



**2019 SECOND ORDINARY SESSION OF THE
ECOWAS PARLIAMENT.
COUNTRY REPORT OF GHANA**

18TH NOVEMBER – 14TH DECEMBER 2019

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Mr. Speaker, Bureau Members, Colleagues, I bring to you, warm felicitations from the good people of Ghana.

Our Country Report is prepared along the thematic format outlined by the Bureau of the ECOWAS Parliament and it reflects progress made in the implementation of Ghana's development agenda since the last report to the May 2019 ECOWAS Parliament session.

2.0 POLITICAL SITUATION

Mr. Speaker. Governments in Ghana have a four-year mandate. The present government led by HE Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo Addo is in its third year of the current mandate. As a result, political activities are increasingly gearing up towards elections in December 2020.

The four year tenure of Local Government Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies as well as Unit Committees ended in September this year and preparations are being made to elect new members of the Assemblies on 17 December 2019. This time, government has made a proposal that Chief Executives of Districts, Metropolitan and Municipal assemblies should be elected based on political party lines. This will require a referendum for a minimum of 40 percent turnout of voters and a minimum of 75 percent of YES votes in order to allow government to pass the Bill for electing Chief Executives on Party lines. The Electoral Commission has already exhibited voters' registers in preparation for the referendum as well as the Assembly elections.

The National Identification Authority (NIA) of Ghana is continuing its mass Ghana Card registration across all sixteen regions of the country. The exercise entails the registration and issuance of smart, dual-interface Ghana Cards to 85% of Ghanaians aged 15 years and above. The registration exercise is also covering Ghanaians in the diaspora and this is being done in collaboration with Ghanaian Missions abroad and the Office of the Diaspora Relations of the Presidency.

3.0 SECURITY SITUATION

The reporting period witnessed massive demonstrations by political parties and professional groups against government for the erosion in their standard of living and welfare. In September this year, government arrested a group of persons alleging they were planning a coup d'etat. These persons have been arraigned before the court and are going through due process of the justice system.

3.1 Insecurity arising from Political Vigilantism

The tension caused by political vigilantism which surged in the early part of the year reduced drastically following the appointment by government of a commission to investigate the Ayawaso West Wuogon (AWW) bye election violence in the Greater Accra Region. The commission completed its work and published the report which has been made public. Government published a White Paper on the report accepting most of the recommendations but rejecting a few. Government also proposed a Bill passed by Parliament into Law entitled ***Vigilantism and Related Offences Act 2019***. This law criminalises the establishment and operation of vigilantes in Ghana.

3.2 Insecurity arising from Non-compliant Financial Institutions

Mr. Speaker, as reported in Ghana's Country Report to the first Ordinary Session in May 2019, Ghana went through a turbulent period of insecurity resulting from several financial institutions not complying with the Central Bank operating regulations and licencing procedures. As a result, this placed depositors' monies at risk. Government stepped in to close many financial institutions that could not meet the deadline for compliance and had to take steps through the Central Bank to restructure the entire financial system in Ghana. Higher minimum capital requirements were introduced and several banks were either closed or merged. This resulted in panic withdrawals that could not be met by the financial institutions and led to liquidation and receivership of the affected banks. This led to huge demonstrations in the country by affected depositors and efforts are now ongoing to refund some part of the monies to depositors.

3.3 Insecurity arising from Terrorism activities along national borders

Ghana continues to monitor activities of terrorism along the borders with its neighbouring countries such as Burkina Faso, Togo and La Cote d'Ivoire. The country's security services are on constant alert and conduct mock drills to stay tuned-up in preparation for any eventuality. However, there have been reported cases of kidnappings. An investigation report by the Police on an earlier case of kidnapping confirmed the murder of the three Takoradi girls who were kidnapped earlier in the year. Culprits are in Police custody and are being taken through the due process of the courts.

