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COUNTRY REPORT OF GHANA

DELEGATION

- Hon Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin - Leader of delegation
- Hon. Kwasi Ameyaw-Cheremeh - Member
- Hon Sampson Ahi - Member
- Hon Mahama Ayariga - Member
- Hon Emmanuel Kwasi Bedzrah - Member
- Hon. Johnson Kwaku Adu - Member
- Hon Laadi Ayii Ayamba(Ms.) - Member
- Hon Abdul-Aziz Ayaba Musah - Member

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1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

Mr. Speaker, I extend warm greetings from the government and people of Ghana. Permit me Mr. Speaker to present on behalf of Ghana's delegation, our Country report which falls in line with the thematic areas specified by the Bureau.

2.0 **POLITICAL SITUATION**

Ghana remains peaceful despite numerous internal and external forces that threatened its stability in the past year and the first quarter of 2021. These factors included the COVID-19 pandemic, tensions arising from the conduct of the 2020 Presidential and Parliamentary elections, secession attempts, illegal mining and destruction of the environment, and the threats of terrorism, among others. That notwithstanding, the government and the security sector rose to the occasion to mitigate these threats which ultimately culminated in safeguarding the peace and stability of the country.

One key factor that continues to underpin Ghana's success in mitigating both internal and external threats is the effective nature of the collaboration among all State Security and Intelligence agencies

2.1 **The COVID-19 Pandemic**

The COVID-19 pandemic was and still remains a national security threat not only in Ghana but countries all over the world. The existential crisis occasioned by the pandemic engendered governments across the world to deploy a wide range of strategies including restriction on movement, border closures and enhanced Covid-19 testing among others.

In Ghana, the National Security architecture was instrumental in implementing a number of these strategies. The launch of Operation COVID-safety, a joint operation comprising the Military, Police and operatives of the National Security was critical in enforcing lockdown measures at the initial stages of the outbreak of the pandemic in Ghana. Similarly, the Special Border Operation, launched to enforce the closure of land borders helped in reducing the importation of COVID-19 cases. The Kotoka International Airport which was also initially closed for the same purpose has since been opened subject to strict adherence of covid-19 protocols.

More importantly, the government rolled out a number of interventions such as tax reliefs and other relief packages, aimed at protecting the

vulnerable in society and supporting small and medium scale enterprises against the economic effects of the pandemic.

It is also worth stating that in March 2021, Ghana began its vaccination efforts upon receipt of over 600,000 vaccines from the COVAX facility. The current surge in COVID-19 cases in India which impeded the COVAX facility from further distributing the Astrazeneca vaccines to countries across the world adversely affected Ghana's vaccination efforts.

That said however, the country has received 350,000 additional doses of the Astrazeneca vaccines and is in the process of administering them to 350,000 people who took their first dose in March 2021. Efforts are also underway by the government to procure more vaccines for the people of Ghana.

2.2 Elections

Ghana conducted its Presidential and Parliamentary elections in December 2020. Political tensions were high throughout the year owing to the fierce competition between the two major political parties in the country – the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC).

To ensure a transparent and violent-free election, the National Election taskforce was constituted. The taskforce comprised personnel from all State Security and Intelligence agencies. Despite pockets of violence which were recorded in parts of the country, the National Election Taskforce ensured the preservation of peace before, during and after the elections.

The election of 2020 produced a hung Parliament with the governing New Patriotic Party securing 137 seats out of the total parliamentary seats of 275. The opposition National Democratic Congress also obtained 137 seats while an independent candidate, who aligns with the ruling party, won a seat in Parliament. The election of the Speaker which commenced about 12:15 am on 7th December was characterised by misunderstandings, thus delaying the process until about 9:00 am. It is significant to note that for the first time in the history of the 4th republican parliament, the House elected a Speaker who does not belong to the ruling party but is a member of the major opposition party (NDC), further attesting to Ghana's high democratic credentials.

Ghana's democracy again came to the test, when the largest opposition party, the NDC, dissatisfied with the results of the elections contested

same in the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court eventually affirmed the election of the President, Nana Addo Danquah Akufo-Addo. Thankfully, the country remained peaceful after the declaration of the verdict.

3.0 **SECURITY SITUATION**

3.1 Socioeconomic

Although Ghana has not been spared the adverse economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the country's economy recorded some positive growth at the end of 2020. At the turn of the New Year, the government implemented new economic policies which included the introduction of new taxes as part of measures at mobilizing revenue to minimize the effect of the pandemic on the economy.

