

**IN THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE  
SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE  
FOURTH REPUBLIC OF GHANA**

**SEVENTEENTH REPORT OF THE  
APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE**

**ON**

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

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APPOINTMENTS**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 In the exercise of the powers conferred on the President by Articles 78 (1), and 256 (1) of the Constitution, the President of the Republic of Ghana, His Excellency John Dramani Mahama nominated seven (7) persons for appointment as Ministers of State and Regional Ministers and communicated same to Parliament on 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2016 for their prior approval.

1.2 The nominations were subsequently referred to the Appointments Committee by the Rt. Hon. Speaker for consideration and report pursuant to Order 172 of the Standing Orders of the House.

The nominations are as follows:

- i) Hon. Albert Abongo - Regional Minister-Designate for the Upper East Region**
- ii) Mr. John Alexander Ackon - Regional Minister-Designate for the Ashanti Region**
- iii) Hon. Edwin Nii Lantey Vanderpuye - Minister-Designate for the Ministry of Youth and Sports**
- iv) Hon. Kweku Ricketts Hagan- Regional Minister-Designate for the Central Region**
- v) Mr. Abdallah Abubakari - Regional Minister-Designate for the Northern Region**
- vi) Mr. Prosper Douglas Bani - Minister-Designate for the Ministry of the Interior**
- vii) Ms. Mavis Ama Frimpong - Regional Minister-Designate for the Eastern Region**

## **2.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS**

The Committee referred to the following documents during its deliberations:

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

## **3.0 PROCEDURE ADOPTED FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE NOMINATIONS**

- 3.1 The Committee firstly caused to be published the names of the nominees and notice of the Committee's Public Hearings in daily newspapers for the attention of the general public pursuant to Order 172 (3) of the Standing Orders of the House,. The publication also invited memoranda from if any the general public in respect of the nominees.
- 3.2 The Committee also obtained Confidential Reports in respect of the nominees from the Ghana Police Service and the Bureau of National Investigations (BNI) as part of the Committee's background checks. In addition, the Committee obtained their Tax Status Reports from the Ghana Revenue Authority in line with Article 94(1)(c ) of the Constitution
- 3.3 The Committee thereafter held Public Hearings from Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> to Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2016 to consider the nominations.
- 3.4 Prior to the commencement of proceedings, the nominees subscribed to the Oath of a Witness after which questions were put to them by the Hon. Members of the Committee to solicit their responses. The questions focused on issues relating to the nominees' citizenship, records of their offices, qualifications and eligibility, matters pertaining to the offices to which they have been nominated and other issues of national concern.

The Committee has duly considered the seven (7) nominees and reports as follows:

#### **4.0 HON. ALBERT ABONGO – REGIONAL MINISTER-DESIGNATE FOR UPPER EAST REGION**

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##### **Background**

Hon. Albert Abongo was born on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 1959 and hails from Gowrie-Bongo in the Upper East Region.

The Hon. nominee had his primary education at the Gowrie L/A Primary and Middle Schools from 1965 to 1974. He progressed to the Bolgatanga Secondary School for his Ordinary Level Certificate from 1974 to 1979 and continued at the Tamale Secondary School for his Advanced Level Certificate between 1979 and 1981.

The Hon. Nominee attended the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) and graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering in 1986. He also attended the University of Trondheim, Norway and obtained a Postgraduate Diploma in Ports and Coastal Engineering in 1992. He further studied at the University of Ghana and obtained a Master's Degree in Shipping Administration in 2008.

Hon. Abongo became a Member of the Ghana Institution of Engineers in 1996.

The Hon. Nominee worked at the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA) from 1987 to 2000 and rose from the position of an Assistant Civil Engineer to a Principal Civil Engineer. He has held a number of positions including a Member of Board of Trustees of the Ghana Investment Fund for Electronic Communications (GIFEC) and the Board of the Digital Terrestrial Television Migration. He was appointed as the Minister for Water Resources, Works and Housing from February, 2009 to March 2010.

The nominee has been the Member of Parliament for the Bongo Constituency in the Upper East Region since 2001 and also serves on a number of parliamentary committees including the Committee on Lands and Forestry and Appointments Committee.

##### **Responses to Questions**

The nominee provided the following responses to question posed to him:

## **Harnessing Local Opportunities for the Development of the Upper East Region**

In response to a question on how he would harness local opportunities for the development of the Region, the nominee acknowledged the fact that the Upper East is amongst the poorest Regions in the country and indicated that he would focus on mobilizing local resources to support the farmers to improve the standard of living of the people recognizing the enormous agricultural potentials of the Region. This, he said, would be achieved by partnering with local institutions and donor agencies in the Region to align efforts.

## **Development of Tourism in the Upper East Region**

Regarding the initiatives he would adopt to develop the tourism potential of the Region, the nominee stated that the Region was endowed with a huge tourist attraction which could be harnessed for the benefit of the Region. He enumerated some of the tourism potentials of the Region such as the interesting tourist sites, dances and festivals. He stated that as Regional Minister if approved by the House, he would focus on the management and packaging of the tourism resources through partnerships with the private sector.

## **Maintenance of peace and security in the Region**

Responding to the question on how he will ensure the maintenance of peace and security in the Region particularly during the impending general elections, the nominee stated that he would work to enhance the good works of the Regional Security Council and also work closely with other security structures in the Region to maintain and promote peace and security in the Region.

## **Major Challenges facing the Region**

On his view of the major challenges facing the Region, the nominee indicated that extreme poverty is one of the challenges facing the Upper East Region. He attributed the situation to the inability of the farmers in the Region to carry out their farming activities throughout the year due to ~~the Region's short rainy season. To this end, he promised to focus on~~ initiatives that will improve the condition of farmers in the Region. He intends to rehabilitate existing dams and construct new ones to make

water available for farming activities during the long dry season. He also proposed the construction of canals during the construction of new roads for the purpose of collecting more water for farming purposes. He further promised to adopt best practices from other countries especially Burkina Faso to enhance the efficient utilization of water in the Region.

The nominee also mentioned the migration of the youth from the Upper Region to the southern part of the country as the other challenge. He explained that, school children and other residents of the Region migrate to the south to look for jobs during the dry season and fail to return to the Region due to the harsh economic conditions back home. He therefore indicated his intention to collaborate with the Municipal and District Assemblies in the Region to work on the School Feeding programme, the Free Uniform and other initiatives to address the issue.

### **Measures to address the Impacts of the Spillage of the Bagre Dam**

On the measures that the nominee would adopt to address the impacts of the spillage of the Bagre Dam and attendant flooding of parts of the Region, the nominee stated that he would implement practical measures to address the challenge by taking advantage of the spillage to create more reservoirs and diversions as well as construct of dams. The nominee believes this would address the perennial flooding caused by the spillage and also make available water for irrigation purposes during the dry season.

### **Matters relating to the STX Korean Housing Deal**

The nominee stated that he had no regrets for the introduction of the STX Korean Housing Deal during his tenure as Minister for Water Resources, Works and Housing. He however indicated that it was rather unfortunate that such a good project could not be implemented to address the huge housing deficit facing the country. On how much money the country lost through the STX Korea Housing Deal, the nominee stated that he could not remember paying money to any company in respect of the House Deal. On whether the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing did sponsor a delegation to Abu Dhabi and Korea in connection with the Contract, the nominee indicated that he did not know the source of the sponsorship.

