

COMMUNIQUE



ISSUED BY THE
CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF GHANA (CCG) AND THE
GHANA CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE (GCBC)
ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 2018

Greeting

Dearly Beloved fellow-citizens, and men and women of goodwill resident in Ghana, receive warm greetings from the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) and the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference (GCBC) in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Preamble

We, the members of the Christian Council of Ghana and the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference, held our annual Joint Meeting at the Mary Mother of Good Counsel Catholic Church, Airport West, Accra on Wednesday, May 16, 2018. We also held an Ecumenical Service to pray for Christian unity, the wellbeing of the Government and People of Ghana, and we reflected on the theme: "*Unity with Christ and with each other for peace and mutual upbuilding*" (cf. Romans 14:19). In our Meeting, we discussed several issues of both Church and national interests. We deem it appropriate as Christian Leaders to speak to and bring the following issues to the attention of the Government and People of Ghana, especially to members of our Church communities.

Christian Spirituality in Ghana

We have observed with very grave concern various abuses in some worshipping centres in Ghana in the name of spirituality, prophetic revelations and divine intervention. These happenings in the Christian fraternity discredit the Gospel and cause people to despise the

positive influence of the Word of God. We are concerned that the role of Christianity “*as the salt of the earth and light of the world*” (cf. Matt 5:13-14) is losing impact as a result of the self-serving practices of some Christian leaders. We abhor such practices and call upon such leaders to tend the flock of the Lord faithfully.

We therefore wish to draw the attention of Christians and the nation to the following:

- No human person or object should take the place of Christ as object of worship.
- Christians should put their faith in Jesus Christ alone to meet all their needs even in times of difficulties.
- Christians and all citizens should cherish the values of hard work, patient endurance, moderation and contentment.
- We call on Christian leaders to intensify the faith formation of their members through teaching of the the Word of God in order to develop sustaining and sincere relationship with God, intimate prayer life and a life of selfless witnessing.

Fight against Bribery and Corruption

We commend the President of the Republic, His Excellency, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, for the call to fight and sustain same against bribery and corruption. We welcome the setting up of the Office of Special Prosecutor and congratulate those appointed to oversee the operations of the Office. We, however, urge strongly that this campaign cannot be another lip service. We call for transparency and integrity in investigations to ascertain corrupt practices and demand that culprits be duly prosecuted in accordance with the laws of our country. All Ghanaians, especially Christians, are called upon to work harder to eliminate the evil of bribery and corruption, to cherish fearless honesty, probity and accountability.

LGBT Rights in Ghana

We have observed, in the past months, that there have been strong calls and pressure by some international lobbyists on Ghana to consider the legalization of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights as well as same sex marriages and relationships. We commend the Speaker of Parliament, Rt. Honourable Prof. Mike Ocquaye for his stance against the legalization of LGBT rights in Ghana. We call on Government never to be cowed down nor succumb to the pressure to legalize such rights.

As Christians, who uphold the Bible as our principal guide, we consider same sex unions as unacceptable unions that our God frowns upon (cf. Leviticus 20:13-16). In addition, we state unequivocally that same sex unions are alien to the Ghanaian culture and cannot be tolerated or accepted. Our cultural values uphold the family system as an integral part

of the survival of communities and the nation at large. Therefore, we shall not and cannot accept the orientation towards same sex unions and relationships as a fundamental human right.

We, the members of the Christian Council of Ghana and the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference, state that we shall resist any attempt, either latent or manifest, by any individual, Political Party, Civil Society, Human Rights' Activist or Government to legalize LGBT rights in Ghana.

We are however willing and available to provide the needed pastoral care and support to persons with LGBT tendencies in a non-condemning manner. We pledge to treat such persons with unconditional positive regard at all times.

2018 Basic Education Certificate Examinations (BECE)

We congratulate all the candidates scheduled to take part in the June 2018 BECE. We pray for God's grace for each candidate and for success in the examinations.

