

# Sit-tight leaders responsible for resurgence of Military coup in Africa

– Akufo-Addo

Ghanaian President, Nana Akufo-Addo, said democracy in West Africa is in danger with the recent incidences of military takeovers in the sub-region. President Akufo-Addo stated this at a high-level parliamentary seminar on the 'Role of the ECOWAS Parliament Relating the Challenges of Unconstitutional Regime Change and Presidential Term Limits in West Africa', organised by the ECOWAS Parliament in Winneba, Ghana. The Ghanaian President while declaring the seminar open said the region is confronted with a difficult economic, political, social insecurity situation. He said despite the considerable progress made by the community in the areas of democracy, good governance and the rule of law since the 1990s, "we are at the moment witnesses a significant decline in our democratic relations". "This observation is bitter and implacable, today four member ECOWAS States are led by military government as a result of coup d'etat, this has unfortunately created a stare palpable anxiety and tension in every corner of the region, raising the spectra of Region instability which we thought had been banished forever. Equally apart is the culture of violence and disputes that characterize the period of electing some of our leaders. "In my opinion, regional democracy is currently facing three serious threats.

Firstly, is the attempted confiscation of democracy by elites who engage through legal act in the manipulation of constitutional rules and the subjugation of the institutions of the republic with the sole aim of remaining in power. "Secondly is the emerging remilitarization of governance with the return once again of the military unto the political scene. We've neither consulted nor received any mandate from the people on whose behalf they purport to act. "Lastly is the wanton desire to destroy democracy by terrorist groups and armed criminal gangs which see to start lawlessness in the absent of freedom in our region. "I want to reaffirm that in the contemporary world, the only legitimacy for any leader is through a mandate that is freely given by the people in a fair, peaceful and transparent election. This is the most tangible and objective way to know and recognize the commonwealth which is the wealth of the people. "The election of Mohammed Bazum in Niger inboard this recognition of the commonwealth and that is why the coup in Niger is particularly tragic for the consolidation of democracy in our region. "It is also important to remind us that democracy is not a western concept as some believe but rather a universal concept of general application," he said.

According to him, the history of the world, including that of Africa testifies that the process of electing and installing leaders in democratic circumstances provides the best form of government. "Modern history has taught us that tyranny, oppression and totalitarian government do not last long. No matter how a people reject democracy and civil liberty circumstances will always force them back to embrace them," he added. President Akufo-Addo however, urged Parliamentarians to speak against the extension of presidential tenures by some leaders to strengthen their grip and power adding that the action tend to result in discontent among the



Nana Akufo-Addo, Ghanaian President

populace to create fertile grounds for which military intervention feed. "There should be no backsliding in support for democratic values anchored on the promotion of the rule of law and respect for human rights. "It is important for all of us in the adherence of democracy to remember not to underestimate the importance of parliament, the consequently not to undermine it's worth. "We cannot emphasize enough the role of Parliament in exercising the checks and balances needed on the executive, we cannot emphasize enough the role of Parliament as the voice of the people and we cannot emphasize enough the role of Parliament in setting the tone for public discuss in our respective countries. "It is for the good of our nations that our parliaments development the capacity to insist on accountability in all aspect of our land and no institution is better suited for this than the one who houses the representatives of the people" he said. The Ghanaian President further assured that the authority of Heads of States is expectant of resolutions from the seminar. "Brainstorming on all this major challenges which I have just outlined in the search for solutions to the political and security challenges facing our region is the imperative mission of this seminar, one of the expected outcomes is to help us understand even better the root causes of democratic regression and political I stability in the region it all will be better to address. "This seminar over the next few days must propose measures to ensure the anchoring of democracy and republican values both at the level of political elites and citizens of the community. This will help towards preserving the peace and stability of the region.