



PROGRESSIVE PEOPLE'S PARTY

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For Immediate Release

The Progressive People's Party (PPP) has learned about the use of the Ghana Armed Forces in civil matters. We are in a civilian, democratic dispensation; so, deploying the military to exert force domestically must be condemned by all. We are of the opinion that if there is an extreme situation where the President needs to use the military in severe or unprecedented ways domestically that can affect Ghanaian citizens, then it is of utmost importance for him to secure specific authority from Parliament.

Similarly, it is important that we do not allow the authorities to act in a fanciful manner capable of creating fear and panic and also preventing civilians from exercising their democratic rights. We are very much concerned about the reports that a security contingent which includes the military and the Ghana Immigration Service have been deployed heavily into some communities along the Ghana-Togo boarder such as Wudoaba, Korpeya and Anoenu since Monday, June 22, 2020.

It would be recalled that not too long ago, Maj. Bright Basuglo, the Chief Instructor at the jungle warfare school in the Eastern Region, is reported to have said that, "the military is fully prepared for the December polls and Ghanaians must believe in us." The question we are asking is, should the military be used to exert force domestically against Ghanaians in a civilian dispensation?

It is interesting to note that in 2012, the then Acting Chief of Defence Staff, Rear Admiral Quarshie reiterated that "the Army was prepared to ensure that Ghana was peaceful before, during and after the 2012 presidential and parliamentary elections." How was the military prepared then as they are now to get into the middle of a civilian democratic activity?

We contrast this willingness of the Ghanaian Armed Forces to be used by a civilian administration to what happened in the USA recently, when authorities used tear gas and rubber bullets to scatter protesters in the Lafayette Square, to enable President Donald Trump take a picture in front of a Church. In the case of the U.S., the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Mark Milley, recently apologized in a video commencement address to the National Defense University for accompanying President Trump to the photo opportunity at the Washington, D.C., church.

"My presence in that moment and in that environment created a perception of the military involvement in domestic politics. As a

commissioned uniformed officer, it was a mistake that I have learned from", Milley said.

Milley, who wore combat fatigues during the controversial appearance with Trump on the streets of the nation's capital, also said he was angry about "the senseless and brutal killing of George Floyd."

Our military must learn from best practices and resist the repeated temptations to get themselves involved in civilian issues. The Akufo-Addo Administration must understand that we are no more in a military junta where the military could be deployed in civilian matters. We call on the administration to condemn in no uncertain terms the ethnocentric comments made by the MP for Adansi Asokwa, Mr. K.T. Hammond about the people in the Volta Region.

It is our considered opinion that in a constitutional era, state actors must avoid sending a terrible message to create the impression that we are now militarising domestic law enforcement and risk damaging the military's relationship with the broader civilian population. We owe ourselves a responsibility to strengthen the constitutional dispensation that has allowed political parties to compete and win power to administer the affairs of the nation.

The president should not try to portray himself as being more in charge than he actually is. Say NO to the deployment of the military in domestic issues.

Signed,

Paa Kow Ackon
Communication Director