



# African Union

Distr.: General  
18 June 2026

Original: English

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## Resolution 2026/0001

### Resolution adopted by African Union on 18 June 2026

#### Promoting Continental Response to Coups and Democratic Backsliding

*The African Union,*

*Recalling* Article 4(p) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, which condemns and rejects unconstitutional changes of government,

*Deeply concerned* by the wave of military coups that have affected Mali (2020, 2021), Chad (2021), Guinea (2021), Sudan (2021), Burkina Faso (2022), Niger (2023) and Gabon (2023), representing a significant reversal of democratic progress on the continent,

*Alarmed* that the number of African countries considered democratic-leaning has declined from 31 out of 54 in 2019 to just 22 today, indicating a continent-wide trend of democratic backsliding,

*Recognising* that unconstitutional changes of government are frequently rooted in structural conditions including youth unemployment, corruption, weak institutions and security sector failures rather than isolated political events,

*Affirming* the primary importance of African-led solutions and the sovereignty of member states, while recognising that the AU has both the right and responsibility to intervene in grave circumstances,

*Noting* the limits of punitive measures alone, as demonstrated by Niger, where regional sanctions have failed to restore constitutional order,

*Pointing out* the importance of a united continental response to coups and democratic backsliding for the goals and values of the African Union,

*Recognizing* the role of the African Peace and Security architecture (APSA) in creating a continental response,

*Emphasizing* the goals of Agenda 2063 and the importance of democratic structures in achieving them,

*Acknowledging* the important role of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Mechanisms (RMs), including ECOWAS, IGAD, and the SADC, as the first line of response in addressing democratic backsliding within their respective regions, while recognising the need for stronger continental coherence and coordination,

*Reaffirms* its commitment to the principle that Africa's democratic future must be built by Africans, through cooperation, dialogue and continental solidarity,

1. **Calls** upon all member states of the African Union to reaffirm their commitment to constitutional governance and to refrain from any action that undermines elected institutions, such as:
  - (a) military coups,
  - (b) rebel takeovers,
  - (c) mercenary interventions,

- (d) refusal to hand over power to oppositional parties after fair, free and transparent elections,
  - (e) illegally removing presidential term limits except when legal and non-violent circumstances are in place;
2. **Requests** the AU Commission to establish a Continental Early Warning and Democratic Resilience Unit (CEDRU) tasked with:
- (a) monitoring indicators of democratic backsliding including electoral manipulation, restrictions on civil society and growing military influence in politics,
  - (b) reporting quarterly to the Peace and Security Council on high-risk member states,
  - (c) coordinating with Regional Economic Communities to share intelligence and early warning data,
  - (d) organized by a monitoring panel consisting of states with strong expertise and democratic experiences Democratic Resilience Mentorship Program where historically stable democracies share best practices regarding judicial independence and anti-corruption frameworks with states undergoing transitions,
  - (e) integrating religious leaders and highly reputed leaders from civil society organizations into the monitoring panel,
  - (f) action taken against such should include conducting structural vulnerability assessments to identify institutional decay and governance deficits, alerting the PSC to issue warnings, monitoring electoral integrity, and enforcing the ACDEG to hold member states legally accountable,
  - (g) the integration with the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS),
  - (h) collaborating with the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) to utilize its governance assessments, peer-review processes, and recommendations in identifying and addressing risks of democratic backsliding among Member States;
3. **Encourages** the CEWS after its integration into the CEDRU to increase its monitoring of political tensions, electoral disputes and governance crises and to provide regular reports to the PSC;
4. **Urges** the AU and RECs to prioritise preventive diplomacy and political dialogue before crises escalate, including:
- (a) deploying AU mediation teams to member states showing early signs of institutional instability,
  - (b) offering technical assistance for electoral processes, judicial independence and security sector reform;
5. **Decides** that where unconstitutional changes of government occur, the AU shall apply a graduated response framework consisting of:
- (a) suspension from AU activities and condemnation by the Peace and Security Council, if measures such as mediation do not lead to acknowledgement and changes in a given timeframe, which is to be communicated openly,
  - (b) targeted sanctions against coup leaders and their financial networks, not the broader population,
  - (c) a clear and time-bound roadmap for the return to constitutional order, developed jointly with the concerned state;
6. **Encourages** member states to invest in the structural conditions that prevent coups, including youth employment programmes, professional security sectors loyal to the constitution, and independent electoral and anti-corruption institutions;
7. **Affirms** that the AU's response to unconstitutional changes of government must be consistent, timely, and impartial across all regions of the continent, and that selective application of sanctions or suspension mechanisms undermines the credibility of the AU as an institution;

