

**IN THE FIRST SESSION OF THE EIGHTH
PARLIAMENT OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC OF
GHANA**



**FIRST REPORT OF THE
APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE**

ON

**HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT'S
NOMINATIONS FOR MINISTERIAL
APPOINTMENTS**

ACC NO : 3257 C2
CLASS NO : CR/M/21

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MARCH, 2021

**FIRST REPORT OF THE APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE ON HIS EXCELLENCY
THE PRESIDENT'S NOMINATIONS FOR MINISTERIAL AND REGIONAL
MINISTERIAL APPOINTMENTS**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Pursuant to Articles 78 (1) and 256 (1) of the Constitution of Ghana the nominees of H. E., the President for Ministerial and Regional Ministerial appointments were communicated to Parliament on 22nd January, 2021. The nominations were referred to the Appointments Committee by the Rt. Hon. Speaker for consideration and report in furtherance to Order 172 of the Standing orders of the House.

1.2 A total number of forty-six (46) names, comprising thirty (30) Ministers of State and sixteen (16) Regional Ministers designates were submitted to the Committee for consideration and recommendation to the House. However, considering the numbers involved, the Committee agreed to report in batches. The First Report of the Committee, therefore, covers 13 out of the 46 nominees. The rest would be covered in subsequent reports of the Committee.

1.2.1 The nominations are as follows:

NAME	DESIGNATED MINISTRY/REGION
1. Mr. Albert Kan Dapaah	National Security
2. Hon. Dominic Nitiwul, MP	Defence
3. Ms. Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey	Foreign Affairs & Regional Integration
4. Hon. Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum, MP	Education
5. Hon. Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu, MP	Parliamentary Affairs
6. Hon. Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh, MP	Energy
7. Hon. Dan Botwe, MP	Local Government, Decentralisation & Rural Development
8. Hon. Ambrose Dery, MP	Interior
9. Hon. Ignatius Baffuor Awuah, MP	Employment, and Labour Relations

10. Hon. Sarah Adwoa Safo, MP	Gender, Children and Social Protection
11. Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto	Food and Agriculture
12. Hon. Mavis Hawa Koomson, MP	Fisheries and Aquaculture Development
13. Hon. Kojo Opong-Nkrumah - MP	Information

2.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

The Committee principally relied on the under-listed documents during its deliberations:

- i. The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana;
- ii. The Standing Orders of the Parliament; and
- iii. The Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the Nominees.

3.0 CONSIDERATION OF THE REFERRAL

- 3.1 In furtherance of Order 172 (3) of the Standing Orders of the Parliament, the names of the nominees were published in newspapers with national circulation for the attention of the general public pursuant to Order 172 (3). The Committee, also through the publication, requested Memoranda in respect of the nominees from the general public.
- 3.2 The Committee subsequently sought and obtained Confidential Reports in respect of the nominees from the Ghana Police Service and the National Intelligence Bureau (NIB). The Committee also requested and obtained Tax Status Reports on the nominees from the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA).
- 3.3 The Committee thereafter held Public Hearings to consider the nominations. Each nominee subscribed to the Oath of a Witness before proceeding to answer questions posed by Hon. Members. The questions were related to their CVs, eligibility, competence, and issues about the offices for which they have been nominated for. Other questions of national concern were also asked.

3.4 The Committee after its deliberations reports on the nominees as follows:

4.0 MR. ALBERT KAN-DAPAAH

MINISTER-DESIGNATE
FOR NATIONAL SECURITY

4.1.1 Background

Mr. Albert Kan-Dapaah was born in Kumasi on 14th March, 1953 and hails from Maase-Boaman in the Ashanti Region. He is a Christian (Methodist) and married with four children. He had his primary education at Amoako Methodist Primary School between 1958 and 1962 and his middle school education at Amoako L/A Middle School from 1962 to 1964. The nominee proceeded to Acherensua Secondary School for his GCE Ordinary Level Certificate from 1964 to 1969.

Between 1969 and 1972, he attended the Institute of Professional Studies (now University of Professional Studies) and obtained his RSA/AIA Inter Certificates. Mr. Kan-Dapaah further attended the North-East London Polytechnic, London where he was awarded an ACCA Level 2 Certificate from 1974 to 1977. He then proceeded to the Emile Woolf College of Accountancy to obtain his final ACCA Certificate in 1978.

Mr. Kan-Dapaah has the following professional qualification: a) fellow of the Association of Certified Chartered Accountants UK (1978). b) Member, Institute of Chartered Accountants, Ghana, and c) Honorary PhD. From the University of Professional Studies, Accra.

Mr. Kan-Dapaah worked as the Resident Partner of Panell Kerr Foster, Chartered Accountants in Liberia (1978 - 1986). Between 1986 and 1987, he was the Head of Audit at the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT). He joined the Electricity Company of Ghana as the Director of Audit in 1987 and later held the position of Director of Finance in the same company from 1989 to 1995. He later became the Founding Member/Managing Partner of the Kan-Dapaah and Associates from 1996 to 2000.

The nominee served as the Member of Parliament for the Afigya Sekyere West Constituency from 1997 to 2013. Between 2001 and 2008, Mr. Kan-Dapaah served as Minister for Energy, Minister for Communication, Minister for Interior and Minister for Defence. Whilst in Parliament, the nominee served as the Ranking Member on the Committee on Mines and Energy and a Member of the Committee on Employment, Social Welfare & State Enterprises (from 1997-2000). Also between 2001 and 2004, he was a Member of the Privileges Committee and Foreign Affairs Committee. Again, from 2005 to 2008, Mr. Kan-Dapaah was a Member of the Committee on Roads and Transport and Special Budget. The nominee was a Member of the Committee on Defence & Interior and Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee (2009-2013). The nominee has also served on a number of Boards and Councils including as Member of the SSB Consumer Ltd, Kabelmetal (Ghana) Ltd, New Times Corporation, Institute of Chartered Accountants, Police Council, Armed Forces Council, Ghana Prisons Council, Ghana Immigration Services Board, and Fire Service Council.

Between 2013 and 2016, Mr. Kan-Dapaah was the Director, Financial Accountability and Transparency, Africa; Consulting Director, Centre for Public Accountability-University of Professional Studies, Accra; and Adjunct Lecturer, Masters in Auditing Course-University of Professional Studies, Accra. From 2014 to 2017, the nominee was the Director of the Financial Accountability and Transparency, Africa. He was also the Consulting Director of the Centre for Public Accountability and an adjunct Lecturer at the University of Professional Studies, Accra from 2014 to 2017. Finally, Mr. Kan-Dapaah was the Minister for National Security from 2017 to January, 6th 2021.

Mr. Kan-Dapaah consulted for several organisations between 2014 and 2015. These included the following: 1). Preparation of Operating Practices, Procedures and Preparation of Legacy Document PAC, and Citizens Budget 2014 all funded by STAR-Ghana, 2). Preparation of Operating Practices and Procedures of PAC of Liberia and Stakeholders Training Sessions, Workshops and Policy Dialogues with PAC, Civil Society and media in Liberia; all funded by the World Bank, 3). Simplified Auditor General's Report (where did the Money Go) funded by the UNDP, and 4). Training Seminars for CSOs on Accountability and Financial Laws of Ghana-funded by LOGODEP/USAID.

4.1.2 INTERACTION WITH NOMINEE

Responses to Questions

The nominee responded to questions relating to:

- the State of Security in the Country;
- The Country's Preparedness for Cyber-Attacks;
- Visibility of Military in the Public;
- The Power of the Auditor-General to Disallow and Surcharge;
- Inequitable distribution of resources and deployment across the country;
- Presence of Armed Security Personnel (Soldiers) in the Chamber of Parliament;
- Ayawaso West Wuagon Constituency By-Election Incidence;
- Compensation for Ayawaso West Wuagon Victims;
- Resolution of the Dagbon Conflict and other Chieftaincy Issues in the country;
- The Security and Intelligence Agencies Act, 2020 and Transition from the Secretariat to a Ministry;
- The fight against illegal mining (Galamsey);
- National Security Strategy;
- Counterterrorism and Maritime Fusion Centres;
- The fight against transnational crimes and the Accra Initiative;
- Accra Intelligence-Traffic Monitoring System;
- Heavy deployment of the military in the Volta region during the Voter registration exercise; and
- Elections related violence involving Security Personnel during the December 7 Elections. Below is a summary of his responses.

a. **The State of Security in the Country**

Addressing the security situation in the country with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, the nominee informed the Committee that the COVID-19 pandemic presents peculiar security challenges which the country must deal with as long as the pandemic remained. The Minister-designate stated that the effect of the pandemic on the financial resources and the impact on other sectors of the economy could not be overemphasised. He recalled the problems associated with the first lockdown and the difficulties the people encountered in getting food and going about their daily routine.

He further stated that the country continues to experience the normal security challenges including violent crimes, illegal mining, drug and human trafficking, and chieftaincy disputes and violence. The nominee further intimated that the country's borders continue to be porous with the upsurge in transnational crimes such as cybersecurity and terrorism.

Regarding the country's preparedness to contain any external security threat from terrorists, the nominee stated that terrorism in the sub-region is an emerging phenomenon that is of a major priority to the security agencies. He related to a situation where within three years, the infiltration of terrorist in a certain country had increased from about five per cent to over eighty-five percent.

He indicated that the situation poses a serious security threat, and the Ministry of National Security has taken steps to protect the country from any terrorist infiltration. As part of the efforts, a national framework for preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism in Ghana was developed to guide the Government and security agencies to respond to the threats.

According to the nominee, the security and intelligence agencies to a large extent, have managed the situation well and considered the general security situation in the country, to be stable.

b. The Country's Preparedness for Cyber-Attacks

Touching on the country's preparedness to counter any cyber-attack, the nominee stated that although cybercrime was not a new phenomenon in the country, it had not been considered a major security threat in the past. The nominee indicated that cybercrime has, however, become a major security challenge that confronts the country in recent times. According to the nominee, this had awakened the proactiveness of the security agencies to prevent and respond promptly when they occurred. The nominee added that considering the harm and possible damage cybercrime could cause the country, the security agencies need to be adequately resourced to be able to sustainably combat the menace.

The nominee indicated that currently, the intelligence and security agencies were not adequately capacitated to effectively deal with the cybersecurity threats on their own. It was, therefore, against this background that after a holistic study had been conducted,

the government decided to situate the cybersecurity architecture at the Ministry of Communications, the only institution that is currently better placed and resourced to protect the country against any cyber-attacks. The nominee added that there had so far been an excellent working relationship and collaboration between the intelligence and security agencies and the Ministry of Communication in this regard and was optimistic, the collaboration would be further strengthened.

That, notwithstanding, the nominee opined that ultimately, the National Security and its security agencies needed to acquire their cybersecurity infrastructure and expertise, and as part of the preparation and effort towards the realisation of this aim, the Ministry of National Security had established a task force on digitising the security and intelligence agencies and also to build capacity.

The nominee reiterated that currently, the Ministry of Communication has the resources and expertise to protect the country against any cyber-attacks.

c. Visibility of Military in the Public

Responding to the question as to whether it had been the government policy to deploy personnel from the Military instead of the Police Service for civil protection duties, the nominee, stated that the decision to deploy a particular protection service had always been based on the result on a security- risk assessment carried out by the security agencies at a particular time. According to the nominee, the act of deploying personnel of the security services, particularly, the Military and the Police had been an age-long practice. The nominee indicated that contrary to the recent commentaries in the public domain, the security support was not only available to Ministers, Deputy Ministers, and high-profile members of government, but also other members of the society whose security risks were considered high. He stated that it is the security agencies' responsibility to ensure that lives of the people of this country whatever their status are protected and the type of protection provided depended mainly on the results of security risk assessment, carried out. He mentioned that Journalists have also been given such a facility when it was realised that their security was at risk.

The nominee disagreed with the assertion that the deployment of military personnel in civil protection duties was on the upsurge and meant a vote of no confidence in the Ghana Police Service to protect the civilian population. He explained that the military is called upon to provide such protection when the security assessment of a particular situation requires them to do so. The nominee also added that, like other security agencies, the Police do not have the full complement of personnel and equipment required to alone provide the needed VVIP protection services nationwide.

d. The Power of the Auditor-General to Disallow and Surcharge

Expressing his opinion on the Auditor-General's power to disallow and surcharge without recourse to Parliament, as cited in a recent Supreme Court decision in the Occupy Ghana case, the nominee, a former Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament, stated that although the Auditor-General has the power to disallow and surcharge under article 187 (7) (b) (i) (ii) and (iii) of the 1992 Constitution, the power cannot be exercised without recourse to Parliament. He explained that the Auditor-General is an employee of Parliament and as such, the exercise of his powers should be done with the prior approval of Parliament.

The nominee added that like other countries within the Commonwealth, the work of the Auditor-General is not conclusive until Parliament approves its report as stipulated in Article 187 (5) and (6) of the 1992 Constitution. The nominee maintained that it is wrong for the Auditor-General to disallow and surcharge people when Parliament has not even seen the audit report. The nominee believes that it was only after Parliament had approved the Auditor-General's report that he could go ahead to disallow and surcharge individuals and institutions who may be found culpable.

The nominee asserted that if the current position was allowed, there would be no need for the Public Accounts Committee as the Auditor-General could punish offenders before the report containing the audit findings were presented to Parliament. The nominee disagreed with the Supreme Court's decision on the matter and urged Parliament to take steps to have the decision reviewed.

e. Inequitable distribution of resources and deployment of security personnel across the country

Regarding the inequitable allocation of resources and deployment of security forces across the country, the nominee intimated that in spite government's commitments and increasing efforts to resource the security agencies to effectively carry out its activities, the challenge of inadequate resources continues to plague the sector. According to the nominee, the security and intelligence agencies have never been given the full complement of the resources they require for their work because of the competing demands on the state's scarce resources.

The nominee stressed the importance of providing resources required to ensure the provision of adequate security in all parts of the country, particularly, amid increasing terrorist attacks in the sub-region. The nominee assured the Committee that when approved, he would provide the needed leadership to guide the Ministry to leverage technology to improve the country's security situation.

The nominee also intimated that since maintenance of peace and security was not the sole responsibility of the Ministry of National Security, he would collaborate with his colleagues at the Ministries of Finance, and Defence and Interior to raise the needed resource to ensure that the required logistics and adequate personnel are deployed to the remotest part of the country.

f. Presence of Armed Security Personnel (Soldiers) in the Chamber of Parliament

The Minister-Designate condemned the presence of armed soldiers in the Chamber of Parliament on the eve of the election of the Speaker and swearing-in of the Eighth Parliament of the Fourth Republic on the 7th of January 2021. The nominee indicated that he got alarmed and wished such incidence never occurred. Responding to the question as to whose instructions the security personnel entered the Chamber, the nominee indicated that his enquiry revealed that a Commander, who considered the situation in the Chamber to be chaotic, authorised the operation to restore order in the House. The nominee, however, could not disclose the identity of the said Commander and added that he was aware that the Chief of Defence Staff had commissioned an investigation into the matter and was hopeful, appropriate action would be taken upon completion of the investigation.

He assured that persons who would be found to have behaved unprofessionally after the investigations would be sanctioned. The nominee, however, was unable to indicate when the investigations would be completed but assured the Committee that he would liaise with the Minister of Defence to ensure that matter is dealt with promptly.

g. Ayawaso West Wuagon Constituency By-Election Incidence

The nominee stated that the incident that happened during the bye-election at Ayawaso West Wuagon was regrettable coming at the heels of other violent bye-elections at Atiwa, Chereponi, Akwatia, and Talensi. According to the nominee, the government was alarmed and concerned when another bye-election violence happened at the Ayawaso West Wuagon and it was against this background that the President's commitment to deal with the matter head-on that led to the establishment of the Ayawaso West Wuagon Commission of Inquiry chaired by Justice Emile Short.

The nominee disagreed that the government jettisoned the Commission's recommendation on the disbandment of the National Security SWAT team and stated that the Government White Paper made it clear why it was unable to accept all the recommendations. Two fundamental reasons were given. The nominee explained that as indicated in the White Paper, the Commission failed to make a full, faithful, and impartial inquiry into the circumstances of, and establish the facts leading to, the events and associated violence during the Ayawaso West Wuagon By-Election contrary to the Commission's terms of reference. Secondly, the Commission wrongly assumed that the SWAT Team engaged in the incident at the Ayawaso was the one responsible for the election security. The nominee was emphatic that the SWAT Team was not responsible for election security during the Ayawaso West Wuagon bye-election. The nominee stated that the Government could not accept the recommendation to disband the SWAT Team because of the reasons stated above.

h. Compensation for Ayawaso West Wuagon Victims

When the nominee was asked to update the Committee on the compensation packages for victims of the Ayawaso West Wuagon bye-election incidence as recommended by the Smile Short Commission, the nominee stated that the payment for compensation had delayed because the Commission did not indicate specifically how much should be paid to each of the victims. According to him, even though his Ministry is not directly

responsible for the payment of these compensation packages, he will liaise with the Ministers of Justice and Attorney General and Finance to ensure that the payment was made expeditiously. The nominee assured the Committee that the payment would be effected at the end of May 2021.

i. Resolution of the Dagbon Conflict and other Chieftaincy Issues in the country

Commenting on the peaceful resolution of the Dagbon conflict, the nominee stated that in addition to His Excellency the President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo's commitment to a peaceful resolution of the Dagbon crisis, there was also the determination of the people of Dagbon to end the crisis. He stated that the commitment of both parties paved the way for a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

The nominee mentioned chieftaincy conflicts remain one of the most significant domestic security challenges in the country. According to the nominee, about forty percent (40%) of the security reports he receives daily relate to chieftaincy issues that may threaten the peace and security of the country. He expressed the National Security outfit's readiness, to partner with the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs to address these threats posed by chieftaincy-related conflict in the country.

j. The Security and Intelligence Agencies Act, 2020 and Transition from the Secretariat to a Ministry

In answer to a question as to the measure being taken to ensure a smooth transition of the National Security Secretariat into an intelligence agency as prescribed by the new Security and Intelligence Agencies Act, 2020 (Act 1030), the nominee stated that there has been a long desire and calculated attempt by successive governments to transform the Secretariat into a Ministry. This resulted in the appointments of personalities such as Messrs Totobi Kwakye and Francis Poku being appointed as National Security Ministers. The nominee indicated that although Ministers were appointed, the Secretariat remained the same. The Ministry of National Security held the view that this would make the security and intelligence agencies more transparent and accountable to the people.

The Minister-designate commended Members of Parliament, particularly, the Committee on Defence and Interior and security and intelligence experts from both political parties for their immense contribution during the formulation of the Act.

The nominee expressed his happiness about the fact that Parliament proposed under the new standing orders to establish a parliamentary committee on Security and Intelligence. He therefore pledged his outfit's preparedness to work closely with the Committee and also share confidential security and intelligence report and information with Members, once they swore the oath of secrecy.

Touching on some of his achievements, the nominee maintained that during his time as the Minister for National Security, he tried to demystify the apprehensions surrounding the operations of the office. The nominee entreated Parliament to insist that the security and intelligence agencies continue to be accountable to the people without compromising the office's core responsibility and secrecy.

On what the country should expect from the change in the name from Bureau of National Investigation (BNI) to the National Intelligence Bureau (NIB) as provided for in the new Security and Intelligence Agencies Act, the nominee stated the change has helped to refocus the institution from the role of investigation to a body that collects, gathers, analyse, and disseminate intelligence to the security agencies and government. The nominee indicated that NIB now has a team of well-trained analysts, who do not only gather intelligence but analyse to establish trends and provide policy implications to guide decision making.

k. The fight against illegal mining (Galamsey)

Responding to a question relating to the status of the fight against illegal mining (Galamsey) and associated issues, the nominee indicated that it is in the collective interest of every Ghanaian that the fight against the illegal mining and general destruction to the environment, particularly, water bodies and ecosystems succeed. To the nominee, the fight against Galamsey required our collective national efforts since it borders on national security, particularly, food security and the general livelihood of many rural communities. The nominee opined that though small scale mining had been in existence for many years, the current method and rate of destruction to the environment is quite alarming and call for concentrated efforts from all stakeholders. According to the nominee, many successes were achieved in the fight against illegal mining, although the situation persists. He maintained that the Government took a bold

step to protect the environment and without which the situation would have been worse. He, therefore, commended the His Excellency the President, for the effort.

Regarding the exact amount spent on the Galamsey Taskforce activities, the nominee could not provide the figures since the budget for the operation was not channeled through his Ministry. The Minister-designate indicated that the Government would revisit the Galamsey fight to ensure that the environment, particularly, the water bodies are protected.

On the myths surrounding the seized excavators, the nominee informed the Committee that investigations were still ongoing and a comprehensive report would be made available when the exercise is complete.

I. National Security Strategy

Speaking on the existence of a national security strategy for the nation, the nominee stated that for the first time in the history of the country, a national security strategy had been developed and published. The nominee recounted the efforts by successive governments to develop such an important document and commended the Government for making good, its campaign promise of developing a national security strategy. The nominee indicated the numerous support and contributions of security experts both in the past and present administration and expressed his profound gratitude to them. Particular mention was made of the Former Chairman and Ranking Member of the Defence and Interior Committee of Parliament, Messrs. Seth Acheampong and James Agalga, and the entire membership of the Committee of the 7th Parliament.

According to the nominee, ensuring peace, security, safety, and territorial integrity are the key objectives of the National Security Strategy. The nominee also indicated that the strategy underlines the unique characteristics, risks, and threats confronting the country and how to respond to those risks and threats. The document also, the nominee added identifies roles of the various stakeholders, Ministries, the media, individuals, civil society and academia.

As to whether climate change and the environment were considered a critical part of the National Security Strategy, the nominee answered in the affirmative, and indicated that a whole chapter has been dedicated to climate change and the environment. The

nominee reiterated his earlier submission that environmental degradation, water pollution, and destruction of vegetation as a result of the Galamsey menace constitute a significant security threat and called on all to support the fight against the menace.

The nominee assured the Committee that the Strategy would be implemented fully when he is approved and hoped he would continue to enjoy the support of Parliament and other stakeholders in the implementation of the Strategy.

m. Counterterrorism and Maritime Fusion Centres

According to the nominee, two counterterrorism and maritime fusion centres have been established to improve intelligence and protect the country against terrorism. The nominee stated that to facilitate the sharing of information and intelligence promptly, the Ministry's ultimate desire is to have a Centre which brings together all the intelligence and security agencies including the National Intelligence Bureau (NIB), the Research Department, Ghana Immigration Service, Customs Division of the Ghana Revenue Authority, Ghana Police Service, and several other agencies to run a maritime domain under one roof. Such coordination, the nominee agreed will help fight crime such as drug trafficking, illegal migration, terrorism, piracy, and many other transnational crimes in a coordinated and timely manner.

n. The fight against transnational crimes and the Accra Initiative

Giving the background to the initiative, the nominee stated that the Accra Initiative became necessary due to the threat of terrorism in the sub-region. It was explained that as a result of increased threats of terrorism and other transnational crimes, many countries in the Sahel areas and the Lake Chad Basin have formed associations and groups to collaborate and strategise against the threat of terrorism. It was, however, observed that Ghana and its neighbours, including Togo, Benin, and Ivory Coast did not belong to any of the associations.

According to the nominee, the Accra Initiative, which was established at the request of His Excellency the President of Ghana during an ECOWAS meeting is to enable countries in the sub-region to collaborate and support each other in the fight against

terrorist threat and attacks. The Initiative, according to the nominee has since been providing training for security operatives from the participating countries.

o. Accra Intelligence Traffic Monitoring System

Responding to a question as to whether the Accra Intelligence Monitoring System is under the Ministry of National Security, the nominee stated that there are currently two projects, the Alpha project and the Accra Intelligence Traffic Monitoring System under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Roads and Highways. According to the nominee, what the Accra Intelligence Traffic Management System seeks to do is already being done by the Alpha project and considered its implementation as a possible duplication of efforts and resources. He explained that the Alpha project had already installed many cameras at various places to fight crime. He maintains that the system is working well and can comfortably absorb the second project and suggested that instead of procuring a similar system, the resources could be channeled to procure more cameras to beef up the existing system.

p. Heavy deployment of the military in the Volta region during the Voter registration exercise

The nominee disagreed with the assertion that the deployment of the military in Volta region was because of the voter registration exercise. He further stated that it was not entirely true that the military has been recalled from the borders after the elections. The nominee indicated that three things accounted for the deployment of the military to the country's land border. The first was the fight against terrorism. It was added that intelligence report at the time indicated that there could be a terrorist attack on the country from the border with Burkina Faso. As a result, there was a heavy deployment on the northern frontier.

Again, all the neighbouring countries also strengthened their borders with a massive deployment of security personnel. Also, for the terrorist attacks in Benin and Ivory Coast, the anticipated routes were not used and mindful of this, a decision was taken to deploy the military to all country's land borders.

Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic was waging, and there was an urgent need to protect the borders in response to the President's directives to close the land borders.

The nominee maintained that the voter registration exercise just coincided with the above deployment. The nominee informed the Committee that the late former President Rawlings summoned him to explain the deployment in the region and according to the nominee, after explaining the circumstances surrounding the deployment, the former President understood and urged him to engage the chiefs and people from the Volta on the matter. He also indicated that several consultations were made in that regard.

q. Elections related violence involving Security Personnel during the December 7 Elections

The nominee admitted to pockets of election-related violence in various parts of the country during the just ended general election. Particular mention was made of the incidents in Odododiodoo, Techiman South, and Ablekuma Central constituencies. Recounting the incidents, the nominee informed the Committee that in the Odododiodoo constituency two persons were shot dead during the counting of ballot papers at the constituency collation Centre. Six others who received injuries from the gunshots were sent to the hospital for treatment. He stated that action had been taken as a result of which five suspects have been arraigned before court and charged with murder. They have since been remanded into police custody. The nominee added that thirty-two others suspects have also been arrested and charged for causing unlawful damage. The nominee assured the Committee that investigations are ongoing to ensure that justice is done.

In the case of Techiman South, the Minister-designate explained that there was a violent protest by a mob of party activist which included the throwing of stones, firing of gunshots by an assailant which disrupted the collation of the election results. To disperse the crowd, the security personnel on duty fired some shots that injured eight male adults. Two of the victims, identified as Tajudeen Mohammed and Abdallah Ayarek, were pronounced dead when they were taken to the Holy Family Hospital in Techiman. The Police are still investigating to determine the perpetrators of the crime.

Responding to the question as to the status of the Kasoa shooting incident, the nominee indicated that when given the nod, he would investigate and cause the appropriate sanction to be meted out.

At the Ablekuma Central Constituency, a security operative, fired gunshots to disperse a violent mob at the Odorkor Police church's collation centre, injuring two persons. One of the injured persons has died. The Police investigations established that a stray bullet, fired by a soldier who was yet to be identified, hit two persons. Investigations are underway to identify the military Officer who fired the warning shot.

The nominee assured the Committee that investigations are ongoing to bring all those involved to book.

Recommendation

The Committee, *by Consensus*, recommends to the House to approve the nomination of Mr. Kan Dapaah for appointment as Minister for National Security.

4.2 HON. DOMINIC NITIWUL - MINISTER- DESIGNATE
FOR DEFENCE

4.2.1 Background

Hon. Dominic Bingab Aduna Nitiwul was born on 4th November, 1977 at Chamba in the Northern Region. He is a Christian (catholic) and married with five children. He had his basic education at the St. Joseph's Primary School, Gungumpa from 1981 to 1987. He attended St. Charles Secondary School, Tamale from 1987 to 1992 for "O" Level and obtained a Teacher's Certificate "A" at Akrokerri College of Education. He further attended the then University College of Education, Winneba (1998-2002) for both Diploma in Science Education and Bachelor of Education- B.ED. Hon. Nitiwul later attended the International Academy for Leadership, Germany and obtained Conflict Prevention and Conflict Management Certificates I and II in 2003 and 2005 respectively. He also studied at the University of South Wales (Glamorgan) from 2005 to 2006 and obtained a Master of Business Administration (Finance) Degree. The

nominee, further obtained Master of Laws (LLM) in Corporate Finance from the University of Westminster from 2006 to 2007.

Hon. Nitiwul served as the Member of Parliament for the Bimbilla Constituency from 2002 to 2005. He was again elected as the MP for Bimbilla Constituency from January 2009 to date. While in Parliament, Hon Nitiwul held a number of positions including the position of Deputy Minority Leader (January 2013- January 2017) and has served on a number of Committees including the Monetary and Financial Affairs (Pan African Parliament), Business Committee, Appointments Committee, Roads & Transport Committee. Furthermore, he was a member of the Finance and Youth, Sports and Culture Committees between 2009 and 2013. He was the Minister for Defence from 2017 to 2021.