3.4 Cyber Insecurity

Cybercrime is the next wave of criminality which has hit corporate Ghana. Internet or on-line fraud is at the peak in many businesses, specifically in the banking sector. To stem and contain this growing menace, the Government has set up a Commission tasked to train corporate Ghana to detect and prevent internet fraud and counterfeiting.

3.5 Insecurity arising from Chieftaincy Disputes and other Ethnic Conflicts

Mr. Speaker, Chieftaincy disputes, ethnic conflicts and land litigation remain an important source of conflict and instability in Ghana. Ghana witnessed an outbreak of ethnic conflict in the North Eastern Region of Ghana between the Kokombas and other ethnic tribes. Government deployed security forces to bring this conflict under control but at great expense.

3.6 Insecurity arising from Nomadic Herders – Crop Farmers Conflicts

Nomadic Herders and Crop framers conflicts continued during the year. In Bagurugu in the Karaga District of the Northern Region, more than 30 houses of Fulanis were burnt, along with food stocks and personal properties and injuries to persons. In Agogo in the Ashanti Region also conflicts occurred resulting into loss of more than 1,500 cattle when the Operation Cow Leg was launched by the Government. Even in Accra Plains and the Keta Ramsar wetlands in the south of the country, effects of nomadic cattle have been felt. They invaded the Ramsar wetlands, destroying the breeding grounds of fish thus leading to loss of fisheries productivity of the lagoons.

On 8th October 2019, Ghana hosted a high level meeting in Accra between the Sahelian countries and the coastal countries in West Africa on the subject of implementing the ECOWAS transhumance protocol in order to reduce herder – crop farmer conflict and to ensure the integrity of protected zones such as game parks, forest reserves and Ramsar sites. Speakers extolled the need to continue to discuss and propose more acceptable and sustainable management models, which will make it possible to make judicious use of pastoral resources of these protected and farming areas without compromising their biodiversity. The meeting, which was the Sixth High Level Policy Dialogue was to contribute to improving the management of cross border and intra-national transhumance flows by providing policy-makers with information enabling them to take strategic and operational decisions relating to the movement of animals in West Africa and the Sahel.

3.7 Insecurity arising from illegal Mining Activities and Destruction of the Environment

Government continued to wage a relentless war against illegal mining which is degrading large tracts of our forests and savannah belt and polluting water resources. Illegal mining has been a source of proliferation of small arms and insecurity and this goes on in 13 out of the 16 regions in Ghana. There have been constant clashes between government security forces and illegal miners in these affected areas.

4.0 HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION

Since the last report to the May 2019 session of the ECOWAS Parliament, no further significant human rights infringements have occurred. Institutions of

State tasked with ensuring human rights of citizens continue to discharge their duties responsibly.

5.0 YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMMES

Government continues to implement programmes to contain the growing unemployment situation in the country. Several skills training programmes have been launched and are ongoing as follows:

5.1 Nation Builders Corps

The Nation Builders Corps (NABCO) was initiated to bring relief to the many unemployed tertiary graduates in the country. From January to September 2019, about 100,000 young men and women have received skills training across all the seven modules of the scheme:

- Educate Ghana,
- Heal Ghana,
- Feed Ghana,
- Revenue Ghana,
- Civic Ghana,
- Digitise Ghana, and
- Enterprise Ghana

Graduating NABCO trainees have been deployed to various places of work:

- 10,000 trainees deployed at the Ghana Revenue Authority and all Metropolitan Municipal and District Assemblies;
- 30,000 in schools at all levels across the country;
- 7,000 personnel in health care delivery;
- 8,000 supporting the private sector;
- 12,000 engaged in the National Digital Property Addressing System (NDPAS);
- 8,300 engaged in the flagship initiative, Planting for Food and Jobs;
- 500 trainees deployed in the Judicial Services;
- 140 trained as drone pilots for GALAMSTOP under the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation have been deployed in mining areas;
- 100 trainees of the ORACLE Training programme area deployed to support the Public Financial Management Reform Project (PFMRP) under the Ministry of Finance;
- 130 trainees deployed to provide support for the Ghana Metrological Agency;
- 650 trainees deployed directly to One District One factory programme (1D1F) under the Ministry of Trade; and
- 12,800 trainees deployed into local government, information services, public media houses and community work.

