

Ten things the Nana Akufo-Addo NPP-led Administration should do in the 1st year of its tenure to deepen accountable and responsive governance in Ghana

On Saturday, January 7, 2017, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo was sworn in as the 5th President of the 4th Republic. The new President gave broad hints about the path he and his administration intend to walk in order to deliver the change that many Ghanaians voted for in the December 7, 2016 polls. As a democratic governance policy research think tank, the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) is interested in the specific policy and programmatic initiatives the Akufo-Addo/NPP administration will introduce to deal with the unresolved challenge of rendering the Ghanaian state and government **strong** and **capable**, yet **subject to the rule of law**, and at the same time, **accountable and responsive to its citizens**.

EDITORIAL TEAM

- E. Gyimah-Boadi
- Kojo P. Asante
- Franklin Oduro
- Edem Selormey

CDD-Ghana understands that Ghana's governance challenges are deeply rooted in structural and cultural factors/forces that impede the adoption of reforms and conventions to strengthen institutional checks and balances, promote national cohesion and unity, and especially curb political patronage as well as hyper-partisanship and, arguably, "*winner takes all politics*." Nonetheless, Ghanaians have demonstrated clearly through the exercise of their franchise in the

December 7, 2016 elections that, they want significant improvement in the quality of governance, and the Akufo-Addo–New Patriotic Party (NPP) administration should take heed and respond credibly to the charge. The Center therefore expects the Akufo-Addo-NPP administration to implement, at the minimum, the following measures within its first year in office in order to make a credible dent in the challenge of accountable and responsive governance in Ghana's 4th Republic:

1. Curb endemic corruption and promote integrity in public life by *vigorously enforcing the provisions of the Public Office Holder (Declaration of Assets and Disqualification) Act 1998 (Act 550)*. Act 550 requires public office holders listed in Schedule 1 of the Act, to submit a written declaration of their assets and liabilities, owned and owed, directly or indirectly to the Auditor-General before taking office, at end of every four years and at end of their term of office.
2. Also, *vigorously enforce the conflict of interest injunction under Article 284 of the 1992 Constitution, and elaborated in the CHRAJ Guidelines on Conflict of Interest*.
3. De-politicize criminal prosecutions and partisan bickering over criminal prosecution of politicians by *implementing plans to set up an Office of the Special Prosecutor, and confine criminal prosecutions at the Attorney General's office to the non-political staff of the Department*.
4. Reduce the cost to the nation of the current "spoils system" and accompanying presidential patronage, political corruption and political polarization, and at the same time, foster public service

professionalism by *insulating the public and security services from partisan politics, and emphasizing meritocratic criteria in appointments to state boards/trusts/councils/para-statal/public utilities/other non-political state agencies.*

5. Enhance performance and reduce political partisanship by *recruiting public servants for the managements and boards of the Ghana Water Company, the Electricity Corporation, the Commercial Bank, COCOBOD, the National Disaster Mobilization Agency, among others, through an independent/non-political Public Services Commission.*
6. Significantly enhance governmental transparency and accountability by *enacting the right to information bill as soon as possible.*
7. Also, *publish the emoluments of public office holders at all levels of government including public corporations.*
8. Reduce the cost of running government by *appointing the minimum number of ministers required by the Constitution, especially those drawn from Parliament.* In addition, to the greatest extent possible, reduce the number of ministries (by collapsing some ministries and abolishing others).
9. Reduce the perception of abuse of office and a sense of entitlement by public officials by *introducing a maximum limit of \$45,000 on the cost of official vehicles acquired by all Ministries, Departments and Agencies* and continue with the re-registration of all government vehicles.
10. Strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of local government authorities as well as promote local participation and inclusion in local government by consulting widely with traditional authority and interest groups as dictated by the constitution, and in the accordance with the Model Standing Orders of the assemblies in the Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Chief Executive (M/M/DCE) nomination, vetting and approval processes.



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Contact us:

Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana)
No. 95 Nortei Ababio Loop, North Airport Residential Area
P.O. Box LG 404, Legon, Accra

Telephones: 233-302 776142 / 784293 - 4
Fax: 233 302 763028/9

*** Tamale Office**
Telephones: 0372 027 758
Fax: 0372 027 759
P. O. Box TL 1573, Tamale