The nominee has participated in several local and international conferences and workshops.

4.2.2 INTERACTION WITH NOMINEES

Responses to Questions Asked

In sum, Hon. Nitiwul responded to the under-listed questions and issues:

- Presence of Armed Security Personnel (Soldiers) in the Chamber of Parliament;
- Recruitment into the Ghana Armed Force
- Establishment of Military Base in the Regions
- Adoption of the Concept of National Guard
- Achievements and Challenges as Minister for Defense
- Reverting portions of Military acquired lands to the original owners
- Proposed relocation of Burma Camp to the Sagleme Housing Project Site
- Expansion of the Bazua Military Base in Bawku
- Increased Military Involvement in Internal Security
- Female Enrolment into the Armed Forces
- Boosting Morale in the Armed Forces
- Protecting the Ghana Maritime Domain
- Feeding and Fueling Arrears
- Encroachment on the Military Land

Below is some details of the responses:

a. Presence of Armed Security Personnel (Soldiers) in the Chamber of Parliament

On the matter of who authorised armed military personnel into the Chamber of Parliament on the eve of the election of the Speaker and swearing-in of the Eighth Parliament of the Fourth Republic on 7th January 2021, the nominee indicated that at the time of the incident, he did not have the capacity to have ordered the armed military personnel into the Chamber. He stated that at that material time the incident occurred, his tenure of office as Minister for Defence had expired. He described the action of the Military as unfortunate. He stated that the Military in discharging their duties are professionals and could have decided to restore law and order in the Chamber. He informed the Committee that the Military High Command had instituted an investigation into the matter and assured Committee that persons who are found to have behaved unprofessionally would be sanctioned.

b. Recruitment into the Ghana Armed Forces

Commenting on the perceived protocol recruitment into the Armed Forces, Hon. Nitiwul informed the Committee that the Ghana Armed Forces has a robust criterion by which people are selected and that nobody can influence the recruitment or the enlistment process into the Ghana Armed Forces. He stated that recruitment into the Armed Forces involves six stages and indicated that there is no 'protocol' recruitment as part of the enlistment process. He indicated that the recruitment process is nationalistic, with the selection team usually going around the country to select qualified candidates through a vigorous process. He cautioned members of the public not pay monies to any group of persons or individuals with the promise of securing them a place. He bemoaned the activities of fraudsters who take advantage of the process to defraud the unsuspecting public and warned that the Military would deal with such fraudsters as some of them are currently serving jail terms.

He advised the public to pay attention to advertisements in new papers or the Ghana Armed Forces' official website for information relating to the enlistment process.

c. Establishment of Military Base in Regions

In response to a question regarding the possibility of establishing a base in the other parts of the country, the nominee informed the Committee that it has been the Ministry's priority to open a regiment in each region. The nominee indicated that though the military presence in some of the country had been on a temporal basis, plans were far advanced to develop permanent bases in all the regions to support the civil police in maintaining law and order to ensure the safety of the citizenry and defend the country's territories. The nominee hinted that His Excellency, the President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, would soon be cutting the sod to commence the establishment of fifteen military operating bases across the entire north to beef up the security of the country's borders against any external threats.

d. Adoption of the Concept of the National Guard

The nominee was favourable to the suggestion of the possibility of country's adoption of the National Guard concept as being practiced in the countries in the sub-region and promised, when approved, work with the Military High Command, security professionals/experts and other relevant stakeholders to develop a comprehensive framework for the consideration of the Cabinet. The nominee also assured the Committee that he would work closely with the Committee on Defense and Interior in this endeavour to ensure that this laudable initiative explored.

e. Achievement and Challenges during his tenure as Minister of Defence

Touching on his achievement as Minister in the previous Government, the nominee informed the Committee that he was able to undertake several projects and initiatives within the last four years. He stated that the \$100,000,000 loan approved by Parliament enabled him to undertake most of the Ministry's projects and initiatives. The Ministry commenced the construction of accommodation facilities for Officers of the Armed Forces across the country. The housing units which are at various stages of completion will be completed to provide decent accommodation for members of the Armed Forces and their families. The nominee informed the Committee that some housing units are yet to start due to some technical challenges that the contractor experienced. He further indicated that he continued the abandoned projects initiated by his predecessor and that about 80 per cent of those have been completed. The nominee undertook the construction and repairs of several barracks roads across the country and purchased

luxurious buses for the staff of the Ghana Armed Forces. While the nominee ensured that all the Ghana Armed Forces training facilities in the country are upgraded, the salaries and allowances of personnel were also rationalised. He extended an invitation to the Committee on Defence and Interior to visit some of the Ministry's projects sites across the country when he is given the nod as Minister.

Commenting on the challenges he faced as a Minister during his tenure of office, Hon Nitiwul informed the Committee that accommodation for the Officers of the Armed forces was one of his major challenges. As a result, his priority in the few years is to ensure the provision of decent housing in the Barracks to all the Ghana Armed Forces personnel. This would ensure discipline and high morale within the service.

The nominee further stated that inadequacy of resources required to modernise the Ghana Armed Forces operations were his primary challenge. He indicated that for the GAF to confront the threat of cybersecurity, terrorism and maintain the country's territorial integrity he required a huge investment in the deployment of modern technology, military logistics, and training. He assured the Committee that gallant men and women of the GAF are ready to discharge their mandate effectively and efficiently in defence of the country.

Regarding the purported arrest of Ghanaian at the country's border by Ivorian soldiers, Hon Nitiwul indicated that since the two countries are 'neighbours, and it will not be appropriate to use military aggression in settling disputes. He stated that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through diplomatic channels, is handling the matter with her counterpart in Ivory Coast. He indicated that as part of measures to ensure that the security around Bole and its environs, an operating military base has been established.

f. Reverting portions of Military Acquired Lands to the original owners

The nominee stated that the Government, through the Lands Commission, acquired some parcels of land across the country for the Military. The nominee mentioned that a Committee had been established to advise the Ministry on the size and locations of land entrusted to the Military and determine the circumstances under which those lands were acquired. The nominee believes that the exercise would indicate the parcels of lands that may be returned to the original owners. He assured the Committee to engage with

the relevant stakeholders regarding the way forward when the report of the Committee is finally submitted to his outfit.

g. Proposed Relocation of Burma Camp to the Saglemi Housing Project Site

In answer to a question on whether the nominee would consider relocating Burma Camp to Saglemi Housing Project, the nominee lauded the idea and indicated that the Ghana Armed Forces would be ready and willing to accept this proposal if the facility is given to the Armed Forces as a means of solving its accommodation challenge. The nominee, however, stated that though military camps and bases in most advanced countries are found at the city's outskirts the decision to relocate Burma Camp remains a sensitive one that would require extensive discussions and stakeholder consultations. He indicated his willingness to engage the relevant bodies and authorities to get their support in this endeavour.

h. Expansion of the Bazua Military Base in Bawku

In response to a question on the expansion of the Bazua Military Base in Bawku, the Upper East region, Mr. Nitiwul informed the Committee that the Bazua Military Base is one of the most important bases that need expansion and upgrade. As part of the Ministry's measures to upgrade the Base, the Bazua Military base has been selected as one of the four permanent operating military Bases to host the military logistics in the Upper East region. He assured the Committee that when given the nod, he will work closely with stakeholders including the sitting Member of Parliament, to expand the Bawku Military Base for the total benefit of the people in the area.

i. Increased Military Involvement in Internal Security

The nominee disagreed with the assertion that the Military has taken over the role of the Ghana Police in civil protection duties in recent time. The nominee emphasised that there has actually been a reduction in this regard. The nominee explained that before he assumed office as Minister in 2017, the Military had signed a Memorandum of Understanding with 22 mining companies across the country, for the provision of security services. He informed that Committee that he took steps to reduce the military exposure by withdrawing the Military from twenty of the locations leaving that of

Anglo Gold Ashanti in Obuasi and Azumah Mining Company in the Upper West region. He stated that military personnel who had been found to have provided protection to any mining company outside the agreed agreements had been sanctioned. The nominee further intimated that the Officers implicated in the Tontokrom incident had been sanctioned with some being sacked while others demoted.

j. Female Enrolment into the Armed Forces

Responding to a question as to the efforts being made to encourage recruitment of more females into the Ghana Armed Forces, he said that the Ghana Armed Forces is a professional and competitive body with no regard for favouritism and discrimination. The female officers have always been recruited based on their competence and qualification, just as their male counterpart. He further stated that the above, notwithstanding, a gender desk had been established to provide encouragement, recognition, and statistics on female intake and advise the Ministry and the Military High Command on strategies to ensure gender inclusion. He stated that Ghana has one of the highest female intakes in the armed forces per the United Nations standards.

k. Boosting Morale in the Armed Forces

On how he intends to ensure high morale in the Ghana Armed Forces, the nominee stated that the surest way to deal with low morale is to provide the men and women of the forces with the requisite protection, adequate remuneration and the logistics for them to work. He further stated that the decision to extend round out days for five more years had contributed significantly to boosting the Armed Forces' morale. He noted that for the Military to defend and protect Ghana's territorial integrity and give out their best against any external aggression there is the need to do everything to boost the Military's confidence and morale.

l. Protecting the Ghana Maritime Domain

On the intervention the nominee would put in place to protect the Ghana Maritime Geographical area, Mr. Nitiwul informed the Committee that as part of the effort to keep the Exclusive Economic Zone safe, the Government had awarded a contract to build a Military Base at Nzulenzu in the Western Region. When completed, the Base, according to the nominee, will reduce the time needed to reach the Exclusive Economic Zone where most of the country's oil installations are located. The Government is also

equipping the Navy from the Forward Operating Base and is expected to do the same in the Eastern part of Ghana.

m. Feeding and Fueling Arrears

On what the Ministry has done to resolve the feeding and fuel arrears in the Ghana Armed Forces, the nominee stated the fuel and feeding arrears were inherited and with the intervention of the Minister for Finance, the Ministry was able to clear most of the debts. He indicated that the Ministry would continue to engage contractors to supply food and fuel since they are essential ingredients in the day-to-day operations of the forces. He further expressed his gratitude to his colleague Minister for Finance in supporting his outfit to clear the arrears owed over the years.

The nominee, however, admitted that there still exist some feeding and fuel arrears to be paid and assured that when approved, he would collaborate with the Minister of Finance to ensure their timely payment.

n. Encroachment on the Military Land

In response to how he would deal with encroachment on Military lands, the nominee told the Committee that his experience has shown that these lands are normally encroached because they are not properly fenced. For this reason, the Ministry is taking a comprehensive inventory of the entire Military asset across the country to develop a proper database of all its assets including parcels of land. The nominee promised to engage the relevant stakeholders to ensure that such encroachment does not occur.

Recommendation

The Committee, *by Consensus*, recommends to the House to approve the nomination of Hon. Dominic Nitiwul for appointment as Minister for Defence.

4.3 HON. SHIRLEY AYORKOR BOTCHWEY - MINISTER-DESIGNATE
FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

4.3.1 Background

Hon. Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey was born on 8th February, 1963 in Accra. She hails from Gbawe, a suburb of Accra. Between 1975 and 1980, she attended the Akosombo International School where she obtained her Ordinary Level certificate. She proceeded to the St Mary's Secondary School for her Advanced Level Certificate (1980–1982). She pursued a Diploma in Secretarial and Management studies at the Pitman Central College, United Kingdom from 1983 to 1985 and again obtained a Diploma in Public Relations and Advertising from the Ghana Institute of Journalism, Accra (1995 -1997). She also holds a Master of Arts Degree in Communication and Public Relations from the University of Westminster, UK (2001 -2002) and an MBA in Project Management from the University of Ghana Business School (2002 -2004). Also, the nominee holds Bachelor of Law (LLB) from the University of London; (2015-2018).

Hon. Nominee has attended short courses on governance and leadership from notable institutions including the Harvard Kennedy School, Boston, USA, the African Leadership Initiative/ the Aspen Institute and the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA)

Hon. Botchwey was the Chief Executive Officer of Dynacom, a Marketing Communications and Advertising Company in Osu, Accra (1999-2004); Marketing Manager for Worldspace Ghana Limited (1996-1999); Personal Assistant to the Executive Secretary of Divestiture Implementation Committee (1993-1996); Administrative Assistant at Hodge Recruitment (1987-1992) and a Sales Assistant for Argos Distributors, London (1985 -1987). Hon. Botchwey is a Member of National Association of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Practitioners.

Hon. Botchwey was the Member of Parliament for Anyaa-Sowutuom Constituency in the Greater Accra Region (2013-2021). She was also the former Member of Parliament

for Weija Constituency (2005 - 2013). She was appointed Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs (2006-2007); Deputy Minister for Trade and Industry (2007-2008); and Deputy Minister for Information (2005-2006). The Hon. Nominee served on a number of Committees as a Member of Parliament and they include Committees on Communications, Members Holding Office of Profit, Foreign Affairs and Gender and Children. She has been a Member of the ECOWAS Parliament since 2013. From 2017-2021, the nominee was the Minister responsible for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration.

The nominee has attended several capacity building programmes. These include: Institute of Paralegal Training and Leadership Studies (Dec 2014); Harvard Kennedy School, Boston, USA *Aug 2014); Casa Africa, parliament of Spain (Jun 2010); The African Leadership Initiative/The ASPEN Institute-leadership Values (JuDec 2009); and Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA)-Marketing Management (March 2001).

4.3.2 Interaction with Nominees

The nominee responded to the under-listed questions when she appeared before the Committee:

- Efforts Being Made to Enable Ghana have Access to Covid-19 Vaccines;
- Review of Covid-19 Antigen Testing Rate at the Airport;
- Electing Members of ECOWAS Parliament by Universal Adult Suffrage;
- Reopening Closed Land Borders;
- Status of CBD and Sinohydro Loan Facilities in Relation to Ghana-China Relations;
- Withdrawal of Ghana's Candidature as Vice Chair of the AU;
- Benefits of Hosting the AFCTF Secretariat in Accra;
- ING Bank Closure of the Accounts of Ghana's Embassy in Brussels and related matters;
- Evacuation of Domestic Workers from the Gulf Countries;
- Ghana-US defence Cooperation Agreement;
- Uneconomic Rent Payments;

- Demolition and redevelopment AICC and Ghana's Mission to the UN;
- Revenue generation of the Missions Abroad Safety of Foreign Service Staff in the midst of Covid-19; and
- Demolition of Nigerian Embassy's Property in Accra

Responses to Questions Asked

a. **Efforts Being Made to Enable Ghana have Access to Covid-19 Vaccines**

On efforts being made to ensure Ghana gets access to the Covid-19 vaccines, Ms. Botchwey stated that since the procurement process did not directly fall under her Ministry, she was unable to provide the technical details. She, however, informed the Committee of concerted efforts being made by ECOWAS through the West Africa Health Organization and the AU Africa Centre for Disease Control (CDC) to get enough vaccines for all populations within the sub-region and the continent respectively. In addition, the Africa CDC is making efforts regarding the possibility of the continent developing its own vaccine.

Furthermore, at the ambassadorial level, she had engaged China and Russia for support to enable Ghana secure some vaccines as there is so much demand from all countries. The nominee, again, informed the Committee that because of the urgency of the situation, H.E., the President, Nana Addo Akuffo-Dankwa doubling as the current Chairperson of ECOWAS, has embarked on intense diplomatic efforts at the level of Presidents and Head of States and Government to get Ghana and the sub-region secure adequate vaccines to curb the spread of the pandemic.

The nominee was confident that with all the efforts being put in, Ghana, in a not too distant future, would receive some vaccines in batches. That the MOH was working and coordinating all the above actions for the timely delivery and eventual vaccination of Ghanaians.

On whether Ghana is considering the strategy of 'Fill and Finish' whereby countries put their local pharmaceutical companies in readiness for the vaccines production. With this strategy, vaccine manufacturing countries sends the active ingredients of the vaccine to countries whose local pharmaceutical companies have requisite capacity to just fill and finish the vaccine production and final packaging for

distribution. The nominee informed the Committee that she was not aware of any such arrangements or strategy and promised that when approved as the Minister, she would liaise with the MoH to get its buy-in for appropriate steps to be taken.

b. Review of Covid-19 Antigen Testing Rate at the Airport

Commenting on whether the recent review of the Covid-19 antigen testing at the airport from \$150 to \$50 for ECOWAS nationals and maintaining the \$150 for non-ECOWAS nationals does not undermine Ghana's Foreign Policy strategy of trying to leverage on diplomacy to beat the Covid-19 pandemic, the nominee stated that she was not consulted on how much to charge for the Covid-19 antigen testing at the airport. She also indicated the decision to charge \$50 for ECOWAS nationals was taken by ECOWAS in consultation with Ghana. She reiterated that there is nothing wrong for ECOWAS nationals to pay less since it is being done in other parts of the world and regional blocks. Particular mention, for example, was made of the Europe, where some charges are less for Eurozone nationals.

c. Electing Members of ECOWAS Parliament by Universal Adult Suffrage

On whether she would facilitate the ECOWAS protocol which mandates Members of the ECOWAS Parliament to be directly elected by ECOWAS Citizens through a universal adult suffrage, the nominee stated that she is a firm believer of Members of the ECOWAS Parliament being elected by universal adult suffrage and stated that she pushed for it when she was a Member of the ECOWAS Parliament.

In the view of the nominee, in every democratic dispensation, it is parliament that controls the purse and hence, as a Foreign Minister of Ghana, she will follow up on the matter. The nominee added that the funding of the ECOWAS Parliament comes from Member States; hence the representatives of the Member States should have the power and authority over the finances of the sub-regional block rather than the Commissioner and or ECOWAS institutions as currently being practiced. She assured the Committee that as Chairperson of the Council of Ministers, she would push for it to be discussed at the Council of Ministers level of ECOWAS.

d. Reopening Closed Land Borders

On how soon the nominee can make a case for the reopening of our land borders when approved as the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the nominee stated that Ghana is not the only country that has closed its land borders. According to the nominee, almost all the countries in the ECOWAS region have their land borders closed. And that in the case of Ghana, appropriate state institutions should be allowed to determine the right time to re-open the land borders after thorough assessment has been made. The nominee empathized with border communities whose socio-economic lives have been adversely affected but appealed to all to be patient.

Ms. Botchway assured the Committee that when her nomination is approved, she in collaboration with the other ECOWAS countries, will discuss further how best to resolve the issue.

e. Status of CBD and Sinohydro Loan Facilities in Relation to Ghana-China Relations

Answering a question on whether the nominee foresees any diplomatic challenges between Ghana and China as reason for delays in approvals and delays for the China Development Bank loan of US\$3 billion and Sinohydro bauxite barter facility of US\$2 billion, she told the Committee that, China and Ghana have very close diplomatic relations since the 60's. Trade between the two countries according to her is over \$7 billion and there is a lot of Chinese investments here in Ghana.

The loan facilities she intimated have experienced some challenges which has resulted in a slowdown in approvals and releases but the projects under the facilities still on course.

The nominee indicated that since monies are not gifts, donations or grants, there was the need for the appropriate procedures and processes to be followed. The nominee was optimistic that once the challenges are overcome and the established processes and procedures followed, the funds would surely be released for the purposes for which they were procured.

f. Withdrawal of Ghana's Candidature as Vice Chair of the AU

Commenting on reasons why Ghana's former ambassador to the UN H.E. Martha Kpobi had to withdraw her candidature as the Vice Chair of African Union, the nominee informed the Committee that, the Government was proud of H.E. Martha

Kpobi candidature and was looking forward to her becoming the Vice Chair of AU. The nominee stated that, the candidature to the AU from any country is considered the candidature for a sub-region/block (as ECOWAS in our case), ECOWAS had to take a decision between having one Vice Chair or two Commissioners.

The Heads of States took a strategic decision that **Peace and Security** was one of the issues that was a major concern to the sub-region and also because of COVID-19, the Commissioner for **Health Humanitarian** was a position that was seen as a priority and would positively impact the sub-region. Therefore the ECOWAS block (to which H.E. Martha Kpobi belongs) agreed to present candidates for these two positions; hence sacrificing the Vice Chair position.

Touching on other factors that prevent most Ghanaians from taking up high positions in the sub-region, in particular, and the region in general, the nominee opined that language barrier prevent many Ghanaians from occupying sub-regional (ECOWAS) and Regional (AU) levels; she therefore urged Ghanaians to take serious interest in learning a second language such as French.

g. Benefits of Hosting the AFCTF Secretariat in Accra

Commenting on the benefits of Ghana hosting African Continental Free Trade Area (AFCFTA) Secretariat in Accra, the nominee stated that there are several benefits such as employment for Ghanaians, promoting tourism, hosting several regional and international conferences which will also make our hospitality industry operate at capacity, for hosting the AFCFTA Secretariat. The nominee believes that the above listed benefits will positively impact on Ghana's economy.

Again, the nominee informed the Committee that the local office is working closely with the Ministry of Trade to position the private sector to take full advantage of the 1.2 billion people in the region with a combined GDP of over three trillion US dollars.

h. ING Bank Closure of the Accounts of Ghana's Embassy in Brussels and related matters

Sharing her views on the reasons for the closure of the accounts of Ghana's Embassy in Brussels and progress made in getting the accounts reactivated, the nominee stated that the decision of the ING Bank to close the accounts came to the

Ministry as a surprise. According to her, the accounts of embassies usually entails inflows of compensation, Goods and Services, and an account which receives visa and passport fees.

Pushing for the reasons for the closure, the nominee revealed that the Bank informed the Ministry that, it is the right of a bank to disengage from a customer and as such has no responsibility to any customer to give reasons. Armed with this information and also, to satisfy herself, she called for all the bank statements of the Mission dating back three years. She told the Committee that she had thoroughly gone through the bank statement but found nothing untoward. The nominee wondered if the action of the Bank was as a result of the blacklisting of Ghana by the EU Anti-Money laundering Institution. The nominee also informed the Committee that her information was that about eight countries have also had the same problem with banks in Brussels.

On the said blacklisting, the nominee informed the Committee that issue rested with MOF. The nominee however, was certain that a lot has been done as a country to address the issues raised by EU on blacklisting Ghana on money laundering. Fortunately, according to the nominee, there will be a meeting in February 2021 where Ghana will make presentations on measures taken so far and call for total removal of the anti-money laundering blacklisting.

i. Evacuation of Domestic Workers from the Gulf Countries

On how many domestic workers were evacuated from the Gulf countries during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and how many remained in those countries, the nominee confessed that stories about Ghanaian domestic workers in the Gulf countries like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman always horrified her and her Ministry. That in collaboration of the Ministries of Employment and Labour Relations, Gender and Children and Social Protection and Interior a lot of the “girls” had to be evacuated from the Gulf countries.

She stated that underground agents deceive Ghanaian girls and recruit them with juicy job offers only to get to the Gulf countries to realise and they had become

slaves. She advised that since the banning of the recruitment of domestic workers to the Gulf countries has not produced the desired result, the country should go back to the era of registering the recruitment agencies to make them more accountable.

The nominee intimated that currently, some of the agents do not use the airport since they might be stopped by operatives from the Interior and Gender and Children Ministries but rather go by road to our neighbouring countries and board flights to the gulf region.

She admonished the “girls” to stay back until activities of the agents are regularised for their protection and welfare.

j. Ghana-US Defence Cooperation Agreement

Responding to a question as to whether she has a copy of the KIA Terminal 1 being leased to MacDan Shipping, the nominee denied knowledge of or sighting a copy of the Agreement which has led to KIA Terminal 1 being leased to MacDan Shipping for fifteen years. Similarly, the nominee denied knowledge of or sighting the Agreement between the US Military and MacDan Shipping for handling logistics and other military consumables.

k. Uneconomic Rent Payments

The nominee answered in the affirmative as to whether a query of the Auditor-General regarding the huge expenditure on rent for residencies, chancery and accommodation of Home Based Officers in the 33 countries where Ghana does not own those properties. The nominee confirmed that as indicated in the 2019 Auditor General’s Report on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, the Ministry spent from 1st September 2017 to 30th September 2018 a total of US\$5.2 million, €1.9 million and CFA128 million (US\$220,000) rent for residencies, chancery and accommodation of Home Based Officers in 33 countries. According to the nominee, the amount represented 50% of the total expenditure of Goods and Services of the Missions.

She told the Committee that, Ghana actually operate in 58 countries at the level of embassies and consulates and for many of these countries, Ghana has been there for several years hence the need to get permanent accommodation to ensure that the expenditure on rent is reduced to the barest minimum. The nominee therefore

commended the previous administration for procuring an amount of US\$50 million from Societe Generale Bank to be used for purchases, construction and rehabilitation of properties in the Missions abroad. She continued that, because properties are very expensive, the 50 million is almost exhausted and yet a lot of the Missions are still in rented properties, with some being in deplorable state. Mention was made of Ghana's Mission in New York.

Additionally, the nominee informed the Committee that, there are some management guidelines on rentals and the kind of property to be rented is dependent on the levels of staff in the host country. The nominee explained that the Foreign Service Officers, when posted to missions abroad, are diplomats and many countries demarcate, though informal, areas for diplomats so as to be able to reach them as quickly as possible in times of danger. Ghana, therefore, cannot rent properties just anywhere for her diplomats.

l. Demolition and redevelopment AICC and Ghana's Mission to the UN

The nominee acknowledge the poor state of the Accra International Conference Centre and Ghana's Mission to the UN and bemoaned the need to do something urgent to avert any calamity in future. She told the Committee that the two properties in addition to others needs to be pulled down and redeveloped. She reiterated her commitment to work with the Foreign Affairs Committee to find a lasting solution to these issues, when is given the nod.

m. Revenue generation of the Missions Abroad Safety of Foreign Service Staff in the midst of Covid-19

The nominee admitted that the revenue generation at the Missions Abroad, has been badly hit as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The nominee explained that to ensure the safety of the Foreign Service Officers, a directive was given for the suspension of consular services, in many countries, for about eight months in 2020. The nominee however indicated that though some countries have locked down again because of the second wave of Covid-19 some of the Missions do attend to critical emergency request for consular service.

The nominee assured the Committee of the continuous safety of Foreign Service Staff and in situations where they have to work, they are screens to protect them from coming into direct contact with the public in addition to adhering to all Covid-19 protocols.

n. Demolition of Nigerian Embassy's Property in Accra

Explaining why a property of the Nigerian Embassy was demolished, the nominee stated that Nigeria acquired the land during Former President Rawlings era when Obasanjo was the leader of Nigeria. Unfortunately, the Nigeria High Commission failed to finish all requisite documentations, such as land title registration and acquisition of building permit when construction started. The land in question according to her is a vested land owned by the Osu Stool and they in turn gave out the land which was subsequently processed and duly registered at the Lands Commission in the name of a third party. But in the spirit of strong ties between the two countries the problem has been resolved and Ghana has agreed to construct the demolished structure to the state at which it was and Nigeria has been asked to take steps to properly document her land/property.

Recommendation

The Committee, *by Consensus*, recommends to the House to approve the nomination of Ms. Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey for appointment as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

4.4.1 Background

Hon Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum was born on 9th April, 1964 in Kumasi in the Ashanti Region. From 1969 to 1975, he attended Jachie Anglican Primary School in the Ashanti Region for his primary education. Between 1975 and 1978, he also attended Jachie Anglican Middle School where he obtained his Middle School Leaving Certificate.

Hon. Dr. Adutwum enrolled in Jachie Pramso Senior High School from 1978 to 1983, where he obtained his GCE Ordinary Level Certificate. Between 1983 and 1985, Hon Dr. Adutwum attended Kumasi High School, Kumasi, where he acquired his Advanced Level Certificate.

Between September, 1986 and October, 1990, Hon Dr. Adutwum pursued a degree at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi where he was awarded a Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Land Economy. Hon Dr. Adutwum also attended the Chapman University, City of Orange, California-USA between September 1995 and June 1999, there, he obtained a Post Graduate Diploma in Teaching. From September 1995 to June, 1997, Hon Dr. Adutwum pursued and obtained a Master of Education (Med) in Educational Management and Administrative Services from the University of La Verna, California, USA. From September 1997 to June, 2008, Hon Dr. Adutwum attended the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California, USA where he was awarded a PHD in Education Policy and Administration.

Hon Dr. Adutwum started work as a service person with Jachie-Pramso Senior High School from September, 1985 to June 1986. From November, 1990 to October 1991, he worked with the Land Valuation Board, Kumasi also as a service person. He was the mathematics tutor and volleyball coach for Inglewood Christian School from September, 1992 to June 1993.

Hon Dr. Adutwum was a substitute teacher for the Los Angeles Unified School District, Cantilena Valley Union High School District and Lawndale Elementary School District from August 1993 to June 1994. He also taught mathematics and information

technology at Manual Arts High School in Los Angeles- California, USA from July 1994 to June, 2004.

