



PRESS STATEMENT

September 26, 2023

To all Media Houses

CCG CONDEMNS UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT OF POLICE DURING PEACEFUL PROTEST

The Christian Council of Ghana condemns unreservedly the unprofessional conduct of officers of the Ghana Police Service during the protest organised by the pressure group Democracy Hub on Thursday September 21, 2023. The media reports of the arrest and detention of some peaceful protestors and journalists is unfortunate, just to say the least.

The Council views the behaviour of the police officers as unethical and a bad reflection on the country's democratic credentials. The reaction of the police to the peaceful protest goes against their mandate to maintain peace, protect life and property and the dignity of citizens. Their actions do not only taint the country's hard won international reputation as the bastion of democracy in Africa, but it also infringes on the public's right to assemble and protest peacefully granted under the 1992 Constitution.

The Council understands that the Police Administration was informed about the protest about a month prior to the event but insisted that the Service did not have the numbers to provide protection for the protesters. We find it strange that the Police found the numbers to arrest and detain some protesters and even journalists during the march.

In as much as the leaders of CCG appreciate the efforts of the Police Service to keep the peace in our country, the Service in discharging its duties should not act in any way to be seen as taking away the constitutional rights of citizens. We encourage our service personnel to exercise patience and carry out their duties professionally and in a manner that protects life and property without abusing the rights of citizens to protest.

The Council therefore calls on the Police Administration, as the custodian of law enforcement, not to continue to act in a manner that makes the public see it in negative light. We also strongly appeal to the Police Administration to ensure that citizens seeking to exercise their rights to peaceful gatherings and protests within the law are not prevented from doing so, and they should not be arrested. These occasions can also become an opportunity for the Police Service to improve its rapport with the civilian population and to improve its image in the eyes of the public.

The Council also urges citizens to at all times ensure to maintain peace, and in as much as they have the right to protest, they must do so within the requirements of the law.

The leadership of CCG wishes to encourage all Ghanaians to cherish the peaceful coexistence we enjoy in our nation and work to maintain it. As we seek peace, we must collaborate to ensure that justice is done in all spheres of life. Therefore, we call for swift investigations into Thursday's incident and demand that anyone found guilty is made to face the full rigors of the law to instill confidence in our democratic system.

May God bless our home land Ghana and make our nation great and strong.

Signed

Rev. Dr. Cyril Fayose
General Secretary