. Results not displayed in polling stations.	Victory in first round 59.92% Results differ between minutes and electoral commission. Added 20.9 : Failure to comply with the compilation process: no intermediate compilation in cities in North and replacement of minutes at the headquarters of the MPS. Maximum fraud in North: between 90 and 95% for Deby in 12 regions of the North. With maximum 100% in the North, he would have only 42% nationally. Military intimidation of the population 21-22 April (many deaths). Limited social media and Internet access. Texting cut off from 9-23 April and more. The opposition, with the minutes of 9 regions in the South says Deby is 4th.

The **Collective for Solidarity with Social and Political Struggle in Africa** has devoted itself to a number of events and crises, focusing on electoral processes.

Presentation and List of Actions Undertaken

October 2016, Gabon : Open letter to UN, EU and President of France: request for democracy
July 2016, Gabon : Presidential election of 27 August: repression before an Electoral coup
May 2016, Congo Brazzaville, Djibouti, Chad : The vicious circle of electoral processes without democracy
April 2016, Equatorial Guinea : Open letter to European union and french, spanish and american governments
April 2016, Djibouti, France, Ue: Analysis of the electoral process before the presidential election of 8 April
April 2016: Chad, France: Analysis of the electoral process before the presidential election of 10 April
March 2016, Congo Brazzaville: Analysis of the electoral process before the presidential election of 20 March
March 2016, Congo Brazzaville, Djibouti, Chad: Open letter to EU on 3 presidential without democracy
January 2016 : Djibouti, 21 December 2015 massacre and the brutal stopping of the electoral process
December 2015 : Congo Brazzaville : An Analysis of the Constitutional Coup d'Etat – An Open Letter to the UN, EU and the President of France
October 2015 : Congo Brazzaville : A Constitutional Coup d'Etat – An Open Letter to the European Union
July 2015, Togo and European Policy: Letter to the European Union about Togo and the democratization of Africa (reply in French)
May 2015, Togo : Letter to the UN, UE, OIF: presidential elections and support for democratization in Africa
April 2015, Togo: Presidential election, are democracy and political change possible?
February 2015, Nine proposals to the European Union to support democratization in Africa
February 2015, EU and African elections in 2015 and 2016: revive Europe relationship - Africa through increased support to democratization'
November 2014, Chad, widespread repression against demonstrators cut international communications
October 2014 Burkina Faso, Africa: limiting the number of presidential terms, no exception is no longer acceptable
October 2014, Chad, support for civil society in Chad following the day 'dead city'
March 2014, CAR and Chad, influence and involvement in CAR I Déby of mid-2012 to January 2014
January 2014, Djibouti, press repression, electoral disputes and European politics
December 2013, Chad, Information Package on possible rehabilitation of Idriss Déby
November 2013, Togo, press following the visit of Faure Gnassingbé at the Elysee
October 2013, Chad, release on French policy in Chad
September 2013, Cameroon, communicated on legislative
July 2013, policy of France in Africa, statement on military influence
May 2013, Equatorial Guinea, parliamentary elections and elections Oil Press
April 2013, Togo, business fires, letter to Laurent Fabius
February 2013, Djibouti, Togo, Cameroon, Guinea, elections: open letter to National Assembly
February 2013, Djibouti, elections: press
January 2013, Togo, elections, collective open letter to the European Union
July 2012, Congo Brazzaville, elections, collective statement
December 2011, Gabon, general elections: information package
October 2011, Cameroon, presidential election: information package, mobilization and rally
2010: fifty years of independence: participation in organizing the demonstration on July 14, 2010
March 2010, Togo, presidential election: mobilization, advocacy and communicated to EU