Hon Dr. Adutwum became a Principal Partner for Lake Consulting Incorporated from January 2014 to December, 2016. He was the Chief Executive Officer and Founder of Lake Foundation, Downey California- USA from February 2012 to December 2016. He is the Proprietor for Lakeview schools in Jachie-Ashanti from January 2011 to date. He was the Chief Executive Officer for Lakeview Microfinance Company Ltd from January 2011 to December 2016. He was the Chief Executive Officer and Founder for New Designs Educational Group based in California-USA from July 2004 to December 2016. He became the Member of Parliament for Bosomtwe Constituency from January 2017 to date. From 2017 through to January 2017 served as a Deputy Minister of Education, Ghana.

Hon Dr. Adutwum has held a number of leadership positions. He was the Senior Prefect of Jachie-Pramso Senior High School from September 1982 to June 1983 and Assistant Secretary, KNUST Students Representative Council. He was the President of the Ghana Association of Southern California from January 1996 to December, 2000. He was also the Vice Chairman of the New Patriotic Party, California Chapter. He was a member of the NPP Educational Sector Manifesto Drafting Committee and a Member of the Education Transition Sub-Committee. Between 2017 and 2020, the nominee, served on the following Ministerial Advisory Board: Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Environment Science and Technology, Ministry of Special Initiatives and Ministry of Zongo and Inner City. Finally, Hon. Dr. Adutwum was a Deputy Minister of Education from January 2017 to January 2021.

The nominee was a member of the following professional bodies: 1) Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), National Association of Black School Education (NABSE)-USA, California Charter Schools (CCSA)-USA, Chairman, Visiting Committee for Western Association of Schools and Colleges (An Accreditation Agency for Schools in California and Hawaii), New Designs for career and Technical Education Committee, and President, Ghana Association of Southern California.

Hon Dr. Adutwum has attended a number of conferences and capacity building programmes. Some of these are; United Kingdom Forum for International Education

teachers and Ghana Health Service to ensure the safety and protection of pupils/students and also create a congenial environment for teaching and learning.

The need to leverage the opportunities offered by ICT in critical times like this pandemic was also raised and the nominee pledged to liaise with relevant agencies (including the Ministry of Communication and the telecos) to effectively deploy ICT to support teaching and learning.

On the impact of COVID-19 on private tertiary schools, the nominee assured the Committee that he will look into that issue by collaborating with stakeholders to address the adverse impact.

f. Financial Support for Tertiary Students

Expressing his commitment to assist tertiary students to address their financial needs, Dr. Adutwum informed the Committee that collaboratively, he will work with the manager of the Student Loans Trust to streamline the entire procedures for accessing the Student Loans particularly, the existing guarantee arrangement.

The nominee also informed the Committee that besides Students Loans Scheme, GET Fund, has other sources of funding, available to students.

g. GET Fund funded Projects in the Country

On the question of the list of GETFund financed projects, the Nominee informed the Committee that he did not have the records with him at the vetting session. He promised to submit them later. He also assured the Committee of his readiness to follow up on nonpayment of contractors who execute GET Fund, funded projects for prompt payments.

h. Support to Private Schools in the wake of COVID-19

On the support the Ministry gave private schools who were adversely affected by the pandemic, Dr. Adutwum indicated that the Ministry did not directly provide any financial support to the private schools. Government support to the private school, according to the nominee, was disbursed through the National Board for Small Scale

as part of the transition arrangement under the Act, a five years moratorium for accreditation of private tertiary schools has been provided;

d. The Success of the Double Tracking System and measures to deal with the imminent infrastructural challenges at the Tertiary level

Commenting on the success or otherwise of the Double Tracking Policy for senior high school students, the nominee explained that human capital is the most important asset for socio-economic development efforts of any country. Therefore providing an opportunity for all Ghanaians to have access to higher education, unarguably, is the surest way to achieve and sustain Ghana's development aspirations in the medium-term to long-term. The nominee considered the implementation of the system a success since it has helped to enroll JHS students who otherwise might have ended up on the streets. He, however, acknowledged the fact that there were inherent challenges, especially at the initial stage, and reiterated the intention of the government to phase out the policy within the 5-7 years. The nominee also hinted that a number of SHS will, during the 2021/2022 academic year have a single track for first-year students.

Concerning the foreseeable infrastructural challenges at the tertiary level arising out of the likelihood of more qualified applicants, the nominee assured the Committee of his readiness to advocate for increase investment at the various tertiary institutions to minimise the potential adverse effect.

e. COVID-19 Upsurge and Reopening of Schools

In a reaction to a question on the call by the Ghana Medical Association (GMA) to close all schools as a result of the upsurge of the Novel Corona Virus (COVID-19), the nominee indicated that he was not in support of the call by GMA and all other well-meaning Ghanaians in that respect. In his view, it would be premature to close schools at this stage and opined that if an effective surveillance system is established in all schools to detect early signs of the disease, coupled with strict compliance to the safety protocols, the school environment will be made safe for teaching and learning. The nominee added that to this end, the GES is working hard with partners to ensure all schools across the country (both public and private) get all relevant COVID-19 logistics. Related to the above, the nominee stressed, is the high commitment of

Industries (NBSSI). The nominee was certain that many private schools were supported.

He was, however, unable to indicate the quantum of support and the number of institutions that benefited and promised to follow up with the NBSSI for the records, when approved as the Minister.

i. Refusal of Postings to Rural Schools by Some Teachers

On the issue of some teachers refusing to accept posting to certain regions and districts, particularly, rural schools where their services might be needed, Dr. Adutwum stated that this has been an age-long challenge that the Ministry had been battling with. The nominee added that to address the issue, the Ministry/GES in the year 2020, started posted teachers directly to the schools instead of to regions/districts as was previously being done. The nominee further stated that another dimension of teacher postings has been the issue of accommodation for teachers in rural areas and the Ministry/GES had already initiated action to resolve the challenge.

j. Abolishing of Teachers' Licensure Examination

Responding to a question as to what would be done to assist teachers who fail their professional licensure exams, the Nominee stated that the licensure exam is critical in the sense that it helps to assess the performance of colleges of education and also provide indicators on the capability of the trained teacher to carry out their teaching work effectively and efficiently. The nominee explained that opportunity exists for re-sit and urged teachers who fail in the first instance to take advantage and re-sit. The nominee considered the examination essential and stressed he would never recommend its cancellation.

k. Bridging Gaps between Universities and Job Market

Commenting on the policy interventions to bridge the gap between tertiary education and the job market, the nominee, indicated that in addition to access and quality, the issue of relevance plays a significant role if a country was to benefit from its education system. In the views of the nominee, unfortunately, in many developing countries, the issue of relevance has been a major missing link in education. According to him, to change the status quo, the Government of Ghana within the past four years has been

placing much emphasis on STEM and technical vocational education to ensure that products from the educational institutions have the requisite skills and capabilities required by the job market. The nominee added that countries such as Vietnam are witnessing much industrialization and a high employment rate as a result of their emphasis on STEM and TVET in their educational architecture. Dr. Adutwum assured the Committee of his readiness to work collaboratively with stakeholders in education to change Ghana's narrative on STEM and TVET education.

l. Criteria for the Distribution of Buses and Trucks and other school infrastructure

The nominee indicated that distribution of buses, trucks, infrastructure, and other logistics to the schools are normally ascertained after needs assessment exercises. The Nominee informed the Committee that the GES usually carries out an open assessment of logistical needs of the public educational institutions and as and when these logistics are acquired, the institutions are supplied.

m. Supply of Textbooks and Mathematical Calculators

In response to the Committee inquiry about the reasons for the delay in supplying textbooks to the basic school pupils following the review of the curricula, the Nominee explained that the delay was occasioned by issues in the supply chain because the government relies on private publishing companies to produce the textbooks. The nominee, however, acknowledged the critical relevance of the textbooks to achieving the educational outcomes envisaged by the new curricula and pledged to facilitate the ongoing review process to make them have books available to the schools as early as practicable.

Concerning the status of the procurement of 853,009 West African Examinations Council's approved KAPEK scientific mathematical instrument meant to assist the 2019/20 candidates, the Nominee informed the Committee that though there was a delay as a result of the Covid-19 emergence, the gadgets have arrived and distribution was on-going.

n. Lack of teaching and learning of Ghanaian Languages in Some Private Schools

The nominee bemoaned the current situation where many of the Ghanaian languages are not taught in some of the private educational institutions, particularly, those located in Greater Accra and other major cities in the country. The nominee agreed that because Ghanaian languages are an integral part of the country's culture, the teaching and learning of a local Ghanaian language will further support the children to appreciate the culture and practices and also assist in social cohesion and integration. The nominee, therefore, promised to initiate the process of getting those private schools to appreciate the importance of teaching and learning Ghanaian local languages in the total development of the child.

o. Upholding Academic Freedom and Institutional Autonomy of Public Universities

In responding to the concerns of the University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG) regarding what they perceived to be the attempt by the government to subvert the academic freedom and autonomy of public universities through the introduction of the Public University Bill, the Nominee stressed that the bill was never meant to curtail academic freedom and autonomy of the public universities as being perceived. The nominee recognised UTAG as a major stakeholder in achieving the policy objectives in the proposed public tertiary university reform agenda of the government and pledged to dialogue with all stakeholders, especially UTAG to resolve all burning issues before the reintroduction of the Bill.

Recommendation

The Committee, *by Consensus*, recommends to the House to approve nomination of Hon. Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum for appointment as Minister for Education.

4.5 MR. OSEI KYEI-MENSAH-BONSU - MINISTER-DESIGNATE
FOR PARLIAMENTARY
AFFAIRS

4.5.1 Background

Hon. Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu was born on 3rd February, 1957 at Bremang, Kumasi, and hails from Bremang/Afrancho. He started his elementary education at the Afrancho L/A Primary School (1962-1966) and continued at the Suame L/A Middle School from 1967 to 1970. He attended Saint Peter's Secondary School, Nkwatia Kwahu for his Ordinary and Advanced Level certificates between 1970 and 1977. He also attended the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi from 1977 to 1982 and was awarded Bachelor of Science in Planning (Urban Option).

He did his National Service at Kumasi Girls' Senior High School from 1982 to 1984 and proceed to take up teaching appointment at the same institution. He then moved to Zimbabwe where he worked as Deputy Planning Manager (DATAF Construct, Zimbabwe) Manager between 1987 and 1989. On his return to Ghana, he became self-employed and operated his own business from 1991 to 1996. From 1997 to date; Hon. Osei Kyei Mensah-Bonsu has been a Member of Parliament for the Suame Constituency, Kumasi; Ashanti Region.

While in Parliament, the nominee became the Secretary for the Minority Caucus (1998-2001), Deputy Majority Chief Whip (2001-2002), Majority Chief Whip (2005-2007), and later appointed Deputy Majority Leader from 2007 to 2009. Hon. Osei Kyei-Mensa-Bonsu was also a Member of ECOWAS Parliament from 2003 to 2007. He was appointed Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs from 2008 to 2009. He also served as the Minority Leader from 2009 to 2017. The nominee again, served as the Majority Leader, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of Government Business from 2017 to 2021. Finally, since January 2021, Hon, Osei Kyei Mensah Bonsu is the Majority Leader and Leader of Government Business.

Hon. Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu has been either a Member or Leader of several Parliamentary Delegations both within and outside Ghana from 1997 to 2016 including Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), African Parliamentarians' Network Against Corruption, (APNAC), NCSL and ECOWAS Parliamentary Delegations. He has also attended several workshops and seminars organized by Parliament and some Committees of the House. Again, the nominee, has served on many Committees of Parliament. These include: Business Committee (2001-date); Committee on Section (2001 to date); Committee on Works and Housing (1997-2009); Committee on Youth and Sports (1997-2005); Committee on Land and Forestry (1997-2013); and Subsidiary Legislation (1997-2013). Again, the nominee, was a member of the Vice-Chairman of the Special Budget Committee (2002-2017); Chairman of the Special Budget Committee (2017 to date); Vice Chairman Appointments Committee (2008-2009); ranking Member, Appointments Committee (2009-2017); Standing Orders Committee (2001 to date); Vice Chairman-Business Committee (2008-2009); ranking member Business Committee (2009-2017); and Chairman-Business Committee (2017 to date).

Hon Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu has attended and/or participated in several conferences and capacity building programmes. These included many Parliamentary Committees (CPA, IPU, NCSL, APNAC, GOPAC), from 198to date. Also, since 199, the nominee served as a resource person at several Parliamentary Committees (APNAC, GOPAC, CPA, PNP,-Nigeria).

Hon. Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu has many awards /honours. These include; Bible and Governance Award (2014); Pan African Eminence Award -Confederation of Governance Assessment Institute (2016); Ghana Peace Awards –Comunity Spirit Peace Award, Parliamentary Peace Award and Human Rights Peace Award (2016); PhD (Law) Honoris CORSA-UPSA (2017); enstooled Sompahene at Breman (2017); APNAC-Champion Against Corruption (2018); Pan African Humanitarian Summit & Award-leadership Excellence in Parliamentary Affairs & Public Service (2019 and African International Award (2019).

4.5.2 RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

The questions the nominee responded to include the following:

- Appearance of Heads of Constitutional Bodies before Parliament;
- Members of Parliament as Development Agents;
- Loan Facilities to Members of Parliament to purchase means of transport
- Full ownership of the precincts of Parliament by Parliament of Ghana
- Constitutional Review
- Attrition rate of Members of Parliament of the 7th Parliament

4.5.3 Responses by the Nominee

a. **The relevance of the Ministry for Parliamentary Affairs**

The nominee emphasised that it is absolutely important to have the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs. Buttressing his point, the nominee confirmed that the Clerk is the head of the Parliamentary Service and elucidated that in every parliament, there are two legs; the chamber activities and the group which service the Chamber activities conducted in the Chamber. It was added that in the Chamber, the Members of Parliament of the two caucuses with the minority being headed by the Minority Leader and the Majority Leader heading the majority caucus, and to the extent that one person must speak for the House, the Majority Leader becomes the Leader of the House. He noted that when the Service and Parliament come together, the Speaker is the Head. That is why the Speaker is the head of the Parliament as an Arm of Government.

The nominee opined that beyond the stated configuration, over 95% of the businesses conducted in the Chamber is government business Executive which calls for a liaison between the Executive (Cabinet) and Parliament. The Leader of Government Business and Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, with a clear understanding of government business and rationale for such policies and programmes, is better placed to convince and persuade colleagues to buy into and also support such agenda to the development of the country. The nominee maintained that this explains why a Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, is needed to be in Cabinet where policy evolves, to better understand and appreciate the underpinnings of policies and programmes so he could

provide the needed Leadership to colleagues and compatriots to have buy-in and support for such businesses.

The nominee disagreed with the assertion that once the Leader of House becomes a government appointee, it would adversely affect the independence of Parliament as an important arm of Government. The Nominee indicated that it may not always be the case that the President's Party may have majority seats in Parliament, thus in a situation when the Majority Leader belong to the party other the party of the President, then the role of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs of providing an interface between Parliament and Cabinet would better be appreciated.

The nominee also disputed the assertion of duplication and role conflict between the position of Leader of Government Business and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. To him, they are two distinct positions and that conclusions made by the African Peer Review Mechanism that the Ministry existed just to emasculate Parliament in 2008 when the peer review sessions were held in Ghana was not accurate as they did not consider Ghana's type of democracy, the hybrid system. To him, their conclusions might have been influenced by the fact that they practice the Presidential system of strict compartmentalization, where Ministers are not chosen from Parliament.

The Nominee further explained that the Ministry provides an interface between Parliament, the Executive and other Constitutional bodies and serve as a funnel to sieve issues from these bodies and Civil Society Organizations to ensure programmes that would benefit and positively impact on the nation would be supported by Parliament.

It was added that the Ministry also serves as a platform to sensitize the general public about Government programmes and policies. The nominee explained that, very often, when matters come to Parliament, they are seen to be rushed through Parliament, but if the agenda of Government is known to the Minister who doubles as the Leader of Government business, these policies and programmes could be made available in the public domain so that public concerns and opinions would feed into Government policies and programmes even before being introduced into Parliament to enrich such programmes and policies.

b. Appearance of Heads of Constitutional Bodies before Parliament

The nominee disagreed with the suggestion that the proposal in the new Standing Orders to make heads of constitutional bodies appear on the floor of Parliament to respond to parliamentary question, conflicts with the provisions of the Constitution which allow specific categories of persons to appear on the House Floor. According to the nominee, there are no Constitutional prohibitions as far as appearance of the heads of these bodies on the House floor is concerned. The nominee stressed that the Constitution empowers Parliament to carry out oversight over all bodies including independent constitutional bodies/Commissions and therefore clearly outlining this in the Standing Order does not conflict but reinforces this constitutional provision. The nominee, Parliament for some time now has been considering whether to limit the appearance of these heads only to Parliamentary Committees' including the Committee of the Whole or the floor of the House. And it is to bring finality to the discussion that the Leadership of the House considered it worthy to create space for these constitutional bodies to be interrogated by the people's representatives i.e. Parliament. The nominee believes that this would strengthen Parliament in its oversight responsibility.

c. Members of Parliament as development agents

Though he disagreed with the general public opinion of members of Parliament as development agent, the nominee asserted that the conduct and pronouncements of some Members of Parliament, particularly during electioneering campaigns, feed into this unfortunate public perception. Mention was made of the inscription on some of MPs bill boards dotted across parts of the country. Added to this also, according to the nominee is the fact that in almost all general elections, it has been the picture of Members of Parliament and the Presidential Candidates that are posted on billboards and posters in the various constituencies making the MPs the face of the various constituencies.

The nominee also stated that in addition to the above, the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives, who are responsible for development at the local level are, unfortunately, not voted for in universal adult suffrage and as a result, directly accountable to the electorate as in the case of MPs. Another factor that further fuels this

perception is the promises Members of Parliament make when canvassing for votes, especially, when there are other formidable contenders.

The Nominee mentioned that it was to help solve this problem that the PMs share of the Common Fund was instituted to assist the Parliamentarian facilitate the implementation of minor social development needs in the constituency. However, the paltry nature of the amount makes practically impossible for the MP to undertake major developmental projects such as construction of roads and hospital. The nominee noted the ensuing debate that perhaps the fund be reverted back to the Assembly. Alternatively, a discussion with the Common Fund Administrator and the Minister for Local Government to reconsider an increase in the quantum of such fund to enable Parliamentarians undertake major social interventions that can impact the lives of the constituents could be continued. A decision of which, Parliament in the near future, must take. The nominee further proposed a continuous engagement of the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) to educate the general public on the roles and responsibilities of MPs, and the local authorities (MMDAs).

d. Loan facility to Members of Parliament to purchase means of transport

The Nominee considered the current situation where Members of Parliament take loan facility to purchase their means of transport as a worrying situation which requires concerted efforts from all to address. The nominee described as unfortunate, the current situation where the Legislature is the only Arm of Government whose members take loans to acquire a means of transport. Other concerns that the nominee promised to get a closure on includes provision of official residence improved personal security for MPs. Another issue which the nominee promised to bring finality to is the establishment of a pension scheme for Members of Parliament. This, the nominee opined would liberate the minds of Hon. Members to concentrate on the core functions as a Member of Parliament.

e. Full ownership of the precincts of Parliament by Parliament of Ghana

Regarding the things being done to ensure Parliament takes full ownership of the precincts of Parliament, He did agree that the many social activities in the precincts where all manner of people flock to the precincts does not interfere with sittings of

Parliament but also poses a major security threat to Members of Parliament as well as staff of the Service. The nominee hinted that a lot of work has been done in this regard and was hopeful that barring any eventuality, within two year most of the teething problems would be resolved to allow Parliament take full ownership of the precincts.

f. Constitutional Review

Sharing his view on whether there should be a full or partial review of the 1992 Constitution, the Nominee indicated that he believes in a holistic review of the Constitution. The nominee explained that application of the Constitution over the past 29 years has brought to the fore, many challenges and weakness which need to be addressed. In his view some of the areas that require attention include the entrenched clauses which seems to relegate Parliament to the backyard. According to the nominee, even some of the non-entrenched clauses are, also, not properly aligned. Particular mention were made of Articles 106 (1), (2A), (13) and Article 3 to buttress the point.

He accordingly, called for a national discourse and holistic approach to any future constitution review exercise.

g. Attrition rate of Members of Parliament of the 7th Parliament

The nominee bemoaned the high attrition rate of experienced legislators from the House and called for measures to help retain them. The nominee ascribed the situation to the monetisation of Ghanaian politics. The nominee described the situation as alarming and admonished political parties to confront the issue to stem the tide. The nominee mourned the premature exit of Dr. Mark Assibey-Yeboah, the Chairman of the Finance Committee and MP for New Juaben, Mr. Inusah Fuseini, former Ranking Member on the Committee on Constitutional, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, and Mr. Joseph Yieleh Chireh, former MP for Wa West from the House.

The Nominee indicated that Article 55(5) which is a guided rule of democratic selection of local and national officers of political parties has been misconstrued by almost all the political parties to mean election only. On the account of this, some people are of

the view that at every level, thus, from polling station, electoral, constituency, regional through to national, political parties must conduct elections. The nominee stressed that the language used in the constitution is “they shall be chosen” indicated that aside the popular choice voting, there are many forms of selection including acclamation.

He noted that in some established democracies, the process of selection is guided and guarded and until Ghanaians come to this understanding, the issue of monetisation of party politics would continue to deprive Parliament of experienced hands. The nominee also mentioned that in established democracies, the performance of a Member of Parliament is assessed by the Parliamentary parties and reported to the Party before the “flood gate” is opened. The nominee stressed that until the political parties confront this reality, it would be very difficult to stop the tide of attrition rate in parliament.

Recommendations

The Committee, *by Consensus*, recommends to the House to approve the nomination of Hon. Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu for appointment as Minister for Parliamentary Affairs.

4.6 HON. (DR.) MATTHEW OPOKU PREMPEH - MINISTER-DESIGNATE FOR ENERGY

4.6.1 Background

Hon. Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh was born on 23rd May, 1968 in Kumasi in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. He is a Christian, he has one child. He had his basic education from 1974 to 1980 at the University Primary School; Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST). He then proceeded to Prempeh College for his Ordinary Level and Advanced Level Certificates from 1980 to 1987. He attended the KNUST from 1988 to 1991 and obtained a Bachelor of Science in Human Biology. He went back to the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology from 1991 to 1994 where he obtained Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MB.ChB). He later, from 1997 to 1998 proceeded to The Netherlands Institute of Health Sciences,

The Netherlands to pursue masters in clinical epidemiology. Furthermore, in 2002, he studied MRCS at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, Glasgow.

Nominee has also undertaken several Certificate and/or capacity building Programmes mostly related to management, leadership, legislative drafting, governance, change management and health systems management. These included Executive Certificate in Public Leadership, Applying Behavioral Insights to the Design of Public Policy and Programmes at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University (USA). The Nominee has partaken in various workshops and conferences including Legislative Drafting, Project and Programme Management and Monitoring and Evaluation.

Hon. Dr. Opoku Prempeh began his career as a National Service Personnel at the Manhyia Polyclinic (Kumasi) from 1987 to 1988. He was first employed at Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital, Kumasi as a House Officer from 1995 to 1997. He later travelled abroad and was employed as a Senior House Officer of the National Health Service in the United Kingdom from February 1999 to June 2003. From June 2003 to January 2009, he was the Executive Chairman of Keyedmap Services Limited, Ghana (A Private Security Firm). From 2009 to date the nominee has been a Member of Parliament for Manhyia in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The Hon Nominee was the Minister of Education from January 2017 to January 2021.

The Hon Nominee has held various leadership positions in his line of service to the country. He was the Assistant House prefect (Guggisberg House, Prempeh College) in 1987. In 1990 to 1991 he was the General Secretary of the Medical Students Association of Ghana (KNUST/SMS) and also the Local NUGS President in the same year. He became the National President of the Asante Students Union and Local NUGS President (1st National Vice President) from 1991 to 1992. Hon. Dr. Prempeh was a Member, Executive Board, UNESCO from 2017 to 2020.

The Honourable Nominee has won several national and international awards. The awards include, Best Student 'O' Level Geography and 'A' Level Chemistry in 1985 and 1987 respectively at Prempeh College. Best Student in Community Medicine and Best Student in General Surgery (SMS – KNUST) in 1995. He also won the University Fellowship Award by the Netherlands Government in 1997. In 2017, the nominee, won

the Ghana Entrepreneur & Corporate Executive Awards-Best Minister in Ghana. And in 2020, he won two international awards; The West African Regional magazine (TWARM)-Achievers Business and Leadership Award and Harvard Ministerial leadership Program (Medal of achievement).

Ho. Dr. Mathew Prempeh's interests/hobbies are reading contemporary literature, playing and watching football and board games.

4.6.2 Response to Questions

The questions the nominee responded to related to his stewardship and the Ministry of education and issues pertaining to his new portfolio. Specific responses include the following:

- Promoting Local Content in the Petroleum Sub Sector;
- Improving Efficiency in the Operations of Tema Oil Refinery (TOR);
- Privatization of Electricity Company of Ghana and PDS
- Electricity Tariffs;
- Indebtedness to IPPs;
- Cost of Electricity Meters in Rural Areas;
- Nuclear Energy;
- Training in Oil and Gas;
- Abandoned Rural Electrification Projects in the Upper East Region;
- Generation Capacity;
- Street Lighting;
- The Lighting of Public Schools;
- Temperament and Public Pronouncement;
- Generating Power from Waste;
- Scholarship from GETFund;
- Procurement of Mathematical Set for Schools;
- ECG Workers Strike in Hohoe;
- Improving Renewable Energy Sector;
- Differences between Invest in Human Capital and Investment in Literacy and numeracy;

- Vision to Ensure Energy Security;
- Petroleum Revenue Management Act;
- Track System in Senior High Schools;
- Policy Decisions to Promote Basic Education in the Era of Covid-19; and
- Responsibility Allowances for Teachers

a. Promoting Local Content in the Petroleum Sub Sector

The Hon Minister-Designate for Ministry of Energy in expressing his opinion on how to promote local participation in the petroleum sector indicated that the sector is relatively new in Ghana and as such, there are few Ghanaians and local businesses with the requisite skills and expertise to effectively participate in the sector. He advocated for a deliberate policy shift towards the training and capacity building for Ghanaians and local enterprises to position them to effectively participate in the petroleum sector. He further indicated that, when given the nod, he will explore available avenues for government support to position local enterprises to participate in the petroleum sector.

b. Improving Efficiency in the Operations of Tema Oil Refinery (TOR)

On why the Tema Oil Refinery (TOR) is operating below expectation, the nominee identified obsolete equipment as one of the primary challenges of the refinery. He explained that to turn TOR into a profitable entity, there is the need to improve machinery and equipment to enable TOR to add value to the country's petroleum resources. He assured the Committee that, if given the opportunity, he will explore the appropriate partnership arrangements, both managerial and the supply of modern plants and equipment's to make TOR a profitable entity.

c. Privatization of Electricity Company of Ghana and PDS

On whether he will reconsider private sector participation in power distribution in Ghana, the nominee informed the Committee that every government, since 2001, has tackled the challenges confronting ECG with some form of privatization in mind. He indicated that the idea to invite private sector participation in power distribution commenced during the period of President John Agyekum Kufour. President John Evans Atta-Mills and John Dramani Mahama also pursued private sector participation to help resolve the problems of ECG. He thought that privatization is the surest way to

address the long-standing challenges in the power distribution sector. He however agreed that privatization of power distribution should be done differently. In his view, wholesale privatization might not be the way to go. He called for a complete evaluation and audit of all the operational areas of ECG to identify operational areas where challenges exist. He is of the view that private sector participation should be allowed only in operational areas where losses are recorded.

