

Ghana Opposition Parties Form United Front Against U.S. Military Deal

AFRICOM effort to deepen its penetration of the continent faces resistance

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A leader of the second largest political party in the West African state of Ghana, the Deputy Secretary General of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) Koku Anyidoho, was arrested on March 27 after making comments about the New Patriotic Party (NPP) government of current President Nana Akufo-Addo.

Anyidoho in an interview over a national radio network Happy FM severely criticized a military agreement between the Ghana and the United States which would in essence establish a Pentagon base inside the country. This decision was initiated by the executive branch of the government and approved by parliament on March 23.

Opposition Members of Parliament (MPs) who opposed the character of the deal walked out of the legislative branch prior to the vote. The agreement has generated controversy leading to demonstrations in its aftermath. The NDC, a centrist-left organization, is the main opposition party in the Ghana parliament.

The NDC Deputy Secretary General said that if the deal was not revoked there should be a political coup against the NPP regime. Immediately the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) opened an inquiry into the statements by Anyidoho. He was later taken into custody and spent two nights in detention under the authority of the Bureau of National Investigations (BNI).

Anyidoho was targeted during a joint press conference called by various opposition parties in Ghana. An article published by a news source inside the country said:

“He was picked up at the International Press Centre in Accra today (March 27) during a press conference by a group of opposition political parties known as the Inter-Party Coalition for National Sovereignty, who are kicking against the Ghana-U.S. Defense Cooperation agreement ratified by Parliament last Friday (March 23). The group comprises the People’s National Convention [PNC], the National Democratic Congress [NDC], the Convention People’s Party [CPP], the Progressive People’s Party [PPP], and the All People’s Congress [APC]. The press conference was attended by a number of the parties’ top officials including NDC’s General Secretary Johnson AsieduNketia, Hassan Ayariga of the APC and Bernard Mornah, PNC Chairman, who condemned the invasion of the press conference to arrest Mr. Ayidoho, saying it was an attempt to silence them and a threat to freedom of speech.”

Akufo-Addo’s NPP represents the political heirs of the forces who opposed the Pan-Africanist

Dr. Kwame Nkrumah and the Convention People's Party (CPP), which led the national liberation struggle that won independence from the British in 1957. In July 1960, Nkrumah became president of the First Republic just three years in the wake of independence.

After the U.S.-engineered coup against the Nkrumah government on February 24, 1966, a military and police regime known as the National Liberation Council (NLC) served for two years until elections were held in 1968 which brought to power the conservative pro-western elements which had always opposed the anti-imperialist and Socialist policies of the Nkrumaist forces. A number of additional military interventions in Ghana politics occurred during the 1970s and early 1980s.

Akufo-Addo, whose father was former Supreme Court Judge Edward Akufo-Addo, served as president of the Second Republic of Ghana between December 1970 and January 1972. The Second Republic was overthrown in a military coup by General Ignatius Kutu Acheampong.

Nana Akufo-Addo was elected as president in late 2016 amid worsening economic conditions in Ghana during this period. The situation was not an isolated one where with the decline of commodity prices on the international market prompted many emerging states into recession when the prices of oil, natural gas, strategic minerals and agricultural products dropped precipitously as a direct result of U.S. foreign policy under the administration of President Barack Obama.

Strikes broke out in Ghana during 2014-2015 when oil workers, physicians, railway employees, educators and others were not able to secure adequate salary increases while the national currency, the cedi, declined in its real value. Similar developments occurred in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Angola, all of which are leading states on the continent.

Opposition Alliance and Mass Demonstrations

Although there have been two previous military agreements with the U.S. government in 1998 and 2015, the announcement about the enhanced deployment of Pentagon troops has set off a firestorm. Ghana is a strategically located state which has agricultural (cocoa), mineral (gold) and energy (oil) resources which are being produced and exported on the international market.



Demonstration against US military deal

Peacefmonline.com noted that documents in its possession revealed that the NDC government under former President Jerry Rawlings in 1998 and the previous administration of President John Mahama, also of the NDC, had both signed military agreements with the Pentagon. Therefore, this media outlet surmised that the NDC was being hypocritical in their opposition to the most recent deal signed by the NPP.

