

**MEMORANDUM TO PARLIAMENT**

**BY**

**THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT**

**SUBJECT:**

**APPROVAL FOR GHANA'S MEMBERSHIP OF  
THE GULF OF GUINEA COMMISSION.**

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OSU - ACCRA

**MAY, 2015.**

## **1.0 ACTION REQUIRED**

Honourable Members are respectfully invited to consider and approve the request for Ghana's membership of the Gulf of Guinea Commission which aims at ensuring Peace and Security among States that border the Gulf of Guinea.

## **1.1 BACKGROUND**

The Gulf of Guinea Commission was established by a Treaty signed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 2001 in Gabon. Member States that are party to the Treaty include Angola, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo Brazzaville, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Nigeria and Sao Tome and Principe.

The objectives of the Commission include the following:

- i. To strengthen ties of cooperation and solidarity existing among member states;
- ii. To create conditions of mutual confidence, peace, and security conducive to harmonious development of states;
- iii. To promote close consultation in the exploitation of the natural resources of the Gulf of Guinea with a view to ensuring the economic development of member states;
- iv. To harmonise the respective policies of member states regarding the matters of common interest, particularly concerning the exploitation of natural resources;
- v. To protect, preserve and improve the natural environment of the Gulf of Guinea and cooperate in the event of natural disaster;
- vi. To formulate a concerted immigration policy and find appropriate solutions to the problem which might arise thereof;

- vii. To strengthen cooperation in the area of communications, with a view to facilitating ties and trade among member states and their peoples;
- viii. To develop a wide communications network and ensure the integration of transport networks;
- ix. To promote co-operation in the different sectors within the framework of the treaty establishing the African Economic Community and the African Union and thereby contribute to the development of the continent;

It is pertinent to note that the Gulf of Guinea Commission became dormant soon after its establishment in 2001. However following increasing insecurity among the countries along the Gulf, the Heads of States of the Commission met in Gabon in August 2005 to revive the Commission and appoint Administrative Heads to commence duty. The meeting also selected Angola as the Headquarters of the Commission.

In pursuit of the Commissions objectives, the Contracting Parties reaffirmed their commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charters of the United Nations and the African Union. Parties to the Commission will also need to cooperate and pool their efforts towards the harmonization of their respective policies in the areas of common interest.

## **2.0 JUSTIFICATION**

In recent times there has been an increasing maritime security concern in the Gulf of Guinea and this requires concerted efforts by countries in the region to address the security challenges. Ghana is already investing a lot of resources into the maritime security programmes occasioned largely by the discovery of oil in commercial quantities. It is therefore imperative for Ghana to

join the Commission and cooperate with other countries within the region to ensure an atmosphere of mutual confidence, peace and security favorable for the development of Member States. The Commission will also provide a platform for Ghana to better safeguard her interest in the Gulf of Guinea region.

It also worth noting that at the Third Ordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Gulf of Guinea Commission, His Excellency, President John Dramani Mahama recounted some of the security threats in the region and indicated Ghana's efforts to improve maritime security along her coastline through retooling and restructuring of maritime-related agencies. He stated that Ghana's efforts alone were not sufficient to address the regional threat and announced that Ghana will seek membership of the Gulf of Guinea Commission to enable her to contribute to the peace and security of the region.

### **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

No financial implications are foreseen for Ghana's membership of the Commission apart from the payment of annual contributions and bearing the cost of delegation to meetings of the Commission.

### **4.0 CONSULTATIONS WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS/ORGANIZATIONS**

Interested stakeholders with an interest in the Security of Ghana's territorial waters have been consulted and no objection has been expressed to Ghana's membership of the Gulf of Guinea Commission.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

The Gulf of Guinea Commission provides a framework for cooperation among the member countries in protecting their maritime interests. Ghana's membership of the Commission will enable her to promote and safeguard her interests in the region.

In the light of the above, Parliament is respectfully invited to consider and approve the request for Ghana's membership of the Gulf of Guinea Commission.

The Clerk of Parliament has been provided with copies of the Treaty establishing the Gulf of Guinea Commission for your perusal.

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**HON. DZIFA A. ATTIVOR (MRS)**  
**MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT**

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