On what prevented GoG from verifying the authenticity of relevant documents before handing over ECG's assets to PDS and whether there is an economic cost associated with the inability of PDS to meet Payment Guarantee under the Concession Agreement, the nominee indicated that he is not in a position to say if there is an economic cost associated with the inability of PDS to meet its obligations under the Concession Agreement. And that he will study all the documents to understand what happened and what can be done in the supreme interest of the country; going forward. He was, however, emphatic that, the inability of PDS to meet payment guarantee is central to the Concession Agreement and lauded the government for terminating the Agreement. He informed the Committee that, all revenues collected by PDS were lodged in an escrow-account thereby making it difficult for PDS not to account for revenues collected. He however assured the Committee that, if given the nod, he will work with all stakeholders to retrieve any outstanding resources in the custody of PDS.

d. Electricity Tariffs

On what he will do to reduce the cost of Electricity for consumers and Industry to make them more competitive to take advantage of AfCTA, Dr. Opoku Prempeh (nominee) advocated for the need to minimise the debt burden in the power sector to reduce the cost of electricity to both domestic and industrial consumers. He opined that Ghana has one of the highest tariff regimes in the West Africa Sub-Region but power producers do not meet their cost and continue to call for tariff increases. In his view, reliable and affordable electricity can serve as an incentive to boost the country's industrialization drive. The nominee, therefore, called for the need to unbundle the tariff regime to make it more transparent and affordable to consumers.

e. Indebtedness to IPPs

On how to deal with escalating debt situation in the Energy Sector despite the securitization of proceeds from the Energy Sector Levy to defray legacy debt in the energy sector, the nominee lamented the inability of power distributors to collect sufficient revenue to meet the cost of power purchased from power producers. He called for a total reform of the power sector to correct the inefficiencies in revenue collections and reduce system losses and power theft to avert a total system collapse. He informed the Committee that the indebtedness of the power sector will collapse the power sector if bold and decisive measures are not taken to halt further debt accumulation. He opined that though tariffs in Ghana remain one of the highest in West Africa, the power sector continues to accumulate debt. He blames the debt accumulation partly on US\$500 million paid annually on excess capacity by Government. He promised to engage PURC to disaggregate power tariff build-up to identify where new debts continue to be accumulated so that they can be addressed. He assured the Committee that restructuring of the debt situation in the sector would be given priority attention if his nomination is approved.

f. Cost of Electricity Meters in Rural Areas

Responding to the question of what he will do to reduce the cost of electricity metres in rural areas which sometimes is supplied to rural communities at an exorbitant price of GHc600, the nominee expressed dissatisfaction with the unavailability of resources to enable ECG to procure sufficient meters. He indicated that ECG is therefore compelled to rely on credit supply from local manufacturers and importers thereby creating meter shortage in the system. He proposed the zoning of various areas and giving the task of metering to meter manufacturers on concession to supply meters to consumers and payment made on monthly installments by the beneficiaries. He assured the Committee of working innovatively to address the "meter shortage syndrome" in the country; bearing in mind the interests of both power producers and consumers.

g. Nuclear Energy

On whether Ghana intends to explore the option of adding nuclear energy to the country's generation mix, the nominees responded in the affirmative. He explained that nuclear power has been on the agenda of Ghana since independence and successive

governments have pursued and promoted nuclear power in various forms. He informed the Committee that the Ministry, in collaboration with other agencies, is in the final stages of selecting a vendor to help decide on the technology to use and the training required. He indicated that nuclear energy is a safe and clean form of energy by far.

h. Training in Oil and Gas

Responding to a question on the proliferation of training institutions offering programs in oil and gas and how graduates from such institutions find it difficult to get employment in the sector, the nominee believed that, the inability of trainees from these institutions to get jobs is because, among other things, many of the institutions are not accredited. He explained that, once the training institutions are not accredited, the certificates so acquired cannot be certified and hence the graduates will find it difficult to get jobs or be employed. He indicated that some operators in the oil and gas sector have partnered and supported some institutions for the training of requisite manpower for the sector. Dr. Opoku Prempeh called for proper scrutiny of all training institutions to ensure they are properly accredited to run such programs. He assured the Committee that given the opportunity, he will work with industry players to get the right accreditations for such training institutions; to make their products employable in the industry. Such a measure will be one way of promoting local participation in the sector and industry.

i. Abandoned Rural Electrification Projects in the Upper East Region

On what he will do to ensure that abandoned rural electrification projects started in parts of the Upper East Region during the previous NDC Government era which have been left unattended to in the last four years are completed, the nominee reiterated that the goal of government is to ensure universal access to electricity. According to the nominee, equally in his region, Ashanti, there several such abandoned rural projects. He averred that the main challenge has been inadequate financing of the sector. In the past, most of such electricity programs (such as Self Help Electrification Projects-SHEP) have been funded through loans. If there is a challenge with the disbursement of the loan facility, the project completion timeline is consequently affected.

He also advocated for off-grid schemes to support the rural electrification program and to achieve universal access to electricity. He explained that some rural communities are far from the national grid and it is more economical to establish off-grid programs to enable them to get access to electricity. He assured the Committee that, if given the opportunity, he will engage the contractor working on the project in Upper East and other regions with such abandoned projects, to find out what the challenges are and how they can be addressed for the projects to be completed.

j. Generation Capacity

The nominee in an answer to why the government has not added any significant generation capacity to what it inherited from the previous government, the nominee explained that the attention of the government in the last four years has focused more on what to do with the excess capacity which is putting a huge financial burden on the country and not generation. He explained that the country currently has excess generation capacity which is imposing huge financial burdens on the system through the numerous take or pay agreements entered by the previous government. He informed the Committee that, his primary focus will be to renegotiate the existing take or pay agreements to ensure that power produced is consumed and paid for, by ensuring electricity power being affordable to domestic and industrial consumers.

k. Street Lighting

Explaining the government's policy direction on street lighting, the nominee lamented the rampant theft of street light cables and bulbs on our major roads. This, he said largely accounted for the non-functioning of many street lights. He further explained that the street lighting regime is convoluted with several entities playing different roles at different times. According to the nominee, power Distribution Company's claim, they do not get adequate money from power consumed through the "street light. Additionally, power distribution companies are not responsible for the installation of street lights yet they are expected to maintain them. Sometimes, some institutions, including MMDAs do not use the standard materials and experts to install street lights yet, the country places that responsibility on them. These arrangements make it difficult to place ultimate responsibility for the management of street lights on one single entity.

The nominee informed the Committee of the high rate of non-functioning of street lights in many urban communities especially Accra and Kumasi. He advocated for the use of solar light for street lighting to reduce theft and to take street lights off the national grid; as well as engage all stakeholders involved to have a common understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities in lighting our towns and communities/villages.

l. The lighting of Public Schools

On how to improve safety, teaching, and learning in public schools by providing them with electricity, the nominee agreed on the need to provide all public schools with electricity. The challenge he adduced however was that many schools are not designed and constructed to be connected to power. He indicated that school infrastructure is provided by MMDAs but in most cases electrification is not factored into the design and even when included sometimes sub-standard materials are used. This makes it difficult to extend power to existing schools. He advocated for the use of solar power in basic and senior high schools where power consumption is relatively low. The nominee indicated that because of the cost of solar batteries, using them to store the generated power could be expensive to operate, unless the excess power is transferred to the national grid. According to the nominee, the technology exists for the transfer, and an individual who generates excess power could sell to ECG. The nominee added that a lot of discussions had been done in this regard and what was outstanding has been the price at which ECG would buy the excess power. The nominee to have further stakeholder engagements to arrive at an acceptable rate.

The nominee agreed to the suggestion of sending some Ghanaian to countries such as Indonesia to benchmark their vast experience in solar power generation.

m. Temperament and Public Pronouncement

The nominee when asked to substantiate an allegation he made to the effect that Mr. John Dramani Mahama, bussed parents and their wards, from across the country to fake fainting at the Independence Square in Accra to sabotage the school placement system in the wake of challenges associated with the Computerized School Selection and Placement system in 2019, admitted saying those words but indicated that he has no evidence to show that Mr. John Mahama bussed parents to the independence Square.

He indicated, his pronouncements are regrettable and used the opportunity to withdraw those words and apologized to the former president.

He explained that his pronouncement that Prof. Naana Opoku Agyemang was a disgrace was not directed at her in person but at some statements, she made on the radio which were all false. He said the former Minister made a statement that she started the Progressive Free Senior High School programme and his (nominee) view was that such statements were a disgrace to her tenure in office as Minister of Education. He said given the opportunity, he would have said it differently. He used the opportunity to render an apology to whosoever is offended by the pronouncements.

On why he accused the former Minister of Education of leaving huge debts to the Ministry, Dr. Opoku Prempeh explained that Prof. Naana Poku Agyemang did not include those outstanding debts (buses and pick-ups) in her handing over notes; hence not indicating the Ministry's financial obligations.

n. Generating Power from Waste

Responding to a question on why the Ministry of Energy is not exploring the potential of generating power from waste, the nominees agreed that, many players in the energy sector are interested in exploring the possibility of generating energy from waste. But one issue is we (Ghanaians) not separating waste. The challenge he indicated is that, it is very expensive to generate power from waste. According to the nominee, due to the high cost of generating waste power, adding it to the energy mix, has the potential to increase the final price to consumers. That notwithstanding, the nominee agreed to the idea of adding to the current energy mix to ensure a constant supply.

o. Scholarship from GETFund

In a response to a question on whether the nominee feels he deprived people who need scholarship when he was granted a scholarship by the GetFund, he indicated that the facility was extended to many Members of Parliament, from both sides (NPP & NDC) benefitted from the scholarship in 2016. He said he has not regretted and when he gets the opportunity again he will take advantage of it.

p. Procurement of Mathematical Set for Schools

The nominee in a response to a question on whether mathematical sets procured by the Ministry of Education for WASCE student was delivered on time and whether it served the purpose for which the facility was approved by Parliament explained to the Committee that, the Ministry of Education procured about 853,009 mathematical sets together with a non-programmable scientific calculator for all student in Senior High School. According to the nominee, this purchase was based on series of advice (including providing students with the non-programmable scientific calculator to prevent examination mal-practices), from the WAEC Head Office. That series of correspondences between the GES and WAEC made it necessary to seek approval from the Public Procurement Authority for sole-sourcing as time was not on his side to go through open tendering. The nominee further informed the Committee that the unit cost of the mathematical set was 75 cedis and not 75 USD. The Ministry, therefore, upon the recommendation from WAEC undertook to procure the set for all students. Unfortunately, due to the impact of CIVID-19, delivery of the instruments delayed. They were, however, subsequently delivered to the Ministry.

q. ECG Workers Strike in Hohoe

On how he intends to address the concerns of ECG workers at Hohoe who embarked on industrial action to protest the arrest of their colleagues for performing their legitimate duties, the nominee assured the Committee that, if given the nod he will look at the cause of the strike and address it accordingly.

r. Improving Renewable Energy Sector

Explaining to the Committee how he intends to ensure the achievement of 10% renewable energy in the energy mix in Ghana, the nominee explained that most of the legislations and incentive schemes required to attract investment into renewable energy have been passed. What is lacking is the ability to whip up investors' interest in the sector. He attributed the reluctance of players to invest in renewable energy to the high cost of electricity generated from a renewable energy source. He promised to put in place the required incentive schemes to encourage individuals and households to install solar panels to help achieve the 10% target. On what he will do to encourage institutions and households to use solar, he explained that government institutions including SHS

will be taken off-grid. He further indicated that, if given the nod, he will explore the possibility of granting subsidy on solar panels to real estate developers and households to further encourage the use of solar panels as an alternate source of power.

Explaining why an attempt was made to amend the Bui Power Authority Act to allow it to venture into renewable energy, the nominee indicated that generating solar energy requires large tracks of land. According to the nominee, Ghana has signed on some protocols on climate change hence solar farms will largely be done on degraded land because of the potential adverse effect on agricultural and other land use. He explained that the Ministry initiated the process to amend the Bui Power Authority Act to allow the Authority to install solar panels on the lake surfaces to avoid competition with other land uses.

s. Differences between Invest in Human Capital and Investment in Literacy and numeracy

Expressing his opinion on the differences that exist between investment in human capital and investment in literacy and numeracy, the nominee explained that the government's desire to improve education increased investment in infrastructure introduced a capitation grant, and School Feeding Program during President Kuffour era. The outcome of these investments he indicated was a 100% increase in school enrolment. The government also intends to keep students in school longer by introducing the Free Senior High School. This is to reduce the number of students who drop out of school after completing their Junior High School. Under the Free Senior High School, the government supplied free core textbooks and the elective books were supplied as library books in the schools.

On why elective textbooks were not supplied to students, the nominee explained that it was difficult for the numbers for every elective subject to be determined. The idea at the time was to put the books at the library to encourage students to also use the libraries.

t. Vision to Ensure Energy Security

Outlining his vision to ensure energy security for Ghana, the nominee indicated that, his vision is to plan to ensure that generation capacity is expanded timely to avoid power shortages while ensuring cheaper power for end-users of power. Also, the nominee stated that he will pursue an agenda of ensuring universal access to affordable power by all consumers.

On whether there is an added advantage to Ghana for having excess capacity in power generation, the nominee responded in the affirmative. He indicated that excess capacity serves as a buffer and international best practice requires that a country should have an excess capacity of about 20% of peak demand. But this should be done in such a way that power is affordable to all consumers

u. Petroleum Revenue Management Act

Expressing his opinion on which aspects of the PRMA needed to be amended, the nominee indicated that the PRMA is premised on transparent and accountable use for petroleum revenues. He believed that based on findings of PIAC as published in its reports over the years, transparency and accountability for petroleum resources remain a challenge. He opined that there is the need to revisit the Act and improve upon the transparency and accountability regimes and provisions in the Petroleum Revenue Management Act to ensure Ghana gets maximum returns from its oil resources.

v. Track System in Senior High Schools

The nominee disagreed with an assertion that the track system in SHS resulted in teenage pregnancies among students. He indicated that there are no statistics to back the said claim. He indicated that there are reports of some 1,500 SHS Students been pregnant but attributed it to the long periods students stayed at home following the closure of schools to contain the spread of COVID-19.

w. Policy Decisions to Promote Basic Education in the Era of Covid-19

Responding to a question on what policy he left behind at the Ministry of Education to promote Basic Education, especially, in public schools due to the impact of Covid -19,

Dr. Opoku Prempeh indicated that GES has introduced distance education, radio programmes, and TV programs for both basic and Senior High Schools. The Ministry has also uploaded all educational materials for Senior High Schools online. The Ministry has established five recording studios for recording educational materials. The Ministry has printed manuals that are supporting children at home. He further indicated that there are radio programs aimed at supporting children's education in the Northern part of Ghana. He explained that with the Covid-19, Ghana has positioned itself for blended education which combines classroom teaching with distance learning. All these programs are aimed at reaching out to pupils and students even as they are at home following the closure of schools due to COVID-19.

x. Responsibility Allowances for Teachers

On whether the Ministry of Education has abolished the payment of responsibility allowance to deserving teachers, the nominee indicated that only nine categories of teachers are entitled to responsibility allowance. He explained that the Ministry continues to pay responsibility allowance to the deserving teachers. However, if a teacher falls out of the category of teachers entitled to the allowance, due to transfer, promotion, etc they cease to benefit from the allowance.

On a question on the dissatisfaction of some heads of schools due to centralized procurement of food to school, the nominee responded that arrangement has been in practice for many years. In the past, PAMSCAD and Ghana Food Distribution Corporation/Company were involved in some form of food procurement for schools. Recently it is the Ghana Buffer Company supply some food items based on requests from Heads of institutions; who also inspect them.

Recommendations

The Committee, *by Consensus*, recommends to the House to approve the nomination of Hon. Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh for appointment as Minister for Energy.

4.7.1 Background

Hon. Daniel Kwaku Botwe was born on 26th February, 1958 at Mabang in the Ahafo-Ano North District in the Ashanti Region. He hails from Abiriw/Anum-Boso in the Eastern Region.

He had his primary and middle education at Maaban Presbyterian Basic School between 1962 and 1971. The nominee attended Kumasi Academy for his GCE Ordinary Level and proceeded to Achimota School between 1977 and 1979 for his Advance Level Certificate. Between 1979 and 1980, he was enrolled at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) and obtained a Certificate in Data Processing. He then continued his education at the same institution and was awarded Bachelor of Science Degree in Computer Science in 1984.

Hon. Botwe rendered his national service at the Building and Road Research Institute (BRRI) of KNUST between 1984 and 1985 and at Ghana COCOBOD between 1985 and 1986. He commenced his professional career as a Computer Programmer at the Ghana COCOBOD in 1986 and later joined PALB Pharmaceuticals, Danmaud Limited as a Director of the Company between 1993 and 1995. He later became the Director of Operations and Research at the New Patriotic Party (NPP) from 1996 to 1998 and the General Secretary of the NPP from 1998 to 2005. He was appointed as the Minister of Information in the erstwhile Kufuor Administration from 2005 to 2006. He was the Managing Director of DM Farms Limited from 2006 to 2008.

The nominee was the Minister for Regional Reorganization and Development from January 2017 to January 2021. He is the current Member of Parliament for Okere Constituency and has occupied the seat since 2009. Whilst in Parliament, he was the Minority Chief Whip (2012 – 2016) and a member of the Public Accounts Committee.

He was the National Coordinating Secretary National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS) from 1983 to 1984 and later the National Secretary of the Union from 1982 to 1983.

Hon. Daniel Kwaku Botwe is a recipient of the Companion of the Order of the Volta Award of the Republic of Ghana.

4.7.2 Reponses of the Nominee

The issues the nominee were engaged in include:

- Realignment of Districts in the country;
- Increasing the District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF);
- Internally Generated Fund as a requirement for External Funding for Assemblies;
- Waste Management and Sanitation;
- Provision of Financial Support for Local Unit of the District Assemblies;
- Integration of Government Special Initiatives;
- Payment of Monthly Salaries to Assembly Members;
- Mismanagement of DACF by some Assemblies;
- Ghana First Company's activities in the Districts;
- Property rates; and
- Santrokofi, Apkafu, Lolobi and Likpe (SALL) Matter

Details on the above are presented below.

a. **Realignment of Districts in the country**

On the matter of the merger of some existing districts and their realignment for effective decentralisation and local development, the nominee stated that the subject of decentralisation and its components had received massive scholarly attention. He said that transferring power, functions, resources, and personnel from the Central Government and the EC to the local government units is the core objective of the decentralisation process. When done properly, the nominee believes that decentralisation would ensure popular participation in the decision-making process at the local level. The nominee indicated that the ideas of decentralisation, including popular participation and local development, had influenced the decision of successive

Governments to increase the number of districts from the initial 200 to 275. In the nominee's opinion, when more people represent manageable units, they can have personal and direct engagement with the people and represent them better.

The nominee informed the Committee that the establishment of districts go through the rigorous processes set out in Articles 2 and 5 of the 1992 Constitution dealing with the creation of regions. He stated that the Constitution permits the country to create new regions or merge existing ones. He maintained that if a strong consensus emerges among the people for the creations of new constituencies, districts, and the merger of existing ones the constitutional process would be activated at any point in time.

b. Increasing the District Assembly Common Fund

Commenting on increasing the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF) from the current 5 per cent to 7.5 per cent or more, the nominee stated that Chapter 20 of the Constitution on "Decentralisation and Local Government" places enormous responsibility on Parliament. He mentioned that the Legislature is enjoined under the 1992 Constitution to enact the appropriate legislation to ensure that powers, responsibilities, personnel, and resources are at all times transferred from the Central Government to the local government units in a coordinated manner. The nominee indicated that he would partner with Parliament and other stakeholders to advise the Government on the best way forward. He stated that the change in the name of the Ministry by the addition of "Decentralisation" has refocused the mandate of the Ministry towards a deeper decentralisation as envisaged under the Constitution. He assured the Committee of his resolve to make available to the local units the resources required for effective decentralisation.

c. Internally Generated Fund (IGF) as a requirement for External Funding of the Assemblies

Regarding the requirement of Assemblies to generate more IGF to enable them to access more support from the Central Government and other external sources of funds for the districts, the nominee indicated that such a criterion creates imbalance and apprehension in the local government system. The nominee questioned why a district is penalised if that district cannot generate enough IGF through no fault of theirs. He stated that some of the districts' circumstances and geographical location are such that it would be extremely difficult for such districts to generate the required IGF to receive

more funding from Central Government and external sources. The nominee inquired whether the above is factored into the determination of the Formulae for the District Assembly Common Fund and the other funds of the Assemblies. He believes that the Government's role is to support districts that are vulnerable and, through no fault of theirs, cannot generate more revenue for their local development while empowering the stronger assemblies with the capacity to generate more revenue to do so. He suggested that he will look into the matter with stakeholders when given the nod and develop a robust framework for allocating resources to assemblies based on the peculiar circumstances and need factor.

d. Waste Management and Sanitation

On how the nominee will collaborate with his counterpart in the Ministry of Water and Sanitation to resolve the issues confronting waste management and sanitation in the country, the nominee stated that the Ministries exist to help the President formulate sound policies and programmes as well as provide oversight over the waste management and sanitation sector. As a result, the nominee believes that for the Government to achieve its target in the waste management and sanitation sector, the Ministry of Water and Sanitation and Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development must collaborate and work together as a team. According to the nominee, although the mandate of waste management and sanitation belongs to the Ministry of Water and Sanitation while the assemblies who are the implementers of the sanitation mandate falls under the Ministry of Local Government, the arrangement should not prevent the Ministry of Water and Sanitation from implementing its sanitation programmes within the districts. He maintained that situating the waste management and sanitation function in the Ministry of Water and Sanitation, other than the Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development, should not create any problems as it is being asserted, but rather the two Ministries would collaborate to resolve the waste management and sanitation challenges in the country.

e. Provision of Financial Support for Local Units of the District Assemblies

The nominee stated that the transfer of power, function and responsibility to the local units must go along with transfer of financial resources to enable the units' function effectively. He mentioned that if the resources are not transferred to back the power and

the functions, then there is no real decentralisation. He stated that the proposition is in line with His Excellency's vision to deepen decentralisation in the country.

The nominee indicated that the literature on the subject had proposed various models for dealing with the question. He assured the Committee that he would assemble a team of experts to look at the best practices and develop a holistic fiscal decentralisation framework.

f. Integration of Government Initiatives

When he was asked how the districts will integrate government initiatives, including the One-Village-One-Dam, One-District-One-Factory, Planting-for-Food-and-Jobs, Planting-for-Export and Rural Development, among others, the nominee stated that many of the initiatives were anchored at the local level and can be pursued vigorously by the local authorities when placed under the Assemblies. He noted collaboration between the Ministries of Agriculture and Local Government and Rural Development to establish nurseries and their distribution to interested farmers under the Planting-for-Food-and-Jobs and Planting-for-Export and Rural Development. According to the nominee, the local economy will grow if districts owe these initiatives.

g. Payment of Assembly Members

As to whether Assembly Members should be paid monthly, the nominee indicated that Assembly Members do not work full time at the Assembly, and many of them are already workers paid by the Government. He noted that he would support an initiative that will support Assembly Members to interact more with their people.

Whether he will develop a programme that would compel the Assemblies to assign funds for specific electoral areas, the Minister-designate indicated that he is open to suggestions on the matter. However, he informed the Committee of the practice where some Assemblies pay Assembly Members some allowances out of their IGF.

h. Mismanagement of DACF by some Assemblies

When the nominee attention was drawn to the Auditor General's report on the management of the DACF and the audit infractions by some Assemblies, the nominee

stated he would never countenance corruption at the local level. He indicated that since the audit reports are presented to Parliament, he will study them and apprise himself of the recommendation and infraction to enable him to take the necessary remedial actions against any Assembly found to have misappropriated the Assembly's funds.

i. Ghana First Company Limited and project in the districts

Commenting on the activities of the Ghana First Company Limited, the nominee stated that as a member of the Committee on Local Government and Rural Development, he heard about the complaints during the Committee's interactions with the districts. During the discussions, the nominee stated that he was not sure whether the projects undertaken by the company are being spearheaded by the Central Government or a partnership between some government agencies and the private sector or were purely private sector driven. He indicated further that he was not sure whether there were formal agreements between the company and the Assemblies for the provisions of the projects. He stated his determination to interrogate the matter further and his resolve to contact the Hon Member who asked the question for detailed information concerning the issues raised to enable him to follow up on the issues.

a. Property Rate

Touching on the status of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and the Land Valuation Authority for the valuation of properties located in the various Assemblies to enable the districts to collect property rate, the nominee stated that property rate is seen by many as a significant source of revenue for the Assemblies. He informed the Committee that what has prevented some Assemblies from valuing the properties to enable them to collect the correct rate was a provision in the Lands Commission Act that purported to make the Land Valuation Authority the sole body that values properties in the country.

The nominee recommended the amendment of the Lands Commission Act to allow the district Assemblies to perform that function themselves. Another suggestion he made was to decentralise the Land Valuation Authority as a department of the Assembly to enable them to work for the Assembly.

He assured the Committee that he would take steps when he is given the nod to ensure that the Assemblies can effectively collect property rate.

b. Santrokofi, Akpafu, Lolobi and Likpe (SALL) Matter

The nominee indicated that he had been informed about a petition against his nomination in respect the SALL matter. He stated that he had a deep respect for the chieftaincy institution and its role in ensuring an enduring local government system. He stated that the allegation contained in the petition was borne out of a profound misunderstanding of about the entire process of creating new regions as provided in the 1992 Constitution. He, therefore, urged the Committee to dismiss the petition as it has no basis. According to him, Article 5 of the Constitution is very clear on the processes for the creation of a region. He stated that this provision of the Constitution had been there since the 1969 Constitution. He said that petitions were received from people who wanted to have a new region by the President's Office as stipulated in the Constitution. The Ministry of Regional Reorganization worked closely with the Office of the President and coordinated the entire process.

The nominee informed the Committee that the President appointed a Commission of Inquiry to look at the petitions. The Commission went round the country and the affected regions and held public hearings. The Commission presented its report and recommendation to President.

During the campaign for the referendum in the affected areas, it was observed that while some were for the new regions, others were against their creation.

The nominee was emphatic that it was never true that people from Santrokofi, Akpafu, Lolobi and Likpe areas were not interested in joining the Oti region and that they were forced. He maintained that it is totally untrue, and nothing supports that assertion. He stated that the Constitutional Instrument (C. I. 109) on the referendum for the new regions laid in Parliament by the Electoral Commission clearly showed the areas where the referendum will occur, and at no point did the people object to it.

He indicated his Ministry was just facilitating the consultations, and there was nowhere that he could have influenced the process. He continued by stating that after the Oti region was inaugurated and the region was composing the regional House of Chiefs, the Chief of Lolobi was in Dambai to swear as a member of the Oti Regional House of

Chiefs. He also informed the Committee that the Council of State election held, the person who has been elected to represent the Oti region is from Apkafu.

Recommendations

The Committee, *by Consensus*, recommends to the House to approve the nomination of Hon. Dan Botwe for appointment as Minister for Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development.

4.8 HON. AMBROSE DERY - MINISTER-DESIGNATE FOR THE INTERIOR

4.8.1 Background

Hon. Ambrose Dery was born on 23rd August, 1956 at Nandom in the Upper West Region. He is a Christian, married with a child. Hon. Dery began his primary education at the Lawra L/A Primary School (1962 -1966) and continued at the Saint Paul's Primary School (1966 – 1968). He progressed to the Adakura U/C Middle School at Zuarungu from 1968 to 1970. The Hon. Nominee attended the Navrongo Secondary School from 1970 – 1977 for his Ordinary and Advance Level Certificates. He also attended the University of Ghana, Legon from 1977 – 1980 and was awarded the Bachelor of Laws Degree. He thereafter progressed to the Ghana School of Law for his Professional Law Certificate from 1980 to 1982.

Hon. Dery had his National Service at the Upper West Regional House of Chiefs from 1983-1985. He then entered into private legal practice as the head of Bimi, Dery & Co. Law firm from 1995-2000 and later as Managing Director of the Dery & Co from 2000 to 2003. For his professional life, he served as President of the Upper East branch of the Ghana Bar Association from 1993-2000 and again as a Member of the National Council of the Ghana Bar Association. He has also been on a number of boards on several capacities including as Chairman of the Board of Director of Rural Aids (Northern) Ghana (1990-2003) and as member of Board of Directors of the National network (Pronet).

He was appointed as the Deputy Attorney-General (2003-2004), Regional Minister (2005-2007), later as Minister of State at the Ministry of Justice (2007-2008), and Minister for Interior (2017 to January 2021). Hon. Dery served as Deputy Minority Leader from 2009-2012 and as a Member of the Pan African Parliament, South Africa during the same period. He was the leader of the Pan African Parliament Observer Mission to the presidential and parliamentary elections in Namibia in November, 2009 and also led the Pan African Parliament Fact Finding Mission to La Cote D'voire in 2012.

The nominee has participated in several conferences and/or capacity building programmes. Notable among them are: sixtieth Sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and Crime, Vienna Austria (March 2017), 5th Euro African Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development, Marrakesh, Morocco (May 2018). International Ministerial Forum on Combating Terror, Israel (June 2018). Sixty-Second (62nd) Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the High level Ministerial Segment of (CND), Vienna, Austria (March 2019), and 1st African Anti-Corruption Forum, Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt (June 2019).

Hon. Dery's hobbies are; reading, watching football and dancing.

