

Dear Heads of State and Government of the CPLP countries,

On February 20, 2014, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP), recommended that Equatorial Guinea become a full member of the CPLP, and that decision must be ratified during the conference to be held one month from now, in Dili.

One of the "progresses" recorded by the ministers, under the July 2012 Accession Programme, was the announcement of the adoption of a moratorium on the death penalty. However, organizations such as Amnesty International reported that shortly before, at least four people, "if not nine", were executed. These deaths raise serious questions about the motivation of the presented moratorium.

Moreover, it is a fact that nothing has been inserted in the Constitution or the ordinary criminal law which would allow one to securely conclude that the country intends to end the death penalty. The announcement of the "temporary moratorium on the application of the death penalty", contained in the Presidential Resolution No. 426/2014, is just that: a decision, temporary, that was not even submitted for the parliamentary ratification or popular referendum. We continue to observe several extrajudicial killings by government security forces.

It is therefore incomprehensible that the Ministers have concluded there is "progress" in this area.

According to Amnesty: "Equatorial Guinea has a very troubling human rights situation, having failed to adopt many of the recommendations made in the context of the periodic review of the United Nations." Also Human Rights Watch and the U.S. State Department, in a February report, denounce extrajudicial detention where detainees are left without access to the outdoors, enforced disappearances, torture and restrictions on the exercise of political and democratic rights.

Corruption at all levels is another serious problem. According to several international organizations, the eldest son of President Obiang, when he was Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, extorted public funds channeled through fictitious companies into bank accounts under his control. Teodorin Obiang was wanted by international justice but that did not impede his father from revising the country's Constitution to create the post of second vice president for his son.

It is therefore not surprising that, for the second consecutive year, Equatorial Guinea has been in 163<sup>rd</sup> position in a ranking of 177 countries, in the 2013 Corruption Perception Index of Transparency International. Despite very high revenues from natural resources, Obiang and his regime keep, deliberately, 70% of the population living below the poverty line.

In short, little or nothing has changed since the 2012 Maputo Summit – other than propaganda maneuvers and buying favors on the part of Equatorial Guinea. The millions of dollars that the regime has invested cannot, however, conceal human rights violations.

This therefore risks violating the CPLP statutes, which will discredit this institution and may jeopardize the rights of the people of Equatorial Guinea, the signers of this letter urge Your Excellencies to:

1. Reject accession of Equatorial Guinea to the CPLP as a full member as long as, in law and practice in the country, the conditions of the CPLP Statutes, namely the effective abolition of the death penalty, remain unproven;
2. Establish formal and substantive prerequisites for political democratization and channeling of national revenues for the effective improvement of the living conditions of the people, under the guiding principles set out in Article 5 of the CPLP Statutes;
3. Require that democratic practices, good governance and respect for Human Rights are promoted among its members and to reflect the activities and strategies of broadening and deepening the organization under Article 5.2 of the CPLP Statutes.

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