



# ARCHBISHOP TUTU FELLOWS ALUMNI NETWORK

## **Statement by the Tutu Fellows on the Deteriorating Situation in Chad**

March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021

The Archbishop Desmond Tutu Leadership Fellows (“Tutu Fellows”), a diverse group of civic, political, business leaders, and artists from 43 African countries, are united in condemning the violence taking place in Chad as the April 2021 presidential election draws near.

We are deeply concerned by the detention of hundreds of peaceful protesters and call upon the Government of Chad to adhere to its national and African obligations, release those detained arbitrarily and protect their right to peaceful assembly.

The incidents which led to Dr. Succes Masra and his companions to take refuge in the US Embassy in N’Djamena and the deployment of heavy military equipment and forces to the house of a presidential candidate in the forthcoming election, mark unacceptable escalations in the use of force and violence by State security institutions towards citizens seeking a fair, transparent and inclusive electoral process.

These events confirm a negative pattern of shrinking space for the opposition, civil society, human rights defenders, and independent voices after similar violent clashes occurred in Nigeria, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Uganda, Mali and Algeria over the past year. We, the Tutu Fellows, whose ambition is to see an acceleration of the socio-economic and political development of Africa, request that our leaders - our role models - denounce these actions with their last energy.

The circumstances of the events in Chad must be investigated impartially. The security of political leaders and citizens demonstrating in the coming weeks must be guaranteed. Equally, protests must remain peaceful, Chad has lived through too many military conflicts.

Give peace and dialogue a chance!

We call upon the African Union’s Chairperson and the Chair of the Commission to uphold in Chad, and in all its member States, the relevant principles and goals of the Constitutive Act and the Protocol on Amendments to the Constitutive Act of the African Union which are as follows:

- Achieve greater unity and solidarity between African countries and their people;
- Promote peace, security, and stability on the continent;



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- Promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance;
- Promote and protect human and peoples' rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other relevant human rights instruments;

We call upon the International Community to press the government of Chad to fulfill its obligations under international conventions with regards to civil and political rights and to guarantee the right to freedom of expression.

If we truly believe that development cannot happen without peace, and peace can only be gained through dialogue and the opening of safe spaces for all daughters and sons of Africa to share their ideas and visions, then we must not tolerate, justify or turn a blind eye on such abuses of power.

We believe that the leaders of Africa need to be mindful of the role of its youth, harness their energy and innovation to achieve Vision 2063 for “an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens, representing a dynamic force in the international arena.”

What is currently happening in Tchad does not bode well for achieving Vision 2063 and sets the continent back.

## **The Archbishop Desmond Tutu Leadership Fellows**

### **About the Tutu Fellows**

Tutu Fellows are leaders and change-makers, forming a dynamic network of Africans passionately committed to the continent's transformation, bridging the divide between nations and ensuring that Africa is set center-stage in global affairs.