The introduction of new taxes particularly resulted in the increment of fuel prices, which took effect in May 2021. This generated uproar among a section of the public, leading to a social media campaign dubbed #FixtheCountry. Although the social media campaign could have potentially degenerated into street protest, the government has succeeded in engaging the citizenry to explain to them the need for the introduction of new taxes. Meanwhile, the government has expedited plans to introduce a number of relief measures to ease the burden on the citizenry.

3.2 Terrorism

The recent surge in terrorist activities in neighbouring and other countries in the sub-region places the country at risk of terrorist attack. In the past year, the Ministry of National Security stepped up its counter-terrorism efforts to avert an occurrence of a terrorist attack particularly at the Northern frontier which borders Burkina Faso.

It is important to state that in 2017, Ghana launched its Framework for countering terrorism and violent extremism. The framework contains overarching plan and multifaceted roles to be played by all State Security and Intelligence agencies to prevent terrorism and violent extremism. A major step towards the implementation of the framework, was the establishment of the Counter-terrorism fusion centre. The Fusion centre continues to monitor developments regarding terrorism in the sub-region, analyse terrorist threats and provide strategic warning and recommendations for action.

Additionally, Operation Conquered Fist, an operation led by the Ghana Armed Forces was launched to prevent terrorist infiltration into the country. So far, the operation has been successful.

It is also worth mentioning that, Ghana continues to collaborate with neighbouring countries to combat terrorism. This has even become more important given recent indications of plans by terrorist groups to expand their activities to countries along the Gulf of Guinea. The Accra Initiative, whose formation was spearheaded by Ghana and is made up of countries including Benin, Togo, Burkina Faso and the Ivory Coast, has served as an excellent platform for enhanced intelligence gathering and coordination of joint operation of security agencies of member countries all aimed at curbing the spread of terrorism.

3.3 Secession Attempts

The country, in the past year, recorded a number of secession groups including the Homeland Study Group Foundation (HSGF) and its splinter groups such as the Western Togoland Restoration Front (WTRF). The groups continue to agitate for the independence of 'Western Togoland' a stretch of land which covers the Volta region and parts of the regions in **Northern** Ghana.

Although the activities of the groups predate the past year, they adopted a more militaristic approach in 2020 in furtherance of their agenda. This culminated in September 2020 disturbances in parts of the Volta region. Again, thanks to the **proactiveness** of the security architecture, the secession attempts were quelled.

Subsequently, Operation motherland was launched by the Ministry of National Security to control the activities of the secessionists. This has resulted in the arrest of the leaders and key members of the groups.

3.4 Illegal Mining

Illegal mining remains a major issue of National security concern for Ghana. In recent times, the surge in illegal mining activities has threatened to destroy the vegetative cover and water bodies in parts of the country. The persistence of the menace despite efforts by governments in the past is an indication of the gravity of the problem. The participation of foreigners particularly, Chinese and nationals of some ECOWAS member States such as Togo, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Mali have made the fight against illegal mining more daunting.

However, at the turn of the New Year, the government, in collaboration with other key stakeholders has renewed the fight against illegal mining. This has birthed Operation Halt, which is currently underway in places where river bodies and vegetative cover have been destroyed. The operation promises to be successful. Some of the illegal miners have been arrested and processed before court.

3.5 Activities of Nomadic Herdsmen

The activities of nomadic herdsmen, which often result in conflicts between herdsmen and residents of crop farming communities, remain a perennial problem. The situation has, however, been largely managed following the launch of Operation Cowleg and the introduction of the Cattle Ranching Program.

Whereas the Operation Cowleg prevented the invasion of herders and their cattle into communities, the cattle ranching program provide grazing spaces for the cattle at a distance from communities. Cognisant of the current developments in Nigeria regarding clashes between herders and crop farming communities, the Ministry of National Security continue to implement measures to prevent a similar development in Ghana.

In recent times, investigations have revealed the involvement of most of these nomadic herdsmen in criminal activities in the country, notably, highway robberies, attacks on merchants, and kidnapping citizens for ransom. The police have intensified patrols particularly in the Northern part of the country where the phenomenon is rife.

3.6 Threats of Maritime Security

Piracy is increasingly becoming an emerging threat to Ghana's maritime security particularly because the Gulf of Guinea has become a hotspot for piracy in recent times. Relative to zero cases of piracy in 2019, Ghana recorded six (6) cases of piracy in 2020. The Ghana Navy is being equipped to enhance surveillance on the territorial waters of the country.