## **Response to Concerns Relating to the Savanna Accelerated Development Authority**

On how the Savanna Accelerated Development Authority (SADA) has served the people within the SADA zone including the Upper East Region, the nominee stated that it will be difficult to measure the impact of SADA for now. In response to matters relating to the disbursement of monies, subsequent alleged wastages and non-performance of the entity, the nominee stated that he did not know the details of the operations of SADA and pleaded that he would have better briefings if he is approved and assumed control. Notwithstanding, the nominee said that he was aware that SADA was undergoing restructuring to reposition it to deliver on its mandate. He disclosed that the Authority has been put under a new management and has been consulting various stakeholders in that regard. He stressed that SADA has learnt a lot from its past experience and believed it will perform better this time round. In his view, the Guinea Fowl module under the SADA is good but there is still the need to review the modules to achieve better results. He revealed that the Government had commenced processes to retrieve monies that the Authority wrongfully paid to various entities. He believed that the Authority will deliver on its mandate when it is fully repositioned. The nominee further agreed with the suggestion that SADA did not act professionally when it failed to utilize the expertise of the Forestry Commission in the implementation of its Tree Planting Project. He however stated that the concept was good and SADA could have done better.

## **Initiatives to Address Poor Sanitary Practices**

Asked how he intends to address poor sanitary practices such as open defecation being practised by some residents in the Upper East Region, the Hon. nominee insisted that open defecation was not a cultural practice in the Region but promised that he would do his best to bring that practice to an end, if approved. He said that he would assist in sensitizing the people in the Region about harmful effects that open defecation has on their lives to discourage the practice. He also stated that he would work through the Municipal and District Assemblies in the Region to provide toilet facilities in communities and would also ensure that the residents provide toilet facilities in their homes.



## **Youth Development Strategies**

Responding to a question on how he has helped as a Member of Parliament to harness the economic opportunities in the Bongo Constituency, the Hon. Nominee indicated that he had to do a lot to improve upon the lives of people. He disclosed that he has currently organized fifteen (15) women groups who are engaged in art and craft works including the promotion of the “Bolga Basket”. He also stated that he has supported youth Groups in his Constituency to undertake dry season farming. Apart from supplying the youth groups with water pumps, the nominee said he has also bought cattle for the youth groups to assist them in ploughing their farmlands. He said, if approved, he would introduce other interventions at various levels to ensure sharing of experiences amongst the Groups and support their activities towards improving the welfare of the youth in the Region.

## **Initiatives for the Support of Women in the Region**

The nominee commended the members of the Sirugu Women Association for implementing measures to put the products of the women on the international market. He also disclosed that he has undertaken similar projects in his Constituency which promotes the “Bolga Basket” produced by the women in the Bongo Constituency. In the same vein, the nominee stated that he would replicate the initiatives in the Region and adopt other measures to improve the condition of women in the Upper East Region. He intends to do this by collaborating effectively with donor agencies in the Region to establish growth centres. He also promised to support the fifteen (15) women groups and other industrious and enthusiastic women in the Region by sourcing funds from the District Assembly Common Fund of the Districts in the Region. He further disclosed that he was building an Arts Centre in the Bongo Constituency to promote artistic works produced in the area.

## **Relationship between MPs and District Chief Executives**

The nominee was of the view that the conflict between MPs and Chief Executives of MMDAs is borne out of the lack of understanding of the different roles they play as development agents. He was of the view that MPs should be given autonomy over the releases of their share of the Common Fund as part of the measures to addressing the issue. He raised the concern that situations where MPs were not informed of ongoing projects in their Constituencies is not a good practice because the MPs are

held directly accountable by the people. He however stated that he would work closely with the all Stakeholders because he believed that they all work towards a common goal.

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### **Composition of Regional Security Council**

Relating to the composition and functions of the Regional Security Council (REGSEC), the Hon. nominee stated that the REGSEC is headed by the Regional Minister with its membership composed of the Deputy Regional Minister, DCEs, heads of the various security Agencies in the Region. He explained that the function of the REGSEC is ensure peace and security in the region by working closely with the District Security Council.

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### **Curbing Smuggling at the Ghana/Burkina Border**

On what measures he would put in place to curb smuggling at the Ghana/Burkina border, the nominee conceded that the issue was a major concern in the Region. He attributed the increasing smuggling to the porous nature of the country's borders. He explained that the absence of a physical barrier allows people to enter the country so easily and thereby making it difficult to deal with the issue. As a measure to curb the practice, the nominee said he would support the security agencies to mount serious surveillance at the border and empower them to check the infiltration of certain groups of people from entering the country.

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### **Revival of the Pwalugu Tomato Factory**

The nominee stated that past attempts to revamp the Pwalugu Tomato factory have faced several challenges. According to him, the situation was due to the inability of farmers to produce tomatoes throughout the year to feed the factory. This, he attributed to the short raining season experienced in the Region. If given the nod, he intends to learn from ongoing efforts to revive the Factory and adopt new technologies to ensure availability of the raw material at all times to enable the factory operate throughout the year.

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### **Recommendation**

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The Committee by *consensus* recommends that the House approves the nomination of Hon. Albert Abongo for appointment as Regional Minister for the Upper East Region.

## **5.0 HON. EDWIN LANTEY VANDERPUYE – MINISTER-DESIGNATE FOR THE MINIST OF YOUTH & SPORTS**

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### **Background**

Hon. Edwin Nii Lantey Vanderpuye was born on 11<sup>th</sup> June, 1965 in Accra, Ghana.

He had his primary education at the All Saints International School at Adabraka, Accra from where he proceeded to the Rapid Preparatory School in Sunyani for his Middle School Education. He attended the Presbyterian Secondary School, Bechem in the Brong Ahafo Region for the Ordinary Level Certificate in 1983 and continued at the Mfantshipim School, Cape Coast where he obtained his Advanced Level Certificate in 1985. He later attended the University of Ghana where he graduated in 1989 with a Bachelor's Degree in English and Classics. Hon. Vanderpuye further attended the Ghana Institute of Journalism and graduated with a Diploma in Communications in 1997. He is currently undertaking a course in law at the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration.

The Hon. nominee has participated in a number of training programmes including Sports Management and Promotion at the National Sports Council and Basic Soccer Coaching. The nominee was the Sports Captain of the Sarbah Picot House, Mfantshipim (1984 - 1985) and also held the position of Sports Secretary at Mensah Sarbah Hall, Legon (1988 - 1989). Further to this, he served as the General Secretary of the National Chapters Co-ordinating Committees (NCCC) of the Hearts of Oak Sporting Club between 1987 -1990.

The Hon. nominee is a retired footballer and has played as a professional footballer for Accra Hearts of Oak and Abusua Dwarfs and is now the President of the Liberty Oldies.

The nominee undertook his national service at Assin Fosu District from 1989 to 1990 and later was engaged as Sports Presenter and Commentator by the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation from 1990 to 2001. The Hon. nominee served as an Aide at the Office of the President, Accra between 2009 and 2013.

Hon. Vanderpuye is currently the Member of Parliament for the Odododiodio Constituency and a Deputy Minister for Local Government and Rural Development.

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### **Responses to Questions**

The nominee provided the following responses to question posed to him:

#### **Development of Lesser-Known Sports**

The nominee stated that the country has failed in the past to take concrete steps to develop other sporting disciplines besides football. He stated that though the country had achieved laurels in the past in other sports like hockey, volleyball, table tennis and boxing, not much has been done to promote them. He said what the country needs to do is not only to resurrect them but also to develop the sports to win international awards. He said he would brand Sports as a product to attract both local and international sponsorship. According to him, Sports is science and one needs a good knowledge base to make it work. He emphasized that if sports is not developed, the outcomes would not be right. In this regard, the nominee assured the Committee that, if approved, he would be a Minister for Sports and not a Minister for only football.

