

CENTRE POUR LA CONSTRUCTION DE LA PAIX, LEADERSHIP ET BONNE GOUVERNANCE. (CPLB)
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Kinshasa, September 22, 2016

Concern: **Prayer request**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings,

I hope that this letter will find you in good health. We are doing fine in spite of the violent situation we had at the beginning of this week. We praise the Lord for being alive even if our area where we live, commune of Ngaliema, was not affected. Most violent actions were in the communes of Limete, Ngaba, Masina, Lemba, Makala, Matete, Ndjili, Bandal, Kalamu and main centers like Victoire, Rond point Ngaba, Mullars, Intendance, Echangeur de Limete, for those who know the city of Kinshasa.

On September 19 and 20, 2016, the people of Kinshasa, the capital of Democratic Republic of Congo(DRC) woke up with millions of people on the main streets (Avenue de l'universite, Triumphant, Boulevard Lumumba and others). Most of them were young people demanding President Kabila's departure from power for not planning to organize the presidential election in December 2016.

According to the constitution, 90 days before the date of election, the CENI (National Independent Electoral Commission) has to announce the end of the president's term and launch the activities and dates of the coming presidential and legislative elections.

Unfortunately, nothing was done, neither from the government for providing financial resources nor from the CENI in providing an election calendar and announcing to Kabila to be prepared for finishing up his two terms and give up power.

On September 16, 2016 some of opposition leaders met with the Governor of Kinshasa to ask special permission for organizing a peaceful march to ask Kabila to give up power. In addition, at the end of the walk, a delegation of opposition leaders would go to the CENI's office and drop off a memorandum preventing Kabila from running for a third term, and insisting that he leave office on December 20, 2016, because legally, he won't be the President of the DRC any longer.



Regrettably, the peaceful march launched by the political opposition leaders ended up in chaos. Thirty-three people were killed and more than 126 injured; 368 people were arrested to be questioned; and political party offices, stores, gas stations, private schools and houses were burned up by participants.

The opposition leaders did not get control of the street children who took over the activity and created more insecurity state in the city of Kinshasa for two days.

Today, September 23, 2016 Kinshasa is calm and most people are back to their daily activities, but schools are still closed until Monday, September 26, 2016.

Meanwhile the inclusive dialogue lead by Edem Kodjo is on its way. Participants are working on a political agreement that will unify the majority and the opposition leaders for peaceful presidential and legislative elections.

Nevertheless, today again the facilitator Edem Kodjo suspended the dialogue for mourning those who died and doing more advocacy with other opposition leaders like Tshisekedi who are not participating to the inclusive dialogue. We do not know yet when the participants will be back to this forum again.

In visioning what is happening now in Kinshasa and in some other parts of the country, we need to do more trainings on nonviolence at the peace center than we have been doing in past years.

Consequently, at the Center for Peacebuilding, Leadership and Good governance(CPLB) led by myself, Pascal Tshisola Kulungu, we are planning to increase the number of seminars and workshops on Anabaptist nonviolent behaviors and servant leadership with the Mennonite churches in Kinshasa. Our target participants are youth, men and women leaders. We need to produce more syllabi and non-violent materials and increase the number of participants and sites of trainings in the coming months. We know from now until December 20, 2016, many violent activities are expected from the opposition leaders as well as from the government who so far owns the power and the guns.



On Thursday, September 22, we met with some Mennonite church leaders in Kinshasa. Our first workshop was supposed to be held on September 24, 2016. For better planning and security reasons, it will be done next week. This is why, we request from you to:

- Pray in your churches, families, workplaces and organizations that we can have more means and available time for training many people who will behave peacefully and correctly.
- Pray that God can touch our political leaders so they can see other people as human beings rather than as animals or trash.
- Pray for those who are ready to help but cannot do it from a distance, that they can find other ways of helping by using other means of communication.
- Pray for those who have lost loved ones or homes, that God can help them recover in this situation with help from other people.
- Advocate to other people or peace, medical, church, or human right organizations who also could help us in any way so we can boost up more peacebuilding and nonviolent behavior trainings in the city of Kinshasa as well as in the country side. Violent behavior or destruction is not a solution to our political, social and economic problems.

In this way, the peace seeds we have been planting among the Mennonite members will impact Congolese life at a certain level in the future.

For this time, our goal is to start with the Mennonite leaders and youth who will affect other people in their neighborhoods, schools, workplaces and churches. Hopefully, that will create more contacts with other Congolese churches and lay people.

Please speak out on our behalf to other peacemakers in your areas.

We are available for any other question or additional information you may need.

Shalom,

Pascal T. Kulungu

Director of CPLB