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Ghana

Mobilization against the high cost of living and corruption in Ghana

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Faced with a major economic crisis, the President of Ghana has been obliged to call on the IMF to restructure the country's debt while at the same time implementing a policy of austerity against the population.

Nana Akufo-Addo was elected in 2017 on the promise of a "Ghana Beyond Aid", expressing the desire for the country to no longer be dependent on international financial institutions and development aid from rich countries.

Economic crisis

For the President of this English-speaking state in West Africa, this in no way meant committing to an alternative economic path.

This paradigm shift meant changing the country's sources of funding, giving priority to borrowing on the international markets and putting an end to the succession of IMF plans, some fifteen since independence. The only result of this policy has been an increase in interest rates to around 8%. As a result, Ghana devotes half of its revenue to repaying its debt, which stands at around 63 billion dollars.

The main source of wealth is limited to the export of raw materials such as oil, gold and cocoa, without any processing policy. In the case of cocoa, for example, Ghana is not integrated into the value chain to increase its resources.

Corruption

In addition to Nana Akufo-Addo's liberal policies, the country is plagued by corruption. Be it in the oil sector, with the trial that has opened against Technip FMC, or the resignation at the beginning of 2020 of the anti-corruption prosecutor who denounced the interference of the presidency in judicial affairs. A presidency that also had to part company with its Secretary of State for Finance, caught red-handed asking for bribes, and its Minister for Sanitation and Water, who had more than a million dollars at home.

Mobilization

The drop in purchasing power is hitting Ghanaians hard, including those in the middle classes. Shopkeepers have lowered their curtains several times in protest at inflation, which stands at almost 37%. In the absence of social measures, protests against the high cost of living and corruption are a regular feature of life in the country and have rapidly taken on a political dimension. Civil society activists have set up "#AriseGhana", which organises street demonstrations. Like "Y'en a marre" in Senegal or "Balai Citoyen" in Burkina Faso, a youth organisation has also been set up, "#FixtheCountry".

The most popular slogan is undoubtedly "#OccupyJulorbiHouse", a play on the words "Jubilee House", which refers

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to the presidential palace, and "Julorbi", which in Ga means "Thieves".

The government's only response to these protests has been disproportionate police repression, to use Amnesty International's expression. In this respect, Ghana is far from being an exception.

*Translated by **International Viewpoint** from [l'Anticapitaliste](#).*

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