



STATEMENT ON THE OCCASION OF 2018 AFRICAN UNION ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY

July 11, 2018

On behalf of the Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition GACC, I welcome you to this year's African Union's Anti-Corruption Day on the theme, *Winning the Fight Against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation*. This year's theme provides a critical opportunity to make progress in the fight against corruption especially taking concrete steps to mitigate the corrosive impact of corruption on prosperity, growth, security and the fight against extreme poverty.

This year's theme has come at an opportune time for us in Ghana because citizens consistently place corruption among their top concerns. Corruption among government officials and bureaucracies has increased over the last decade according to the Ibrahim Index of African Governance. Similarly, over the past few years, Ghana has fared poorly in the Transparency International (TI) Corruption Perception Index (CPI).

In fact, Ghana's score on the CPI has dropped consistently since it achieved its highest score of 48/100 in 2014. The low CPI score for 2017 was not unexpected, it is consistent with the general decline in the scores since 2015.

The CPI score reflects poorly on us as a society irrespective of which government is in power. As such, government should always endeavor to respond positively to the challenge of pervasive corruption conveyed by a low score.

The GACC acknowledges the efforts of Government to combat corruption in 2018. This includes the passage of the Office of the Special Prosecutor (OSP) Law , efforts to reduce the use of sole sourcing in public procurement, digitalization of some public sector processes among others

That notwithstanding, there have been numerous corruption scandals that have rocked this country since the beginning of this year which possess a worrying signal in our efforts to fight corruption. Notable among them are; the over bloated USD 178 Kelni GVG Contract, BOST Oil saga, Cash for Seats, Allegation of corruption at presidency against two chief of staff and Anas' Number 12 video alleging massive rot at the GFA. .

The GACC is therefore calling on the government to deliver concrete commitments to prevent further corruption, give credible anti-corruption bodies and law-enforcement agencies the resources needed to effectively combat corruption, and ensure that citizens have the information necessary to restore confidence in government institutions. On the part of citizens, there is need to desist from engaging in petty corruption including the offer of bribes and other gifts to induce public officers, being civil and law abiding in our dealings as well as be bold and willing to demand accountability and transparency from duty bearers whiles taking the initiative to blow the whistle and report on acts of corruption within our societies. In this regard, the media must be seen being objective in their reportage and programming in an attempt to educate the public.

Further, to rebuild citizens trust in governments and to enable citizens and governments to work together to build a better future, citizens must be able to track the operations of our agencies be it public or private whiles An independent media, citizens and appropriate judicial and legislative checks and balances must be readily in place to be able to hold leaders accountable.

The GACC and its partners are therefore calling on government and the country at large embark for a bold declaration that propels actions on the following:

- The Passage of a credible and robust RTI law to ensure that citizens can easily access public information, particularly information on budgets, contracts, foreign agreements/treaties as well as procurement to deepen transparency and accountability. In addition, Government should the passage of some key anti-corruption bills such as the the Code of Conduct for Public Officer's Bill, Whistleblowers Amendment Bill, the Companies amendment Act, Witness Protection Bill among others
- Implement and enforce inclusive development planning and policymaking that includes open, participatory and transparent budgets that allow citizens, including vulnerable groups, to participate in the governance process
- Implement open contracting processes for public procurement and publish government contracts.
- Protect freedom of speech and the work of journalists and civil society organizations.
- Take steps to ensure that public officials declare their assets and liabilities and as such put in mechanisms to verify and make public such declarations.
- Stakeholders to work collectively to evolve creative and positive ways in building integrity within government institutions, supporting organizational cultures based on accountability and ethical behaviors;
- Empower anti-corruption agencies to promote their independence and effective functioning to enforce existing anti-corruption laws and research into new ways of preventing corruption.
- Introduce and enforce legislation that expedites the prosecution of corruption cases.
- Create channels for active community participation to enhance whistle blowing and provide protection for whistle-blowers.
- Introduce and enforce legislation to transparently manage the proceeds of crime for the benefit of the citizens.
- Increase corporate transparency, including ownership structures such as public beneficial ownership registers.

- Lastly, government must be committed to the implementation of NACAP as well as other key anti-corruption conventions such as the African Union Convention Against Corruption and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption

In conclusion, Ghana has made significant gains in democratic governance especially in the successful change of governments from one democracy to another in the last 25 years. However, corruption has remained one of Ghana's biggest developmental challenges.

Corruption is characterized by many social, economic, administrative, political and cultural factors. Fighting corruption therefore requires collaboration and partnership between government, civil society and the private sector. In fact, it also requires strong institutions and "strong men" who will be willing to enforce the law to confront the problem of corruption. This way we will be "*Winning the Fight Against Corruption leading to a Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation*" for which at the respective country level will equally require the needed sustained commitment from stakeholders including Civil Society, Private Sector, Government as well as citizens and the media. Many thanks for your attention!!!