

**STATEMENT ON GAS EXPLOSIONS IN GHANA AND THE WAY  
FORWARD BY THE HONOURABLE MEMBER FOR MANHYIA  
NORTH CONSTITUENCY, COLLINS OWUSU AMANKWAH**

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity given me to make a statement on floor of the house on the above subject.

Mr. Speaker, I start with great empathy and condolence to the families and friends of those who have lost their dear ones due to these recurrent gas explosions.

Recently two persons lost their lives in a gas explosion in Kumasi in which one Collins Obeng a 37-year-old young and vibrant man as well as a yet to be identified 68-year-old man lost their lives.

Mr. Speaker, not long ago on September 7, 2017 the country we experienced a fatal gas explosion at North Legon on the Madina-Atomic energy road where seven (7) lives perished.

In recent years the country has suffered horrendous explosions. Records have it that we have lost about two hundred and fifty two (252) lives in twelve years due to such explosions. It has also left several hundreds injured for life (TAWIAH OWUSU, May 7<sup>th</sup> 2018, MyJoy Online).

If we would recall, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June 2015, the whole country was in great grief when we lost about 90 persons in another twin Gas explosion and flood disaster, which additionally left several hundreds in life-threatening conditions.

The danger posed by these gas explosions goes beyond the boundaries of Accra. It has spread to the whole country. Mr. Speaker, another such explosion occurred in Axim, a farming community in the western region, and yet another in Tarkoradi. In Accra, places like Tema, Kasoa and Nungua Zongo have experienced such explosions.

Not long ago, this year, we experienced a massive explosion which happened in the heart of Accra close to a busy bus station and an emerging mini rising market, at Atomic Junction, near Madina in Accra. It claimed 7 lives and left several persons with various conditions of injury. Again Mr. Speaker, just about two weeks ago we heard of another gas explosion disaster at Trinity Oil Kumasi in the capital of Ashanti Region.

The threat the gas explosions pose to human lives, damages caused to properties, resources including money, and jobs lost are incalculable. Some people attribute these occurrences to lack of appropriate policies whilst others blame it on lack of policy implementation. Because of the loss of lives and properties there is the clamour that such stations should not be situated at residential areas or close to public places.

Mr. Speaker, the NPA has guidelines governing the siting of Gas and fuel stations. One of such is that Gas and fuel stations should be situated at a minimum of 30.8 meters (100ft) away from residential facility. The question to ask, Mr. Speaker, is that if indeed there are such guidelines are they being followed by

respective Gas Station operators? If No, Mr. Speaker, which institution is responsible for enforcing these rules?

Mr. Speaker, the truth is that there are no regulations backed by law but just guidelines set out by the NPA in the operations of fuel and gas distribution centres. These guidelines are even being flouted by these fuel and gas operators.

Mr. speaker, I want to use this platform to appeal to all stakeholders, the National Petroleum Authority (NPA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS), Factories Inspectorate Department (FID), Metropolitan Municipal and District Authority (MMDA), and the Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) to take the issue of frequent gas explosions with catastrophic consequences very serious and take the necessary action to halt any such future occurrences. In the meantime, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to personnel of the Ghana National Fire Service for their quick responses whenever such tragedies have befallen the Nation. We should provide adequate logistics to the Service in the face of such Adversities.

The President, His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwah Akufo-Addo issued a statement on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2017, expressing his condolences to the affected persons and their families, He has ordered for a thorough investigation into such incidents and that all

necessary actions will be taken to put a stop to these manmade disasters.

Mr. Speaker, parliament on its own volition can also cause the appropriate committee to investigate these incidents with a view to crafting the appropriate legislation to combat the menace as provided for under Article 103(3) of the 1992 Republican Constitution. That is the least we can do as a House.

Thank you.