Going forward, Ghana will also seek to collaborate more with countries along the Gulf of Guinea to develop coordinated maritime strategies to deal effectively with the rising incidence of piracy.

4.0 **HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION**

Ghana as a democratic nation has established institutions tasked with the promotion and protection of universal human rights and other freedoms relating to civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

4.1 Investigation of human rights cases (2019/2020)

The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), as the national human rights institution in Ghana received and investigated about 8,445 cases of human rights complaints in 2019. In 2020, a total number of 7,523 human rights complaints were received by CHRAJ, out of which 7,334 cases were investigated.

4.2 Presidential and Parliamentary elections

In the year 2020, Ghana successfully organised Presidential and Parliamentary elections for the 8th time since 1992 with limited human rights issues. All citizens who attained the minimum age of 18 years were given the opportunity to register and cast their votes. Most local and international observer mission reports, including the Network of National Human Rights Institutions in West Africa (NNHRI-WA), concluded that except for isolated incidence of violence some of which unfortunately led to the death of a few individuals, the electoral process was considered generally transparent and in accordance with the electoral management laws and regulations of Ghana.

4.3 Witch Camp

Older women, especially in the Northern regions of Ghana were usually subjected to abuse and violence based on suspicion of witchcraft. Most of these elderly women sought refuge in **witch** camps, while others were physically and verbally abused, and even killed. A notable instance, was when an elderly woman was beaten to death on 23 July 2020 in Kafaba, a town in the East Gonja District in the Savannah Region, on suspicion of witchcraft. Some persons were arrested and charged with murder by the police. In August 2020, there was another incident in the Savannah Region where another woman accused of witchcraft was also attacked and seriously injured. As part of measures to address this human **rights** issue, government has closed down a number of witch camps and reintegrated victims into communities.

4.4 Child Abuse

Although the laws of Ghana prohibit all forms of abuse against children, there have been some incidence of child abuse in the country. In 2019, a total number of 1,270 defilement cases were recorded. Child, Early and Forced Marriages (CEFM) also continues to be a concern. Despite the minimum legal age for marriage at 18 years, CEFM still persist in Ghana. The National Strategic Framework on Ending Child Marriage (2017 – 2026) reports that, 1 in every 5 girls in Ghana gets married before 18 years. The phenomenon of CEFM in Ghana also has regional, educational, health, geographic, and wealth dimensions. In January 2018 to December 2019, the CHRAJ received 64 cases of child early or forced marriages; and in 2020, 25 were received by the Commission and 23 investigated.

4.5 LGBTI Rights

The rights of LGBTI persons in Ghana, has been a sensitive topic on the socio-cultural landscape of the country. One survey revealed that the vast majority of Ghanaians abhor the practice, and therefore disagree with any attempt to officially accept or recognise LGBTI persons. Indeed, the laws of Ghana prohibit homosexuality, which is viewed as an unnatural carnal knowledge. There have therefore been some levels of hostility and intolerance against LGBTI persons in the country. ~~For instance, in February 2021; the police shut down an office of the LGBTIQ+ community in Accra following intense campaign against the existence of the office by religious and political entities, as well as the general population.~~

4.6 Prison Conditions

Prison conditions and overcrowding remain a challenge in the country. As of November 2020; statistics showed that 13,333 inmates were held in 44 prisons with a combined capacity of only 9,945. The overcrowding situation sometimes leads to the spread of communicable diseases, infections, and contamination.

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic; the Ghana Prison Service conducted regular health checks in order to avoid any outbreak in the prisons. Another notable intervention was the granting of amnesty to 808 prisoners by the President in March 2020 to help decongest the prisons and to prevent the spread of coronavirus in the country's prisons. These prisoners included first-time offenders, seriously ill, inmates, and very old prisoners (70 years and above). **The Judiciary has**

also introduced a lot of reforms including non-custodial sentencing of convicts. Judges have these guidelines.

4.7 Media Freedom

There is a general respect for freedom of expression in Ghana, including press freedom. Notwithstanding this, there have been few reported instances of arrests and abuse of some journalists by security operatives in the country.

In an effort to curb these unfortunate incidents, the Ministry of Information, in partnership with Civil Society Organisations and law enforcement authorities developed a Framework for Journalist Safety and Responsible Journalism in late 2019.

