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## **END OF POLLS STATEMENT ON THE AKWATIA CONSTITUENCY BY-ELECTION**

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### **Introduction**

The Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) trained and deployed 25 election observers to observe the Akwatia Constituency by-election, which was held on Tuesday, September 2, 2025. While most observers were stationed at sampled polling stations and the collation center, where they monitored proceedings including the opening and closing of polls, counting, and the declaration of results, a few observers moved across several polling stations during the day to provide broader coverage of the constituency. It is worth noting that observers impartially monitored the process using CODEO's observation checklist and incident forms. This statement highlights the findings from observing the setup, voting, closing, and counting processes at polling stations and the collation center, as well as incidents recorded during voting.

### **Arrival and Setup of Polls**

- Majority (70%) of observers arrived at the polling stations before 6:00 AM.
- Observers reported that election officials were present in almost all polling stations upon their arrival.
- All the observers indicated that polling officials permitted them to observe the voting process when the polling station was officially opened.
- The majority of the polling stations observed were opened by 7:15 AM, with very few opening between 7:16 AM and 8:00 AM. No polling station opened after 8:00 AM.
- While the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) had party agents stationed at all the observed polling stations, the Liberal Party of Ghana (LPG) did not have agents at some polling stations.
- Majority of observers reported that voting materials, including ballot papers, indelible ink, voting screens, validating stamps, ink pads, endorsing ink, and voters' registers, were

available in polling stations. Tactile ballot papers were also provided in polling stations where persons with visual impairments were expected to vote.

- Most of the ballot booklets were observed to be serialized and ordered numerically.
- All observers indicated that ballot boxes were shown to be empty, sealed, and placed in public view before voting commenced.
- CODEO observers reported that security personnel were present in all polling stations observed, with some stations having only stationed security and others having both stationed and roaming security.

### *Voting*

- For all polling stations observed, ballot papers were stamped with the validating stamp before being issued to voters.
- Observers reported that no unauthorized persons were allowed to stay inside the polling station during voting.
- CODEO observers reported that in all polling stations observed, the biometric verification devices functioned properly without any malfunction.
- No incident of harassment or intimidation against voters or polling officials was recorded in any of the polling stations observed.
- In every polling station observed, vulnerable groups, including the elderly, pregnant women, nursing mothers, and persons with disabilities, were given priority to vote first.
- Observers reported that in all polling stations observed, all eligible voters were either biometrically or manually verified before they were permitted to vote.
- CODEO observers reported that in all polling stations observed, no voter was denied the right to be assisted by a person of their choice.

### *Closing and Counting*

- In about half of the polling stations observed, there were no voters in the queue at 5:00 PM. At polling stations where there were voters still in the queue at the close of polls, they were allowed to cast their ballots before voting officially ended.
- Observers reported that in all polling stations, there were no attempts to harass or intimidate polling officials, agents, or observers during the counting process.
- In all polling stations observed, no unauthorized individuals were present within the inner perimeter or cordoned area during the count.
- In the observed polling stations, observers reported the availability of adequate light during counting in the majority of the polling stations.
- All political party agents in the observed polling stations were allowed to observe the counting process.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

CODEO commends the Electoral Commission (EC), the Ghana Police Service, and the electorate of Akwatia for ensuring that the by-election was conducted in a largely peaceful and orderly manner. The polls were concluded without major incidents, resulting in the timely declaration of the winning candidate.

CODEO acknowledges that the overall conduct of the by-election was consistent with Ghana's electoral laws, rules, and regulations, with polling officials largely adhering to the established procedures. Notably, there were no reports of shortages of voting materials, and the biometric verification devices (BVDs) worked well in most polling places, with only a few minor technical issues that did not significantly affect the voting process.

The Coalition is particularly encouraged by the professional conduct of election officials and the security services, whose presence contributed to maintaining peace and order throughout the electoral process. CODEO urges all stakeholders, particularly political parties and their supporters, to uphold the values of peace, tolerance, and respect for due process in subsequent electoral activities.

As part of its commitment to promoting credible and transparent elections in Ghana, CODEO will continue to observe and provide independent, evidence-based assessments of electoral processes to strengthen public confidence and support continuous improvement in the country's electoral system.

## About CODEO

CODEO is an independent and non-partisan network of civil society groups, faith-based organizations and professional bodies which observe Ghanaian elections. It was established in 2000 under the auspices of the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) to mobilize citizens of Ghana to participate in the electoral process actively and to complement the efforts of Ghana's Electoral Commission in ensuring transparent, free, fair and peaceful elections. The Coalition of 41-member organizations has grown to become the largest and most credible domestic election observer body in Ghana, which mobilizes citizens and groups to participate in Ghana's electoral processes.

SIGNED:

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Coordinator, CODEO Secretariat

*(For and on Behalf of the Advisory Board)*

Thursday, September 4, 2025