

STATEMENT BY THE RT. HON. SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT BEFORE
ADJOURNMENT OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE FOURTH SESSION
OF THE PARLIAMENT OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC OF GHANA -
FRIDAY, 22ND MARCH, 1996

PARLIAMENT OF GHANA
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This statement brings us to the end of the First Meeting of the Fourth Session of Parliament of the Fourth Republic. All told, there have been Thirty Nine Sittings from Friday, 12th January to 22nd March, 1996. We have had a varied agenda as itemised by the Majority Leader in terms of Bills, Instruments, Loan Agreements, international agreements, visits of foreign dignitaries and international business transactions that we have considered.

There were a number of occasions when the policy of Government was declared and debated during the Meeting. The President's speech at the Opening of the First Meeting of the Fourth Session of our Parliament, as usual, served as a general declaration of the aims and intentions of the Government, for the Session. In the ensuing debates on the speech, there was opportunity for Hon Members to express their views more fully on the address/speech.

The Budget Speech of the Minister of Finance was another occasion when the general lines of Government policy were exposed for comments. Members were also able to articulate the concerns of their constituents and constituencies.

I wish, at this stage, to commend Hon. Members for the considerable dispatch and efficiency with which business on the financial policy and the Annual Estimates were tackled during the Meeting. The expert

manner in which the financial policy proposals were debated and the details of the Expenditure Estimates scrutinised by the respective Committees of Parliament were all manifestation of the experience you have acquired from your full involvement in such processes over the past three years. Those well-informed discussions have culminated in the smooth passing of the "Appropriations Act" for the 1996 financial year.

The Parliamentary mechanism of Members and Ministers' statements as an effective strategy for the conduct of Parliamentary business was adequately utilised during the Meeting. Once again, I have good reason to commend Hon. Ministers and Members for the effective manner they continued to make pertinent statements in the House to draw attention of the Executive to serious constituency concerns and topical issues of national interest. The ingenuity with which Members seized every debating opportunity to raise a constituency concern and the very fundamental issues Hon. Members raised during the debates meant a lot and depict Members steady mastery of the art of conflict resolution through words.

During the First Meeting two sets of official visits outside Ghana took place. The Rt. Hon. Speaker led a ten-man Parliamentary delegation to the Parliament of the Republic of Togo from 8th to 11th February, 1996. During this visit the Speaker had fruitful discussions with His Excellency the President of Togo. The visit further strengthened the already improved international relations between the Government and peoples of the Republics of Ghana and Togo. Between 2nd and 10th March, 1996 the Hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs also attended a C.P.A. Regional Conference in Maseru, Lesotho, South Africa at which views were shared on the subject "Conflict Resolution in Africa".

It is now my wish to congratulate you Hon. Ministers and other Members of Parliament for your hard work and selfless devotion to duty during the period of this Meeting. I cannot, but continue to count on your assistance, unwavering support and usual co-operation in carrying out the programmes of the House during the Meetings ahead. To the Leadership of the House, I also sincerely offer my thanks and best wishes for the satisfactory manner you conducted the business of the House. I would like, finally, to congratulate my First and Second Deputies for the steady support they have given me. I hope their support will be sustained over the period ahead of us.

Finally, to all Hon. Members, I would say "Well done". You have indeed put up a splendid performance during the Session and no doubt most of you are looking forward to a period of well deserved rest. You are however, reminded that in addition to enjoying your well-earned rest, you may also find time to discharge your obligations to your constituents and constituencies through education of the electorate on the Role of Parliament and the good work that has, so far, been done by it. You are also advised, on the eve of the next Elections, to educate your constituents about the urgent need for smooth and orderly Elections which will further foster and entrench the ideals of democracy in Ghana.

I wish you all excellent health and a HAPPY AND ENJOYABLE EASTERTIDE. I now declare the House adjourned "sine die".

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