[This news agency says:](#)

“Peacefmonline.com has in its possession copies of a 1998 agreement signed by the Rawlings government with the USA; and also, an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement entered into by Ghana and the United States in 2015 signed by then Minister of Foreign Affairs under the erstwhile Mahama regime, Hannah Tetteh. A quick read through both documents (the 1998/2015 agreements) show little discrepancy in the 2018 agreement ratified in Parliament and those signed under the NDC 1 and 3 regimes headed by ex-President Jerry John Rawlings and Hannah Tetteh, respectively on the blind side of Ghana.”

In the aftermath of the approval of the March 2018 military deal with the Pentagon, opposition parties formed a Ghana First Patriotic Front (GFPPF) to agitate against the incursion by AFRICOM and the policies of the NPP administration. Official government statements have denied that the character of the agreement between Washington and Accra jeopardizes the sovereignty of Ghana as an independent nation.

However, the U.S. military has sought to spread its presence and influence throughout Africa over the last decade since the administration of former President George W. Bush. AFRICOM was formed under Bush in February 2008 and was expanded through the Obama administration. Since President Donald Trump has taken office more Pentagon and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) personnel have been deployed in Africa. There have been escalating clashes between Special Forces and local elements labelled as terrorists in Somalia and Niger.

A base of at least 4,000 Pentagon troops is stationed at Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti in the Horn of Africa. In Somalia at least one Pentagon soldier was killed in combat operations last year. During October 2017, four U.S. Green Berets were slain in a battle in Niger, also in West Africa. No concrete explanation has been provided as to the actual circumstances surrounding the deaths of these elite combatants.

Many Ghanaians want to avoid an escalation of violence within their country. Some have said that the mere existence of U.S. soldiers on their soil will invite attacks against the armed representatives of Washington.

On March 28 thousands took to the streets of Accra to denounce the military agreement with the Trump administration. According to one report: “A number of opposition politicians have joined in the demonstration, which started from the Kwame Nkrumah Circle and headed towards central Accra. Former Vice-President, Paa Kwesi Amissah Arthur and others who have declared interest in running for National Democratic Congress presidential candidacy, including Dr. Ekwow Spio-Garbrah, Sylvester Mensah and Prof. Joshua Alabi as well as parliamentarians Samuel Richard Quashigah, Okudzeto Ablakwa, James Kludze Avedzi and Rockson Dafeamekpor are all participating. Hassan Ayariga of the All Peoples Congress, Bernard Mornah, Chairman of the People’s National Convention, Socialist Forum convener

Kwesi Pratt Jnr. and BedeZiedin are among participants. Some of the participants in the Ghana First demonstration are bearing placards saying 'Ghana not for sale', 'Ghana is better than \$20 million', and 'Why would you betray Ghana for money' among others'."

Founder of Ghana Was Removed for Anti-Imperialist Stance

During the 1960s under the leadership of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the CPP categorically opposed U.S. military intervention in Africa. Nkrumah in his book entitled "Africa Must Unite", published in May 1963 at the founding of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, emphasized that there was no need for imperialist military bases in Africa.

Nkrumah was targeted by the former administration of the-then President Lyndon Johnson due to his anti-imperialist, Socialist and Pan-Africanist politics. His 1965 book, "Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism", attracted the ire of the U.S. which issued a letter of protest through the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs G. Mennen Williams. Just a few months after the publication of the book which identified U.S. imperialism as the major impediment to the development and unity of Africa, Nkrumah was overthrown in a coup while he was out of the country on a peace mission involving the occupation war of genocide in Vietnam waged by Washington for many years.

Today Ghana is the focus of Washington's military interests. Consequently, it will take a mass movement operating on behalf of the people of the nation that can defeat these attempts to spread the tentacles of imperialism throughout the continent.

Irrespective of the subtleties of the various characters of U.S. military presence in Africa it is only designed to facilitate the centuries-long exploitation and oppression of the people. The legitimate security and economic interests of Ghana and Africa as a whole will only be realized through the collective efforts of the masses themselves.

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