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Burkina Faso: Dissolution of more than a hundred NGOs and associations shows intensifying crackdown on civil society

Reacting to the announcement of the dissolution of 118 NGOs and associations in Burkina Faso, Ousmane Diallo, Senior Researcher on Sahel at Amnesty International's Regional Office for West and Central Africa, said:

“We are alarmed and deeply concerned by this flagrant attack on the right to freedom of association. Dissolving NGOs and associations is at odds with the Constitution of Burkina Faso, which guarantees freedom of association and union. The various constitutional amendments have never questioned this principle.

“This dissolution is also entirely inconsistent and incompatible with Burkina Faso's international human rights obligations including under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which it is a state party.

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This dissolution is part of a much broader effort to silence civil society through a combination of repressive tactics.

Ousmane Diallo, Senior Researcher on Sahel at Amnesty International's Regional Office for West and Central Africa

“Civil society organizations play a critical role in the promotion and protection of human rights and the rule of law. Authorities must immediately rescind this decision and allow them to freely carry out their work without fear of reprisals.

“This dissolution is part of a much broader effort to silence civil society through a combination of repressive tactics that include abusive legislation, intimidation, harassment, arbitrary detention, and prosecution of human rights defenders and activists.

“Authorities must end their restrictions on civic space and attacks on human rights and uphold the country's international human rights obligations and commitments.”

Background

On 15 April 2026, Burkina Faso's Ministry of Territorial Administration and Mobility announced the dissolution of 118 NGOs and associations “in accordance with current legal provisions,” as well as a ban on their activities, without any further justifications.

On 29 January 2026, all political parties were dissolved after three years of suspension.

In November 2025, a presidential decree required all national and international NGOs to close their accounts with commercial banks and transfer them to a newly created state-controlled bank, within the National Treasury, leading to the risk of arbitrary freezing of funds, financial surveillance, and targeted sanctions.

Burkina Faso has been ruled by a military regime following two coups in January and September 2022. In May 2024, the military transition, which was scheduled to end on 2 July 2024, was extended by five years.