We call on the West African Examination Council (WAEC) to ensure that all challenges that had arisen in past have been dealt with in order to facilitate the smooth process of the examination this year. We urge the Examination Council, Invigilators, Parents and the candidates to take caution to avoid any embarrassment through examination malpractices.

Free SHS Programme

We commend Government for making secondary education more accessible and affordable to Ghanaians through the implementation of the Free Senior High School (SHS) programme. We are aware that the implementation is facing some teething challenges. There are incidents of some Senior High Schools in distress as a result of late disbursement of funds for food and accommodation facilities for the beneficiaries of the Programme. We urge the Ministry of Education to accept in good faith genuine feedback on the challenges facing the implementation. As stakeholders, we are ready for further engagement in the sustainability and success of the programme.

New Reforms on Colleges of Education

We welcome the efforts of Government to improve the quality of teacher training in the country. This move will convert Colleges of Education into Degree-awarding institutions

as Affiliates/Satellite Campuses of some Public Universities for a transition period of four years.

While we praise Government for this reform, we wish to state that many of the Colleges of Education in Ghana are owned by the Churches. We repeat our earlier call for a comprehensive consultation and participation in the implementation of the new reforms. We cannot abandon Church-State partnership in education at this critical time. We state that:

- Government should continue to dialogue with the Churches that have Colleges of Education for mutual understanding on the affiliation of the Colleges to the Public Universities.
- Government should facilitate and even expedite the process of approval for the Presidential Charter for Universities owned by the Churches to enable them have the capacity to take charge of and manage their Colleges of Education as affiliate-institutions of such Universities.

Illegal Mining (Galamsay)

We have taken note of various efforts by some individuals, members of the Security Services, Politicians and Chiefs to thwart the fight against illegal mining. We demand that Government, the Media Coalition against Galamsay, concerned Agencies and Institutions, and all Ghanaians should be bold and courageous to sustain the campaign and deal ruthlessly with the perpetrators of the menace. Our sources of livelihood (water bodies, farmlands and livestock) are being sacrificed for selfish interests. While we ask God to change the hearts of these nation wreckers, we shall not tolerate such sinful acts against nature and posterity.

We urge all Christian leaders to preach against the perpetration of the menace. Let us protect our common home - our water bodies and lands - from collapse and degradation.

Carnage on our Roads

Another very worrying concern is the spate of accidents and the resultant carnage on our roads. We cannot but agree that the best and most valuable asset of any nation is its human capital. We therefore plead with all who must ensure safety on our roads; the Motor and Traffic Police and Guards, drivers of both public and private vehicles, the DVLA, mechanics, pedestrians and, indeed, all road users in this country must endeavour to respect the rules and regulations regarding vehicular traffic, and maintain their vehicles to curb very drastically the high rate of accidents and deaths on our roads. Every human

life is precious to God the Creator and is an asset to the person, to the society and to humanity as a whole.

Conclusion

Finally, we plead with the Government, Members of Parliament, Politicians and the Media to be decorous, guarded and timely in providing relevant information to Ghanaians on policies, initiatives and international engagements. The integrity of Ghanaians should never be taken for granted. We urge everyone to promote the peace, stability and development of our country Ghana.

We, your Christian leaders, renew our commitment to demonstrate true Christian leadership in all spheres of our lives. We encourage you to pray for us and support the spread of the Gospel especially in your life of witnessing. Be assured that we shall continue to provide support for the Government and the People of Ghana through our public education, advocacy and dialogue, social interventions and relentless prayer for the peace, stability and development of Ghana. We ask God to enkindle in us all the gift of the Holy Spirit and make us truly Christ-like.

signed

REV. DR. CYRIL G. K. FAYOSE
General Secretary, CCG

signed

REV. FR. LAZARUS ANONDEE
Secretary General, GCBC

signed

RT. REV. DR. SETH S. AGIDI
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signed

MOST REV. PHILIP NAAMEH
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