The NABCO Talent Academy, a virtual training portal, was developed to provide Learning & Training opportunities to enable trainees acquire the needed exposure to seek permanent employment or venture into

entrepreneurship. Within the programmed implementation period of 36 months, Government expects the scheme to deliver a skilled and competent workforce for national development.

6.0 THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

The Special Independent Prosecutor continues to investigate and bring public officials to the courts. The Auditor General also continues to prepare several Annual Audit Reports on all Ministries, Departments and Agencies and listed surcharges on public officials to refund various sums of monies that have been lost to the state.

7.0 GHANA'S PARTICIPATION IN ECOWAS ACTIVITIES

7.1 ECOWAS Transport and Road Infrastructure

Ghana has embarked on a massive rehabilitation and extension of its ports at Tema in order to be the "Container Hub" for West Africa. At its peak, it will have 3.7 million tonnes throughput capacity per month. This is being done under a Public Private Partnership arrangement between Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority, Meridian Port Holdings of Netherlands and the Bollore Transport and Logistics/APM Company of France. Shareholding structure is 30:35:35 respectively. When completed, Ghana will be the hub for off-loading bigger vessels and containers from where other smaller vessels will pick off smaller containers to other ports on the West Coast. It will also be the main hub for moving containers to inland countries such as Burkina Faso and Niger.

7.2 Ghana's Participation in the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS)

The Task Force on Road Governance under the National Shippers Council and the Ministry of Roads and Highways continued to monitor activities and reporting infringements on the main ECOWAS road corridors. Ghana continues to monitor unauthorised check points within its borders in order to check delays and unauthorised payments in the free movement of transit goods to other neighbouring countries through Ghana. Several incidents of corruption still persist on the roads.

The ECOWAS Biometric card programme is also on course and is now linked to Ghana's National Identification Card.

The Joint Border Post (JBP) between Ghana and Togo at Akanu/ Noepe **is yet to fully function** after being commissioned twice in 2016 and 2018. The main challenge is the non-availability of the software and fibre optic cables to complete the merger of the Customs ICT platforms between Ghana and Togo. We are informed that the supplier of the ICT software and fibre optic cables has refused to pay customs duty on the items at the port of Lome hence the inability to clear the items for installation. We want to bring this development to the attention of the ECOWAS Commission to expedite action on this matter

in order that the huge investments into the establishment of this Join Border Post do not go to waste.

Mr. Speaker, another issue affecting Ghana's trade with its neighbours in the sub region is the closure of the Nigerian Benin border in September this year. Several trucks from Ghana sending goods to Nigeria have been stranded at the Seme-Krake side of the border for over two months now. Similarly, Ghana trucks returning from Nigeria with goods cannot also cross the border. In October this year a representation from Ghana made up of our Foreign Minister and Trade Minister met with their Nigerian counterparts to discuss the effects on Ghana of the border closure between Nigeria and Benin. While the Nigeria side claims that the border closure was not targeted at Ghana but to control some security issues emanating between them and the Republic of Benin, the Ghana side indicated to their Nigerian colleagues that the border closure had collateral damage on Ghana's exports and imports to and from Nigeria since the border closure. We believe that Nigeria may have good reasons for taking such action but the measures infringe on the provisions of the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS). Whatever be the reason, this situation needs to be resolved as quickly as possible. For the medium to long term, Ghana's delegation wishes to propose that the present mandate of the Task Force on ETLS be expanded to become an office of Trade Ombudsman. Member countries that wish to undertake measures that will deviate from the provisions of the ETLS must notify this office. Issues such as the objective of the measures, how the measures are to be implemented and which parts of the country will be affected by the measures, how the impact of the measures will be monitored and reported, date of commencement of the measures and expected date of termination will be considered by this Office of the Trade Ombudsman and member countries notified accordingly. We believe that this may go a long way to create a more open and transparent mechanism for trade conflict resolution in the ECOWAS sub-region.

8.0 GHANA'S IMPLEMENTATION OF ECOWAS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL PROTOCOLS AND TREATIES

8.1 Ghana's Ratification of Community Protocols and Texts

Mr Speaker, the number of protocols Ghana has ratified has not changed since our last sessional report. Ghana has signed to and ratified forty-five (45) of the Community Protocols with 11 outstanding.

8.2 Implementation of ECOWAS Common External Tariff (CET)

Mr. Speaker, it is recalled that Ghana began the implementation of the ECOWAS CET in February 2016 and presently applies the 2017 version of the ECOWAS CET procedure. It is important to note that the adoption of the CET as a uniform regime of customs and related charges to third country goods in member countries of ECOWAS is helping Ghana to address the problem of cross-border smuggling and dumping.

8.3 ECOWAS Single Currency Programme

Mr. Speaker, Ghana is committed to the ECOWAS Single Currency Programme, in the belief that it will help remove trade and monetary barriers, reduce transaction costs, boost economic activity, and eventually contribute to raising living standards of citizens in ECOWAS member states. Ghana actively participated in all the meetings on ECOWAS Single Currency Programme, and contributed its quota towards the process of realisation of the Single Currency Programme objectives by 2020.

8.4 Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)

Mr. Speaker, cooperation between the European Union (EU) and Ghana has been underpinned by constructive policy dialogue and negotiations, based on Ghana's evolving developmental agenda, national priorities, and the principles of aid effectiveness, ownership and harmonization. Ghana has earlier ratified the Ghana-EU Stepping Stone Economic Partnership Agreement (commonly referred to as the Interim Economic Partnership) in August 2016 to enable Ghanaian exporters continue to enjoy uninterrupted duty-free quota-free (DFQF) EU market access. The Agreement received approval of the European Parliament on 1st December 2016, and entered into provisional implementation on 15th December 2016. The EPA covers goods and development cooperation and related issues such as Customs Cooperation, Trade Facilitation, and Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Measures. The EPA entails 100 percent tariff liberalization by the EU Side and the gradual removal of 80 percent tariff liberalization by Ghana within 15 years. The EPA Accompanying Measures Strategy (AMS) that provides the roadmap and strategic framework to ensure that Ghana fully maximizes the opportunities and meets the challenges of implementing the EPA has been developed.

During the May to October 2019 period, The Ministry of Trade has been preparing the tariff schedule under the EPA-AMS liberalization of Category "A" products. Implementation of this schedule is expected to commence in 2020, after Ghana's Cabinet and, subsequently, Parliament has approved the tariff schedule and liberalisation calendar.

8.5 Ghana Hosts the Secretariat of the African Continental Free Trade Area

In July 2019, Ghana won the bid to host the Secretariat of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in Accra Ghana. This followed intense lobbying by our Head of State, Trade Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration.

Mr. Speaker, our delegation on behalf of the citizens of Ghana, express its thanks to the West African countries which supported this bid.

Mr. Speaker, the smooth implementation of the AfCFTA will, no doubt, open the market for intra African trade and accelerate the development of agricultural and industrial value chains which could promote Africa's

industrialization, drive and improve her growth prospects. The IMF estimates that Sub-Saharan Africa's ratio of value added to total exports is currently about 20 percent, much lower than that of Europe and Asia. Under the context of AfCFTA, value chains could expand through value addition and deeper intra-African trade, leading to stronger competition across firms, improved productivity, export competitiveness, and lower consumer prices.

