

# President of ECOWAS court laments over enforcement of its judgments

President of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Court of Justice, Justice Edward Amoako Asante has lamented over the inability of one hundred and six (106) of its judgment to be enforced by member states while another eleven (11) are outstanding against ECOWAS institutions at the opening of the 2023 first Ordinary Session in Abuja Nigeria.

According to him Parliament is the custodians of the peoples' mandate within the West African democratic architecture, hence parliament will need to contribute its effort to ensure the survival of our democracy. And in the spirit of deepening relations between their two institutions, the interest of the community will be better served if they work together to secure a significant improvement in the level of enforcement of the decisions of the Court because of the inherent benefits to the democratic journey. The court has contributed immensely to the strengthening of some underpinnings of democracy such as respect for human rights and the protection of the freedom of expression by holding Member States accountable for their International Treaty obligations.

However, recent democratic reversals in the three Member States of Burkina Faso, Guinea and Mali eloquently demonstrate the fragility of our cherished democracies across the region and the need for collective vigilance and coherent action in its protection. He further noted that, the military coups in these three Member States and the tension that accompanies elections in Member States point to the need for the identification of the underlying issues that confront our democracy and the implementation of measures for securing it, which are mainly governance related as well as other issues in order to ensure that our democratic practice responds to the yearnings of our people.

Justice Edward Asante therefore noted that, it's reassuring that female parliamentarians under the aegis of the ECOWAS Female Parliamentarians Association (ECOFEPA) hosted a town hall meeting last week on how to rejuvenate

Democracy by giving voice to Women and Youth.

In addition, he pointed out that he understands that, the first Ordinary session of parliament will, among other things, be mainly devoted to the consideration of the report of the President of the Commission on the implementation of the Community Work Programme. "Considering the enhanced role of the parliament, I am confident that through the consideration of the report and the ensuing discussions, recommendations will emerge that will enhance the realization of the objectives of the Community".

And hopes the current session of parliament will also propose measures that will contribute to improving the level of enforcement of the decisions of the Court through their joint efforts for the benefit of the region, particularly its citizens who see in the Community the ultimate platform for improving their lives through collective action.