4.8.2 Response to Questions

The questions and issues the nominee responded to and touched on basically related to his stewardship as the immediate past Minister and the programmes and interventions that would be implemented to improve on the working conditions and professionalism of the agencies under the Ministry. The nominee specifically touched on:

- Perceived excessive Military Presence in Civilian Areas;
- Expansion and Completion of Police Hospital;
- Status on the Implementation of Vigilante Act;
- Police Brutalities;
- Presence of Police Officers in the Chamber of Parliament;
- Anti-Robbery Unit of Ghana Police Service;
- Construction of Hospital in Nsawam Prison;

- The outcome of Alleged Sexual Misconduct of Police Officers in Peace Keeping Mission;
- The killing of Innocent Citizens in Asawase;
- Loss of Revenue Amounting to GH¢1,100,272.86 from Reduction of Permit Fees;
- Justification for Increment in the Salaries of Officers in December 2020;
- Achievements in the Past Four Years;
- Forensic Laboratory for the Police;
- Status of Implementation of the Narcotics Control Act (Act 1019)
- Controlling the Country's Entry Points;
- Reposition of NADMO to Deliver on its Mandate;
- Non-Custodial Sentencing and Congestion in Prisons;
- Controlling Online Gambling;
- Increasing Spate of Suicide among Police Officers;
- Extension for Retired Officers;
- Establishment of an Independent Police Complaints Commission;
- Increasing Insecurity in Ghana;
- Southwards Movement of Terrorism;
- Equitable Distribution of Logistics among Security Agencies;
- Illegal possession of Arms;
- Discipline in the Police Service;
- Accommodation for Security Personnel;
- Recruitment into the Security Services; and
- Pension Scheme for Security Service

a. Pension Scheme for Security Services

The nominee in explaining the pension scheme that exists for the security services informed the Committee that, before the passage of Act 766, all security services were under CAP 30. However, following the unification of pensions under the new pension scheme, all the security services except the military were to be migrated to the new scheme. The proposed migration resulted in some form of discontent among officers of other security services. To address these challenges, the government has decided to amend Section 31 of Act 766 to exclude all other security services from migrating to

the new scheme. The implication is that all the security services namely the Ghana Armed Forces, The Police Service, Prisons Service, and Ghana Immigration Service will remain on the existing CAP-30 pension scheme. He informed the Committee that, Cabinet has approved the proposal for amendment to Act 766 which will soon be laid in the House to complete the process.

b. Recruitment into the Security Services

Addressing concerns of Members on why the security services continue to recruit without advertisement in the national dailies and the lack of transparency in the recruitment to the security services in the last three years, the nominee explained that, every person recruited into any of the security services has responded to an advertisement published in 2018. He explained that, during the 2018 recruitment process over 80,000 people applied and it was determined that the number of qualified applicants far exceeded the available vacancies. He indicated that upon thorough deliberations it was decided that the backlog of qualified applicants should be given the opportunity before a new advertisement is made. He said, the cost of application is a burden on the applicants and the only way to ensure that persons interested in security services are not made to pay every year is to create a pool of qualified applicants from which selection is made every year. He was emphatic that following the decision, security services since 2018 continue to recruit from a pool of qualified applicants in the database of the security services

Some Members of the Committee alleged that they have credible evidence of the recruitment of persons who were in school at the time of the advertisement and couldn't have qualified to apply. The Minister-designate denied knowledge of any such recruitment and undertook to investigate the issue if his nomination is approved.

c. Accommodation for Security Personnel

On what he has done to improve the accommodation situation for the security services in fulfillment of his promise during his vetting in 2017, the nominee admitted that the security services faced some challenges of which accommodation is one of them. He indicated that at the time he resumed offices, the security services were confronted with problems of promotion, inequitable salaries, and an improper compensation system for officers who lost their lives in the line of duty among others. He informed the Committee that, to improve the problem of accommodation among the security services

the Ministry commenced the construction of 84 housing units for the Ghana Immigration Service at South Odokor. He admitted that accommodation remains the biggest problem for the security services. To ameliorate the problem cabinet has approved the payment of a 10% housing allowance for officers to reduce the reliance on official bungalows. The overall vision was to provide accommodation in partnership with the private sector. However, at the time, the Ministry of Finance did not have a legal framework to regulate Public-Private Partnership Agreements. He assured the Committee that, the legal framework is now in place and plans are far advanced to commence housing projects for the security services under Public-Private Partnership arrangements.

d. Discipline in the Police Service

The Committee expressed worry on the seeming breakdown of discipline among personnel of the Ghana Police Service with a new crop of uniformed Police Officers keeping long beards, men wearing earing rings, and others with tattoos. The nominee indicated that he had not observed any such trend among police officers. He further indicated that in line with Article 202(2) of the Constitution, operational matters and administration of the police service are matters within the domain of the IGP. He assured the Committee that he has not observed that the physical appearance so described has so affected the professional conduct of the police to the extent that they cannot achieve their goals. He said the police service is more active now but assured the Committee that the matter will be raised with the Police Council and with the IGP to get the issues resolved.

e. Illegal possession of Arms

The Committee noted that about 1.1 million illicit arms are circulating in the country with some 1.2 million registered arms of which only 40 thousand are renewed annually. This combined with our porous borders pose a security risk to the country and wants to know how the Minister-designate intends to control the circulation illicit of arms fueled by the porosity of our borders. The Minister indicated that arms are licensed to enable one to possess arms. He said the Commission on arms and small weapons is working to control the circulation of illicit arms in the country. He assured that it is not an easy task but the Ministry is working to control the circulation of arms.

f. Equitable Distribution of Logistics among Security Agencies

On what he will do to ensure an optimum level of logistics and ensure equitable deployment of equipment and logistics among the securities agencies and locations across the country, the nominee admitted that the last four years have seen improvement in logistical support for all the security agencies. He admitted that though the logistics were not equitably distributed but there was the need to start from the main agency which is the Ghana police. He said in the last four years, over 740 vehicles, ten motorbikes, and helicopters with hangers were procured for the police. The police service also introduced the canine unit with the deployment of dogs to help maintain peace and order. The capacity of the marine police was improved with the provision of boats. The Ghana immigration service was also provided with 100 vehicles. The capacity of the Ghana fire service has been enhanced with new equipment to control fire up to 16 floors. He however admitted that a lot more remains to be done in terms of sufficient logistics to the security services. He also informed the Committee that the Ghana Police has introduced a continuous training and capacity-building scheme for officers to sharpen their ability and skills. Other security services were also provided with logistics to enhance their operations. He informed the Committee that, the program to retool the security service is ongoing and assured the Committee that other security service will get their fair share in the coming year. He laments inadequate funding as the greatest challenge to the retooling agenda and called on Hon. Members to support any plans to increase resource allocation to the security services.

g. Southwards Movement of Terrorism

On what he will do to control the southwards movement of terrorists towards Ghana, the nominee explained that the impact of the southwards movement of a terrorist is already been felt in Ghana as it reflects in the upsurge in crime. He expressed worry over the emergence of cross-border crimes mostly committed by criminals who cross our porous borders to commit a crime. He informed the Committee that officers will be deployed to the various entry points to curb the movement of these criminals. Additionally, the proposed Northern Security program is also aimed at controlling the movement of cross-border criminals and curtail the southwards movement of terrorists towards Ghana. He expressed concern about the use of some 200 illegal entry points in

Ghana and called on Communities and opinion leaders and citizens to co-operate with the security agencies to control movement across the Borders.

On election-related violence and the killing of some 7 civilians during the just ended general elections, the nominee used the opportunity to extend his condolences to the victims and affected families. He assured the Committee that the issue will be investigated and the perpetrators brought to book.

h. Increasing Insecurity in Ghana

Responding to question on the increasing spate of armed robbery and violent crimes in Ghana, the nominee dismissed the claim of increasing insecurity in Ghana. He however admitted that some incidents of robbery and violent crimes had taken place and expressed his condolences to victims and affected families of those crimes. He explained that the Ghana Police Service is well resourced and is determined to fight armed robbery and other violent crimes. He assured the Committee that the security service has put in place measures to control these crimes. He said the perpetrators of some of these heinous crimes have been apprehended by the police. He indicated that the police have put in place arrangements including snap roadblocks, increasing police patrol and visibility along the countries highways, provision of a police escort for high-risk activities among others to ensure the safety and security of every Ghanaian. He explained that the Ghana Police Service is presently understaffed and required an additional 10,000 personnel annually to be able to cope with crime. He stressed the need to continually train and motivate police officers to enable them to fight crime. He assured the Committee that the police have not lost control of the situation.

i. Establishment of an Independent Police Complaints Commission

On whether he agrees with the proponents of the establishment of an independent Police Complaints Commission to improve police accountability, the nominee indicated that he accept the proposal in principle. He explained that police accountability should be viewed in two layers. The first which is internal accountability should give the Police Service the authority to deal with issues of indiscipline and misconduct among officers internally through administrative procedures. The issue of the establishment of an Independent Police Complaints Commission is currently under consideration. He explained that the Ministry is in consultation with stakeholders to resolve issues relating

to the form of the Commission and its legal framework. He assured that the Ministry is committed to increasing police accountability.

j. Contract Extension for Retired Officers

Espousing his views on the legality of given extension and contract to retired officers and how the practice is affecting the career progression and morale among servicing officers, the nominee explained that no police officer has been given contract extension beyond sixty-five (65) year limit set in the Constitution. He explained that contracts are given to officers on retirement as an interim measure and are often limited to appointments. He assured the Committee that granting of the contract does not affect the career progression of serving officers. On why officers on contract continue to be promoted, the nominee indicated that he sees nothing wrong with the practice since it is not prohibited in the Police Service Regulation. He assured the Committee that contract and extensions will be given to retiring officers only when the exigencies of the time require and it will not go beyond the constitutional limit of sixty-five 65 years. He proposed the extension of the retirement age of senior police officers to allow the State benefit for investments made in them.

On delayed promotion in the security services, the nominee explained that the issue of delayed promotion among security services has been addressed. He said there was a presidential directive that the promotion of officers must not be delayed. In compliance with this directive, all officers due for promotion have been promoted across all the security services. He admitted that there might be some isolated cases but when attention is drawn, each case will be considered on its merit.

k. Increasing Spate of Suicide among Police Officers

On what accounted for the increasing spate of suicide among Police Officers, the nominee indicated that the reported incidents of death among police officers attributed to suicide remain mere allegations. He cautioned that the media reports, for now, are mere allegations and investigations are underway to ascertain the cause of death of the officers. The Police service he explained will come out with the actual cause of death when investigations are concluded. Notwithstanding, the Police Service has instituted a counseling unit to provide counseling services to depressed officers. Additionally, plans are far advanced to decentralize religious units in the police service to the regions

and district by posting clergymen and Imam to help provide counseling at the Districts. He also agreed with the suggestion that the Police Service should consider mandatory counseling especially to officers who are nearing retirement to enable them to prepare adequately for life after service. He disclosed that in the interim the psychology Association of Ghana has been contacted to provide counseling services to Police officers.

l. Controlling Online Gambling

On what the Ministry will do to control a surge in online gambling in Ghana, the Minister-designate for Interior lament the proliferation of gambling across the country. He said any effort to control gambling will not be limited to online gambling. He called for swift action to save children especially in rural areas from exposure to gambling through the indiscriminate placing of gambling machines in communities. He assured the Committee that there is an inter-ministerial Committee working on how to deal with the problem. He agreed with the Committee that it might be easier to control online gambling by blocking the gambling sites. But this will require a strong cybersecurity system that currently does not exist among the security services. He indicated that the Police are building capacity to be able to deal with the menace of online gambling. He advocated for the introduction of technology in the police investigation to allow the police to come to speed with the new trend of online gambling. He informed the Committee that, an inter-ministry committee has been formed to come out with solutions for the problem. He assured the Committee that, if his nomination is approved, he will consider legislation to control online gambling.

m. Non-Custodial Sentencing and Congestion in Prisons

Explaining what is delaying the introduction of non-custodial sentencing to decongest the country's prisons, the nominee informed the Committee that, work is currently ongoing on the Non-Custodial Sentencing Bill. He said the implementation of non-custodial sentencing itself cannot decongest the country's prisons. There is a need to reform the entire prison system to make way for the implementation of the program.

On how he intends to improve conditions in the country's prisons, Mr. Derry acknowledged the need to eliminate the dehumanizing conditions that presently exist in the country's prisons. In the interim, while the country awaits financial resources to

expand the prisons, he suggested the granting of amnesty to non-violent prisoners and speed up of work on the non-custodial sentencing Act to help decongest the prisons. The nominee assured the Committee that, if given the nod he will explore a PPP arrangement to expand the prisons and make them more habitable. He also called for speedy adjudication under the justice for all program to help decongest the prisons.

Responding to the content of an investigative documentary by a journalist of the Multi-Media Group Limited highlighting the challenges of food rationing, extreme congestion, and unhygienic conditions in our prisons, the nominee was of the view that nobody deserves to be taken through such conditions. He indicated that he has visited the prisons on several occasions but has never seen that aspect of prison life before. He described the scene as very disturbing and requested for the video to enable him to investigate as the president's representative at the Ministry of the interior. He informed the Committee that the feeding grant per prison remains at GHS1.80 per day but assured that processes have been initiated for an upward review of the feeding grants.

n. Reposition of NADMO to Deliver on its Mandate

On how to reposition the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO) to deliver on its mandate and respond to disaster victims on time, the nominees lament the inadequate funding for the NADMO. He explained that, though there is a dedicated source of funding for the Organisation, resources are not released on time. He informed the Committee that, to avoid overreliance on government subvention, the organization has written a proposal to appeal for support and he was hopeful that the situation of the Organisation will turn around once other funding sources are secured.

o. Controlling the Country's Entry Points

Mr. Derry expressing his views on how best the entry points to Ghana could be controlled assured the Committee that the Ghana Immigration Service is working in collaboration with other security agencies to secure the country's entry points to prevent the illegal movement of goods and people to protect the country from the danger of COVID-19 and other contraband goods. He is confident that with the Authority given to Immigration Service to use arms, they will be more effective in their mandate. He called for the deployment of technology to control the country's entry points.

p. Status of Implementation of the Narcotics Control Act (Act 1019)

Responding to a question on the status of implementation of Act 1019 the Minister-Designate informed the Committee that a working committee has been put in place to develop the required Regulations to operationalise provisions in the Act. He used the opportunity to dispel misinformation that Act 1019 seeks to legalize the use of marijuana for medicinal purposes. He explained that the Act among others seeks to identify an issue related to the abuse of marijuana and the health associated conditions as medical issues. The Act also provides for alternative livelihood schemes for people who make living from the cultivation of marijuana.

q. Forensic Laboratory for the Police

In a response to a question on whether the Ghana Police Service has a modern forensic laboratory for processing crime, the nominee indicated that presently there is no such lab. He explained that Forensic Laboratory is provided for in the Narcotic Control Act. When this lab is established, it will help the Police in processing crimes He explained that in the absence of the Laboratory, the police rely on mobile labs for processing crime scenes. He said there is a general programme to retool and reequip the Police Service and with the continuous investment the capacity of the police will be enhanced.

r. Achievements in the Past Four Years

Outlining some of the major achievements of the Ministry of the Interior in the last four years, the nominee touted the General transformation in the police Service relating to the provision of equipment and logistics, training for officers, and the improvement in the welfare of security services as the major achievement in the past four years. He indicated that, following rationalisation of the salary of the Army, the salaries of other security services were also adjusted to be at par with what pertains in the military.

s. Justification for Increment in Salaries of Officers in December 2020

The nominee denied the suggestion that the salary increment approved for the security services in December 2020 was intended to induce them before the general elections. He explained that there was a salary rationalisation in the military which disadvantaged

officers of other security services. Consequently, there were some agitations which were resolved by a one-time payment of allowance to men and women of other security services. He informed the Committee that to address the issue permanently, a new salary scheme was introduced to take effect from 2021, as such the arrears for the year in question were paid pending the commencement of the new salary scheme. Additionally, approval was also given for the payment of a 10% housing allowance to all officers. These two allowances resulted in a substantial increase in the take-home pay of the officers in December 2020. He was emphatic that, the increment observed by the officers was a one-off payment of an accumulated allowance for 2020.

t. Status of Investigation into the Assassination of Investigative Journalist Ahmed Suale

Explaining the status of the investigation into the assassination of Investigative Journalism, Ahmed Suale, the Minister-Designate indicated that, the fact that people don't get to hear about the case on daily basis does not mean the case has gone cold. He assured that the police have made significant progress and the perpetrators will soon be brought to justice.

On the murders of the Late J. B. Danqua, he indicated that the CID is collaborating with the Attorney Generals Department to find justice for the deceased MP and his family. He assured that the security of every Ghanaian is of paramount importance to the security services just as justice for Ahmed Suale and J. B. Danqua.

u. Loss of Revenue Amounting to GH¢1,100,272.86 from Reduction of Permit Fees

The Committee noted that the Auditor-General's report on MDAs for 2019 indicted the Ministry of the interior for reducing permit fees for three companies namely ABY Mining Service, AKY Mining Services Limited, and Maxim Ghana Limited from a statutory rate of 7% to 5% resulting in the loss of GH¢1,100,272.86 without the approval of Parliament to the state. The Minister-designate who was Minister responsible at the time denied approving any reduction in permit fees to the three companies. He assured the Committee that, if given the nod he will take steps to retrieve the sum of revenue lost from the three companies involved.

v. The killing of Innocent Citizens in Asawase

Briefing the Committee on the outcome of investigations into the killing of innocent citizens in Asawase by the Ghana Police Service, the nominee informed the Committee that investigations conducted into the matter established that the killings were cases of mistaken identity. He explained that, following the incident, a committee was constituted to investigate the killings. The terms of reference of the investigative Committee were in three folds namely;

- I. To investigate the allegation that the victims were criminals;
- II. Determine appropriate compensation to the victims if they are not criminals;
and
- III. Prosecution of officers concerned.

He indicated that upon the conclusion of investigations, it was determined that the victims were not criminals. Appropriate compensations were paid. What is left is the prosecution of the officers involved. He indicated that the docket is currently at the Attorney-General's Department. He assured the Committee that officers found to have misconducted themselves will be dealt with in accordance with the law and justice will be done for the victims and their families.

w. The outcome of Alleged Sexual Misconduct of Police Officers in Peace Keeping

Mission Responding to a question on the outcome of the investigation into alleged sexual misconduct by Ghanaian peacekeepers on UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) which resulted in the repatriated of a group of 46 Ghanaian peacekeepers for sexual exploitation in South Sudan, the minister-designate indicated that the issue remains an allegation and has not been substantiated. He said, upon the reports, the Ministry commissioned its investigation into the matters. Several letters were issued to the United Nation to present evidence and witnesses to aid investigations but none was responded to. He assured the Committee that the incident did not erode confidence in peacekeepers from Ghana as the UN continues to use Ghanaian peacekeepers in its missions. He informed the Committee that, in response to the allegations, the Ghana Police Code of Conduct was amended to include issues of sexual misconduct. He assured the Committee that any police officer who misconducts himself will be dealt with in accordance with the law.

x. Construction of Hospital in Nsawam Prison

The nominee admitted that there was a manifesto promise to construct a hospital in Nsawam Prison to cater to the healthcare needs of the inmates but that was not implemented due to the unavailability of funds. He assured the Committee that the construction of a Hospital will be considered as part of a general program to reform the prisons.

On whether he will consider the introduction of academic programs into prisons to ensure inmates are properly reformed, the nominee applauded the innovation at the Nsawam prison and asked that the system should be built upon to cover many inmates.

y. Anti-Robbery Unit of Ghana Police Service

Explaining why the anti-robbery unit of the Ghana Police Service is not in uniforms yet they are heavily armed making it difficult for the citizens to identify them as law enforcement officers, the nominee indicated that police officers are supposed to be in their uniforms to be identified as officers of the law. He denied knowledge of an armed unit in the police service in plain clothes and described the situation as unacceptable and out of place. He assured the Committee that if his nomination is approved, he will engage the Police Service to correct the anomaly.

A1 Transportation of NPP Supporters in Police Vehicles

Asked if he is aware of the status of the investigation promised by the IGP into a Police vehicle with registration number GP 3852 conveying NPP party faithful during the voter registration exercise in 2020, the nominee said the issue has not come to his notice. He promised to take steps to get the status from the IGP Investigate.

A2 Presence of Police Officers in the Chamber of Parliament

Justifying why there was a heavily armed police detachment to Parliament on the 7th of January, 2021, the nominee explained that the Police have a duty to take necessary steps to protect life and property if they feel the peace of the state is been breached or a crime is to be committed. He was of the view that the events of 7th January, 2021 require police intervention to restore calm and peace. He however denied knowledge of who authorised the invasion of the Chamber. When reminded that by the Standing Orders

of the House it is only the Marshal that can call for additional support and reinforcement, he indicated that there is a police detachment to Parliament and he suspects the reinforcement might have come from them. He is however open to investigation to determine who authorised armed police into the Chamber of Parliament on 7th of January 2021 in breach of Parliamentary rules. He assured the Committee that the issue will be investigated to determine who authorized the Police into the Chamber of the House.

A3 Perceived Police Brutalities

Addressing concerns of Members on the increasing incident of Police brutality in the process of arrest and interrogation, the Minister-Designate assured that when given the nod he will take steps to ensure that police officers, do not brutalise civilians in the process of arrest. He argued that though the law allows the police to use reasonable force, the use of reasonable force is only applied if a person is resisting arrest. Even in such a situation, reasonable force must be applied with extreme circumspection so as not to violate the rights of suspects. He also committed to ensuring that the rights of citizens are not abused by detaining them above the constitutional limit of 48 hours, including weekends and holidays.

A4 Implementation of Vigilante Act

On whether any person has so far been prosecuted under the vigilante Act, the nominee observed that in the last elections, the activities of vigilantes were virtually non-existent. He indicated that since the passage of the Act many political thugs have been arrested. He assured the Committee that if given the nod, he will take steps to contain political thuggery and vigilantism in the political space.

A5 Expansion and completion of Police Hospital

Explaining why construction work stalled at the ongoing expansion work at the Police Hospital, the nominee explained that the project commenced in 2003 at £21.2 million. Later an investigation and value for money audit were instituted which delayed work on the project. As a result of the delays, by 2019, the project cost increased to £54 million. Work is currently about 60% complete and the contractor is in the process of

securing additional funds to complete the project. He assured the Committee that, if his nomination is approved, he will treat the project as a priority one and get it completed.

A6 Excessive Military Presence in Civilian Areas

Addressing the concerns of the Committee on the excessive military presence in civilian areas, the Interior Minister-nominee, Ambrose Dery said the police are now largely capable of operating without army support. He explained that the police needed the army from time to time to deal with urgent issues of national security concern which has led to joint operations. He cited the military support in dealing with Fulani herdsmen tensions in areas like Agogo and the policing of illegal mining as areas where the police and military collaborated in law enforcement. Mr. Dery indicated that as the capacity of the police is built, they will gradually be phasing out the army in internal security operations. The nominee assured that police have always been the lead agency when it comes to internal security. He however admitted that there are some capacity challenges the police needed to address to enable them to be self-sufficient in maintaining internal security. He indicated that if the police are adequately motivated and resourced they do not need the army.

The nominee also agreed that soldiers should go back and play their traditional role and be less involved in internal security matters.

Recommendations

The Committee, *by Consensus*, recommends to the House to approve the nomination of Hon. Ambrose Dery for appointment as Minister for Interior.

4.9.1 Background

Hon. Ignatius Baffour-Awuah was born on 24th August 1966 at Nsoatre in the Bono Region. He had his primary education at the Saint Patrick Primary/Middle School from 1973 to 1981 and entered Sunyani Secondary School where he obtained his GCE Ordinary Level Certificate (1983-1985). He proceeded to the St. Hubert Seminary, Kumasi for his GCE A Level from 1986 to 1988.

Hon. Baffour-Awuah again attended the University of Ghana Business School and was awarded Bsc. Business Administration (Accounting Option) (1989-1992). He also studied at the Galilee College, Israel in 2002. He further obtained a Post-Graduate Diploma in Management from the International Professional Managers Association, London in 2004.

The nominee taught at the Chiraa Secondary School between 1988 and 1989 for his National Service. He worked at European Union Micro Project, Atebubu as Accountant (1993-1994) and later at the Nsoatreman Rural Bank Limited as Manager Trainee (1995-1996) and later as Operations Manager of the same Bank (1996-2001).

Hon. Baffour-Awuah was appointed the Chief Executive of the Sunyani Municipal Assembly between 2001 and 2005. In 2006, he was appointed Deputy Regional Minister for the Brong Ahafo Region and later elevated to the position of Regional Minister, a position he held till 2009.

Hon. Baffour-Awuah is the Member of Parliament for the Sunyani West Constituency and has represented the Constitution since 2009. He was the Minister for Employment and Labour Relations from January 2017 to January 2021.

4.9.2 Response to Questions

Hon. Baffour Awuah touched on the following issues when he attended upon the Committee:

- Perceived Partisan Recruitment in NABCO;
- Total Number of Jobs Created Government;
- The exploitation of Casual Workers;
- The difficulty at unionising at Gold Field Ghana Ltd;
- Inclusion of other security agencies in the CAP30 Pension Scheme;
- Child Labour situation in Ghana;
- Status of implementation of the Unemployment Insurance Scheme;
- Migration of Ghanaian Workers;
- The relevance of Public Employment Centres;
- Extension of the Ghana Labour Market Information System to all regions (GLMIS);
- The Impact of National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Plan (NEIP);
- The threat to Industrial Peace;
- The State of Cooperatives in Ghana;
- Discrimination in Public Agency; and
- Working Mothers

a. **Partisan Recruitment into NABCO**

Responding to a question on the perceived partisan recruitment into NABCO, the nominee stated that though NABCO is about employment, in terms of policy matters, NABCO does not fall under his mandate. According to the nominee, every Ghanaian has the right to work as long as that person qualifies to be employed. And that the government desiring to improve the wellbeing of all Ghanaians, irrespective of the individual's party affiliation will employ people base on their qualifications and vacancies available. Furthermore, the nominee indicated that the majority of the recruitment for jobs under NABCO takes place at the districts, Municipal and Metropolitan Assembly level through public advertisements. The nominee, therefore wondered how anybody could be identified by his/her political colours.

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Hon. Baffour Awuah entreated all Ghanaians to draw the attention of the authorities, if such abuses occur, for swift remedial action to be taken.

b. Total Number of Jobs Created by Government

In an answer to a question regarding the number of jobs created by the end of 2020, the nominee informed the Committee that as of September 2020, the government under His Excellency the President of the Republic of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo Addo, has created approximately Three Million jobs in the country. He indicated that the stated figures were given to Parliament on several occasions. The nominee promised to furnish the Committee with detailed records on the jobs created in both public and private sector during the last four years. The documents have since been made available to the Committee. The nominee also indicated his preparedness to provide a detailed briefing on the distribution of jobs created both under the public and private sectors.

c. The Exploitation of Casual Workers

The nominee, in a response to a question on the measures the Ministry has instituted to ensure adherence to Labour Act, 2003, (Act 651) especially issues relating to the right and protection of Casual workers, indicated that the Ministry had always ensured that casual workers are not paid less than the minimum wage.

The Nominee explained that though the engagement of casual workers for less than six months may not seem morally right, it does not offend the law. What therefore needed to be done is to ensure that the worker is not disadvantaged in terms of compensation and accrued rights and benefits.

The nominee added that luckily some weaknesses in the Act have been identified and the Ministry is working closely with Development Partners and stakeholders to ensure that those sections are amended.

d. Difficulty in Unionising at Gold Fields Ghana Ltd.

