

**ADDRESS DELIVERED BY THE MUNICIPAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE, HON
KOFI ADJEI ON THE OCCASION OF GHANA INTEGRITY INITIATIVE,
THE LOCAL CHAPTER OF TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL ON
FRIDAY, 5TH MARCH, 2021 AT PENTECOST CHURCH, AKROFORO**

Mr. Chairman,

Nananom,

Friends from the Media,

Invited Guest,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I deem it a great privilege and honour for me to be invited to be part of this all important programme organised by Ghana Integrity Initiative, the Local Chapter of Transparency International.

On this special occasion, which is purposely to educate the public the need to play a major role to fight against corruption. I deem it imperative to formally welcome all distinguished personalities and all who have travelled to participate in this important programme.

Mr. Chairman the topic for the occasion namely: JOINING EFFORTS TO FIGHT CORRUPTION – THE ROLE OF THE CITIZEN (NACAP) THE ROLE OF THE ADVOCACY AND LEGAL ADVICE CENTRE (ALAC) was chosen at the right time since there are so many reported cases on corruption not only in Ghana but across the globe.

Mr. Chairman,

Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII) is the local chapter of Transparency International. They are non-partisan, non-profit civil empowerment

organisation focused on the delivery of essential theme necessary for the creation of a National Integrity system. They bring people together in the powerful worldwide collation over ninety (90) locally established national chapters–in–formation to end the devastating impact of corruption on men, women and children around the world.

Mr. Chairman,

Ghana Integrity Initiatives’ has four main objectives specifically aimed at achieving the mission of corruption free Ghana. These are:

- i. To be an effective and efficient civil empowerment organisation that works to achieve its anti-corruption mandate.
- ii. To continuously create awareness about negative effect of corruption and sensitize citizens on need to work together towards curbing corruption in all spheres of society.
- iii. To empower citizens to demand responsiveness, accountability and transparency from people and institutions in Ghana.
- iv. To build the culture of integrity where corruption is unprofitable for people in Government, policies, business and civil society, through collaboration with like-minded people and groups.

Mr. Chairman,

In the past two to five years, Ghana Integrity Initiative has organised sensitization workshops, seminars on the courses, effects and solution to corruption. Not only that they have also engaged student bodies in schools and identifiable youth groups to talk about the canker and possible remedies of corruption.

Mr. Chairman,

Corruption is a form of dishonesty or criminal offence undertaken by a person or organisation entrusted with a position of authority to acquire illicit benefit or abuse of power for one's private gain. Corruption can include: giving or accepting bribes or inappropriate gifts, double dealing, under-the-table transactions, manipulating elections, diverting funds, laundering money and defrauding investors. One example of corruption in the world of finance would be an investment manager who is actually running a Ponzi scheme.

Mr. Chairman,

When corruption occurs within an organisation, unflattering media coverage typically follows which may result in customers losing trust in the company's business practices and product. A comprehensive public relations campaign is often required to limit reputational damage and restore trust. This requires valuable resources, such as time and money, which may result in other critical areas of the organisation being deprived.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Invited Guest,

Admittedly, corruption unchecked can increase criminal activity and organised crime in the community. A number of steps can however, help to manage corruption.

There must be a strong focus on education, which must reinforce best business practices, and alert managers and employees where to look for corruption. This can be achieved by introducing mandatory Anti-Money Laundering (AML) courses. Senior Executives and Management must set a strong culture of honesty and integrity by leading example.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Invited Guest,

Corruption is likely to be reduced when accountability mechanisms is in place. This, in turn is likely to reinforce a culture that fosters strong ethical behaviour while holding those to account who violates the norms. Corruption can further be reduced by making it easy to report, whether by managers, employees, suppliers and customers. A robust control environment also reduces the risk of corruption as thorough background checks before lining or promoting employees.

Mr. Chairman,

Corruption often results in loss to the weaker section of the society or organisation. There are different forms of corruption. It includes extortion, nepotism, parochialism, bribery, cronyism etc. Corruption may lead to human and drug trafficking, police brutality, repression of opponent etc.

Mr. Chairman,

There are so many effects on corruption and they are as follows:

- i. Political effect; corruption becomes a major road block for the rule of law and democracy. The political system loses its legitimacy when power is used for private advantage.
- ii. Economic effect; It depletes national wealth. The betterment of the communities and societies are compromised for the benefit of the profit of officials, therefore, leads to the misuse of national resources.

- iii. Social effect; The community or society gives up trust in the system. This makes it even more challenging to remove corruption from the system.
- iv. Environmental effect; Corruption results in the degradation and exploitation of precious natural resources. Thus result in turbulence in the ecological systems.

Mr. Chairman,

There are ways to fight corruption; Effective law enforcement is the key to ensure the corrupt culprit is punished. For this purpose, we need a strong legal framework. Another way we can fight corruption is steps focusing and improving financial management and strengthening the role of auditing agencies will help in curbing corruption. This would include transparent and participatory budgeting by local communities and local government. The tradition of Government openness, freedom of the press, transparency and access to information helps in curbing corruption.

Strengthening citizens' demand and empowering them to make Government accountable is a great approach to build mutual trust between the Government and the citizens.

Mr. Chairman,

The international financial system should be under the scanner to stop money laundering by corrupt officials. Hence, major financial institute need to put a check to stop their banks and allied financial sentence across the globe from accepting illegal flows of money.

Mr. Chairman,

To sum it up, corruption is the biggest evil of any society. All necessary steps must be taken to eliminate this evil. Not only the ones with power but at times even the weaker sections of the society tend to become culprit in this.

Mr. Chairman,

I will like to finally thank the organizers for the kind invitation extended to us to be part of this important programme and for the opportunity to share some few words with you.

Thank you and God bless us all.