5.0 **HEALTH SITUATION**

Planned activities in the programme of work (POW) for the year under review were severely disrupted following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. This development challenged the Ministry of Health with difficult decisions to balance the demands of responding directly to the COVID-19 pandemic with the need to maintain the delivery of other essential health services.

A review of the mid-year performance using routine data from District Health Information Management System (DHMIS 2), showed that essential services utilisation and coverage reduced. The initial interventions of limiting people movements for control of the disease, fear on the part of health workers and clients, as well as the stigma and misinformation about COVID-19 affected healthcare delivery as many routine services were suspended.

In response to increase demand in essential service, the Ministry of Health adopted an all-inclusive government and private sector approach aimed at strengthening vital health services and core capacity development at different levels of the sector. The Ministry through the Ghana Health Service activated the emergency preparedness and response teams at all levels to ensure early detection of epidemic prone and priority disease. Other activities the Ministry undertook to address the challenges of low service utilization included: the launch of behaviour change communication using multiple channels including social media, providing avenue for patients with non-communicable diseases to book appointment and use of technology to provide teleconsultation.

5.1 Management of COVID-19

The events of 2020 cannot be reported without the mention of COVID-19 and its devastating impact on the performance of the health sector. Ghana recorded its first two cases of COVID-19 on 12 March 2020, a day after WHO declared the disease as a pandemic. In response, the country developed a national strategic Covid-19 response plan aimed at reducing incidence, morbidity, and mortality of the disease. The plan is targeted at reducing exposure to COVID-19 infections, tracking all suspected infected individuals and their contacts to minimize spread, testing all suspected cases and their contacts for early detection and appropriate management, and initiating early treatment to effectively manage cases. The MOH played a leading role in mobilizing financial resource and technical guidance in the fight against the pandemic. It is worth mentioning that Ghana is recognised as one of the countries that have managed the COVID-19 pandemic effectively. This is evidenced by the high recovery rate as against the generally low death rate of COVID-19 cases. The country adopted aggressive testing and contact tracing regime that proved effective in the early identification, isolation and treatment of infected persons. **COVID-19 treatment/isolation centres were set up at the district, regional and national level as part of the country's emergency response for the treatment of infected persons.** As at May 2021, the total confirmed Covid-19 cases was 93,644. Out of the total number, recoveries/discharge stood at 91,602 whilst 783 persons had unfortunately lost their lives. Active cases currently stand at 1,259.

5.2 National Health Insurance Scheme

The number of people enrolling in the NHIS has seen a remarkable improvement in the last two years (2019-2020). It is indicated that the proportion of population with active NHIS membership increased from 12,283,457 (40.6%) in 2016 to 16,310,425 (52.6%) in 2020, exceeding the set target of 42%. This increment can be attributed to the introduction of digital platforms that enables subscribers to renew their registration online.

5.3 Pre-hospital Care (Access to Ambulance Service)

Pre-hospital care is critical to reducing deaths associated with emergencies particularly road traffic accidents, and eventually all-cause mortality. There was a marked improvement in both the number of ambulances procured and ambulance service stations established across the country to strengthen the quality of care in pre-hospital and emergency care services. The number of ambulances increased by 263, from 47 in 2019 to 310 in 2020. Access to pre-hospital services increased considerably by 6 times the baseline number, from 6,039 to 38,255 between 2019 and 2020. Consequently, the service recorded an increase in coverage from 52% in 2019 to 100% in 2020. These gains

are attributed to procurement and distribution of new ambulance vehicles for each constituency in the country to augment the existing functional ambulances. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, 40 ambulances were dedicated to conveying COVID-19 patients to treatment centres.

5.4 Maternal Health Service

Access to quality maternal and child health services are crucial to achieving the SDG related goals. Women in fertility age is a core segment of the population that requires health care services such as family planning, antenatal care, skilled delivery, and post-natal care. Ghana achieved its target of 1:710 midwife to women in fertility age (WIFA) population ratio for 2020 using 2016 as a benchmark where the figure stood at 1:560. This finding is a remarkable improvement and needs to be sustained across all the administrative regions as the country strives to attain the SDGs.

5.5 Nurse to population ratio

Nurse to population ratio remains a strong indicator of delivering quality of healthcare. The number of nurses improved by 5% during the period under review from 41,675 in 2019 to 44,167 in 2020. Generally, there was a consistent increase in the number of nurses over the 5-year (2016-2020) period. In ratio terms, the nurse to population ratio for 2020 improved marginally (1:701), compared to 2019 (1:727). This ratio is higher than the recommended WHO standard of 1:1,000, an indication that the country has excess nurses although the issue of mal distribution still exists.