On whether he was aware of some challenges between management and employees at the Gold Fields Ghana Ltd over the later inability to form a labour union at the workplace, the nominee responded in the affirmative. The nominee informed the Committee that his preliminary assessment pointed to the policy of redundancy within the operations of the company. He further indicated that he had engaged all concerned

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parties to have discussions to resolve the impasse for peace and tranquility to prevail. The nominee assured the Committee of his commitment and readiness to revisit the issue, should he be given the nod.

e. Inclusion of other security agencies in the CAP30 Pension Scheme

The nominee confirmed that Cabinet has approved the proposal to include the other Security Agencies into the CAP 30 Pension Scheme. The nominee added the process had begun and the Ministry is currently working with the Ministries of Interior, Defense and the Justice and Attorney-General to give effect to the Cabinet decision.

f. Child Labour situation Ghana

According to the nominee, three different surveys have been conducted by the United States Department cited the existence of child labour in Ghana and the Cote D'Ivoire cocoa industry. And due to the serious implication of such a practice to the future marketing of Ghana's cocoa in the international market, the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations is collaborating with stakeholders and development partners to take all necessary measures to curb the practice. Thus, the labour market is constantly monitored to ensure that children are protected from engaging in hazardous labour.

g. Status of implementation of the Unemployment Insurance Scheme

In an answer to a question on the status of the unemployment insurance scheme announced by the Minister of Finance as part of Covid-19 measures, the nominee informed the Committee that, the government has identified an insurance scheme and would-be committing resources to it so that in the unlikely event that there is an outbreak of any pandemic such as COVID, people who become unemployed could be assisted. He stated that, currently, a technical committee comprising the tripartite has been set up and the government had set aside seed money of fifty million Ghana Cedis (GHc50,000,000.00) to start the Scheme.

h. Migration of Ghanaian Workers

Regarding the status of the irregular migration of Ghanaians to the Gulf States, the nominee informed the Committee that migration has been a natural phenomenon in the history of mankind. But following the continuous report of abuse of the fundamental human rights of persons who seek employment in the Gulf States, the government placed a temporary ban on the movement of domestic workers to the Gulf States. He

stated that the government has developed a bilateral agreement and approved legislation on domestic workers to serve as a benchmark in negotiating with recipient countries.

The nominee indicated that in addition to regularisation, the Ministry has put in place a mechanism for the would-be-migrants to undergo training before departing from Ghana. He further informed the Committee that a memo has been sent to Cabinet for the ban to be lifted and was hopeful, Cabinet would approve the request.

i. The Relevance of Public Employment Centres

Honourable Ignatius Baffour Awuah responding to a question on the relevance of public employment centres informed the Committee that over the years, the Labour Department has been the main actor in the area of employment opportunities. However, the labour system was labourite as a result of Act 651 which enables the private sector a licence to play similar roles. The public employment centres, therefore, became redundant. However, given the relevance that the Labour Department in the area of providing an interface between job seekers and employers, the Ministry collaborated with development partners and renovated eight of the centres and also in the process of adding another twenty across the country. According to the nominee, the Ministry has expected to have covered the entire country but is currently limited because of financial constraint.

The nominee further stated that the Ministry plans to roll out a working system where one can log information on a web for job seeking. The web will also serve as a marketplace where job owners can meet with job seekers to share ideas on the labour requirement and the type of skills to train to make it relevant to meet the needs of the labour market.

j. Extension of the Ghana Labour Market Information System to all regions (GLMIS)

Answering a question on the Ministry's plans to extend the Ghana Labour Market Information System to the entire country, the nominee indicated that it is one of the Ministry's priorities to extend the system to cover all the 16 regions across the country. He, however, stated that the only challenge confronting the Ministry's ability in this regard is inadequate funds. To overcome this challenge, the nominee, informed the

Committee of the Ministry's determination to work with Development Partners and other stakeholders to establish the information system in the remaining regions.

k. The Impact of National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Plan (NEIP) on Job Creation

Commenting on how the National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme has helped create jobs in the private sector, Hon Ignatius Baffour Awuah indicated that the NEIP has empowered young individuals to be registered as entrepreneurs. Juxtaposing it with the public sector, the nominee informed the Committee that for the country's working population, the informal sectors have provided close to about 85% of employment. The nominee further expressed his appreciation for the impact the NEIP programme has provided for the country, and therefore encourages the youth to take advantage of this programme to be employers rather than employees.

l. The threat to Industrial Peace

In response to a question on whether there is a threat to the industrial peace in the country, the nominee informed the Committee that the re-emergence of the novel coronavirus pandemic is emphatically a threat to industrial peace. He stated that the unfortunate situation might make the industrial harmony worst off since some employers, especially, in the private sector, might end up cutting off the salaries of some workers and/or laying some off. The nominee feared that the persistent upsurge of the Covid-19 pandemic may adversely affect the bottom line of most companies with its attendant problem of worsened plight of the worker. The nominee hoped for an immediate cure to maintain industrial harmony.

m. The State of Cooperatives in Ghana

The nominee admitted that laws that govern the Cooperatives in Ghana are outmoded and are not able to meet the demands of contemporary times. He informed the Committee that his outfit has reviewed the existing laws on Cooperatives, and forthwith when given the nod, he would present the proposal to Parliament for approval.

n. Discrimination in Public Institutions

Commenting on the perceived discrimination or protocol in the recruitment of persons into the public agencies, the nominee indicated that the fact remained that employment opportunities in the public sectors are stretched and limited. Hence, the perceived discrimination and held the view that to solve this problem there would be the need to create the enabling environment for the private sector to expand to absorb the excesses from the public sector. The nominee further indicated that the current usage of digital space in public business has contributed immensely towards the fight of eliminating the practice of discrimination in the public sector. According to the nominee, it would be expedient to invest in Information Technology (IT) in respect of recruitment processes to minimise the issue of perceived discrimination regarding recruitment in the public agencies.

o. Working Mothers

In an answer to a question regarding the government's commitment to increase maternity leave from the current 12 to 14 weeks as required by the ILO Convention on maternity leave, the nominee indicated that the Ministry is in consultation with the tripartite committee to come up with a holistic plan to improve the condition of the working mother. He assured the Committee that the outcome of the tripartite Committee would be in line with the Constitution of the country.

p. Ratification of Placement on Domestic Workers (ILO 189)

Hon Ignatius Baffour Awuah responding to a question on the ratification and placement of domestic workers in respect of the International Labour Organization (ILO) 189 convention, the nominee informed the Committee that ratification is a process and as part of the efforts of the government, is to amend some portion of the law on domestic workers before proceeding to Parliament for ratification. The nominee further informed the Committee that since the legislation takes more precedent than the ratification, there would not be any need to ratify the ILO 189 convention when the nation has no law to regulate its internal activity.

4.10.2 Interaction with Nominees

The nominee responded to several questions, notable among them are:

- Measures to reduce the incidence of Human Trafficking;
- Increasing street hawking phenomenon;
- Challenges associated with the implementation of the School Feeding Programme;
- Continuous operation of Witches 'Camps in the country;
- The emerging practice of surrogacy in the country;
- Regulating the Establishment and Management of Orphanages;
- Nominee's Expectations at the end of her tenure;
- Expanding on the Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty (LEAP) Programme;
- Support to Victims of Domestic Violence;
- Passage of critical Gender-based Bills;
- Views on Lesbians, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Groups in the country;
- Addressing the Kayayei Phenomenon;
- Passage of Aged Bill; and
- Improving the Procurement Regime of the Country

a. Measures to reduce Human Trafficking

The Hon. Nominee acknowledged that the trafficking of citizens, especially, the young girls abroad is a matter of concern to all, particularly, the Government. She said it was unfortunate the situation is still on the rise despite efforts by successive Governments to address the challenge. The nominee indicated that the adoption of policy and legislative frameworks such as the Human trafficking Act, 2005 (Act 694) and Human Trafficking Prohibition (Protection and Reintegration of Trafficked Persons) Regulation, 2015 L.I. 2216. Are all measures put in place to help curb the menace. The nominee stated these young girls go through harsh and humiliating conditions and agreed that it was time the country took decisive steps to bring the situation to a minimal level. She assured the Committee of engaging the human trafficking department of the Ministry of Gender and Social Protection and other stakeholders to identify the lacuna in the current policy frameworks to fashion out sustainable policies to address it.

Recommendations

The Committee, *by Consensus*, recommends to the House to approve the nomination of Hon. Ignatius Baffour Awuah for appointment as Minister for Employment and Labour Relations.

4.10 HON. SARAH ADWOA SAFO - MINISTER DESIGNATE FOR
GENDER, CHILDREN &
SOCIAL
PROTECTION

4.10.1 Background

Hon. Sarah Adwoa Safo was born in Accra on 28th December 1981. She was home schooled during her primary education and obtained her GCE 'O' (1996) and 'A' Level (1998) Certificates as a private candidate. She attended Alliance Francaise from January to July 1999 and obtained a Certificate in French. She enrolled at the University of Ghana, Legon in 1999 and was awarded an LLB in 2002. She subsequently enrolled at the Ghana School of Law in 2002 and was awarded Professional Law Certificate in 2004. She was called to the Ghana Bar the same year.

Hon. Adwoa Safo attended the George Washington University Law School, USA and obtained an LLM in Government Procurement Law in 2005. She also attended the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, USA and was awarded Certificates in Public Financial Management, Senior Executive in National and International Security and Senior Managers in Government, among others.

Hon. Adwoa Safo worked at the Legal Aid Board from 2004 to 2005 for her National Service. From 2006 to 2008 she worked as the First Legal Officer at the Public Procurement Authority. She is the Legal Advisor at the Kristo Asafo Mission and the head of Chambers of Safo & Marfo at Law, Aduana Chambers. She is currently the Member of Parliament for Dome Kwabenya Constituency. She was the Deputy Majority Leader of the Seventh Parliament.

b. Increasing Street Hawking Phenomenon

The Hon. Nominee bemoaned the upsurge in street hawking in the country, especially, young children at the expense of their education. The nominee added the activity puts most of the hawkers in harm's way with little protection. When given the nod by the House, the nominee indicated her preparedness to liaise with the appropriate stakeholders including the Committee on Gender and Children of Parliament to come up with sustainable solutions to curb the problem. Specific measures targeted at the children at school-going- age would also be vigorously pursued. The nominee further indicated her intention of collaborating with the Ministry of Labour and Employment to explore the possibility of providing alternative job opportunities for the hawkers.

c. Challenges associated with the implementation of the School Feeding Programme

The Hon. Nominee acknowledged that despite the implementation challenges confronting the school feeding programme, the programme remains one of the critical social interventions that require the support of all. The nominee said the introduction of the programme among others, has helped to achieve important educational outcomes like improvement in pupils' enrolment and cognitive ability of pupils at the basic schools' level. The nominee, however, held the view that the politicisation of the programme was one of the challenges affecting the smooth implementation of the programme and urged Ghanaians to desist from it. She pledged to work with the Ministry of Finance to pay the caterers and also expand the programme when her nomination is approved by the House.

d. Continuous operation of "Witches Camps: in the country

The nominee considered regrettable the establishment and operation of "witches' camps and the dehumanising conditions at the camps in some parts of the country. She told the Committee that information on the subject revealed that out of six hundred (600) inmates of the Gambaga "Witches Camp", only one inmate was ready to be resettled, a situation which portrayed the complex nature of the problem. She said, if her nomination is approved, she would visit and engage the inmates of the camps as well as the traditional authorities within the catchment area of the camps to obtain first-hand information on the situation to find a more sustainable solution. She proposed the possibility of rebranding and provision of some basic social infrastructure and protection to the inmates.

e. The emerging practice of surrogacy in the country

On what her views were on the practice of surrogacy in the country, the Hon, nominee disclosed that it was an advanced scientific method of assisting women to have children with the support of other women. She said the practice is well regulated in advanced countries where the practice is prevalent. She added that there is the need for the country to take urgent steps to institute regulatory measures to safeguard the rights of people involved and also for the practice to measure up to high international standards since according to media reports, some Ghanaians have begun indulging in the practice.

f. Regulating the Establishment and Management of Orphanages

When asked about how she intends to improve the regulatory environment for the establishment and management of orphanages in the country, the Hon Nominee lauded the role orphanages have played in protecting and keeping children out of the streets as well as providing homes for these children. She agreed to the suggestion that lapses exist in current legislative frameworks and pledged to review the existing legal regime governing orphanages and map out strategies to improve their operations to match up with contemporary demands of managing orphanages.

g. Nominee's Expectations at the end of her tenure

Relating to what she expects to be remembered for at the end of her tenure as a Minister for Gender and Social Protection, the Nominee said she would want to leave a legacy similar to great women in the Holy Bible which God used as a tool to impact humanity. She expects to impact the lives of the vulnerable in society through her policies and actions.

h. Expanding on the Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty (LEAP) Programme

The Hon. Nominee noted that Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty (LEAP) Programme was a useful social protection programme through which Government is supporting people living on extreme poverty and, therefore, must be maintained and expanded. On strategies to expand on the programme, the Hon. Nominee promised to advocate for more budgetary resources from the Ministry of Finance to support the expansion of the programme. She also expressed her intention to work with Ghana National Housing Registry under the Ministry of Gender and Social Protection to identify citizens who are living in extreme poverty for support under the programme.

She further proposed the deployment of digital technology to improve the method of identification and payment to beneficiaries of the programme. To this end, she pledged to work closely with the Ministry of Communications and Digitalisation to achieve this objective, if given the nod.

i. Support to Victims of Domestic Violence

The Hon. Nominee admitted that despite the legislative framework provided through the passage of the Domestic Violence Act, 2007 (Act, 732) and amendments to the Criminal Code of the country, certain institutional structures continue to undermine the support offered to victims of rape and defilement. She disclosed that victims do not oftentimes access the supports available to them because of the perceived cumbersome or insecure nature of procedures outlined for such supports. This reason among others, the nominee intimated, accounts for why victims, for instance, fail to seek medical refund after undergoing medical treatment. She said she would collaborate with the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service and other stakeholders to assess the situation and design appropriate solutions to improve upon the supports offered to the victims and to deal with issues of the trauma they suffer from.

j. Passage of critical Gender-based Bills

The Hon. Nominee shared in the concern that gender-based bills such as the Affirmative Action Bill and the Property Rights of Spouses Bill have been on the drawing board for over a decade without passage into law to assert the rights of young girls and women. She recalled that the Bills were once introduced into the House for consideration and passage into law but could not be done due to some issues surrounding certain provisions in the Bill. According to her, the absence of the Affirmative Action law, for instance, continues to impact negatively on the representation of women in decision-making bodies of the country. She pledged to resolve the issues surrounding the Bills through stakeholder engagements and bring them back to the House for possible passage into law if given the nod.

k. Views on Lesbians, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Groups in the country

On her views about the practice of lesbianism and gayism as well as bisexual and transgender activities in the country, the Hon. Nominee stated that they are matters that

arouse emotions and would not be countenanced. She explained that the country's jurisprudence frowns on the practice and is deemed as criminal acts under Section 104 of the Criminal Code of 1960. Besides, the practice runs counter to societal and cultural norms of the country and a large extent the African continent.

l. Addressing the Kayayei Phenomenon

The Hon. Nominee observed that the kayayei phenomenon was a complex issue that requires a multifaceted approach to tackle. In this regard, a more comprehensive solution is needed to resolve it rather than simply outlawing it due to the inherent dehumanising nature of the trade. While admitting that the phenomenon is hazardous to the young girls and women who ply the trade, she pledged to engage the stakeholders and further study previous works done in the area to determine more sustainable livelihood for the young girls and women who engaged in it, if her nomination is approved by the House.

m. Passage of Aged Bill

The Hon. Nominee shared in the concern that the passage of an Aged Bill to provide the requisite policy and regulatory framework to support efforts to address the needs of the aged in society was long overdue. She observed that many of the social concerns such as medical care and housing needs remain unattended due to the absence of a legislative framework for the aged. The Hon. Nominee assured the Committee of ensuring that the Aged Bill is laid before the House for passage into law if her nomination received approval from the House.

n. Improving the Procurement Regime of the Country

Commenting on measures to employ to improve the existing procurement regime as part of efforts to reduce corruption, the Hon. Nominee suggested that procurement management must be given a new outlook by making institutional roles distinct and not subsumed under functions or mandates of different agencies of State which are themselves procurement entities.

The nominee advocated for the carving out of the procurement functions from the function of the Ministry of Finance and assigning them to a separate institution. She explained the current arrangement whereby the Ministry of Finance which is a

procurement entity has a supervisory role over the procurement regulatory authority does not augur well for effective oversight of the sector.

Recommendations

The Committee, *by Consensus*, recommends to the House to approve the nomination of Hon. Sarah Adwoa Safo for appointment as Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection.

4.11 HON. (DR.) OWUSU AFRIYIE AKOTO - MINISTER-DESIGNATE FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

4.11.1 Background

Hon. Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto was born on 19th October, 1949 in Kumasi in the Ashanti region of Ghana. He comes from Koforidua in the Eastern region of Ghana.

Hon. Akoto attended Opoku Ware School, Kumasi for his 'O' and 'A' Levels education in 1963 and 1969 respectively. He progressed to the University of Ghana to pursue a Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture from 1969 to 1973. In 1974, Hon. Akoto was awarded the prestigious Commonwealth Scholarship for his Master of Science Degree in Agricultural Economics at the University of Cambridge which he duly completed in 1976. He later obtained his Doctor of Philosophy from the same university between 1981 and 1985.

Hon. Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto worked as an Agriculture Economist (Pioneer National Service) at the Ministry of Agriculture (1973 - 1974) and as an Economist at International Coffee Organization (ICO) in London, England (1977 - 1981). He was then promoted to the position of Senior Economist at ICO in London, England (1981 - 1987). He further worked as the Principal Economist at ICO (1987 - 1991) and went on to become the Chief Economic Advisor at ICO in London, England (1991 - 1993). Hon. Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto has experience in consultancy and has worked as a consultant to the World Bank, UN, on Soft Commodities (Cocoa, Coffee, and Sugar). He was the

Chief Executive Officer at Goldcrest Commodities Ltd, Ghana (1995 - 1998) and the Chief Executive Officer at Plantain Resources Ltd, Ghana (1998 - 2008). He served as the Member of Parliament for Kwadaso and Deputy Ranking Member: Committee on Food, Agriculture and Cocoa Affairs (2009 - 2012). He also served as the Member of Parliament for Kwadaso and Ranking Member: Committee on Food, Agriculture and Cocoa Affairs (2013 – January, 2017). He was the Minister for Food and Agriculture from January 2017 to January 2021.

Hon. Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto was the Chairman of the Opoku Ware School Old Students Association, UK Branch (1985 - 1991). He was also the Acting General Secretary of the United Kingdom and Ireland Branch of the New Patriotic Party. He has been the Chairman of the Manifesto Committee of the New Patriotic Party (2007 – 2008). He has also been the New Patriotic Spokesperson on Food, Agriculture and Cocoa Affairs. He also served as the Chairman of the New Patriotic Party Committee on Agriculture (2016).

4.11.2 RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

Most of the questions the Minister-Designate responded to bordered on his stewardship as a former Minister and his vision for the Ministry. Specific questions he responded to include:

- State of Food Security in Ghana;
- Contribution of Agriculture to Ghana's Gross Domestic Product (GDP);
- Supply of Implements to support Rice Production;
- Market price of Plantain;
- Concession Agreement between Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA) and Food Export Ltd.;
- Cocoa Marketing Company Board;
- Loan for Agricultural Mechanisation;
- Indebtedness of COCOBOD to Licensed Cocoa Buying Companies (LBCs);
- Coffee Development;
- Composition of the Board of Ghana Incentive-Based Risk Sharing System for
- Agricultural Lenders (GIBRSSAL);

- Audit of Cocoa Road;
- Number of Jobs Created Under Planting for Food and Jobs;
- Middle Level Employment under Planting for Food and Jobs;
- Scaling Up Rearing for Food and Jobs Program;
- The Glut of Tomatoes in Bono Region;
- Adoption of Technology to Support the Production of Disease Free and Disease Resistant Planting Materials;
- Smuggling of Subsidised Fertilizer;
- Production of Ornamentals;
- Decline in Cocoa Production in Western North Region;
- Benefits of Ghana Cote D'Ivoire Collaboration on Sustainable Cocoa Initiative;
- Difference between Planting for Food and Jobs and Other Agricultural Support Initiatives;
- Interventions for Rice Cultivation at Fumbisi;
- Differences between Earning from Tree Crop between Ghana and Cote D'Ivoire;
- Supply of Cocoa Product by the Ghana Buffer Stock for Secondary Schools;
- Support for Local Seed Production;
- Procurement of Fertilizer and Chemicals;
- Uncompetitive Poultry Sector;
- Increase in the Volume of Cocoa Production;
- Strategy for Self Sufficiency in Rice Production;
- Outstanding Debt under Planting for Food and Jobs;
- Shortage of Tractors to Support Farming;
- Promotion of Non-Traditional Export;
- Control of Fall Army Worms;
- Agricultural Insurance; and
- Promoting School Farms

a. State of Food Security in Ghana

Commenting on the state of food security in Ghana, the nominee assured the Committee that there is food security in Ghana and stressed that Ghana had never experienced the level of food security that presently is being witnessed. The nominee

emphasised that food is abundant in all parts of the country at relatively cheap prices and though we are in the lean/dry season where traditionally food prices would have been high, prices of many staple foods are relatively low compared to the previous years.

Buttressing his assertion, Dr. Afriyie Akoto indicated that the data on food production levels is a sufficient testament that there is food security in Ghana. He added that before the assumption of office in 2017, the highest production of maize recorded in the history of Ghana was 1.8 million metric tonnes recorded in 2016. Through prudent policies, maize production has seen a consistent increase since 2016 recording 2 million metric tonnes in 2017, 2.3 million metric tonnes in 2018, 2.9 million metric tonnes in 2019. However, in 2020, due to the effect of drought in the southern part of Ghana during the main crop season, maize production is projected to decline to 1.9 million metric tonnes as against the end-of-year projected figure of 2.3 million metric tonnes.

On the price indicator of food security, the nominee, quoting from the average trend in monthly wholesale prices in the major market across the country indicated that maize prices are relatively low. He said a 100 kg bag of maize is selling on an average of GH¢172.39 presently. The same quantity was sold for GH¢92.96 in 2017, GH¢133.35 in 2018, and GH¢127.62 in 2019. The nominee, however, disagreed with the suggestion that the upward movements of the prices meant food insecurity. The nominee explained that the prices so mentioned are nominal prices and to determine the real prices, one needs to take into account the inflationary effects on the prices.

Asked whether he knows the price of a ball of kenkey, the nominee indicated that the Ministry of Food and Agriculture is not the agency responsible for tracking prices of cooked foods in the Market.

b. Contribution of Agriculture to Ghana's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Touching on the contribution of agriculture to the nation's GDP, the nominee indicated that, as of 2019 the contribution of agriculture to Ghana's GDP stood at 19%. He explained that the contribution of agriculture to GDP has declined from 50% of GDP two decades ago to the present level. The nominee, however, added that the

downward trend may not necessarily be as a result of the poor performance of the sector but also as a result of the expansion of the economy. The nominee further explained that as the economy advances, other sectors namely industry and Service sectors naturally expand thereby shrinking the contribution of the agriculture sector. He alerted that the share of agriculture as a percentage of GDP will continue to decline further as other sectors namely, industry, mining, tourism, banking, and other services continue to expand. These trends he indicated are characteristics of every developing economy and are not unique to only Ghana.

c. Supply of Implements to support Rice Production

On what policy measures being implemented to make farm implement available to support rice production in northern Ghana, the nominee informed the Committee that the demand for agricultural implements, especially, for harvesting and processing of has gone up as a result of the increase in food production across the country. He said rice production has more than doubled but the milling capacity has remained the same. The response of the private sector in supporting the growing need for farm implements along the value chain of agriculture has also been very slow. This had compelled the government to step in and fill the void by procuring implements to support agriculture. To this end, the government has taken steps to support farmers with farm implements for rice farming including tractors for land preparation, planters, and combined harvesters. Additionally, the government has entered into an agreement with Brazil and India for the importation of farm machinery including rice milling machines and harvesters to meet the growing demand for these implements. He assured the Committee that the government has taken note of the problem of inadequate implements for rice farming and would increase its support to meet the growing needs of the industry.

d. Price of Plantain

Reacting to a comment to have been made to the effect that the price of a bunch of plantains has fallen from GH¢30 to between GH¢3.00 - GH¢6.00 and whether he stood by the statement, the nominee responded in the affirmative and said there is even an improvement in the supply of plantain. The nominee explained that plantain is a seasonal crop and during harvesting, there is a glut in the market which causes significant price reduction. He again indicated that there is sufficient production of

plantain currently to the extent that it is exported to the Sahel countries. Expressing his opinion on whether there is sufficient food at cheap prices to the extent that every Ghanaian can afford three meals a day, the nominee indicated that in every society there are people who may not be able to afford the basic necessities of life. He was very confident that, the supply of food in Ghana has improved considerably under his watch as Minister for Food and Agriculture.

e. Concession Agreement between Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA) and Food Export Ltd.

On the status of the Concession Agreement between GPHA and Food Export Ltd for a terminal to support the export of food and horticultural products, the nominee indicated that the Ministry of Food and Agriculture in 2008 with financial support from the World Bank entered into an Agreement with GPHA to refurbish one of its terminals to aid fresh fruits and vegetable exports. However, GPHA failed to honour its part of the Agreement by leasing the facility to a private company. He said the Ministry of Food and Agriculture is currently in talks with the Ministry of Transport to resolve the issue.

On whether the agreement is functional or terminated, the Minister-designated indicated that so far as the Ministry of Food and Agriculture was concerned, the Agreement is not terminated. He explained that part of the challenge was that, instead of GPHA dealing with the fruits and vegetable Exporters Association, it has given the Concession Agreement to a private company to operate. Responding to a suggestion that a directive from the Minister of Transport for the termination of the Agreement could occasion judgment debt against the State, the nominee assured that he will work to ensure the default by GPHA does not result in judgment debt against the state. He declines further public comments on the issue because it could prejudice the outcome of ongoing negotiation on the matter.

f. Cocoa Marketing Company Board

Asked whether the Board of Cocoa Marketing Company he inaugurated has all the institutional representations as outlined in its enabling legislation, the nominee indicated that he went strictly according to the regulations guiding the company and as such no institution was left out.

g. Loan for Agricultural Mechanisation

Answering a question on the status of the US\$150 million loans secured from the India Exim Bank to support agricultural mechanisation, the nominee explained that the Agreement between the Exim Bank of India and the Government of Ghana was in place before he assumed office. The intention he explained was to conclude negotiation on the facility within the first year in office but the process was delayed. He assured the Committee that all negotiations have been concluded and the final agreement signed by the Minister of Finance and the Head of Exim Bank in charge of Africa. The nominee was, therefore, hopeful that the programme will take off by the end of the year. He indicated that the programme intends to supply farm inputs and equipment to farmers to boost agricultural production. He intimated that because the programme has been delayed, the government intends to use proceeds from the last trench of the Brazilian facility to supply farm machinery to farmers in the interim to sustain the growth in agriculture.

h. Indebtedness of COCOBOD to Licensed Cocoa Buying Companies (LBCS)

Explaining to the Committee on what accounted for the inability of COCOBOD to pay for cocoa purchases, the nominee described the situation as an unfortunate occurrence in the past two months. He explained that due to the impact of COVID-19, chocolate consumption has declined in America and Europe and this affected the demand for Cocoa beans. COCOBOD therefore could not sell enough cocoa to enable it to draw on the last trench of the syndicated facility approved by the House. He indicated that, at the time, COCOBOD sold only about 33.3% of all cocoa purchased. This created some liquidity challenges for the company hence its inability to pay LBCs to enable them to pay the farmers. He informed the Committee that, COCOBOD has since agreed to sell all the cocoa beans in its custody. The last trench of the syndicated facility which is predicated on cocoa sales will soon be released to the company. In the interim, however, the Bank of Ghana is providing funding to enable COCOBOD to settle its indebtedness to LBCs to enable them to pay for cocoa purchased. He assured the Committee that cocoa farmers will start receiving payment for cocoa sold by Monday, 22nd February, 2021.

i. Coffee Development

On the interventions he would implement to promote Coffee production in Ghana, the nominee indicated that the statute that established COCOBOD also tasked it to promote the development of Coffee and Shea. But these two crops did not receive the needed attention from COCOBOD over the years. He indicated that there was an initiative in 2013 and 2014 to pilot very successful Coffee production. This requires the needed incentive schemes and government support to encourage more farmers to venture into coffee production. To address the problem, the government has embarked on a massive programme under the Tree Crop Improvement Programme to support and promote the production of other tree crops including Coffee.

j. Composition of the Board of Ghana Incentive-Based Risk Sharing System for Agricultural Lenders (GIBRSSAL)

Responding to a question on what was the legal basis for the composition and inauguration of the Board of Directors for the GIBRSSAL, the nominee explained that GIBRSSAL is a private sector entity introduced by BoG to address the challenge of agriculture lending. He informed the Committee that the Board was composed by the Bank of Ghana and the basis for the composition is not known to him. He assured the Committee that GIBRSSAL is a viable entity currently working in collaboration with Agricultural Development Bank to provide funding to some poultry farmers. He explained the concept is a model financing to support poultry farmers on a pilot basis so that the success will be extended to other agricultural activities.

k. Audit of Cocoa Road

Addressing the Committee on the findings, cost, and status of an audit initiated into cocoa roads in 2017, the nominee indicated that the audit was commissioned by COCOBOD and he had not sighted a copy of the report. He explained further that as a supervising Minister, he is not involved in the day-to-day management of COCOBOD. He said he does not recall whether the report was published neither has he been informed it was ready. On which company conducted the audit and how much was paid, the nominee said he has no idea. The nominee, however, assured the Committee of his readiness to make a copy, should he be made aware of its publication.

