



## EQUATORIAL GUINEA : ORGANIZATION OF GENERAL ELECTIONS ; HOLDING OF AN EARLY PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 20, 2022

### Douala-Cameroon: REDHAC Press Release N°031/02/11/2022

Douala-Malabo, October 31, 2022: The Human Rights Defenders Network in Central Africa (REDHAC), in its capacity as an observer, is closely following the news related to the general elections scheduled for November 20, 2022.

Since September 5, 2022, REDHAC has taken note of the organization of an early presidential election in November 2022, approved by the parliament at the same time as the organization of legislative and municipal elections.

While only the legislative and municipal elections were scheduled to take place on Sunday, November 20, 2022, according to the same electoral calendar the presidential election was supposed to be held at the end of the first quarter of 2023. But to everyone's surprise, the Equatoguinean parliament, without any real motivation, approved the holding of an early presidential election on the same date as the legislative and municipal elections.

#### **As a reminder,**

The idea of anticipating the presidential election had on the one hand been justified by the supporters of the current regime as a measure aimed at reducing the expenses of the country which is already weakened by the various crises that are shaking the world; but on the other hand the anticipated organization of this presidential election has caused a controversy within the public opinion with regard to many issues that are emerging here and there in this case the designation of the candidates of the various political formations before the holding of the poll.

Indeed, the party in power (Democratic Party of Equatorial Guinea PDGE) which presents a parliamentary obesity because of its coalition with several other political formations; that is to say 14 in total from the presidential majority. This situation undoubtedly explains why the PDGE, led by President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, has taken over 99 of the 100 seats in the National Assembly and all 70 seats in the Senate.

Also, the unanimous appointment of outgoing President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo on September 23, 2022, by the executive board of the PDGE, which has ruled the country for more than four decades with an iron fist, has been analyzed by some as a government strategy to retain power.

In this vein, government authorities decided to close the land borders with Cameroon and Gabon on Monday, October 31, 2022 to avoid "infiltration of groups" that could "destabilize" the presidential campaign scheduled to begin on November 3, 2022.



Two candidates, Essono Ondo of the Convergence for Social Democracy (CPDS) and Buenaventura Monsuy Asumu of the Social Democratic Coalition Party (PCSD) will face the outgoing president.

**From the above, the Network of Human Rights Defenders in Central Africa (REDHAC) and its Country Coalition-Equatorial Guinea:**

- remain concerned about the risks that human rights defenders in Equatorial Guinea are running, but also about the situation of foreign nationals in light of the massive expulsions that have been recorded in recent days;
- vehemently condemn any act of xenophobia or violence before, during and after the holding of the said elections;
- protest against the restriction of civic space under the pretext of the organization of elections.

**To the Government of Equatorial Guinea,  
The Network of Human Rights Defenders in Central Africa (REDHAC) and its Country Coalition-Equatorial Guinea:**

- ask to ensure the protection and security of human rights defenders and the respect of civic space in all circumstances;
- request that the government work to ensure the smooth running of the electoral process in a climate of peace and transparency.

Finally to the African Union (African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights) (ACHPR) **REDHAC and its Country Coalition-Equatorial Guinea, recommend to call on the State of Equatorial Guinea to scrupulously respect :**

- the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights;
- the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG);
- the principles and guidelines on human and peoples' rights in the fight against terrorism in Africa.

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