
As a movement that believes in the protection of Africans and their human rights, we recognise that leaders have an important role in implementing policies to tackle COVID-19 and prevent its spread.

However, it is with great sadness that in several countries we have noticed recurring incidents of human rights abuses by security forces that use excessive force on civilians in their efforts to enforce curfews and lockdowns ordered by governments implementing social distancing measures.

Africans Rising for Justice, Peace and Dignity condemns the violence deployed by government entities against the people they are mandated to protect. Our movement calls on all African governments to be considerate of the lives, safety, and well-being of all African citizens and residents at all times. We understand the intentions of governments are to curtail the spread of the COVID-19, but we deplore the fact that this crisis is providing security forces an opportunity to bully and terrorize unarmed civilians. Repression and coercion are not effective means of disciplining citizens. We believe that if nations across the world are able to maintain weeks of lockdowns without such human rights violations, it can also be achieved in Africa.

In the spirit of peace-building and sustainable development, we wish to propose more civil and legal ways of dealing with individuals who flout the laid down laws.

We call on various African governments to:

1. Publish regulations for security agencies that are enforcing social distancing measures.
2. Educate the masses on the importance of curfews and lockdown in preventing the spread of the disease.
3. Engage civil society organisations, churches, mosques, and traditional leaders to help enforce the various measures being implemented.
4. Provide basic necessities to the poor and vulnerable people
5. Put together comprehensive health plans.

We, as Africans Rising, believe fighting this disease is largely dependent on our individual contributions. It is imperative that we unite people to stand together against coronavirus, not dehumanize and alienate the people most vulnerable to the disease.

We urge African governments to act now to cease the abuse.

In Solidarity,

Africans Rising!