On the non-submission of the annual report of COCOBOD to Parliament, the nominee asks for time to confirm the availability of these reports and submit, same, to Parliament.

l. Number of Jobs Created Under Planting for Food and Jobs

On the actual number of jobs created under the Planting for Food and Jobs programme and what he meant by farm-level jobs, the nominee indicated that to determine the actual number of jobs created under the Planting for Food and Jobs Programme, there would be the need to conduct labour census. He explained that it is, however, not possible to conduct an accurate labour census on farm-level employments. He indicated that the 2,286,892 jobs in the handing over notes are based on estimates and the baseline indicators were the level of increase in food production having regards to the fact that agriculture in Ghana is labour intensive. He further explained that the increase in fertilizer application means that more hands are needed to apply the fertilizer. More labour is required to clear the land. He said, as a result of the introduction of improved seeds, there is a surge in food production. Additional hands are also required for harvesting. These are the types of Jobs that were tabulated to arrive at the 2,286,892 employment under the Planting for Food and Jobs Programme. He indicated that there is no need to argue with the numbers but what is more important is that agricultural production has increased. He explained that the employment numbers were determined by the Ministry of Labour and Employment using ILO regulations based on data supply by the Ministry of Agriculture.

m. Senior Level Employment under Planting for Food and Jobs

On what he intends to do to create middle and upper-level employment under the Planting for Food and Jobs Programme to make it attractive to University Graduates, the nominee indicated that the green housing component under the programme is aimed at training university graduates on how to produce food using the greenhouses. The component made provision for both training locally and internationally to prepare the graduates to venture into food production using the Green House Concept. He informed the Committee that so far, about 120 graduates have been trained and employed under the greenhouse component of the programme.

Explaining the interventions he intends to implement to scale up the Rearing for Food and Jobs programme, the nominee informed the Committee that the Rearing for Food and Jobs programme is a comprehensive programme for livestock development in Ghana. The Programme involves the importation of high yielding breeds of livestock from the Sahel region and distributes the same to farmers in selected regions. The programme is a revolving scheme in which herds are given to farmers for free and after breeding, an offspring is taken and given to other farmers. In 2019, 7,500 sheep were distributed to 550 farmers and the Ministry intends to distribute an additional 2,300 to some 740 farmers and 11 livestock breeding stations this year. He indicated that the aim is to make Ghana a net exporter of meat and to revive the collapsed meat industry in the country. Furthermore, the programme also aimed at reducing the number of poultry products imported into the country and that based on the programme, several poultry and livestock farmers have been supported. Again, the programme also aimed at improving veterinary services to extend support to farmers.

The indicated government commitment to expand the programme to cover many farmers and also add cattle to the herd to be distributed.

n. The Glut of Tomatoes in Bono Region

On what he intends to do to create a market for a glut of tomatoes produce in parts of the Bono and Ahafo Regions, the Minister-designate informed the Committee that there is an ongoing private sector investment in the tomatoes processing plant at Berekum. The nominee was therefore hopeful that upon completion, the project will provide a ready market for tomatoes farmers in that enclave.

On whether he will consider irrigation to further boost production to feed the industry, the Hon. Minister nominee indicated that irrigation is an expensive and capital intensive venture. And to reduce the burden on the farmer, the government is investing heavily in irrigation project at Pwalugu, and to support those in the forest belt, the focus the Ministry's focus currently is to harness the natural endowments of ponds and pools of water for irrigating farm purposes. The nominee explained that the natural endowments in the forest zones have been overlooked over the years and assured that such potentials will be harnessed to improve agricultural productivity.

o. Adoption of Technology to Support the Production of Disease Free and Disease Resistant Planting Materials

The nominee in a response to a question on how he intends to collaborate with other institutions to use nuclear technology to develop high yielding, disease-free and disease-resistant planting materials to promote agriculture indicated that the Ministry is currently collaborating with the scientific Community to use nuclear energy to develop improved seed varieties to support the development of agriculture. He indicated that the Ministry is working with research institutions to ensure that research work becomes an important input for agriculture development in Ghana.

On whether he will provide financial support to research institutions to position them to contribute to agricultural development, the nominee indicated that the Ministry of Agriculture is financial constrained just as many research institutions. This, notwithstanding, the nominee, indicated the Ministry's commitment to collaborate with research institutions to improve research in agriculture.

p. Smuggling of Subsidised Fertilizer

Enumerating what measures have been put in place to prevent the smuggling of government subsidised fertilizers out of the country, the nominee indicated that the problem of smuggling exists because, in his view, Ghana is the only country in the sub-region that subsidizes fertilizer for farmers. The nominee informed the Committee that some measures had been put in place to prevent/curb the practice. These include;

- a. Reducing the number of fertilisers sent to the districts noted for the smuggling;
- b. Rebranding of the subsidized fertilizers with a yellow logo to make it more visible and easy to identify by all stakeholders, including farmers and security agencies; and
- c. Reducing the weight from 50kg to 25kg to make it more laborious to transport several kilograms.

Also, the Ministry is collaborating with security officers stationed at the country's entry point to monitor the movement of fertilizers and control the activities of smugglers. The nominee further indicated that to find a lasting solution to the problem, the Ministry is experimenting with the adoption of technology in the

distribution of subsidized fertilizers to further eliminate the activities of the smugglers.

q. Production of Ornamentals

On how to harness the potentials of ornamental farming in Ghana's quest to boost earnings from the agricultural sector, the nominee informed the Committee that there are enormous potential and wealth from that sub-sector. The nominee cited the example of Kenya, where about US\$3 billion is earned annually. In his view, Ghana, because of its proximity to the European market, could earn more than Kenya if the sub-sector is refocused. The nominee the Committee that when approved, the Ministry would priorities ornamentals to improve on the wealth of farmers and the country through increased foreign exchange earnings as well as an additional avenue to create a job for the population, particularly, the youth.

r. Decline in Cocoa Production in Western North Region

Explaining the circumstances that accounted for the decline in cocoa production in the Western North Region and measures being implemented to avert the situation, the nominee acknowledged the decline and described the situation as unfortunate. The nominee attributed the problem to the decision by the previous government to stop paying compensation to cocoa farmers whose diseased cocoa trees were cut down. He explained that farms in the region were affected by the swollen shoot disease and the only way to control the disease was for affected plants to be destroyed and replanted. At the beginning of the programme, the government was to pay farmers for cutting down affected trees but that was not done. Additionally, farmers were not assured of any payments for the three years that they will wait for the new plants to start fruiting. The situation discourages many farmers who stop cutting down their cocoa trees. This made the disease to spread to many farms and destroyed large tracts of farms resulting in a major decline in cocoa production. The nominee intimated that to reverse the situation, the government has introduced a grant to support farmers who cut down the diseased cocoa trees and carry out replanting. In the view of the nominee, this support system would encourage farmers to destroy affected farms to control the spread of the disease and also replant such farms with improved seedlings. The nominee indicated that the government is revamping cocoa

production in the Western North Region and expect production to bounce back in three years.

s. Benefits of Ghana Cote D'Ivoire Collaboration on Sustainable Cocoa Initiative

The nominee in explaining some of the benefits of the bilateral collaboration between the Republic of Ghana and Cote D'Ivoire on Sustainable Cocoa Initiative informed the Committee that though the agreement was entered in 2019, full implementation commenced this year, 2021. He enumerated some of the benefits to be derived by Ghana from the collaboration as the introduction of Living Income Differential for cocoa farmers from prices paid by consumers of cocoa products. Again, as a result of the collaboration, every tonne of Cocoa sold attracts an additional payment of US\$400. This additional income enabled Ghana to increase its producer price by US\$400 for farmers. He indicated that the level of collaboration expected from international partners has not been the best. He informed the Committee that Cote D'Ivoire is having some challenges with implementation following the boycott of cocoa beans by major international buyers. This development threatens the sustainability of the collaboration. Dr Afriyie assured the Committee that the two countries are working to resolve the challenges associated with the agreement to make it sustainable.

t. Difference between Planting for Food and Jobs and Other Agricultural Support Initiatives

Commenting on the uniqueness of the Planting for Food and Jobs Programme from the other agricultural initiatives implemented by other governments, the nominee explained that the difference relates to the number of resources invested in the programme, the number of beneficiaries covered and the geographical coverage of the initiative. The nominee indicated that about 1.7 million farmers are benefiting from the Planting for Food and Jobs programme. Additionally, the amount of financial resources invested in the Planting for Food and Jobs Programme and the level of incentive schemes available to farmers is unprecedented. He explained that before the implementation of the programme, the highest amount of fertilizer imported into the country was only 110,000 metric tonnes with a 20% subsidy. However, under the Planting for Food and Jobs Programme, Government, for

example, imported 400,000 metric tonnes of fertilizer in 2017 and granted farmers a 50% subsidy.

On the sources of funding for the Planting for Foods and Jobs Programme, the Minister-Designate informed the Committee that, aside from an amount of US\$125 million support from the Canadian Government inherited from the previous Government, there has been a substantial increase in GoG budgetary allocation to the Ministry of Food and Agriculture to support the programme. He indicated that budgetary allocation for the Ministry increased from GH¢414 million in 2016 to GH¢954 million in 2020. He explained that most of the resources from the Canadian Government were invested in the supply of vehicles and other logistics to improve extension services and emphasised that the Planting for Food and Jobs Programme has largely been funded from the government of Ghana resources.

u. Interventions for Rice Cultivation at Fumbisi

On what interventions would be implemented to promote rice production at Fumbisi, the nominee indicated that Fumbisi has the potential to produce rice to feed entire West Africa. He lamented on the lack of interest by successive governments in the past 40 years to harness the potentials of Fumbisi. He noted that only 1,300 hectares of the land have been put under cultivation since independence. He informed the Committee that the government is currently developing additional 2,000 hectares to improve rice production capacity of the area. Additionally, agricultural equipment and warehouses are being provided to reduce post-harvest losses. The nominee bemoaned the poor state of road infrastructure in the area and promised to collaborate with the Ministry of Roads and Transport to develop the road network in the area to help attract investment and investors.

v. Differences between Earning From Tree Crop between Ghana and Cote D'Ivoire

Addressing what might have been accounting for why Cote D'Ivoire earns far more from tree crops than Ghana, the nominee explained that Cote D'Ivoire earns between US\$16 – US\$18 billion from five tree crops while Ghana earns US\$2.3 US\$2.5 billion from cocoa alone. To improve on the current situation, the objectives of the government, according to the nominee, has been to diversify agriculture to improve

Ghana's earning by paying special attention to the development of other tree crops. To this end, the Tree Crop Development Authority was set up to increase Ghana's export earnings by diversifying the tree crops sector and also to end the overreliance on cocoa. The authority is mandated to develop other tree crops namely, oil palm, mango, coconut, coffee, rubber, cashew and shear nut with the ultimate aim to increase Ghana's export earnings from the tree crop sector. The target, the nominee hinted, is to increase Ghana's earning to between US\$15 – US\$16 billion annually within the next ten years.

On whether he intends to promote investment into plantations instead of relying on small-holder farmers to achieve these targets, the Minister-Designate reaffirms his confidence in the ability of the small-holder farmers to achieve these objectives. He explained that, if Ghana has over the years relied on small-holder farmers to produce premium cocoa, they can be relied on to produce other cash crops if the right support is provided. He assured that, with research and extension support, expanded marketing opportunities and active participation of the private sector, small-holder farmers should be in a position to produce other tree crops to attain the earning targets envisaged.

w. Supply of Cocoa Product by the Ghana Buffer Stock for Secondary Schools

On why the Cocoa Processing Company (CPC) limited could not be involved in the supply and distribution of cocoa products to support governments Free Senior High School intervention, the Minister-Designate informed the Committee that CPC is not financially strong enough to supply cocoa products to all schools in Ghana. He was hopeful that, once the Company overcomes its financial challenges it should be in a position to support the supply of cocoa products to support government free school programme.

x. Support for Local Seed Production

Responding to a question on what programmes are available to address the shortfall in local seed production, the nominee indicated that inherent in the Planting for Food and Jobs programme is the need to improve local seed production and distribution. To this end, the local seed industry has been revived. He explained that following the implementation of the programme, there is an increased demand for new and

improved seed. The increased demand for seed attracted more private sector investment in seeds and seedlings production and distribution.

y. Procurement of Fertilizer and Chemicals

Commenting on the processes used by the Ghana Cocoa Marketing Board for the procurement of fertilizers and Chemicals for farmers, the nominee explained that transparent and competitive procurement methods were and are used to select the suppliers. He explained that adverts are normally placed in newspapers and transparent processes followed to select suppliers.

z. Uncompetitive Poultry Sector

On whether he will consider using the Ghana Commodity Exchange to support the provision of feed to poultry farmers to make them competitive, the nominee acknowledged the significance of feed in the growth of the poultry sector. He indicated that the two main ingredients in the poultry feed are on the Ghana Commodity Exchange which would make it possible for them to support farmers. However, without the support from the Ghana Commodity Exchange, the Ministry through Agricultural Development Bank and GIBRSSAL is providing financial support to all activities in the poultry value chain to make the industry very competitive. He indicated that the Ministry is currently supporting some 200 farmers by linking them to feed millers, feed processors and provision of slaughterhouses. The intention is to extend the program to some 1,000 small scale farm holders. He assured the Committee that, if his nomination is approved, he would explore the possibility of getting support for poultry farmers from the Commodity Exchange and the Ghana Buffer Stock Company.

A1. Increase in the Volume of Cocoa Production

Confronted with data from the International Cocoa Organisation which shows that between 2016 and 2020, Cote D'Ivoire has increased cocoa production from 1,581,000 metric tonnes to 2,500,000, an increase of 919,000 metric tonnes or 58.1% while Ghana at the same period is projected to increase production from 778,000 tonnes to 800,000 tones an increase of 22,000 tonnes or 2.8%, the nominee indicated that the trend presented is a true reflection of growth in the two countries. The Minister-designate

explained that the slow growth rates experienced in Ghana are a result of a decline in production due to the age of cocoa trees. According to the nominee, Cote D'Ivoire has expanded cocoa production rapidly into areas that were not traditionally known for cocoa production. As a result, the stock of cocoa trees in Cote D'Ivoire is fairly new, high-yielding and disease-resistant while cocoa trees in Ghana are very old and prone to many diseases. The nominee also attributed the trend partly to the destruction of Cocoa trees in the Western North Region and parts of the Eastern, Central and Ashanti Regions by the swollen Shoot Disease.

He also blamed the management of the disease in the past and assured that the Government has put in place incentive schemes to encourage farmers to cut down affected cocoa trees to control the spread of the disease.

The nominee disagreed with the assertion that the liberalised method of cocoa management in Cote D'Ivoire compared to the state monopoly and control system as practiced in Ghana is also a major contributor to the different levels of production in the two countries. The nominee explained that State monopoly, for instance, ensures that the quality of Ghana's cocoa remains high and attract premium price in the market. He indicated that there are more challenges with the fully liberalised system as practiced in Cote D'Ivoire. He was confident that Ghana will soon take the lead as the global leader in Cocoa production.

A2. Strategy for Self Sufficiency in Rice Production

On strategies put in place to ensure that Ghana is self-sufficient in rice production the nominee indicated that the government has invested heavily in the distribution of improved seeds to farmers to increase production. He indicated that in 2017, about 1,698 tonnes of improved rice seeds were distributed to farmers across the country. This increased to 8,500 tonnes in 2020. He was confident that, with this trend and the level of enthusiasm among farmers across the country, Ghana will become self-sufficient in rice production by 2023 to 2024 or earlier.

The nominee indicated that the main constraint inhibiting rice production currently is the limited milling capacity. The nominee explained that the milling capacity unfortunately is not expanding to correspond with the increasing level of production. According to the nominee the country's milling capacity currently stands at 400,000

tonnes annually compared with 600,000 metric tonnes production. The nominee, therefore, encouraged the private sector to invest in milling to help fill the gap.

A3. Outstanding Debt under Planting for Food and Jobs

On what the Ministry is doing to recover debts amounting to GH¢8,717,729 extended to beneficiaries in the form of inputs and implements under the Planting for Food and Jobs Programme as reported in the 2018 and 2019 Report of the Auditor-General to ensure the sustainability of the programme, the Minister-Designate explained that the recovery rate under the programme has been impressive. He said, over a billion cedis credit was extended to farmers in the form of inputs and implements under the programme and the outstanding represents a small fraction of the credit extended. The Ministry he explains is pursuing the defaulters to recover the amount and assured the Committee that the issue is being pursued actively and was hopeful most of the amounts would be recovered.

A4. Shortage of Tractors to Support Farming

On why the Ministry has only 50 tractors and equipment, the nominee blamed the situation on the neglect of farm mechanisation Centres established in 2006 by successive governments. He indicated that, following the neglect, all tractors and equipment at the centre has broken down due to lack of maintenance. He assured the Committee that the Government is in the process to revamp the farm mechanisation centres across the country. To this end, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture has secured US\$150 million credit from the Exim Bank of India and an additional US\$50 million from the Brazilian Government for the supply of tractors and other farm equipment. He assured the Committee of plans to embark on a massive injection of farm inputs to support agricultural development in the country. The nominee hinted that the Government intends to grant a 40% subsidy on tractors and other farm inputs to make them affordable to farmers and also boost the fleet of tractors across the country.

A5. Promotion of Non-Traditional Export

On what plans are in place to promote non-traditional export, the nominee stated that the government has an elaborate agenda to promote earning from non-traditional export under the Planting for Export and Rural Development Programme. The nominee explained that the programme intends to diversify export earnings from other non-

traditional commodities to end decades of reliance on a single cash crop for export earnings. The nominee further indicated that under the Tree Crop Development Authority, non-traditional tree crops such as coconut, cashew, and mango among others will be promoted. Additionally, the Green House Villages under the Planting for Food and Jobs will be the nucleus for the production of vegetable and ornamentals plants for export. He assured the Committee that these initiatives will improve the export earnings capacity of the country from the agriculture sector.

A6. Control of Fall Army Worms

Responding to a question on the effect of Fall Armyworms on agricultural productivity and measures put in place to avoid reoccurrence, the nominee explained that the worms were first reported in 2016 and have affected a total of 249,000 hectares of farms in 2017. He explained that, initially, the destructive effects of the worms were underrated until it became apparent that they have become a real danger to food security. The fall armyworms were relatively unknown in our environment and their biological composition was not known to scientists at the time. The nominee added that by the time a study was completed on the biology of the worms to determine how they can be controlled, the worms had affected some 249,000 hectares of farms. Effective control measures were put in place and the devastating effects of the worms were put under control. The worm was controlled in all the affected farms except in some 14,247 hectares which were destroyed in 2017.

To avert reoccurrences, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture acquired the right pesticides and distributed them to farmers on time. Extension officers and farmers were trained on the application of the chemicals. As a result of these measures, the number of farms destroyed by the worms reduced to 79 hectares in 2018, 26 hectares in 2019 and no destruction was reported in 2020.

On the source of funding to control the worms, the nominee indicated that, because the emergence of the worms was not anticipated, it was not budgeted for by the Ministry in its budget for 2017. The government, through the Ministry of Finance, provided an emergency relief fund amounting to GH¢10 million to control worms.

A7. Agricultural Insurance

On whether Ministry is considering agricultural insurance to provide security to farmers and attract investment into agriculture, the nominee indicated that he has received a proposal from foreign insurance companies wanting to set up crop insurance schemes. He explained that the proposals did not receive the necessary attention because at the time the focus of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture was on how to ensure food security by providing seeds, fertilizer and other agricultural inputs to farmers to increase productivity. He assured that the concept will be considered as a way of sustaining the growth achieved in agriculture if his nomination received the approval of Parliament.

A8. School Farms

Explaining the programs in place to bring back the concept of school farms to whip-up interest among the youth in agriculture, the nominee indicated that one component of the Planting for Food and Job program is to promote interest among students. He informed the Committee that many schools have been supported with seed and fertilizer to venture into farming. He indicated that about 10 tertiary schools and 150 other schools are currently been supported. He was hopeful that the intervention will help promote interest in farming among the youth and urged other schools to come on board.

Recommendations

The Committee, *by a Majority Decision*, recommends to the House to approve the nomination of Hon. Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto for appointment as Minister for Food and Agriculture.

4.12.1 Background

Hon. Mavis Hawa Koomson was born on 3rd February, 1966 at Sekondi in the Western Region of Ghana and hails from Salaga in the Northern Region.

She had her primary education at Zubzea Primary School, Gambaga from 1980 to 1985 and continued at the Central Middle School, Bimbilla from 1985 to 1986. The nominee attended the Evangelical Presbyterian Teacher Training College, Bimbilla from 1987 to 1991 for her Cert "A". She also attended the Christian Methodist School, Sekondi between 1995 and 1997 for her 'O' Level. The nominee later enrolled at the University of Education, Winneba from 2002 to 2006 and was awarded a Diploma in Basic Education. She went back to study at the same university between 2008 and 2011 and obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Basic Education.

The nominee attended the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) from September to November, 2014 and obtained a Postgraduate Certificate in Public Administration. She later continued at the same institution and obtained a Postgraduate Diploma in Public Administration (February to May, 2015). She is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in International Relations and Diplomacy at the same institution.

Hon. Koomson worked as a professional teacher from 1991 to 2012. The Nominee has been an active member of the New Patriotic Party and has held various positions including the Constituency Women Organizer for Awutu Senya Constituency from 2009 to 2011. She was elected as a Member of Parliament for Awutu-Senya East in December 2017 and has been a Member of that Constituency to date. She was the Minister for President's Special Initiative from January 2017 to January 2021.

Responses to Questions

Hon. Mavis Hawa Koomson; among others, responded to the under-listed questions:

- Shooting Incidence Recorded During the Voter Registration Exercise;
- Addressing Gap between Fish Production and Consumption Rates;
- Challenges in the Tuna Industry with the Use of Anchovies Bait for the Pole and Line Method;
- Plastic menace in fishing resources;
- Criteria for Rolling Out Developmental Projects and Activities of the Northern Development Authority;
- Construction of Landing beaches;
- Premix fuel distribution Saga;
- Cold Stores Built under Previous Government;
- Policy of One Constituency One Million Dollars;
- Close Fishing Season;
- Policy of One-Village-One Dam;
- Alleged Theft of Tricycles and Procurement Breaches at the Northern Development Authority;
- Achievements at the Ministry of President's Special Initiative;
- Tax Waiver for imported Fish Feeds;
- Fish laboratories;
- Target for Warehousing Flagship Programme;
- The Supply of Ambulances;
- Support for the acquisition of fishing vessels;
- Acquisition of Fishing Research Vessel;
- Vision for the Fishing Industry; and
- Pirates Attacks on fishing Vessels

Details of the some of the responses are as out-lined below:

a. Shooting Incidence Recorded During the Voter Registration Exercise

The Nominee admitted that on July 20th 2020 such an incident occurred which was an unfortunate one and prays it never happens again in the history of Ghana's politics. She intimated that her action was in self-defence when she felt her life was in danger and

had to act to defend herself. She confirmed that the weapon used was hers and duly licensed in her name.

The nominee stated that her body guard on the day of the incident, had not reported for duty at the time, as the occurrence happened as early as 6:30 am and intimated that the incident happened at a hundred meter distance away from a polling station, contrary to what was reported.

The nominee stated that she was not aware and no one brought to her knowledge that her constituents got injured and others got their property destroyed as a result of the shooting incident on that faithful Friday.

In the nominee's response on the weapon used on the faithful incidence, she said that it was her property and was duly licensed.

She regretted her action and apologised to anybody who might have been affected one way or the other. She conceded that with the benefit of hind sight her reaction would be different under the same circumstances and appealed to the Committee not to ask further questions regarding the incidence since the matter was currently under investigations by the Ghana Police Service.

b. Addressing Gap between Fish Production and Consumption Rates

The nominee stated that, the population that consume fish protein is more than the amount being produced. The nominee mentioned that it is to provide alternative source for seafood to fill the gap that the government, under the leadership of her predecessor, among other measures, initiated the 'Youth in Aquaculture and Jobs' Programme. The nominee believes that when the aquaculture sector is enhanced, it would yield enough fish to close the increasing gap between production and consumption, and promised to continue and possibly expand the programme, when approved as Minister in charge of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development.

c. Challenges in the Tuna Industry with the Use of Anchovies Bait for the Pole and Line Method

The Nominee agreed to the assertion that though tuna is Ghana's biggest seafood, contributing significantly to the domestic fisheries sector, it is plague with several

challenges. The nominee also supported the call to urgently change the structure in tuna production, moving from bait-boat fishing with smaller companies to a large-scale purse-seine fishing. It is to promote this efforts that the nominee promised to ensure the regulations governing light fishing is strictly enforced. The nominee also promised to revisit the policy on closed-season fishing to improve tuna production, in particular, and fishing in general.

The nominee also indicated that since tuna production is also found to depend significantly on local female intermediaries, she would ensure that soft loan facilities are made available to the local female intermediaries.

d. Plastic Menace in the Fisheries Resources

Commenting on the effect of the plastic menace, the nominee opined that the plastic menace boils down to the general poor sanitation and environmental management. The nominee indicated that due to the menace, fisher folk, have to repair or replace nets and other gears damaged more often than necessary. She also agreed that boats, has to be fixed with fouled propellers in addition to the time that has to be wasted in fixing the boats. Therefore, considering the negative impacts from plastic menace, the nominee promised to collaborate with the Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology, Ministry of Sanitation; the fishing communities and other stakeholders, to see how best to get rid of the plastic menace in our water bodies. She added that fishermen would also be educated to use the appropriate and right gears in fishing to curtail the harvesting of plastics.

e. Criteria for Rolling Out Developmental Projects and Activities by the Development Authorities

Elaborating on the criteria for rolling out developmental projects of the Northern Development Authority, the nominee indicated that contrary to the perception that the projects rolled out were imposition on the constituencies, they were actually based on the results of a need assessment exercise carried out by the Ministry prior to the establishment of the three Development Authorities. The nominee stated that needs assessment were first carried out throughout the country and results handed over to the

Development Authorities who then collaborated with the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives to undertake those projects in the various constituencies.

The nominee further explained that the projects implemented by the Ministry were of two parts, the government priority/flagship projects and the constituency specific projects. According to the nominee, the flagship projects were rolled out directly by the Ministry of President's Special Initiative. Example of such projects include the procurement of the Ambulance, hospital beds and provision of water systems and toilet facilities. The constituency specific projects on the other hand, were directly implemented by the Development Authorities and based on needs as predetermined.

The Nominee emphasised that she never authorised or had knowledge of Mr Dabid Seindema, the Parliamentary Candidate for Bole Bamboi cutting a sod for projects sponsored with funding from the Northern Development Authority prior to the 2020 general election purportedly published on Ghana web on 9th April 2020. The nominee stressed that the Development Authorities have their respective Management and Boards and that she had no hand in the day-to-day management of the Authorities.

Responding as to how much of the "One Million Dollars" per constituency were released to each constituency during the four year period, the nominee reiterated that the one million dollars was not a direct cash transfer to the Development Authorities, disbursement was made after certificates on works done had been raised. Therefore, depending on the number of projects undertaken, releases ranges between one to two million dollars equivalent. The nominee also indicated that since the source of funding was the Consolidated Fund, undisbursed at the end of the period would be rolled back.

Touching on the number of projects completed during the period, the nominee stated that about 70-80% initiated have been completed with the rest being at various levels of completion.

f. Fish Landing Sites

The nominee confirmed knowledge of the construction of Landing Beaches in some coastal towns in the Central, Western and Greater Accra regions. The nominee stated that her information indicates that construction is at various stages of completion and

indicated her commitment to collaborate with the Ministry of Transport to ensure their timely completion.

g. Premix Fuel Distribution Saga

Responding to a question on what the ministry under her leadership would do to improve on the management of premix fuel in the coastal areas, the nominee bemoaned the reoccurrence of the problems associated with the distribution of premix fuel, despite the numerous interventions by successive governments. The nominee indicated that her briefing has it that at the centre of the problem is the issue of diversion, and to solve the problem, her predecessor in collaboration with the Vice-President and the Fisheries Commission had a programme in place that tracked all the premix delivery tankers. The nominee promised to continue with that initiative.