8.6 ECOWAS Community Levy

Ghana remains in good standing in honouring its payment obligations to the ECOWAS Commission with respect to 0.5% deductions of import earnings from third countries outside the ECOWAS sub region. The total levy payment for the third quarter of 2019 to the ECOWAS Commission amounts to **US Dollars 7,107,165.48**

Table: Payment of the Community Levy to ECOWAS Commission

Post date	Description	Reference No	Amount (GHC)	Amount (USD)
11 July 2019	June 2019 Payment	FT19192284928	12,536,309.52	2,383,301.62
11 th August 2019	July 2019 payment	FT1922760263	12,096,275.00	2,296,792.15
15 th September 2019	August 2019 payment	FT1925457845	12,879,741.44	2,427,071.71
TOTAL			37,512,325.96	7,107,165.48

Source: Ghana Revenue Authority of the Ministry of Finance of Ghana.

Note:

- 1. Lodgements are monthly transfers from the CEPS GCNET ECOWAS LEVY ACCOUNT and ECOWAS LEVY 0.5% ACCOUNT respectively into the ECOWAS 005 PCNT IMPORT LEVY ACCOUNT**
- 2. Transfers represent monthly transfer of funds (90% of Balance) in the ECOWAS 005 PCNT IMPORT LEVY ACCOUNT converted to US Dollar and paid to the ECOWAS COMMISSION in Abuja Nigeria**

9.0 GHANA'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE ECOWAS MACROECONOMIC CONVERGENCE CRITERIA

9.1 Performance

Mr. Speaker, as at the end of September 2019, Ghana met three (3) out of the four (4) Primary Convergence Criteria. The criteria satisfied were (a) Average annual inflation of less than 10 percent and (b) Gross International reserves or import cover of at least three months of imports and (c) no Central Bank financing of the budget deficit. Ghana could however not meet the criterion of achieving a fiscal budget deficit of below 3 percent of GDP.

With regards to the Secondary Convergence criteria, Ghana met both criteria on Debt-to-GDP ratio of not more than 70 percent ($\leq 70\%$) and the nominal exchange rate variation of not more than ± 10 percent band. Please see figures in the Table below.

12.3 Performance on the WAMZ Primary Convergence Criteria 2019

S/N	Convergence Criteria	Target	Ghana: Status end September 2019
Primary Criteria			
1	Fiscal Budget deficit (including grants on cash basis)/GDP	$\leq 3\%$	4.5 % of GDP: Not achieved End Sept. 2019
2	Average annual inflation	$\leq 10\%$; long term goal of $\leq 5\%$ by 2019	7.6 %: Achieved : End Sept: 2019
3	Gross International Reserves	≥ 3 months of imports	4.1 months: Achieved End Sept. 2019 (US\$8.1 billion)
4	Central Bank financing of budget deficit	$\leq 10\%$ of previous year's tax revenue	No Central Bank Financing : Achieved
Secondary Criteria			
5	Public debt/GDP	$\leq 70\%$	60.55 % (September 2019): Achieved
6	Nominal exchange rate variation	$\pm 10\%$	8.4%: Achieved End Sept. 2019

Source: Ministry of Finance Ghana. Budget Statement for 2020 published in November 2019.

12.0 GHANA'S MACRO-ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

13.1 Real Sector Growth Performance

Mr. Speaker. Provisional estimates from the Ghana Statistical Services indicate that Non-Oil Real GDP growth rate was 5.2 percent in the first two quarters (January to June 2019) while the overall GDP growth (including oil) was 6.2 percent at the end of June 2019.

13.2 Agriculture Growth Rates

Mr. Speaker, the average overall growth in the Agriculture Sector was 2.6 percent in the first half year (January to June) of 2019 compared with 4.7 percent for the same period in 2018. In the first quarter 2019, the Livestock subsector had the best growth performance of 5.5 percent, followed by the Crops subsector with 2.4 percent. This trend continued in the second quarter with the Livestock subsector growing at 5.7 percent, and Crops at 4.0 percent. However, the Forestry/Logging and Fishing subsectors contracted in both periods with negative growth rates.

The percentage of budget allocated to Agriculture in the 2019 budget was 10.1 percent. This met the requirements of the Maputo and Malabo Declarations.

