

Petition to Stop Political Violence in Tamale

*The above petition is online at <http://www.PetitionOnline.com/Tamale/petition.html> . Please support the petition by: (1) sending it to others; (2) creating a paper signature form for those who have no access to computers but wish to sign on. You may also contact the author (afaiddi@hotmail.com) with any comments or about other methods to support the petition. Thank you for your support and concern
- afa iddi*

To: Leaders of the two main Political Parties in Ghana; H.E. President John A. Kuffuor, New Patriotic Party (NPP) and Professor John Attah Mills, National Democratic Congress (NDC)

We, the undersigned, as peace - loving men and women residents, friends, and sympathizers of Tamale or the wider Dagbon and Ghanaian citizenry at home and abroad, do hereby protest the renewed violence in Tamale, caused in whole or in part by agents, operatives or cronies of the two main political parties; the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the main opposition party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC).

After a brief reprieve from dawn-to-dusk curfew for more than a year, from March 2002 to April 2003, the men, women and children of Tamale are again subjected to politically motivated violence, reportedly started by clashes between NPP and NDC supporters.

As of April 25, the Daily Graphic, reported the following casualties: four dead, including a student; twenty-five houses attacked, five completely burnt down; three vehicles, three motorbikes and six bicycles destroyed; two hundred and fifty people displaced; and a number of shops destroyed.

In the interest of preserving our burgeoning democracy, peace and development in Dagbon and Ghana at large, we call on you, as leaders of the parties in whose name these atrocities are committed, to take bold and decisive steps to bring calm and normalcy back to the people of Tamale and Dagbon. We specifically suggest you do the following:

1. Hold a joint press conference to denounce the violence and distance the parties you lead from those who planned, instigated, encouraged or participated in the violence. We also suggest you invite the leadership of all other political parties to join you at the press conference.
2. Make an official and public pledge to form a multi-partisan parliamentary committee with representation from all political parties, religious bodies, members of Council of State and civic leaders, to assist law enforcement to investigate and bring to book all persons behind the violence.
3. Pledge to publicly try all those involved without regard to party affiliation, official or social status.

4. There are reports that the security agencies are arresting individuals thought or known to be members of the opposition, address this concern by establishing a body from the committee (in #2), with powers to verify any arrests related to the violence, and make public names and party affiliation of all persons arrested.

5. Provide an avenue; a phone number, individual persons or email address for residents of Tamale to report any abuses or uneven- handed treatment by the security agencies occurring during the state of emergency.

We believe, once the rule of law is established, and people of all status are held accountable for their deeds, the leadership of Tamale and Dagbon will have no option but to make peace.

Respectfully submitted by the Undersigned

Sincerely,

The Undersigned