The nominee also promised to engage the management of the various premix committees to appreciate the need to make the fuel available to the fisher folk on time and at the right prices.

h. Completion of uncompleted Cold Stores Projects initiated by the Previous Government

The nominee's attention was drawn to a number of cold stores dotted over the country that were started during the tenure of former Fisheries Minister, Ms Shirley Ayittey. The nominee acknowledged the important role of cold stores in ensuring all year round supply of seafood and assured to investigate the circumstances that led to the stalling of the construction process to come up with appropriate plan to ensure their completion.

i. Open and Close Fishing Season

The nominee in her response hoped to continue from where her predecessor left off in the implementation and enforcement of the close fishing season regime in consultation with the fisher folks and other stake holders.

j. Policy of 1 Village 1 Dam

Commenting on whether the Government objective of one-village, one-dam was achieved the nominee emphasised that the objective was achieved. The nominee

2. 17

explained that the actual target was to provide every constituency in the five Northern Regions with ten (10) dams and as of December 2020, a total of 471 active sites had been constructed with 427 fully completed and active. Additional work of stone pitching of embankments had also been done at 170 sites. These active sites, according to the nominee, are able to retain water throughout the dry season.

Reacting to a publication on Ghana Web quoting her as describing the dams as “not Proper dams” the nominee explained that she was quoted out of context because that was not what she meant. She explained that what she meant was that the dams being constructed under the one-village-one-dam policy were for example not meant to be like the “Akosombo Dam”.

k. Alleged Theft of Tricycles and Procurement Breaches at the Northern Development Authority

Commenting on the alleged procurement breaches at the Northern Development Authority (NDA), the nominee stressed that though she was the supervising Minister of the NDA, she had no knowledge of any letter, supposedly written by the Chief Executive Officer of the Authority demanding 10% of contract amount from contractors. The nominee indicated her readiness to follow-up on the alleged matter for a proper cause of action to be taken.

On the alleged theft of tricycles, she stated that the Chief Executive Officer informed her and she instructed that the matter be reported to the Police. She further stated that a committee was subsequently constituted at the Ministry to investigate the matter. However, the committee could not proceed further when the Police commenced its investigations.

l. Achievements at the Ministry of President’s Special Initiative

Highlighting her achievements as the Immediate past Minister of President’s Special Initiatives, the nominee said that her proud achievement was that she led the setting up of the Ministry and the three Development Authorities. Other achievements she mentioned include:

- Leading a team to conduct needs assessments in all the 275 constituencies;

- Construction of toilet facilities (1,010 seater water closet);
- Construction of water systems,
- Construction of dams;
- Construction of district warehouse; and
- The procurement of 307 ambulances.

m. Tax Waiver on Fish Feed Imports

The nominee agreed to the need to provide tax waivers on imported fish feed and assured to hold further discussions on the possibility of its introduction with the Finance Minister.

n. Fish laboratories

The nominee agreed to the establishment of dedicated laboratories to undertake research to support the country's fishing industry. The nominee also stated that the Ministry together with the Fisheries Commission would provide the needed support in this regard. The nominee further indicated that the Ministry would contact the European Union to seek assistance for the construction of a dedicated laboratories for the fishing industry.

o. Target for Warehousing Flagship Programme

Touching on the status of the provision of warehouses in selected districts in the country, the nominee indicated that the target under the programme was to build 50 warehouses in the selected districts, and as of October 2020, 42 were fully completed with 8 being at 80% to 90% stages of completion.

Regarding the locations of some of the warehouses, the nominee mentioned Sandema, Tamale and Techiman. She also indicated that about 8 of the completed warehouses are located in the Western and Western North Regions including Bia West. The nominee further indicated that the construction of the warehouses was done in collaboration with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture and the Buffer Stock Company.

p. The Supply and Number of Ambulances

The nominee stated that the Ambulances supplied were 307 at a cost of US\$177,000 (including insurance) per an ambulance. The nominee also indicated that the ambulances were supplied by six different companies.

q. Support for acquisition of fishing vessels

Regarding the support she intends to provide fisher folks to acquire fishing vessels, the nominee stated that the Ministry would collaborate with the Agriculture Development Bank and other cooperate entities, to come up with a support system to enable interested players in the fishing industry acquire their own vessels.

r. Acquisition of Fishing Research Vessel

On what she intends to do to assist H.E., the President of the Republic make good his promise to ensure the acquisition of a fishing research vessel for the country, the nominee indicated that though she was not aware of such a promise, when approved as the Minister, she would remind H.E., the President of his promise to the people of Ghana and assist him to honour the promise.

s. Vision for the Fishing Industry

Sharing her vision for the sector, the nominee intimated that she intends to provide the needed leadership and support to improve, particularly, the aquaculture and inland fishing sub-sectors. The nominee also promised to collaborate with micro-finance institutions to provide financial support to the women operating in the fishing sector.

t. Pirates Attack on Fishing Vessels

On the issue of pirates' attacks on fishing vessels and how she intends to stop it, the nominee assured the Committee that she would collaborate with the security agencies to ensure Ghanaian waters are safe from pirate attacks.

Recommendations

The Committee, *by a Majority Decision*, recommends to the House to approve the nomination of Hon. Mavis Hawa Koomson for appointment as Minister for Fisheries and Aquaculture.

4.13.1 Background

Hon. Kojo Oppong-Nkrumah was born on the 5th April, 1982 at Koforidua in the Eastern Region. He hails from Akim Anyinase in the Eastern Region. The nominee had his basic education at the Pentecost Primary School in Koforidua from 1987 to 1989. He proceeded to St. Bernadette Soubirous School from 1989 to 1997. He then attended Pope John Senior High School & Junior Seminary from 1998 to 2000. From 2001 to 2005, the nominee obtained his Bachelor of Commerce Degree at the University of Cape Coast. From 2011 to 2014, Hon. Kojo Oppong Nkrumah obtained a Bachelor of Laws Degree (LLB) from the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA). He continued at the Ghana School of Law from 2014 to 2016, where he passed out as a Professional Lawyer having obtained his Qualifying Certificate in Law. In 2006, the nominee obtained the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) (Level 1).

The nominee undertook his National Service at the British American Tobacco, as a Treasury Analyst from 2005 to 2006. As a Broadcast Journalist, Hon. Kojo Oppong-Nkrumah worked with Multimedia Group Limited, Accra, where he served in several capacities. While there, he hosted JOY FM's Super Morning Show from 2006 to 2013. Again, the nominee was the Head of the JOY Business Unit from 2010 to 2012.

The nominee resigned from JOY FM and established West Brownstone Capital where he was the Managing Director from 2014 to 2016. The nominee was an Associate at Bentil Consulting in Accra from 2007 to 2009. Hon. Kojo Oppong Nkrumah was a Lawyer under the tutelage at Kulendi, Attafuah & Amponsah @ Law from 2006 to 2017.

The nominee served as a Deputy Minister for Information from 12 April, 2017 to November, 1st 2018 and then, the Minister for Information from 2nd November, 2018 to 6th January, 2021. The nominee, since 7th January 2017 to date has been the Member of Parliament for Ofoase Ayirebi Constituency in the Eastern Region. The nominee in

the 7th Parliament of the Fourth Republic served on the Finance and Constitutional, Legal, and Parliamentary Affairs Committees of Parliament.

Reponses of the nominee

The issues the nominee were engaged in include:

- Overview of Institutions under the Ministry of Information;
- Deployment of Public Relations Officers (PROs) to Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs)
- Perception of Attacks on the Media;
- Closure of Some Radio Stations;
- Achievement at Minister in the previous government;
- Status of TV licensing Regime;
- Utilisation of the Budget of the Ministry of Information;
- Relevance of the Ministry of Information;
- State Ownership of Media Outlets;
- Procurement of Frontier Health Care Company Ltd.;
- Media Freedom;
- Quality of Media Practice;
- Content Management;
- Expanding the Information Services Department (ISD) in all Districts;
- GBC Debts;
- Central Digital Transmission Company Limited;
- Financial Sector clean-up and the Involvement of the Nominee in a Private Company;
- Social Media as a Medium to Educate Ghanaians on Government Policies;
- Purported taken over of GBC Channels of the DTT Transmitting channel;
- Frequency authorisation;
- Financial Assistance to Media Houses;
- Branding Ghana; and
- Ownership of ABC Communications and MX 24 Television

Responses to questions

a. Overview of Institutions under the Ministry of Information

The nominee stated that the Information Services Department (ISD) is the Ministry's primary implementing Agency. According to the nominee, the ISD had been reorganised to give a special focus on four primary areas; namely: Public Relations, Public Education Campaign, Research, and implementation of the Right to Information Act. The nominee stated that the staff strength of the Public Relations Unit was increased from forty-six to seventy-two, and their professional capacity developed through participation in the Institute of Public Relations professional programme. With the above interventions, the nominee reported that the Unit, which was under resourced when he assumed office under the previous Government, can generate a lot of information from their respective Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to feed into the press briefings at the national level. Further, the Public Education Campaigns Unit saw a boost in its staff strength from 781 to 987. The Ministry was able to provide them with laptops and other logistics for their work.

The nominee informed the Committee of the establishment of a Right to Information (RTI) Unit to see to the implementation of the Right to Information Act. The Unit has a responsibility to process all RTI requests from citizens who require such information. The nominee stated that the Ministry had trained and posted RTI Officers to a number of MDAs to help them with the processing of all RTI requests. In the medium to long term, the nominee said that he was looking forward to completing the logistics improvement agenda at ISD.

The nominee stated that State-Owned media that are not directly under the Ministry were supported in a number of ways. He explained that the Ministry supported the Ghana News Agency in its restructuring, with the establishment of a website and strong online unit. The Agency was able to grow its market share from 37 per cent to about 45 per cent.

The Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC), according to the nominee, was able to establish the Ghana Learning Television, the Garden City Television station in Kumasi and a new radio station in Yendi, in the Upper West region. With the Japan International Agency Cooperation support, the Ministry assisted GBC to get new logistics and

equipment. The nominee informed the Committee that GBC has significant financial challenges, including outstanding electricity bills and debts amounting to twenty-five million Ghana Cedis, which has been ring-fenced.

Relating to the New Times Corporation, the major change has been the outlay of the newspaper. Ghana Publishing Company has improved profitability. It has been able to self-finance a number of new equipment, and Cabinet has given the approval to venture into security printing.

b. Deployment of Public Relations Officers (PROs) to Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs)

The nominee informed the Committee that one of the first issues brought to his attention as Minister of Information was how the recipient agencies do not trust PROs assigned to various MDAs. The nominee indicated that to resolve the issue, he wrote to his colleague Ministers and requested them to grant PROs assigned to MDAs some space at management meetings since public relation is a management function. He pleaded with them to grant the PROs access to information required for the weekly press briefings at the Ministry. According to the nominee, a common platform for information sharing was created for all the MDAs and the PROs. The Office of the Chief of Staff was also requested to reiterate to Ministers the need to grant PROs assigned to the MDAs the required information for their work.

The nominee assured the Committee that he would continue to build the Units and institutions' capacity to enable them to deliver value for the country.

c. Perception of Attacks on the Media

On the matter of perceived attacks on media personnel in the country, the nominee explained that from his experience, any attack on a Journalist brings to the fore the issue of whether the attack is true, fabricated or a sheer coincidence. The nominee cited examples in the past where a reported attack on a Journalist was found as a mere coincidence of a robbery attack. He stated that those reported attacks affect the country's ranking on the World Press Freedom Index when they go unvalidated.

The nominee believed that the alleged attacks must be validated through proper investigations to ascertain the veracity or otherwise of these attacks. According to the

nominee, Cabinet had approved a programme of a Coordinated Mechanism for the Safety of Journalists to be implemented by the National Media Commission (NMC). The Ministry had also provided the NMC with the resources required for the implementation of the programme. This initiative brought together the Ghana Journalists Association, the Ghana Independent Broadcasting Association, and the National Media Commission to explore various avenues to provide protection for media personnel in the country. The mechanism will investigate the attacks on media personnel and follow-up with security agencies to ensure that such attacks are dealt with expeditiously. The mechanism would also provide training and support for Journalists to carry out their profession in a responsible manner.

On the question of whether the nominee validated the reported cases of attacks on Ahmed Hussein-Suale, Manasseh Azure and Edward Adeti, the nominee stated that the Police is investigating those cases. He pointed out to the Committee that although the Police investigation in the Ahmed Hussein-Suale murder is not conclusive, many have assumed that the unfortunate killing of Ahmed Hussein-Suale was carried out because of his work as an undercover Journalist.

Regarding Edward Adeti, the nominee stated that he met with him personally and ensured that the necessary safety mechanism had been provided. In Manasseh's case, the nominee stated that the information available to him at the time was that when he reported that his life was in danger, the Minister for National Security ensured that a police officer was deployed for his protection. However, it was later learnt from Prof. Kwame Karikari that Manasseh had left the country because his life was in danger. The nominee stated that he did not have any reason to doubt the reason why Manasseh left the country.

As to whether the Media Foundation for West Africa publication on attacks on Journalists is a credible source of validation, the nominee stated that the Media Foundation for West Africa is a credible organisation on media advocacy, and their report can complement the validation system that the National Media Commission would provide.

The nominee acknowledged the need to support the media and Journalists to protect themselves from attacks. The nominee took the opportunity to ask for more resources and support for the National Media Commission to deliver its mandate.

d. Closure of Some Radio Stations

The nominee took the Committee through the circumstances under which the spectrum authorisation of some media houses were revoked by the National Communication Authority (NCA). According to the nominee, spectrum authorisation for several media houses had expired and those media houses were fined by the NCA. The affected media houses, including Radio Gold and Radio XYZ, then sued the NCA at the Electronic Communication Tribunal. The Tribunal held that since the authorisation of the stations had expired, the NCA did not have the power to fine them. The NCA could not purport to give them an authorisation that had passed. Following the decision of the Tribunal, the NCA asked the media houses to relinquish the frequencies they held since their authorisation had expired. In response to the question of whether the affected frequencies had been reallocated, the nominee answered in the negative.

The nominee reiterated that the media is not required to be licensed before they operate, except that spectrum authorisation is required for those who want to operate an electronic spectrum. He stated that it would be unconstitutional to license any media house and explained that what was withdrawn was spectrum authorisation, not the licence to operate as media houses. He indicated that although the spectrum authorisation had been withdrawn, some of the affected media houses still operate from platforms that do not require spectrum authorisation. Asked if he was aware of any media house that applied and had their authorisation restored, the nominee said he could not tell. He, however, encouraged all the affected media houses to reapply to enable the NCA to consider granting them the spectrum authorisation to operate.

e. Achievement as Minister in the previous Government

According to the nominee, the work of the Ministry of Information is divided into two major parts. The first part covers development communication, where the Ministry works with various MDAs to inform the public about government activities and programmes. The second part deals with the administration of the departments under the Ministry. He indicated that his major highlight is his work with the Research Unit

of the Information Services Department. He stated that when he assumed office, the Research Department produced about 300 public reaction reports that were not scientific. He explained that he had built a world-class research unit for the ISD, which connects all the 260 districts of the country.

On the right to information, the Ministry had created the RTI Division and trained and deployed RTI Officers to MDAs, MMDAs and Independent Constitutional Bodies. Out of 26 activities to be implemented on RTI, about 18 of the activities have been completed; five are ongoing, and three are yet to be executed. He informed the Committee that out of 526 officers, 455 had been trained and deployed. The RTI Unit has received 56 requests, and all of them have been processed.

f. Status of TV Licensing regime

The nominee informed the Committee that his interaction with the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation's management suggested that an arrangement with the Court to enforce TV licence payment did not yield any result. According to the nominee, disagreement between the then Director-General and the GBC Board did not provide the internal cohesion needed to implement the policy. The nominee indicated he had a different strategy regarding funding for GBC. He informed the Committee that a Digital Access Fund will be established under the DTT Policy, out of which funds will be made available for GBC activities. He stated that the argument about who should pay a TV licence and who should not pay in contemporary times does not find favour with several stakeholders. He maintained that the Digital Access Fund is the vehicle that will be used to support the GBC, and when he is approved, he will work with his colleague, the Minister responsible for Communications, to make it a reality.

On the issue of whether the GBC is a public broadcaster or a state broadcaster, the nominee stated that GBC is a public broadcaster, and he will support legislation to declare it as such. He indicated that he had already made a presentation to the National Media Commission to consider making GBC a public broadcaster. He informed the Committee that the National Media Commission had established a GBC Reorganisation Committee to consider making GBC a public broadcaster, but the Committee could not commence work before the expiration of the term of the previous Government. He assured the Committee if he is given the nod, he will task the National Media

Commission to revisit the matter and ensure that legislation is enacted to make GBC a proper public broadcaster.

g. Utilisation of the Budget of the Ministry of Information

On the utilisation of an amount of six million Ghana Cedis allocated to the Ministry of Information in the 2020 Budget, the nominee stated that that allocation was meant for communicating government flagship programmes. He said that Government has sixteen flagship programmes, including Planting for Food and Jobs, National Apprenticeship Programme, Free Senior High School, One Village One Dam, among others. The Ministry's responsibility was to design programmes and activities through which the responsible Ministries undertaking those flagship programmes could update the country on the status of their implementation. He indicated that several nation-building updates, town hall meetings, mass media campaigns that were organised allowed the agencies to tell their story.

He stated that the Annual Budget Performance Report would provide specific details of how that amount was utilised.

h. Relevance of the Ministry of Information

In response to a query on the relevance of the Ministry's mandate in a modern democratic state, the nominee stated that one of the ingredients that make democracies survive and do well is the free flow and availability of information for informed decision-making. He indicated that the Government collect taxes, raise loans and executes several projects for and on behalf of the people. As a result, the Government must regularly update the people on what it is doing with those resources. He stated that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goals 16 and 17, require a strong information-driven society to ensure global development partnerships. He indicated that the governmental function of information aggregation from various sectors, information processing and a feedback system is a distinct function and cannot be compared to that of a Press Secretary at the Office of the President. He stated that while the Press Secretary updates the nation on the President's programmes and schedules, the Ministry of Information reports on all the programmes and activities of MDAs across the country. As a result, bigger machinery must churn out information and receive feedback to enable the Government to make the right decisions.

i. State Ownership of Media outlets

The nominee stated that the private sector is always driven by a commercial motive, and may therefore not venture into areas where the returns on investment are minimal. As a result, the state needs to occupy some space in the media to protect and preserve the cultural heritage and identity of people as well as act as a public broadcaster and provide services in areas where the private sector, because of their commercial motive, may not venture.

j. Procurement of Frontier Health Care Company Limited

On the matter of Frontier Health Care Limited, the nominee informed the Committee that he is a member of the Presidential Task Force on the COVID-19 Response Programme. He stated that the COVID-19 response was escalated from the Ministry of Health to the Presidential Task Force level. He informed the Committee that the Presidential Task Force tasked the Ghana Airport Company Limited to explore options by which it can find an acceptable instant testing mechanism at the airport as a prerequisite measure for the reopening of the airport. The Ghana Airport Company Limited then proceeded to procure the service through an arrangement with a private-sector provider.

The nominee indicated that since the Ghana Airport Company Limited, which procured Frontier Health Care Limited's services, is under the Ministry of Transport, the Minister-designate for that sector will be the right person to provide the answers to the Committee's query. The Minister-designate stated that the question that had been asked of his Colleagues who had earlier appeared before the Committee was to elicit from them responses on whether they had sighted the contract. The President's representative at the Health Ministry and the Minister for Health-designate said that he had not seen the contract and that the Presidential Task Force was responsible for that. The Attorney-General and Minister for Justice-designate also said he had not sighted the contract. The former Minister for Procurement further stated that the Finance Ministry is responsible for that enterprise.

k. Media Freedom and independence

The nominee stated that the freedom of the media is not absolute as they are subject to the Constitution. According to the nominee, freedom of the media comes with responsibility as provided under Chapter 12 of the Constitution, 1992. The nominee stated that the media's freedom and independence should be upheld and assured the Committee that he will support the media to deliver responsibly.

l. Quality of Media Practice

The nominee acknowledged the important role of the media in a democracy. He stated that articles 163 (5) and (6) enjoins the media to hold the Government to account to ensure that sunlight is thrown on all government activities. This is to ensure that people who get into public office do the right things and do it in the people's interest.

He stated that the total liberalisation of the country's airwaves has led to mushrooming of media houses and people who practice journalism without the requisite training in media law and ethics. As a result, the output from these media houses has not been the best.

The nominee stated that the Ministry is aware of the problem and would provide the needed support to assist media houses and personnel to improve the country's standard of media practice. He stated that under the Digital Access Fund that would be established, the Ministry would take some of the cost of establishing TV stations and provide funds for the continuous professional development of Journalists in the country. He informed the Committee that the Ministry had introduced the Media Capacity Enhancement Programme and, with UNESCO's support's developing a curriculum for the practice of responsible journalism.

m. Content Management

The nominee stated that a broadcasting law is required to provide a broad legal framework to regulate the content and advertisement on media platforms. He noted that a lot of work has gone into the draft broadcasting law, which will allow the National Media Commission to re-introduce the Content Authorisation Regulations to regulate contents and advertisement by media houses. He cited an instance where he wrote to the Bank of Ghana and complained about an advertisement on money doubling and its

negative impact on the economy. He maintained that without legislation, it would be difficult to compel media houses not to broadcast content inimical to the national interest.

n. Expanding the Information Services Department (ISD) in all districts

The nominee informed the Committee that the previous Government approved an ISD transformation programme that includes providing information vans and logistics for all the districts in the country. The nominee assured the Committee that budgetary allocation would be made available in 2021 to implement the transformation programme.

o. GBC Debts

To tackle the debt situation of GBC, the nominee said he believed that GBC should charge for the services they render to state agencies in covering state events and programmes. He indicated that he had requested the Director-General of GBC to ask state institutions to route their request for coverage through the Ministry of Information to cover the transmission cost.

p. Central Digital Transmission Company Limited

On the matter of the composition of the Board of the Central Digital Transmission Company Limited, the nominee stated that the process commenced with an engagement with the Minister responsible for Communications. He indicated that the process could not be completed before the tenure of the previous administration ended. The nominee could not recollect whether it is a public or private entity. Whether he shared the view that the Central Digital Transmission Company Limited should operate under the National Media Commission, the nominee stated that he did not subscribe to that view. He assured the Committee that when he is approved, he will ensure that the issues surrounding the establishment of the Board will be addressed.

q. Financial Sector clean-up and the involvement of the Nominee in a private company

Mr. Oppong Nkrumah stated that he had spoken for the Government on many occasions on the financial sector clean-up and the challenges that the financial services sector faced. He informed the Committee that between 2014 and 2016, his private business

invested in Oval Capital as the largest shareholder. He explained that from 2017 to 2019, the company directors reported that they were facing difficulties and requested the shareholders to recapitalise. The nominee stated that together with the other shareholders, they could not reinvest in the company as required. The Bank of Ghana, as a result, revoked their licence.

As to whether there was any impropriety on the part of the directors and the company's shareholders, the nominee indicated that the report did not suggest so. When it was pointed out to the nominee that his company defaulted in the payment of a credit facility extended to him, he stated that at the time the licence was revoked, there was no outstanding liability.

r. Social Media as a medium to educate Ghanaians on Government policies

According to the nominee, the importance of social media as a medium for communicating government policies cannot be underestimated. He informed the Committee that as a Ministry, they have established a Social Media Unit that reaches out to about 1.2 million Ghanaians. The Ministry had, over the period, encouraged and supported other MDAs to establish dedicated social media platforms to enable them to engage with the public. The nominee expects to extend the social media drive to the retail level to include Ministers of State, Members of Parliament, and other high-ranking government officials. The nominee advised users to verify their accounts to minimise the risk of impersonation.

s. Purported taking over of GBC channels on the DTT transmitting channel

In response to a question on whether the Minister for Communications consulted the nominee before writing to the Director-General of GBC to ask that they shut down some of their channels on the DTT platform, the nominee answered in the affirmative and indicated that the narrative that the Minister for Communications directed GBC to shut down the six channels is not correct. He stated that the Minister for Communications invited GBC and other media houses that have more than two channels on their multiplex to a meeting for a discussion with the object of creating redundancies on the DTT platform. The nominee explained the entities were given eight weeks to consult with their Board and Managers before a decision could be taken as to which channels will be released. The nominee noted that it was during this period that

the story broke out that the Minister for Communications had directed them to shut down six of their channels. The nominee insisted that the Minister for Communications consulted with him, and he was surprised that the news was out there that the Minister for Communications had instructed GBC to shut down the channels.

As to whether he was aware of the letter the Minister for Communications sent to the Director-General of GBC, the nominee stated that he had sighted a communication where the Minister had reiterated the discussion she had with the GBC and other media houses on the need to create redundancy on the digital platform. He, however, intimated that he had not seen any letter that instructed GBC to shut down six of their channels. He informed the Committee that the DDT platform belongs to the Ministry of Communications, and as such, the Minister was within her right to engage GBC on issues concerning the changes on the platform. As to whether the National Media Commission was consulted, the nominee could not tell.

He informed the Committee that the President had intervened in the matter and placed the exercise on hold. He assured the Committee that any time the matter is reopened, it would be resolved amicably.

t. Frequency authorisation

On the proposal to relocate the frequency authorisation mandate from the National Communication Authority to the National Media Commission, the nominee stated that he did not support that view. He indicated that the usage of frequency is not just by media, so a body dedicated to the management of frequency as distinct from the body managing the media is the way to go.

u. Financial assistance to media houses

The nominee stated that the Government had not provided any financial assistance to any media house as part of the COVID-19 interventions. He, however, said that he had made a presentation to Government on that score, and whenever funds are made available, they will support the media industry.

v. Branding Ghana

On his branding plans for Ghana, the nominee stated that branding is a very technical area. He indicated that his general idea is to have a recognisable identity for Ghana on the global stage that pushes trade, investments, and cultural identity. In 2020, plans were far advanced to commence with the Brand Ghana exercise until the COVID-19 emerged. It is hoped that the COVID-19 pandemic will go away so that work on branding Ghana can be commenced. The nominee stated that a team of professionals, including the Ghana Advertising Association, will be put together to undertake the exercise.

w. Ownership of ABC Communications and MX 24 Television

In an answer to a question as to whether he owns a media house in the country, the nominee stated that he owns ABC Communication Limited that operates a radio station in Akim Oda in the Eastern region. Also responding to a question as to whether he is the owner or has shares in MX 24, a television station operating in the country, the nominee, replied no. The nominee, again in a response to a question, indicated that since he is not a shareholder in the television station, he will not know when the frequency for MX 24 TV was issued.

On whether in the last Parliament he applied to the Committee on Members Holding Office of Profit for permission to continue to carry out his private business, nominee stated that he did and was given a Certificate by the Speaker.

The nominee also agreed to the suggestion that as a shareholder in a media house, he is both a policymaker and a participant in the media space.

Recommendations

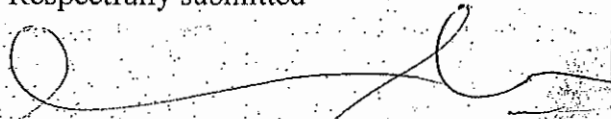
The Committee, *by a Majority Decision*, recommends to the House to approve the nomination of Hon. Kojo Opong Nkrumah for appointment as Minister for Information.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND GENERAL RECOMMENDATION

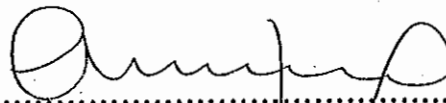
The Committee has duly considered the nominations of His Excellency the President for Ministerial appointments in line with the 1992 Constitution and Standing Orders of the House and recommends the following nominees to the House for approval.

- | | | | |
|-------|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| i) | Mr. Albert Kan Dapaah | - | National Security |
| ii) | Hon. Dominic Nitiwul, MP | - | Defence |
| iii) | Ms. Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey | - | Foreign Affairs & Regional
Integration |
| iv) | Hon. Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum, MP | - | Education |
| v) | Hon. Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu, MP | - | Parliamentary Affairs |
| vi) | Hon. Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh, MP- | - | Energy |
| vii) | Hon. Dan Botwe, MP | - | Local Government,
Decentralisation &
Rural Development |
| viii) | Hon. Ambrose Dery, MP | - | Interior |
| ix) | Hon. Ignatius Baffuor Awuah, MP | - | Employment, and Labour
Relations |
| x) | Hon. Sarah Adwoa Safo, MP | - | Gender, Children and Social
Protection |
| xi) | Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto | - | Food and Agriculture |
| xii) | Hon. Mavis Hawa Koomson, MP | - | Fisheries and Aquaculture
Development |
| xiii) | Hon Kojo Opong Nkrumah | - | Information |

Respectfully submitted



HON. JOE OSEI-OWUSU
FIRST DEPUTY SPEAKER, & CHAIRMAN
APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE



ROSEMARY ARTHUR SARKODIE
(MRS)
(CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE)

MARCH, 2021