

**IN THE SECOND MEETING
OF THE
SECOND SESSION
OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENT OF THE
FOURTH REPUBLIC OF GHANA**

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**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
ON ROADS AND TRANSPORT
ON THE**

**INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON
MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE
(SAR), 1979**

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IN THE SECOND MEETING OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENT OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC OF GHANA

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ROADS AND TRANSPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE (SAR), 1979

1.0 INTRODUCTION

On Thursday, 17th June 2010, the Hon. Minister for Transport, Mr. Mike Allen Hammah laid before the House, the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, (SAR) 1979.

Madam Speaker, in accordance to the Standing Order 189, you referred the International Convention to the Committee for consideration and report.

2.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENT

In considering the International Convention, the Committee referred to the following documents:

- i. The 1992 Constitution
- ii. Standing Order of the House (2000)

- iii. Memorandum on the International Convention
- iv. The International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, SAR, 1979.

3.0 DELIBERATIONS

The Committee is grateful to the Minister for Transport, Hon. Mike Hammah, the Chief Director of Ministry of Transport and the Director General of Ghana Maritime Authority.

4.0 BACKGROUND

The 1979 Search and Rescue Convention was adopted by an International Conference in Hamburg in April 1979 and is intended to provide a Global framework for responding to emergencies at sea involving ships. The Convention, which is crucial to maritime safety, is basically designed to ensure that any emergency at sea will result in a distress call and the response to that call should be immediate and effective.

The Convention entered into force in 1985. Although the obligation to go to the assistance of ships and persons in distress at sea was enshrined in the national law and International treaties such as International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) 1974 until the adoption in 1979 of the SAR Convention, there was no International System covering Search and Rescue Operations. In some parts of the world there were well established organizations mandated to provide assistance promptly and efficiently, whilst in others there was nothing at all.

The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in May 1988 adopted a revised annexure to the SAR Convention. The amended Convention which entered into force in January, 2000, clarified the

responsibilities of contracting governments and put a greater emphasis on a Regional approach and co-ordination between maritime and aeronautical search and rescue operations.

The amended Convention requires countries of a common region to establish a Regional SAR Co-ordinating Centres to facilitate regional and national search and rescue operations. This arrangement reduces equipment of individual nations for search and rescue purposes

5.0 OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- It was observed that under the Convention, Ghana will be required to provide equipment for the establishment of a National Search and Rescue Co-ordinating Centre.

The Committee would like to recommend that urgent steps must be taken by the Ministry to make a request to the International Maritime Organisation to provide all the necessary equipment and training of personnel who will assist with Search and Rescue operations for the National Search and Rescue Coordinating Centre.

It is also the expectation of the Committee that the Ministry and the Ghana Maritime Authority would collaborate with the Ministry of Health, Ghana Armed Forces, Ghana Civil Aviation Authority, National Fire Service, Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority, National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO) and other Stakeholders to provide the needed support for the Centre.

- The Committee also noted that the implementation of the Search and Rescue Convention by Ghana will enable her to put in place the requisite legal framework to provide the basis for the establishment of the National Search and Rescue Coordinating Centre. It further

noted that the ratification of the Convention will also enable Ghana to become a beneficiary to the financial and technical assistance of the International Maritime Organisation for such operations at the National and Regional level.

The Committee would like to recommend that the Ministry should expedite action on all legislation relevant to the Convention to allow for its smooth implementation in the Country.

6.0 CONCLUSION

Since there are immense benefits to be derived from the Search and Rescue Convention, especially the risk associated with offshore oil exploration and production, it is necessary for Ghana to ratify the Search and Rescue Convention to address emergency situation during Search and Rescue operation at sea.



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HON. MICHAEL COFFIE BOAMPONG
CHAIRMAN TO THE COMMITTEE



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SAMUEL ADDEI
CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE