



REPUBLIC OF GHANA

**14TH SESSION OF THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**REMARKS ON THE ADOPTION OF THE
UPR REPORT ON GHANA**

(Presented by ~~the~~ Mrs. Amma Gaisie, Solicitor-General)

Madam President,

I am deeply honoured to address the 14th session of the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council. On behalf of the Deputy Attorney-General and Deputy Minister for Justice, the Honourable Mr. Ebo Barton Odro, I would like to extend our deepest appreciation to all member states who participated in the review of Ghana. We welcome the comments and recommendations which were made.

My delegation also wishes to thank the members of the Troika – Angola, Norway and Qatar, and the Secretariat for all their hard work in preparing the report. We commend their professionalism.

Madam President,

During the review of Ghana on Tuesday, 23rd October, 2012, seventy-six (76) member states participated in the interactive dialogue. Some of them made recommendations, while others commented on the progress we have made in implementing the recommendations accepted during our first

review in May 2008. We also received advance questions from some member states, which we provided responses to in our opening statement during the review last week. We have taken these recommendations, comments and questions in good faith as we believe that they have come from member states who have a sincere interest in helping us advance human rights in Ghana. We are determined not to rest on our oars, but to endeavour to build upon the achievements and improve further, even as we ensure that the sovereignty of our country is safeguarded.

Madam President,

During the interactive dialogue, a total of one hundred and forty-eight (148) recommendations were made to which we have indicated our positions. Out of this number, twenty-three (23) have been accepted because they are in line with the policy of government, and steps will be taken to implement them. Nine (9) of the recommendations have been accepted because they have been implemented, while ninety-one (91) recommendations have been accepted because they are in various stages of implementation. Ghana was unable to support twenty-five (25) of the recommendations.

Madam President,

There are two categories of the recommendations that did not enjoy our support. The first category set out in the document at paragraph 127 relates to the abolition of the death penalty.

As clearly articulated by the Deputy Attorney-General during the review of Ghana on Tuesday, 23rd October, 2012, provisions on the death penalty are

entrenched in the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. Any amendment to these provisions would require a referendum. The acceptance by Government of the recommendation of the Constitutional Review Commission regarding the death penalty demonstrates Government's commitment to let the opinion of the people on the issue be heard. In essence the decision to abolish the death penalty does not rest with government alone, but with the people as well. The implementation of the recommendations on the death penalty will be considered depending on the outcome of the referendum. Government cannot therefore impose an immediate official moratorium or take any decision on the death penalty prior to the referendum. However as distinguished delegations have noted there have been no executions in Ghana since 1993.

The other category of the recommendations which Ghana did not accept is set out in paragraph 128 of the report. They relate to the decriminalization of same-sex relations between consenting adults and the perception of homophobia. Madam President, we wish to reiterate that Ghana does not have a policy of non-equal treatment of its citizens and any acts of violence perpetrated against any manner of persons in Ghana will be investigated and appropriately dealt with.

Madam President,

With these words, I would like to conclude by reaffirming the commitment of the Government of Ghana to uphold human rights in the country. We shall continue to consult with all stakeholders in the country to ensure that respect for human rights in Ghana is further improved and advanced and

remains an inclusive process. We also look forward to continued cooperation with the Human Rights Council and other human rights mechanisms.

Thank you, Madam President.