13.3 Interest rates

Mr. Speaker, on interest rate developments, money market rates have broadly remained unchanged since the beginning of the year. The 91-day Treasury bill rate has remained steady at 14.7 percent since January 2019. Similarly, the 182-day instrument has also stabilized at around 14.1 percent. Rates on the secondary bond market for the 7-year, 15-year bonds have remained steady at 16.3 percent and 19.8 percent respectively. However, the rate on the 10-year bond increased to 19.8 percent from 17.5 percent at the beginning of the year.

Mr. Speaker, average lending rates of banks have moved in line with the Monetary Policy Rate. Lending rates have moved within a range of 22.0 percent and 24.0 percent in the first nine months of the year. The Ghana Reference Rate, which serves as the base rate of the commercial banks, was virtually flat over the review period remaining at 16.1 percent at end-September 2019.

13.4 Monetary Sector Performance

Following the restructuring of Ghana's financial system, the Ghanaian banking system is now better capitalized. Total assets increased by 21.5 percent to GH¢104.6 billion in August 2018. Of the total, advances constituted 32.3 percent. The industry's capital adequacy ratio of 19.1 percent is significantly above the prudential requirement of 10.0 percent. Banks reduced their operating expenses in response to a decline in both interest and non-interest income. The quality of loans improved, as industry Non Performing Loans (NPLs) ratio eased to 21.3 percent in August 2018 from 21.9 percent for the corresponding period in 2017. The Bank of Ghana has approved a loan write-off of GHC1.2 billion for the industry, and this should reduce the NPL ratio significantly to 18.4 percent.

13.5 The Ghana Stock Exchange (GSE) Composite Index Performance

Mr. Speaker, in the stock exchange market, the key market performance indicator, the Ghana Stock Exchange's (GSE's) Composite Index (GSE-CI), trended downwards, contracting by 26.53 per cent (796.22 points) in September 2019, compared with a growth of 29.02 per cent (674.92 points) in the corresponding period of 2018.

Mr. Speaker, the contraction was mainly on account of decline in stock values in some sectors including finance, agriculture, distribution, and information technology, as well as the food and brewery subsectors. The decline in the GSECI resulted in a 14.87 per cent decrease in market capitalization on year-on-year basis, as a significant number of stocks recorded losses. The GSE-CI is expected to recover in the ensuing months on account of waning financial sector uncertainties and easing pressures on the domestic currency.

14.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

14.1 General weather conditions January to October 2019

Ghana experienced unusual weather conditions with heavy rainfall particularly in October –November this year resulting in flooding of the northern parts of Ghana killing 28 persons with thousands internally displaced.

14.2 Climate Change Programmes and Projects

Ghana is implementing a number of climate change programmes, including the promotion of renewable energy aimed at lowering deforestation and forest degradation and also pursuing low carbon electricity, building resilience and investing in adaptation projects such as sea defence projects.

Launch of Cocoa REDDS: On 4 October 2019, Ghana launched the Cocoa Forest **REDDS** Plus Programme in Accra aimed at promoting a climate-smart cocoa regime in Ghana. The intervention programme was led by the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), Forestry Commission, World Cocoa Foundation, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the cocoa industry as well as other industry players. Climate-smart cocoa farming is the production of cocoa without forest degradation but rather with methods that enrich the vegetation cover and nature. Through the programme, cocoa farmers are being supplied with seedlings of indigenous tree species to plant per acre. Farmers are also being discouraged from felling trees and encouraged to nurture them to provide cover for their cocoa farms. This REDDS programme is expected to give a major boost to the climate protection agenda.

Climate Change Summit in Accra: From October 16th to 18th, Ghana through the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD), was the host of the International Climate Change Summit – Africa 2019 in Accra. It was a wide gathering of about 1000 non state and state actors fighting climate change on the African continent, including local governments, businesses,

trade unions, environmental NGO's, farmers, women and youth organisations, researchers, etc. The objective of the summit was to further anchor the implementation of concrete climate actions at the local or District level. The summit was an opportunity to highlight the good practices of the African local actors. The main topics addressed during this summit were:

- How can the African States, Local Governments and Non-State Actors adopt the “rulebook” directives of the implementation of the Paris Agreement on local level
- Access to Climate Finance in Africa
- Sustainable African Cities Development
- Agriculture, food and reforestation
- Renewable energy and energy efficiency in Africa
- Sustainable Mobility and Transports in Africa
- Adaptation and Water in Africa
- Sustainable Building and Construction
- Education and Training in Africa
- What data to measure the Greenhouse gas emissions in Africa?