#### **View on the High Attrition Rate of Ministers for Youth & Sports**

The nominee agreed with the fact that the frequent changes of Ministers for the Ministry of Youth and Sports since 2013 does not auger well for sports development in the country. He expressed the view that if the Ministers are accorded much time they would have acquired the needed experience to implement programmes to develop the sector. He however emphasized that it was the prerogative of the President to appoint and also relieve the Ministers of their post any time he deemed it appropriate.

#### **Alleged Role in Preventing Non-Gas from Registering at Odododiodio Constituency**

Commenting on his alleged role in preventing non-Gas from registering at the Odododiodio Constituency during the 2012 Voters Registration exercise, the nominee stated that what happened was completely misreported and that he did not stop the registration of non-Gas in the Constituency. He maintained that he grew up in the Ashanti and Brong

Ahafo Regions and is also married to a non-Ga and therefore appreciates the sense of diversity.

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### **Late Start of the 2016 Premier League Season**

On how he would get the 2016 League Season started if approved, the nominee stated that he did not know the cause of the delay of the League Season but he promised to seek more information on the underlying factors and thereafter hold constructive discussions with the various stakeholders in a bid to resolve the impasse. He assured the Committee that, he was positive about securing the understanding of the aggrieved parties to ensure that the League commences.

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### **Youth Development Initiatives**

The nominee said that youth development is at the core of the work of the Ministry of Youth and Sports and thus he would work with the National Youth Authority, the Youth Training Centres and allied institutions to create the necessary synergy to improve upon the conditions of the youth in this country. He intends to collaborate with the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development to determine the possibility of raising funds through District Assemblies towards implementing policies for youth development.

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### **Sports as an Emerging Industry in Ghana**

The nominee said that he would take the development of sports in the country more seriously to make sports an economic activity. He stated that he was aware of the steps being taken to expedite the passage of the National Sports Bill into law to create the necessary legal regime for the realization of that goal. He also said that he would adopt strategies to develop the requisite infrastructure for the training of sports men and women in the country. Regarding the source of funding for the development of sports infrastructure, the nominee proposed that District Assemblies should be made to commit 5% of their Common Fund towards sport development in their respective districts.

On the promotion of female football, the nominee stated that he was satisfied with the number of female football teams in the country and promised to do everything possible to coordinate their administration to

support them. He also promised to arrange for scholarships for female footballers.

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### **Proposal to wean GFA off the Budget of the Ministry**

On how the nominee intends to mobilize adequate resources to execute the programmes of the Ministry, the nominee indicated his intention to cut financial support to the Ghana Football Association (GFA). He explained that the GFA has already demonstrated the ability to attract the necessary sponsorship and funding and as such should not be allowed to still take a chunk of the budget meant for the Ministry and other sporting disciplines. He therefore suggested that the State should consider the possibility of making the GFA Self-sufficient so that it could be weaned off the budget of the Ministry in order to free resources for the development of other sporting disciplines. In this respect, he promised to work with the GFA to attract more sponsorship to supplement what the Association is getting currently in order to implement the proposal.

### **Recognizing Retired Sports Legends**

On how he would pay special attention to all retired sports legends in the country and to ensure that the country taps their wealth of knowledge and experience to guide sports development in the country, the nominee lamented the seeming neglect of former sports heroes and heroines. He demonstrated his personal efforts towards the welfare of former sports personalities through his activities with the Liberty Oldies Football Club. He stated that he would consult widely to ensure that sports' personalities who sacrifice for the state are rewarded while alive than doing so posthumously. He accordingly accepted the suggestion to name national monuments after them as a way of giving them due recognition. He therefore promised to ensure that all national sports stadia are named after such distinguished individuals to immortalize excellent sports personalities and administrators.

### **Maintenance of Sports Infrastructure**

On how he would ensure the regular maintenance of the four (4) major sports stadia in the country, he proposed that the work of the National Sports Authority should be confined to the development and promotion of sports thereby relieving it of the management of sports infrastructure. He

therefore recommended outsourcing the maintenance of sports infrastructure.

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### **Development of the Youth**

The nominee considered reviving some of the old institutions which helped to build the youth in this country including the Boys Scouts. He however intimated that budgetary allocation to the youth agencies is usually inadequate and hence there is the need to create new ways to fund youth activities in this country and considered raising funds through the MMDAs to support youth groups in the various districts.

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### **Reforming Football Administration in Ghana**

On whether the nominee would consider replicating the ongoing reforms at the World Football body (FIFA) to ensure transparency in football administration, he conceded that all was not well with football administration in Ghana. He stated that Ghana is part of the global village and he will adopt best practices to bring the needed improvement in the affairs of Ghana Sports. On whether he was prepared to overcome the perceived “mafia” at the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the nominee was convinced that he was capable of dealing with it if the perception turns out to be real.

On the payment of huge salaries to underperforming coaches who are not helping to spot and develop local talents, the nominee indicated that the issue is shared concern and if approved he would endeavor to encourage the GFA to appoint local coaches.

### **Recommendation**

The Committee *by consensus* recommends that the House approves the nomination of Hon. Edwin Nii Lantey Vanderpuye for appointment as Minister for Youth and Sports.

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## **6.0 HON. GEORGE KWEKU RICKETTS-HAGAN – REGIONAL MINISTER-DESIGNATE FOR THE CENTRAL REGION**

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## **Background**

Hon. Ricketts-Hagan was born on 21st August, 1963. He hails from Cape Coast in the Central Region. He attended Methodist 'B' School in Cape Coast from 1969 to 1975 for his primary education. He later attended Methodist School, Bakastir- Cape Coast from 1975 to 1977 and Jubilee School, Cape Coast from 1977 to 1978 for his Middle School Education.

From 1978 to 1983, Hon. Ricketts-Hagan attended University Practice Secondary School, Cape Coast for his 'O' Level Certificate. He later attended Adisadel College, Cape Coast from 1983 to 1985 where he obtained his 'A' level Certificate.

From 1986 to 1988, Hon Ricketts-Hagan pursued a BSc Computer Science and Statistics Programme in the University of Ghana, Legon but had to abandon the programme to continue in the United Kingdom.

From 1989 to 1990, Hon Ricketts-Hagan attended Kilburn School of Computing, London, UK where he obtained a Certificate in Computer Science. He later attended the University of London from 1991 to 1995 where he was awarded a BSc Economics Degree and from 1995 to 1996 where he obtained an MSc Finance Degree. He also attended the Graduate School of Business, University of Chicago, Illinois, USA from 2003 to 2005 where he obtained an MBA in Finance.

Hon. Ricketts-Hagan started work as a production Accounts Officer with Ghana Film Industry, Kanda as a Service Person from September 1985 to September 1986. From September 1990 to October 1995, he worked as a Treasury and FX Trade Analyst (Investment Banker) with the Northern Trust Bank, London UK. From November 1996 to December 1998. He also worked with JP Morgan Chase, London as a Senior High Yield Research Analyst. He Joined Rothschild Bank, London as a Senior Fixed Income Analyst from December 1998 to January, 2003. He worked with Emerging Markets Investec Bank, London as a Senior Investment Manager from November, 2005 to January, 2009.