8. **Urges** the African Union Peace and Security Council (AU-PSC), in close coordination with Regional Economic Communities (RECs), to expand the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) towards strengthening early-warning mechanisms by measures such as:
  - (a) integrating civil society actors into detecting and addressing signs of democratic backsliding before constitutional crises erupt,
  - (b) conducting mandatory, bi-annual joint threat assessments between the AU-PSC and the Regional Early Warning Centres (REWCs) of the RECs;
9. **Urges** the AU to prioritise socioeconomic development and poverty reduction as foundational elements of its strategy against democratic backsliding and thus taking measures such as:
  - (a) investing in youth employment,
  - (b) protecting local businesses,
  - (c) establishing an AU-level fund for democratic resilience that channels resources toward states showing early signs of institutional fragility, providing economic stabilisation support before political crises escalate;
10. **Strongly urges** the 55 member states of the African Union to a strong commitment to the African Peace and Security architecture (APSA), as well as the goals and values of Agenda 2063;
11. **Proposes** stronger AU elections observations missions based on the 5th Edition of “The Joint Specialized Training for African Union Short-Term Election Observers” whilst ensuring that such missions operate strictly as neutral, objective reporting bodies without executive or legislative power within the subjected nation, to preserve a nations sovereignty to:
  - (a) prevent democratic backsliding,
  - (b) prevent the weakening of democratic elections by external forces;
12. **Encourages** cooperation between governments, educational institutions, civil society organizations and community leaders to strengthen democratic culture and social cohesion;
13. **Requests** the African Union Peace and Security Council to prioritize mediation efforts immediately following unconstitutional changes of government in order to prevent violent escalation, facilitate dialogue among stakeholders and support peaceful political transitions;
14. **Calls upon** the Peace and Security Council (PSC) to strengthen cooperation with Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in order to identify member states at risk of political instability at an early stage and support them through dialogue, consultation and institutional strengthening;
15. **Requests** the African Union Commission to support mediation and dialogue missions in member states experiencing severe political tensions in order to prevent escalation and unconstitutional changes of government;
16. **Recommends** the deployment of AU Election Observation Missions to member states requesting support in conducting free and transparent elections, thereby increasing public trust in democratic processes;
17. **Encourages** member states to establish national dialogue platforms involving governments, opposition groups, civil society and youth representatives in order to peacefully address political tensions and strengthen national unity;
18. **Requests** the African Union Commission to provide technical assistance, upon request, in the areas of constitutional reform, institution-building and anti-corruption measures;
19. **Calls upon** member states to address the structural causes of political instability through:
  - (a) vocational education and training programmes for young people,

- (b) infrastructure development that improves access to essential services and strengthens state legitimacy,
  - (c) social projects that strengthen trust between citizens and state institutions and promote social cohesion,
  - (d) measures to increase transparency, accountability and public confidence in state institutions,
  - (e) gender equality and the meaningful participation of women in political decision-making and peace building processes,
  - (f) fair political participation of at ethnics, religious and regional communities;
20. **Recommends** stronger cooperation among member states in combating terrorism, organized crime and violent extremism, as these factors weaken state authority and contribute to political instability;
21. **Affirms** that all measures against coups and democratic backsliding must respect the sovereignty of member states and that dialogue, prevention and institution-building should be prioritized before punitive measures are considered;
22. **Stresses** that long-term stability can only be achieved by improving living conditions, creating economic opportunities and strengthening public trust in state institutions throughout the continent;
23. **Further requests** the AU Commission to report back to this committee within twelve months on the implementation of this resolution and the operational status of the CEDRU;
24. **Invites** delegates and editors to delete all instructional wording and replace it with topic-specific content before publishing the resolution.

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| <b>Vote result</b>  | Adopted                         |
|                     | <i>In favour:</i> 41            |
|                     | <i>Against:</i> 3               |
|                     | <i>Abstentions:</i> 5           |
| <b>Date of vote</b> | 18 June 2026                    |
| <b>Final editor</b> | Presidents of the African Union |