6.0 **STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF ECOWAS TEXTS**

6.1 **Protocol relating to the Community levy**

As at April 2021, Ghana had honoured its financial commitments to the ECOWAS Commission as specified below:

Month	Payment (Units of Accounts)
January 2021 -	15,659,482.83
February 2021 -	15,960,574.54
March 2021 -	19,948,671.21
April 2021 -	18,828,205.72

TOTAL - **70,396,879.85**

6.2 **Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and Goods**

In accordance with the ECOWAS Treaty on the Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment in the sub-region, Ghana has made tremendous efforts to abolish obstacles to Freedom of Movement and Residence in the country.

6.2.2 Right of Entry

As part of efforts to deepen regional integration and promote ECOWAS protocols, Community citizens are allocated special immigration booths at the various points of entry/exit and enjoy a 90-day visa free stay as enshrined in the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement.

6.2.3 Community Citizens with Dual Nationality

Ghana no longer requires community citizens with dual nationality to acquire a visa to enter the country. The 90- day visa free stay provision is extended to Community citizens who possess additional citizenship, provided they travel with both documents.

6.2.4 Collaboration with Border Agencies

The Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) cooperates and collaborates with border agencies of neighbouring countries and also work closely with other national border agencies and stakeholders at the frontiers. Ghana is represented in all Joint Border Security Committees and undertake Joint Border patrols with security agencies of neighbouring countries.

In order to facilitate the movement of goods and persons, Ghana has supported the establishment of a Joint Border Post at Akanu/Noepe with Togo. Similar projects are on-going at Elubo-Noe (Ghana/Cote d'Ivoire) and Paga/Dakola (Ghana/Burkina Faso) borders. Ghana now opens and operates most of its frontiers on a twenty-four (24) hour Thebasis.

Ghana is a member of West African Police Information System (WAPIS) that seeks to build the capacity of West African law enforcement authorities to combat transnational crime and terrorism through enhanced information sharing.

6.2.5 Electronic- Immigration

The GIS has established an Electronic Immigration System that allows passengers to use the E-gate at the Kotoka International Airport to facilitate free movement. This service is extended to ECOWAS citizens.

6.2.6 Right to Residence and Establishment

ECOWAS citizens who wish to establish business in Ghana, only need to satisfy Immigration requirements and apply for residence permit. Community citizens are issued with special permits after payment of administrative fees. Students and Dependents are granted Indefinite Residence permits.

Ghana's immigration laws recognize the issuance of work permit to ECOWAS nationals who are lawfully engaged by companies and Institutions in Ghana.

6.3 **Supplementary Act on equality of rights between women and men for sustainable development in the ECOWAS Region**

6.3.1 **Legal Frameworks on Gender Equality**

Ghana has existing legal frameworks, policies, projects and other interventions that promote the rights of citizens, particularly women. These legislations include the Intestate Succession (Amendment) Law, 1991 (PNDCL 264), the Human Trafficking Act, 2006 (Act 694), the Domestic Violence Act, 2007 (Act 732), Criminal Offences Act, 1960 (Act 29), the Children's Act, 1998 (Act 560), Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715), The Labour Act, 2003 (Act 651). There are other pieces of legislation that abolish customary practices that are injurious to girls and women. These include the criminalization of female genital mutilation, female servitude (trokosi) and harmful widowhood rites.

Ghana is also a signatory to several international agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and has embarked on an elaborate plan of action to empower women through advocacy, sensitization, education and the creation of new gender-oriented organizations.

6.3.2 **Ghana Gender Policies/Strategies**

The Government of Ghana has in place policies and programmes that seeks to mainstream perspectives of women and men as those decisions have some impact on these two groups. To this end, policies and strategies such as the National Gender Policy (2015), The 5-Year Strategic Plan (2018-2022) to address Adolescent Pregnancy and the Ghana National Action Plan (GHANAP) (2020-2025) have been prepared to further promote the rights and welfare of the citizenry, including women. All these interventions have yielded some results, as it has increased awareness of the citizens on the role women can play in the development process.

6.3.3 Gender Equality

In spite of the existence of these legal framework and policies, the issue of gender inequality, particularly the low representation of women in leadership positions and other spheres of public life continue to be a concern in Ghana. Although Ghana's constitution make provision for equal opportunity for all, including the female gender, cultural values and other systematic inhibitions within the society tend to discriminate or exclude girls women from full participation in governance and public life.