Hon. Ricketts-Hagan Joined Strategic African Securities Finance Group, Accra from March 2009 to August 2010 where he worked as the Executive Director and General Manager. He was also appointed the Chief Executive Officer of World Trade Center, Accra from August 2010 to August 2012.

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Hon. Ricketts-Hagan is a Member of a number of Professional Bodies. He has been a Member of the Institute of Chartered Financial Analysts, USA



from 1998 to date. He has been also a Member of the Institute of Risk Management from 2000 to date. He has been a Member of the Securities and Investment Institute, UK from 1992 to date and a Member of the UK Society of Investment Professionals from 1998 to date.

Hon Ricketts-Hagan was appointed the Deputy Minister of Finance from May, 2013 to August 2014. He has been the Deputy Minister for Trade and Industry from August 2014 to date.

Hon. Ricketts-Hagan has served on a number of Boards including the Ghana Investment Promotion Center from August 2014 to date and the Export Trade, Agricultural and Industrial Fund from August 2014 to date.

Hon. Ricketts-Hagan is the Member of Parliament for Cape Coast South Constituency. He serves on the Parliamentary Committee on Privileges as well as Environment, Science and Technology.

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### **Responses to Questions**

The nominee provided the following responses to question posed to him:

#### **Qualities of a Regional Minister**

The nominee stated that a Regional Minister's qualities included interpersonal skills, a unifier and a consensus builder. He explained that the Regional Minister's function has to do with coordination, presiding over statutory meetings, monitoring and implementing government policies for the wellbeing of the people. These involve dealing with people and therefore one needs to have these qualities if the one wants to perform assigned duties very well. He said he wants to be remembered as the Regional Minister who effectively implemented Government policies.

#### **Improving Education in the Region**

The nominee informed the Committee that Central Region has some of the finest and best schools in the country. The Region boasts of six thousand (6000) basic schools and over ninety senior high schools. Unfortunately, many children in the Region do not get admission to these Senior High Schools even though some are very brilliant. He identified poverty as one of the reasons that has contributed to this. He said there was therefore the need to work to make sure that the people in the Region get to attend these schools.

He proposed to pursue the existing 30% quota system to ensure that more students in the region with qualifying grades are admitted. According to him, there was also the need to introduce mitigating factors to assist the students to do very well at the Basic Examinations

He informed the Committee that as a Member of Parliament for Cape Coast South, he has introduced a free bus ride for pupils to go to school. He also provided maths sets for candidates in the just ended BECE. He said lately school attendance has become encouraging whilst performance in the last BECE was better than the previous year. He held the opinion that these interventions he introduced in the constituency have contributed to this performance.

Questioned about the amounts involved in the purchase of the buses, the source of payment, method of procurement or acquisition and payment schedules for the buses, the nominee said he was aided by friends and associates. The Committee requested for further and better particulars on the buses and was duly provided by the nominee.

Hon. Ricketts- Hagan acknowledged Government's efforts to provide more schools in the region. He said these Day Secondary Schools when completed would enroll more students from the Region.

As a Regional Minister, he would introduce more interventions and other measures to ensure that the people of the Central Region benefited from the existing educational infrastructure in order to improve the level of education in the Region. He would also work with the education directors in the Region to help improve upon the quality of education in the Region.

### **Relationship between the Regional Minister and the Deputy**

The nominee indicated that he did not foresee any working challenges with the current Deputy Regional Minister. He said he has worked as a Deputy Minister himself in several capacities under two Ministers namely the Minister responsible for Finance and Minister of Trade and Industry. He said he is well aware of the role of a Deputy Minister and this would inform his relationship with his Deputy. He also indicated that as a Member of Parliament, he has very good relationship with the Deputy Minister who is also a Member of Parliament. He assured that they would work together to improve the lot of the people of Central Region.

### **The Role of CEDECOM**

The nominee informed the Committee that Central Region Development Commission (CEDECOM) is the development arm of the Central Regional Administration. However, on the performance of CEDECOM, there was a lot of room for improvement. He said as a Deputy Minister for Trade and Industry, he had the opportunity to work on CEDECOM as his schedule. He said one of his tasks was to restructure the agency. As a result, a number of recommendations were made to restructure the Agency. He agreed that CEDECOM did not have a legal status but was quick to add that it had a legal framework that it works with. He stated that an effective CEDECOM would go a long way to improve the wellbeing of the people of Central Region. He said he sees his nomination as an opportunity to work with the recommendations of the Ministry of Trade and Industry to make CEDECOM more effective.

### **Pension Scheme for fisher folks**

The nominee indicated that he was aware of Government's pledge to establish a Pension Scheme for the fisher folks in the Region. He said the scheme was feasible and that Government has engaged the fisher folks to come up with such a scheme. He said he would work to ensure that the pension scheme is established and it can be replicated in other regions.

### **Improving Tourism in the Region**

The nominee stated that the Region boasts of a number of tourist sites such as Kakum Park, Elimina Castle as well as Cape Coast Castle. However, there was the need to connect the dots. He explained that the Region lacks in tourism infrastructure to complement the tourist sites in the region. As a result the people are not benefiting from the tourism in the region. Tourism infrastructures include the roads, recreational facilities and good accommodation facilities. He said that in order to improve upon tourism traffic and benefit from it, there was the need to address these auxiliary facilities. He acknowledged Government efforts to improve the traffic to the Region by constructing the Kasoa Interchange. He said if approved, he would work to improve the tourism infrastructure to help boost tourism in the region. He also prayed Government to grant their request of an Airport for the Region.

### **Security in the Region**

The nominee informed the Committee that he was briefed about the security in the Region but was not fully abreast with the actual position yet. He said even though they were under control, a lot more need to be done. He said he was aware of boundary issues, chieftaincy disputes as well as issues of encroachments

He said as a Regional Minister, he would be able to ascertain the actual security issues in the Region and take the necessary steps to address them. He also indicated that he would work hard with the Security agencies in the Region to maintain the peace. On the issue of encroachments, he would work with state institutions to help protect public lands in the region.

### **Delays in the completion of the Komenda Sugar Factory**

The nominee agreed to the suggestion that the project at a time experienced some challenges. He explained that there were some disagreements with the Electricity Company of Ghana and Ghana Water Company Limited over the supply of their services.

He said that a meeting was held with the two companies and they have reached an agreement. He said as he speaks, services to the factory have commenced and that the project is expected to be completed as scheduled.

### **Supporting the Assemblies to raise revenue internally**

The nominee informed the Committee that when he worked at the Ministry of Finance, one of their duties was to assist the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) raise revenue internally. Through this exercise, he has acquired a lot of experience in this area. As a Regional Minister, he would bring this experience to assist the MMDAs to raise revenue for their development.

### **Recommendation**

The Committee *by consensus* recommends that the House approves the nomination of Hon. George Kweku Ricketts-Hagan for appointment as Regional Minister for the Central Region.

## **7.0 HON. JOHN ALEXANDER ACKON – REGIONAL MINISTER- DESIGNATE FOR THE ASHANTI REGION**

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### **Background**

Hon. John Alexander Ackon, was born on 29<sup>th</sup> July, 1958 at Obuasi-Adansi in the Ashanti Region. He began his formal education at St. Thomas Primary and Middle School, Obuasi in 1963. He subsequently attended Obuasi Secondary Technical School for his secondary education and obtained the G.C.E Ordinary Level Certificate in 1977. He thereafter pursued a General Course in Engineering (City and Guilds, London Institute) from 1977 to 1978 and subsequently, Ordinary Technician Diploma in Mechanical Engineering (City and Guilds, London Institute) from 1978 to 1980 at the Kumasi Polytechnic. He also attended the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi and was awarded a Diploma in Mechanical Engineering in 1984. In 2015, Hon. Ackon undertook a course at the Almol Institute, Accra and obtained a Post-Graduate Diploma in Business Administration.