This summit also hosted partners' events, such as the presentation of the Covenant of Mayors in Sub Saharan Africa (CoMSSA) Stage 2, a meeting of UCLG-Africa Climate Task Force, a training session for the members of the “MobilizeYourCity” partnership, side-events organized by OIF / IFDD, AFD, the Paris Process on Mobility and Climate (PPMC), the Global Alliance on Building and Construction (GABC), the African Development Bank, etc.

Launch of Climate Adaptation Policy and Strategy for Ghana

In May 2019, the Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology and Innovations launched National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (NCCAS) for Ghana. The overall goal of the NCCAS is to enhance Ghana's current and future development by strengthening its adaptive capacity and building resilience of the society and ecosystems to the impacts of climate change. The NCCAS, which is expected to (i) ensure a consistent, comprehensive and targeted approach to increasing climate resilience and decreasing vulnerability; (ii) deepen public awareness, and in particular the awareness of policy makers, about the critical role of adaptation in national development; (iii) position Ghana so as to access funding for national adaptation requirements; (iv) strengthen Ghana's international recognition, in order to facilitate action; (v) facilitate the mainstreaming of climate change and disaster risk reduction into national development.

Amendment of the Kyoto Protocol

In July 2019, Parliament ratified the amendment to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on climate change with this ratification. Ghana is entitled to a further funding assistance from the carbon market than it presently does through the Clean Development Mechanism (CON) under the climate change funds. CDM project are designed under the protocol to ensure that developed countries promote sustainable development in developing countries such as Ghana

To date, Ghana has undertaken the following investments

- Supplied to household more than 1 million improved cook stoves
- Invested \$13.2 billion in natural gas infrastructure
- Engaged 20,000 youth to plant 10 million trees in order to increase the carbon sink
- Invested 30 million of general environmental fund and adaptation fund grants to building of small holds farmers in the savannah zone

Participation in the UN General Assembly Climate Change Sessions

Ghana participated in the Climate Change sessions at the UN General Assembly from 21st September to 2nd October 2019 held in New York USA. The delegation comprised the Head of State, the sector Minister and EPA staff as well as the Ghana Parliamentary Committee on Environment Science and Technology and Innovation.

14 ECOWAS SENSITIZATION ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY GHANA DELEGATES

The Ghanaian delegation visited the Joint Border Post between Ghana and Togo at Akanu/Noepe in October 2019 in order to apprise itself with operations of this JBP under the ETLs. It is recalled that this is a flagship project of the ECOWAS Commission.

The delegation interacted with staff of Customs and Immigration of both countries at the JBP and came up with the following findings and recommendations: Staff of both countries are at post at the JBP and seen to be busy about their duties. However, very little traffic flow was observed. Reasons for suboptimal performance of the JBP include the following:

- i. The Customs ICT platform of the two sides have not yet been linked. The supplier is yet to deliver and install the necessary software programmes and optic fibre components to link the two sides that are already on ASYCUDA based platform. If this is done, then it will enable the JBP to become operational and to process documentation for long vehicles such as articulators
- ii. Remaining fixtures such as air conditioners to be fixed in offices. Need for Electric Generator to reduce long periods of power outages being experienced at the JBP.

15. CONCLUSION

In conclusion Mr. Speaker. Ghana once again reaffirms its commitment to the ideals of the establishment of ECOWAS. Ghana is doing all it can to contribute its quota to the implementation of the developmental agenda of ECOWAS and for the realization of the ECOWAS Free Trade Area.

I thank you for the opportunity.

Merci Beaucoup, Obrigado.