Gender equality is the measurable equal representation of women and men in all spheres of society. The United Nations regards gender equality as a human right. It points out that empowering women is an indispensable tool for advancing development and reducing poverty. Gender equality is also a critical factor in achieving the MDGs.

Government of Ghana, in recognition of the invaluable role women play in national development has initiated various affirmative policy measures aimed at ensuring adequate participation and representation of girls and women in educational and leadership endeavours in the country. For instance, Ghana's university admission policies make provision for 30% placement for female candidates. Ghana has also adopted the convention, where all legislations make a provision for women to be included in Governing Councils/Boards of public corporations and institutions.

Unfortunately however, women are still underrepresented in leadership positions, although some women have occupied key governance positions, including Speaker of Parliament, Chief Justice, Chairman of the Electoral Commission, and Chairman of the National Council for Civic Education (NCCE) and Government Statistician since the inception of the 4th Republic in 1992.

It has been realised that in order to ensure gender balance in leadership positions and promote full participation of women in public life, there is the need to institute a deliberate legislative regime, that prescribes equal representation of women in leadership positions and the general governance of the country. To this end, Government has made a commitment to pass an Affirmative Action Bill. The Bill will seek to promote a progressive increase in the active participation of women in public life and bridge the gender imbalance between men and women.

Meanwhile, government, through the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, is implementing policies and specific programmes contained in the National Gender Policy to close the gender gap in political and leadership positions. These include the under listed strategies;

- Reviewing workplace and common area barriers to effective participation of women in governance processes.
- Enhance the understanding of the implications of non-compliance in monetary and programmatic terms to gender mainstreaming policies and programmes.
- Promote enabling political environment commitment that reaffirms increased political will for the state to achieve Gender Equality in all sustainable development frameworks (including post MDGs) and other women empowerment targets.
- Campaign towards clear understanding of gender concepts and women empowerment underpinnings in socio economic development.
- Develop guidelines for mainstreaming women into decision making processes at Metropolitan Municipal and District Assembly levels (MMDA's) and into all public structures.
- Act on removing persisting barriers that militate against Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment by facilitating political declarations and political decisions on inclusion
- Enforce the implementation of Affirmative Action Policy for the realization of women representation in all structures, while advocating for the passage of a bill into a law.
- Review and promote leadership development channels for women across the regions.
- Promote political leadership mentoring for women at least from the tertiary levels of education

In addition, to encourage women's participation in politics, two of the country's major political parties, the NDC and NPP have reduced the cost of filing fees for women parliamentary contestants. The two parties are yet to have quotas for women.

Currently, the Parliament of Ghana has forty (40) female Parliamentarians, which translates into approximately 15 % of the Two Hundred and Seventy-Five (275) member Parliament. It is informative to note that in the traditional governance institutions, efforts have successful been made to ensure the active participation of Queen Mothers in Traditional Councils and Houses of Chiefs.

6.3.4 The National Gender Policy also identifies the roles that key institutions have to play in its implementation. Parliament has a key role to play in this regard. The Legislature is expected to assess impacts and relevance of policies on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment concerns through its Committee on Gender and Children. It is also expected to expeditiously pass and domesticate international instruments in the country and ensure that women's rights are respected. Through its oversight role over the Executive, Parliament is expected to incorporate measures necessary to ensure gender equality in all government policies and programmes to address inequalities. The policy also expects the legislature to institute measures necessary to ensure social protection is integrated into all sections of the society. Parliament must monitor the adherence to gender-equitable representation on parliamentary committees and hold the executive accountable for the implementation of programmes on gender and social protection.

6.3.5 Ghana is also addressing gender equality within the context of the vulnerable in society persons living with disability. In this regard, Ghana has passed the Persons with Disability Act, 2006 Act 715 which provides for the Rights of Persons with Disability, Employment of persons with disability, the Education of persons with disability, Transportation, Health-care and facilities among others. Persons with disability receive funds every quarter from the district fund of the District Assemblies Common Fund to support them earn a decent living. Even though some strides have been made, there is still a lot more to be achieved.

Ghana as a Member State of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is fully committed to implementing the Supplementary Act on the Equality of Rights between Women and Men for Sustainable Development and has gained significant achievements.

CONCLUSION

Ghana remains committed to the objectives and ideals of ECOWAS, and will therefore continue to make the needed contribution for the realisation of the ECOWAS agenda.

THANK YOU, MERCI BEAUCOUP, OBRIGADO