Hon. Ackon is a Member of the Ghana Institution of Engineers, a Fellow of the Civilian Institute of Democratic Administration and an Associate Fellow of the Boardroom Institute of Governance and Leadership.

Hon. Ackon discharged his national service obligation at the Achimota Brewery Ltd, Accra between 1984 and 1986. After his service, he was appointed by the Company as a Workshop Engineer and later as a Maintenance Planner. The nominee joined and remained at AngloGold Ashanti, Obuasi as an Engineer between 1994 and 2008 and held several senior positions including the position of an Engineering Supervisor.

Between 1994 and 2000, Hon. Ackon served as a member of the Adansi West District Assembly as a Government Appointee. He later served as the Municipal Chief Executive of the Obuasi Municipal Assembly from May, 2009 to May, 2012.

In May, 2013, the nominee was appointed the Deputy Minister for the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Traditional Affairs and in June, 2014, he was appointed the Deputy Regional Minister for the Ashanti Region. The nominee is currently the Deputy Minister for the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection.

## **Responses to Questions**

The nominee provided the following responses to question posed to him:

### **Strategy for the Development of the Ashanti Region**

The nominee noted that timber, gold and cocoa have over the years been the traditional commodities associated with the economic development of the Ashanti Region. He however stated that available data points to the decline of these traditional commodities. He explained that gold as a natural resource is non-renewable and suggested that he would focus on agriculture in the Region to sustain employment and thereby improve the economic development of the region. He also proposed the processing of agricultural produce and the establishment of effective linkages between farms and market centres to create more jobs for the people of the Region particularly the youth.

### **Relationship with Traditional Leaders in the Ashanti Region**

On his strategy or how he would maintain healthy working relationship with the chiefs in the Region, the nominee stated that he would replicate his previous experience with Chiefs of Adansi Traditional Area acquired during his tenure as the MCE of Obuasi Municipal Assembly. He accordingly stated that in view of the respect he has for the chieftaincy institution he met with the Asantehene Osei Tutu after his nomination. He promised to work closely with Nananom if given the nod.

### **Initiatives to Deal with Galamsey Activities in the Region**

The nominee stated that, the illegal small scale mining activities continue to cause serious destruction to the environment and pose serious security threat which must be tackled with the seriousness that it deserves. He called for a collective responsibility of all citizens in the Region particularly the Chiefs and the Political Leadership of mining communities in tackling the menace. Besides pushing for the strict enforcement of the law, the nominee suggested the need to revisit environmental provisions of the licences awarded to mining companies to find out if the provisions are stringent or adequate. To avert conflict between the mining communities and investors, the nominee advocated for re-demarcation of potential mining zones by the Minerals Commission and the need for Mining

Companies to establish a good rapport with their catchment communities. The nominee assured the Committee of offering his full support as Chairman of REGSEC to curb the practice.

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### **Addressing the rampant Fire Outbreaks in the Region**

The nominee bemoaned the occurrence of rampant of fire outbreaks in workplaces in the Region and attributed the causes to non-observance of fire safety rules by the traders, congestions and lack of access point to the market. On measures he would adopt to prevent fire outbreaks, he indicated that he would conduct a risk assessment of the markets in the region in order to identify appropriate threats to fire and also consider the siting of Fire Stations in the Market to facilitate education, change of attitude and rapid responses in times of outbreak.

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### **Addressing the Impasse between the Nomadic Herdsmen and some Inhabitants of Agogo**

On whether he would endorse the approach of arresting some individuals perceived to be fueling the conflict as one of the measures of resolving the conflict, the nominee stated that he would rather prefer a collective approach which removes mistrust among the various stakeholders in resolving the conflict. He emphasized that having a united front was key to resolving the conflict. The nominee commended efforts being made by the Regional Coordinating Council and promised to engage the members of the Council to determine the way forward. He also pledged to lend his support towards the enforcement of the court order in respect of the dispute.

### **Selection of Beneficiaries of the LEAP**

The nominee informed the Committee that the LEAP Beneficiaries are selected through a rigorous process though he admitted that MPs were not directly involved in the process. He explained that by the selection process, the Community LEAP Implementation Committees (CLIC) which execute the final selection of the beneficiaries were expected to act as liaison between the Ministry of Gender and Social Protection and Stakeholders of which MPs of the area are an integral part. He emphasized that the role of MPs in the implementation of the LEAP was crucial and as such conscious efforts must be made to involve the MPs in the selection process.

### **Maintenance of Peace and Security during the Election Period**

The nominee indicated that maintenance of peace and security in the Region was crucial for the successful conduct of the forthcoming election. He believes that his personal disposition and ability to work with people irrespective of their political affiliations would win the cooperation of all stakeholders to promote peaceful elections in the Region. He intends, if approved, to engage stakeholders in Region and in particular the MPs of the Region to institute appropriate strategies to avert security threats that may arise. He also assured the Committee that if given the nod, he would not utilize his position as Chairman of REGSEC for any political advantage though he will contest the elections as the NDC Parliamentary Candidate for the Obuasi West Constituency.

### **Relationship between District Chief Executives and Regional Ministers**

The nominee explained that the seeming conflict between DCEs and their respective Regional Ministers arises out of the tendency of people to report their grievances to the Regional Ministers instead of channeling same via the District Assemblies. According to the nominee, if given the nod, he would establish an effective communication chain to allay the fears of the DCEs in the Region to address the issue. In response to the suggestion that DCEs prioritise requests from the Chief of Staff and the Minister for Local Government and Rural Development higher than those from their respective Regional Ministers, the nominee indicated that he did not do that during his tenure as MCE of Obuasi Municipal Assembly. He suggested that in cases where DCEs receive multiple and conflicting requests from these Leaders, the acceptable way to go about it is for the DCEs to seek permission from their Regional Ministers if they have to prioritise the other requests from those Officials over of that their Regional Ministers.

### **Development Plans for the Ashanti Region**

The nominee said he would work assiduously to realize the vision of His Excellency the President for the Region which focuses on the policy of 'Putting People First' if he is found worthy. In this regard, he promised to ensure the execution of on-going flagship projects such as the construction of the Military Hospital in Kumasi, the construction of Community Day Senior High Schools and the *Obuasi-Anwiankwanta* road.



He intends to do this by bringing his leadership skills and experiences to bear on his work as Regional Minister.

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### **Recommendation**

The Committee *by consensus* recommends that the House approves the nomination of Hon. John Alexander Ackon for appointment as Regional Minister for the Ashanti Region.

## **8.0 MR. PROSPER DOUGLAS KWEKU BANI - MINISTER-DESIGNATE FOR THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR**

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### **Background**

Mr. Prosper Douglas Kweku Bani was born on 17<sup>th</sup> September, 1958 at Kpando in the Volta Region. He had his primary education at the Akosombo Experimental Primary School in the Eastern Region (1964-1969) and Middle School education at Cann's Primary/Middle School at Mataheko, Accra (1969 – 1971).

