

**PRESS STATEMENT ON THE OCCASION OF
AFRICAN UNION (AU) ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY
11th July 2023**

Today 11th July 2023, the African Union (AU) and its member states commemorate 20 years of enacting the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combatting Corruption (AUCPCC). This framework was developed to guide member states to fight corruption and promote good governance. This momentous occasion provides stakeholders across the continent; state and non-state actors, a unique opportunity to take stock of the gains made while considering the debilitating effect of corruption on the economic growth and development of the 55-member states of the union.

At the national level, the AU Day and the 20th Anniversary offer Ghana a period for introspection, particularly when the country is said to have stagnated in its fight against corruption and also struggling to pick itself up from an all-time economic quagmire. Among the causes attributed to the current economic challenges facing the country are the increasing corrupt practices and other global developments.

In order to accelerate efforts at redeeming the country from further development challenges, key stakeholders in the fight against corruption are joining forces with Honourable Edem Senanu, Ghana's representative on the AU Advisory Board on Corruption (AUABC) to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the AU Anti-Corruption Day in Ghana. The shared objective is to encourage all stakeholders in the anti-corruption space to use the occasion and subsequent weeks and months till the end of 2023, to organise events aimed at amplifying national strategies to stem the tide of corruption and enhance the country's integrity systems.

It is important to note that Ghana is one of the 48 African countries that has so far signed onto the AUCPCC and ratified it as a covenant it subscribes to. To demonstrate the country's commitment to the convention, Ghana has complied with most of the articles of the convention and has proceeded within the context of the AUCPCC, to develop the National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (NACAP) to guide and strengthen anti-corruption activities within the country.

What remains, however, is the domestication of key aspects of the convention, including criminalizing illicit enrichment (introduction of reverse burden of proof), diversion of state property, conflict of interest, etc., as part of the country's Criminal Offences Act, 1960 (Act 29) and other anti-corruption legislation. In addition, Ghana's framework on Asset Declaration which is regarded below expected best global standards would have to be reviewed to incorporate verification and stricter sanctions for non-compliance.

On behalf of the good people of Ghana, we call on the Executive and Parliament to work towards passing the Conduct of Public Officers Bill into law in order to enhance the fight against

corruption in Ghana. We also call on all NACAP implementing partners to report back to the NACAP Secretariat on activities they implemented in the year 2022 to rid their institutions of corruption. It is not encouraging to note that only 50 agencies reported on their activities in the year 2022.

We use this occasion to call on all stakeholders, to re-commit themselves to the fight against corruption. We want to emphasize that we can win the fight against corruption if we join forces and work together - Citizens, CSOs, Media, Private Sector, Government, and academia. We appeal to the government to display stronger political will and allocate adequate funding to bolster the effectiveness of all Anti-Corruption Institutions. This unified effort aligns with the AU's theme of "*AUCPCC, 20 Years After: Achievements and Prospects.*"

We use this opportunity to emphasize that corruption remains a reality and to encourage Ghanaians to revisit our cultural values that prohibit corrupt conduct. We are convinced that African countries, such as Ghana, can use African models and solutions to tackle and overcome corruption if we employ research and an evidence-based approach in crafting the strategies that will define our policies and programmes over the next two (2) decades. God bless our homeland Ghana, as we commit ourselves, to doing what is in the best interest of our nation.

#AfricaAgainstCorruption

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Signed.

Mr. Edem Senanu, Member - African Union Advisory Board on Corruption (AUABC)

Mrs. Mary Addah, Acting Executive Director - Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII)

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