The nominee proceeded to the Wesley Grammar Secondary School, Dansoman in the Greater Accra Region and continued at the Bishop Herman College, Kpando in the Volta Region to obtain his GCE Ordinary Level Certificate in 1976. He then sat as a Private Candidate for the West African Examinations Council 'O' Level in November – December, 1977. In 1978 he enrolled at St. Thomas Aquinas Secondary School, Accra for his GCE 'A' Level Examinations. Between 1979 and 1981, the nominee attended the University of Ghana, Legon where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science and Sociology.

Mr. Bani obtained a Master of Arts Degree from the Institute of Social Studies in the Netherlands between 1988 and 1989, upon being granted a study leave by the Ghana Institute of Journalism. He was also awarded Master of Arts Degree in Comparative Politics and Governance by the University of Texas in 1992. Between June and August 1991, he participated in a short course at the University of Oslo, Norway, and was awarded a Certificate of Achievement in International Development Studies.

The Nominee discharged his national service obligation at the St. John's Grammar School, Accra between 1981 and 1982.

The nominee taught at the Ghana Institute of Journalism Accra, between 1984 and 1992 as a Lecturer and progressed to become a Senior lecturer and Director of Studies in 1989.

Mr. Prosper Douglas Kweku Bani joined the United Nations in 1995 where he worked until September, 2012. During his employment with the United Nations, Mr. Bani held several positions and handled many projects which include Project Manager and Chief Technical Advisor for the Tajikistan Community-Based Peace and Confidence Building Project; Programme Specialist on Peace and Confidence Building Programmes in Switzerland; Specialist in Small Arms and Demobilisation Project in Switzerland; Regional Advisor for Africa on Crisis Prevention and Recovery; Team Leader for Africa Bureau on Crisis Prevention and Recovery and Senior Recovery Advisor and Manager, Horn of Africa.

The nominee was appointed and served as the Chief of Staff at the Office of the President of the Republic of Ghana between 2013 and 2015.

### **Responses to Questions**

The nominee provided the following responses to question posed to him:

#### **Measures to Curb Narcotic Trade**

When asked of steps he would put in place to curb illicit Narcotic Drugs Trade in Ghana if he is given the nod, the nominee indicated that though some effort has been made in recent times to improve the security system in relation to the detection and arrest of culprits in such cases, particularly at the Kotoka International Airport, the country needs to do more to further strengthen its security systems. He assured the Committee that he would work to address all teething challenges confronting the Security Agencies in the combat of the narcotic trade to reduce its prevalence. He informed the Committee that the Ghana Police Service and the Attorney General's Department have instituted investigations into all narcotic cases. He said if considered suitable, he will support them and other relevant institutions to speed up the prosecution of all narcotic cases.

### **Provision of Adequate Security to Members of Parliament**

Responding to a question on measures he intends to adopt to provide security for Members of Parliament in the light of the murder of the Member of Parliament for Abuakwa North, Hon. Joseph Danquah Adu, the nominee expressed concern about the level of protection offered to Hon. Members of Parliament. He testified that he has driven through the premises of Parliament on a number of occasions without any security check. He bemoaned the lax security arrangement and the limited use of modern security gadgets in Parliament. The nominee assured the Committee of prioritizing the provision of adequate security to Parliament. He intends to liaise with the Leadership of the House to determine an appropriate security architecture which would offer adequate protection of all Members if approved.

### **Comments on the Admission of the Ex-Guantanamo Bay Detainees in Ghana**

Commenting on the presence of the two Ex-Guantanamo Bay Detainees in the country, the nominee endorsed the assurances of His Excellency the President of the Republic that the Detainees did not pose any security threat to individual Ghanaians and the State. He committed to reaffirm the assurances of the His Excellency the President to allay the fears of Ghanaians while at the same time instituting the requisite security measures to avert any potential threat. On a related issue, the nominee stated that he did not know the basis for the decision to allow into Ghana an Islamic Cleric regarded as an extremist who was banned from entering other countries including the United States of America. He explained that issues bordering on national security are classified information and since he was not part of the security apparatus of the nation, he did not have access to such sensitive security information. The nominee nonetheless pledged to hold further discussions with relevant Security Agencies relating to the said Islamic Cleric to determine whether his entry poses any national security threat.

### **Improving the Conditions of Security Agencies**

Responding to questions relating to how he would improve upon the conditions of Security Agencies in general if given the nod, the nominee bemoaned the inadequacy and the poor conditions under which Security Officers in the country discharge their duties. He posited that crime

prevention and control entail very difficult tasks which require that Security Agencies received adequate training and equipment and more importantly adequate motivation. The nominee expressed his commitment to provide the necessary logistics as well as accommodation to the Security Agencies to enable them discharge their obligations efficiently and effectively.

### **Enhancing the Conditions of Prisoners**

The nominee informed the Committee that efforts were on-going to build a new remand facility at Nsawam to help ease congestion at the country's prisons and to separate remand prisoners from convicted persons. He also pledged to encourage innovative initiatives such as the 'Justice for all Programme' to address the issue. The nominee also assured the Committee of working assiduously to address challenges that slow investigative processes which often lead to delays in adjudicating alleged criminal or civil cases.

### **Involvement of the Nominee in Partisan Politics**

The nominee in a response to a question relating to his affiliation with the NDC informed the Committee that, though he had always believed in the ideology of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), he could only become a card-bearing member after the end of his work with the UNDP in 2012. This was because he needed to adhere to the UN principles of neutrality and non-partisanship in engagements with member States. He therefore considered it more appropriate and ethical to engage in active politics after that period.

### **Funding Challenges of the Ministry of the Interior**

Relating to the budgetary constraints of the Ministry of the Interior and how he intends to work with the limited resources, the nominee indicated that he was aware of the situation which was not peculiar to only the Ministry of the Interior but other Ministries, Departments and Agencies as well. He nonetheless assured the Committee of his commitment to work with the limited resources available to the Ministry to ensure adequate security for Ghanaians and, to a large extent, the State. The nominee was optimistic that the Ministry of Finance would release adequate funds to support the activities of the Ministry of the Interior for the 2016 financial year in view of the security demands of the impending general elections.

### **Control of the Proliferation of Small Arms**

In answering questions on the proliferation of small arms and weapons in the country in the light of recent discoveries and apprehensions by the Security Agencies, the nominee observed that the situation puts the country in a very precarious state. He pledged to institute measures to retrieve weapons already in circulation, curb local manufacturing of such arms and tighten controls at the country's entry points. He further indicated his intention to fast-track the ongoing marking of State ammunitions and extend same to those imported by Licensed Arms Dealers to facilitate the tracking and control of weapons use in the country. He said, when given the opportunity he will work with all stakeholders to ensure that the threat and use of small arms is fully controlled.

### **Comments on Issues Regarding Nomadic Herdsmen**

On how he intends to deal with conflict between the nomadic herdsmen and farmers across the country, the nominee advocated for effective border controls and the demarcation of some areas of the country's agricultural land as pasture for animal grazing. The nominee noted that the destructive nature of the activities of herdsmen across the country is a shared concern and described the situation as a resource-based crisis which requires sub-regional and concerted efforts to combat. He indicated that the free movement of the nomadic herdsmen into countries within the sub-region is supported by ECOWAS protocols. He attributed the movement of the herdsmen down the South of the sub-region to the reduced pasture availability up North caused by climate change. He expressed the opinion that the crisis could degenerate from community confrontation to a full blown arms conflict if urgent steps are not taken to address it. He called for the intensification of afforestation programmes as a means to mitigate the impact of climate change as well as revisiting existing international protocols. He said if approved, his immediate efforts would focus on providing security to people in the affected communities as well as improving the effectiveness of existing security arrangements established to control confrontation between indigenes and the herdsmen.

### **Strategies to Ensure Security in the 2016 General Elections**

In an answer to a question about measures he would institute to ensure the security of the State before, during and after the 2016 general

elections, the nominee stated that his primary strategy would dwell on conflict prevention rather than resolution. He cited the activities of “political vigilante” groups and the use of intemperate language as some of the factors that incite violence during elections. He said he was aware of an Election Taskforce established within the Ghana Police Service to ensure peaceful elections and that if approved he would support to maintain peace and order. He also pledged to work closely with all stakeholders including the Ministry of Communications, the Ghana Media Commission, Ghana Journalist Association and in particular, the Political Parties to develop and implement adequate security systems to minimize, as much as possible, the occurrences of violence before, during and after the general elections.

### **Recommendation**

The Committee *by consensus* recommends that the House approves the nomination of Mr. Douglas Prosper Bani for appointment as Minister for the Interior.

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**9.0 HON. MAVIS AMA FRIMPONG - MINISTER-DESIGNATE  
FOR THE EASTERN  
REGION**

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### **Background**

Hon. Mavis Ama Frimpong was born on 25<sup>th</sup> September, 1969 at Akim Afosu in the Birim North District of the Eastern Region. She had her basic education at Afosu Presbyterian Basic School and continued to Amenfiman Secondary School at Wassa Akropong in the Western Region for her GCE ‘O’ Level education from 1984 to 1989. She then proceeded to Fijai Secondary School at Sekondi from 1989 to 1991 for her GCE ‘A’ Level education. From 1993 to 1998 Ms. Mavis Frimpong attended the University of Cape Coast and obtained both Bachelor’s Degree in Social Science and a Diploma in Education. She further attended the University of Ghana from 2005 to 2006 where she was awarded a Master’s Degree in Public Health. The nominee has participated in a number of local and international training programmes.

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Hon. Ama Frimpong started her career as a Community Reproductive Health Advisor under the ARCH Project of CARE International, Ghana from February, 1999 to January, 2003. She was later employed at the Catholic

Relief Services (CRS) as a Senior HIV/AIDS Programme Officer and later became the HIV/AIDS Care and Support Specialist under the Strengthening HIV/AIDS Responses Partnership (SHARP) Project of CRS from February, 2003 to November, 2005. From September, 2006 to October, 2007 she was employed as the Ghana Programme Coordinator for the R3M Programme of the U.S. Population Council. Ms. Frimpong later became the Sexual and Reproductive Health Advisor for West and Central Africa for the Millennium Development Goals Centre of Earth Institute of Columbia University. Between May, 2011 and April, 2013, the nominee was appointed the District Chief Executive for the Birim North District.

The nominee is currently the Deputy Minister for the Eastern Region and has occupied this position since April 2013.

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### **Responses to Questions**

The nominee provided the following responses to question posed to her:

#### **Combating Illegal Mining (Galamsey)**

Asked about the challenging issues in the Eastern Region and steps to address them, the nominee mentioned the menace of illegal small scale mining (galamsey) as a critical challenge confronting the Region. She said as a Deputy Minister for the Region she has worked diligently with the three (3) substantive Regional Ministers since her appointment to support the work of the Taskforce established to deal with the illegal mining activities. She however observed that the fines imposed on the perpetrators were not deterrent enough and equipment used by illegal miners have always found their way back into the practice. In view of this, the nominee indicated that she together with the Regional Minister has made proposals to the Minerals Commission to bridge any gap in the law. She was optimistic the law recently passed by Parliament which sought to address these issues including the confiscation of equipment used in the activities would help in the fight.

#### **Addressing the High Prevalence Rate of HIV/AIDS in the Region**

On how she had helped reduce the high prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS in the Eastern Region, the nominee indicated that she was a member of the HIV/AIDS Regional Committee which carried out a number of education and advocacy programmes to reduce the HIV/AIDS infection. She disclosed that with the support of queen mothers in the Region, the prevalence rate for HIV/AIDS in the Region has reduced from 7.9% in 2006

to 3.7% in 2014, suggesting that the Region was no longer at an epidemic stage.

### **Siting of the University of Environment and Sustainable Development**

When the nominee was asked on her view on the siting of the University of Environment and Sustainable Development at Somanya and the Afram Plains instead of the Regional Capital, Koforidua, she stated that she did not see anything wrong with the decision. She told the Committee that the Government's policy of converting all public Polytechnics into Technical Universities will enable Koforidua, the Eastern Regional Capital to also have a public university.

### **Tourism Promotion**

Responding to a question on how she would promote the tourism potential of the Eastern Region, she told the Committee that there are a number of tourist sites in the Region and new sites have been documented and launched. She said that when given the nod, she would help project the tourist sites on the tourism map to attract investors to partner the Region for the full development of the Region's full tourism potential.

### **Recommendation**

The Committee *by consensus* recommends that the House approves the nomination of Hon. Mavis Ama Frimpong for appointment as Regional Minister for the Eastern Region.

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## **10.0 MR. ABUBAKARI ABDULAI – REGIONAL MINISTER-DESIGNATE FOR THE NORTHERN REGION**

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### **Background**

Mr. Abubakari Abdulai was born on 18th January, 1971 in Nalerigu in the Northern Region. He hails from Walewale. Mr. Abdulai started his basic education in Walewale Hashimia English/ Arabic Primary School from 1976 to 1982. From 1982 to 1986, he attended Walewale English/ Arabic Middle School where he acquired his Middle School Leaving Certificate.

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From 1988 to 1993, Mr. Abdulai attended Walewale Secondary School where he obtained his GCE Ordinary Level Certificate. He later attended Tamale Secondary School from 1993 to 1995 where he obtained his GCE

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Advanced Level Certificate. From 1998 to 2001, Mr. Abdulai attended the University of Ghana and was awarded a Bachelor of Arts Degree.

In 2005, Mr. Abdulai attended the University of Cape Coast to pursue a Master of Arts (Research) programme. However due to career demands, he was unable to complete the course. The programme was downgraded to a Master of Arts (course work) where he obtained his Master of Arts Degree (Course work) in 2013.

Mr. Abdulai began his working career with the Catholic Relief Services in Gambaga as a Community facilitator from November, 2001 to August 2002. He later joined the Cooperative League of USA (CLUSA) from September 2002 to August 2007. Whilst working with CLUSA, Mr. Abdulai rose through the ranks from a District facilitator to a Zonal Coordinator under the Government Accountability Improvement Trust Programme.

Mr. Abdulai later joined IBIS Ghana in Gushiegu from September, 2007 to December, 2009 where he worked as the Programme facilitator under the Alliance for Change in Education programme. He also worked as the Programme director in IBIS Ghana from January, 2010 to February, 2011 under the Public Participation in Local Governance Programme.

Mr. Abdulai worked with Action Aid Ghana, Tamale as the Programmes Manager under the Northern Region Local Rights Programme from February, 2011 to April 2012. He joined MS- Action Aid Denmark, Lilongwe-Malawi as the Human Rights-Based Approach Advisor from November, 2013 to January, 2016.

Mr. Abdulai has attended a number of training programmes. He attended the Transparency and Good Governance Programme in Washington DC, USA from 2nd to 23rd February, 2008 organised by the Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, USA. He also attended Human Rights-based Approach to Development in Arusha-Tanzania from 18th to 22nd November, 2013, organised by the Training Center for Development Co-operation (TCDC) in Arusha. Similarly, He participated in the just ended Participatory Toolbox for Social Accountability in Arusha-Tanzania from 19th to 24th October, 2015, also organised by the Training Centre for Development Co-operation (TCDC) in Arusha.

Mr. Abdulai is a twice defeated Parliamentary candidate of the Peoples National Convention in the 2008 and 2012 General Elections for the Walewale Constituency.

## **Responses to Questions**

The nominee provided the following responses to question posed to him:

### **Decision to join the NDC**

The nominee informed the Committee that his decision to leave the PNC and join the NDC was based on the feedback he received after several consultations with the constituents. He explained that after losing the Parliamentary elections twice, many of his Constituents suggested to him that he was a good person who has a better chance of winning the seat on the ticket of NDC rather than the PNC. He was of the conviction that his decision was the best and therefore has no intention of rejoining the PNC. He disagreed with the suggestion that his ambition was to become an MP and not about serving his people. He indicated that after serving the people in the Region as a Civil Society person it was time to serve them in a different capacity where his impact could be felt the more.

### **Impact of the activities of the NGO**

The nominee stated that activities of NGOs in the northern part of the country have inured to the benefit of the area. He mentioned the establishment of educational infrastructure in communities, the provision of credit facilities and the training support to Small and Medium Scale Enterprises as some of the areas the NGOs have impacted the lives of the people. In giving examples, the nominee said over twenty (20) basic schools were established in Gushiegu. He however indicated that there was the need to regularise the activities of the NGOs and link them to the activities of State Institutions if the nation is to benefit more from the NGOs.

### **Promotion of Tourism in the Region**

Mr. Abdulai indicated that the Northern Region has a number tourist sites that could be developed for the benefit of the people. In order for the people particularly those living in the catchment areas to derive the maximum benefit, the nominee stated that the tourist sites need to be supported with the required tourism infrastructure such as good roads, hotels, recreational facilities, among others. He said as the Regional Minister, he would prioritise the development of the supporting infrastructure and also task the Regional Coordinating Council to come up with innovative ways of harnessing the tourism potentials of the Region.

### **Dealing with diverse Ethnic Groups in the Region**

The nominee agreed to the suggestion that the Region has diverse ethnic groups which may present some form of challenges in his engagement with them. He however indicated that the ethnic groups are well organised with a well laid out leadership structure. He said with this structure, it is easy for anybody to reach out to the ethnic groups through their leadership. As the Regional Minister, if approved by the august House, he would utilize the leadership structures of the ethnic groups to gain their cooperation in the development of the Region.

### **Conflicts in the Region**

The nominee conceded that the Region has been bedeviled by a number of conflicts, the prominent amongst them being the Dagbon Conflict. He suggested that critical component of conflict resolution include the ability to identify possible hotspots and to intervene early. If approved to become the Minister for the Region and the Chairman of the Regional Security (REGSEC), he would work with people with requisite knowledge to resolve the conflicts and also institute early warning systems to help identify the threats for swift action. On the Dagbon Conflict, the nominee stated that the Eminent Chiefs led by the Asantehene have done a good job by providing a roadmap to resolve the conflict. He assured the Committee of offering the necessary assistance to the Eminent Chiefs to resolve the conflict.

### **Proliferation of Arms in the Region**

The nominee concurred with the suggestion that the Region has experienced increase in illegal possession of small arms and weapons which threatens the Region's security. He assured the Committee of working closely with the Security Agencies bring the situation under control to ensure that the Region is safe to Ghanaians and investors. The Committee on its part urged him to look at the law governing small arms and implement the provisions of the Act, if he is approved.

### **Addressing the rise Motorbike Theft in the Region**

The nominee agreed to the suggestion that there was a rise in motorbike theft in the Region. He said the situation was unfortunate and undesirable and requires urgent security measures to address. He said if the House considers him fit, he will lead the REGSEC to liaise with the Security Agencies in the Region to address the situation.

### **Follow-up on Audit Issues**

The nominee informed the Committee that coming from Civil Society, he holds the view that that other side of governance is weak as the public sector does not often involve the citizenry. There was the need to make public officers accountable.

He said as the Regional Minister and head of the Regional Coordinating Council, he would put in place mechanisms to ensure that the Auditor-General's recommendations are implemented. In his view, it was the role of the Regional Minister to ensure the enforcement of the existing policies of government and other enabling laws. He would therefore ensure the enforcements of the Auditor-General's Reports especially those concerning the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies in the Region.

### **Relationship with Members of Parliament in the Region**

The nominee explained to the Committee that his interest in Governance was to serve the people in the Region. He was of the view that the current Members of Parliament also share similar interests. As the Regional Minister, he would work with the Members of Parliament to ensure that the Region benefit from a lot of developmental activities. He said each one has a role to play towards the development of the Region.

### **Measures to address Bureaucracy**

The nominee acknowledged the fact that bureaucracy in the public sector was real and could be very frustrating. One way of addressing such an issue is to ensure that people work timeously. He said that he would ensure that staff of the Regional Coordinating Council work timeously in order to reduce the abuse of bureaucracy. He also said he would put in place performance indicators, appraisals and target settings, among others.

### **International Airport**

The nominee agreed to the suggestion that the Region needs an International Airport. The Airport is central to the opening up of the Region. He said Tamale is the hub of the North and therefore critical towards the development of the three Regions. The International Airport would also facilitate movement and reduce accidents. He said he would support Government's efforts to upgrade the airport to an international airport.

### **Recommendation**

The Committee *by consensus* recommends that the House approves the nomination of Mr. Abubakari Abdulai for appointment as Regional Minister for the Northern Region.

#### **11.0 GENERAL OBSERVATION**

The key observation made by the Committee is that almost all the nominees did not take their time to write their curriculum vitae. In the event, there were many gaps and sometimes overlaps and seeming conflict in the CVs submitted and the nominees were requested to re-submit their CVs. The indication is that the nominee were not diligent enough, yet the Offices that they have been nominated to requires serious diligent. The Committee accordingly urges the nominees to exercise greater diligence in their respective endeavours if approved by the House.

#### **12.0 CONCLUSION**

The Committee has duly considered the nomination of His Excellency the President for Ministerial appointments in line with the 1992 Constitution and the Standing Orders of the House and recommends the nominees to the House for approval. The seven (7) nominees are as follows:

- i) **Hon. Albert Abongo** - **Regional Minister-Designate for the Upper East Region**
- ii) **Mr. John Alexander Ackon** - **Regional Minister-Designate for the Ashanti Region**
- iii) **Hon. Edwin Nii Lantey Vanderpuye** - **Minister-Designate for the Ministry of Youth and Sports**
- iv) **Hon. Kweku Ricketts Hagan-** **Regional Minister-Designate for the Central Region**
- v) **Mr. Abdallah Abubakari** - **Regional Minister-Designate for the Northern Region**
- vi) **Mr. Prosper Douglas Bani** - **Minister-Designate for the Ministry of the Interior**

vii) Ms. Mavis Ama Frimpong - Regional Minister-Designate for the Eastern Region

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Respectfully submitted.



.....  
**HON. EBO BARTON-ODRO**  
**(FIRST DEPUTY SPEAKER AND**  
**CHAIRMAN, APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE)**

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.....  
**PEACE FIAWOYIFE (MS.)**  
**(CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE)**

**FEBRUARY, 2016**