



COLLOQUIUM OF THE DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

“Linking the Ghanaian Diaspora to the Development of Ghana”

Venue: Airport West Hotel, Accra, Ghana, 22 – 24 August, 2012.

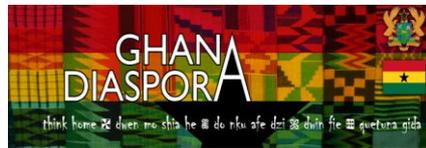
Day 1

Opening Session

Mr. Tsatsu Dawson, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Ghana, started the meeting by welcoming participants and giving a brief introduction on the Diaspora Engagement Project. He said the project is IOM’s contribution to the efforts of the Government of Ghana to mobilising the country’s diaspora toward its socio-economic development through strengthened dialogue and engagements. He introduced **Ms. Dyane Epstein** to give the welcome address.

Welcome Address

Ms. Dyane Epstein, Chief of Mission, IOM, Ghana, in her welcome address stated emphatically that a nation’s strength lies in its citizens. According to her, research has shown that there are approximately three million Ghanaians living abroad or those with Ghanaian heritage. Ghana, as a country, needs the assets of the diaspora to assist in the continued growth of Ghana. Since these Ghanaians attain overlapping agendas, there is therefore a need to strengthen engagement between government and the diaspora. In view of this, IOM stands ready to achieve the goal of enhancing the country’s engagement and relation with the diaspora. Dyane also noted that, the colloquium is the final stage of a year-long process of engagement. According to her, since the commencement of the Diaspora Engagement Project, a diaspora mapping exercise of five countries: Netherlands, United Kingdom, United States of America, Italy and Germany were done. This was followed by video conferences with these countries, mainly focusing on policy issues, incentives, processes and regulations associated with social and economic investment in Ghana. The final stage of this project which is the colloquium, involves constructive dialogue between representatives of diaspora associations, government officials, the private sector and civil society over how to strengthen this relationship. She informed that as part of the mitigating efforts, a diaspora website has been developed and a diaspora unit is being established in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and

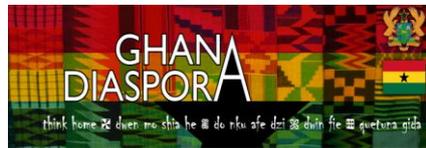


Regional Integration to, among other things, ensure good relations between the diaspora and Ghanaian authorities and ensure the sustainability of this process. In conclusion, she stressed that the colloquium has a central goal to strengthen relation between Ghana and the diaspora and to link the Ghanaian diaspora to the development of Ghana.

The moderator for this session, Mr. Dawson, explained that IOM Ghana secured funding from the International Development Fund of the IOM to strengthen the development of the diaspora. He said that IOM, over the last few years, has done a mapping of diaspora associations in five countries, followed by video conferences with these countries. According to him, the comments and suggestions that came up in the video conferences have been factored into the agenda for the colloquium. He reiterated that the goal of the project is to have a long-term impact on the relationship between the Ghanaian diaspora and the Ghanaian government. Because of this goal, he stated that there should be brainstorming in the colloquium on how to progressively move forward in this relationship. In addition, he informed that IOM is also expanding its data base of Ghanaian diaspora associations through the website and was pleased to announce that one of the members of the diaspora is assisting in the development of the website. The website will eventually be housed by the Diaspora Support Unit. In conclusion he stated that he is looking forward to hear from participants their concerns as well as constructive and creative ways to move forward in strengthening the relationship between the diaspora and the Ghanaian government.

Keynote Address

Mr. Ebenezer Appreku, Director, Legal and Consular Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration (MFA), gave the keynote address on behalf of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. In his address, he stated that the paramount objective of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration is to protect the interest of Ghanaian citizens abroad and ensure the welfare of Ghanaians who return to Ghana. He said, besides ensuring the welfare and consular needs of Ghanaians living abroad, the Ministry should engage the diaspora in the development of Ghana in a proactive manner. He stated that the government must no longer vaguely work with and help Ghanaians abroad. Mr. Appreku stressed that MFA actively supports the diaspora engagement project with IOM. He was also pleased that the Diaspora Support Unit will be housed in MFA. In addition, he informed that the diaspora website will be launched at the end of the 3-day colloquium. He said measures are being put in place to ensure Ghanaians living abroad can have their biometric passports done in their various embassies. According to him, the government is working to enhance the nation's capacity to support the Electoral Commission to allow Ghanaians in the diaspora to vote. In conclusion, he was hopeful that the colloquium will reactivate the suggestions that came up during the Home Coming Summit in 2001. He also appealed to Ghanaians abroad to be law abiding and desist from using fake documents in travelling.

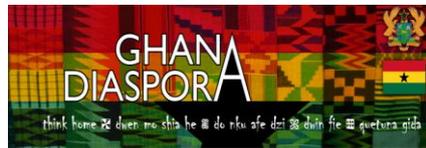


Session I: The Ghanaian Diaspora: An Overview

After the Keynote Address, **Prof. Mariama Awumbila** and **Prof. S.O. Kwankye** all of the **Centre for Migration Studies** were introduced to make presentations on The Ghanaian Diaspora and The Migration Policy Draft Overview, respectively. Prof. Awumbila, who presented the first part on the Ghanaian diaspora, dwelt on with the trends of migration. She said the Colloquium will serve as the third of the Consultation Workshops being organised as part of the on-going national Migration Policy development process. Migration now has assumed importance in the global agenda as its potential for economic and social development is increasingly acknowledged. This change in focus has changed the negative view on Ghanaians moving abroad. As a result, it has increasingly attracted the attention of policy makers and various stakeholders. However, she stated that thus far there has been a lack of policy initiatives in Ghana to maximize the diaspora's contribution to development. Although, there is first a need for a spatially inclusive definition of the Ghanaian diaspora as 71% of Ghanaians residing outside of Ghana are still in West Africa. She gave various definitions of the diaspora and said, to qualify as a diaspora, one has to have a link with his country and make contribution to the development of the country. Nonetheless, Ghanaians are now found in every continent. Ghana was, however, among the top ten immigration countries in sub-Saharan Africa in 2005. Further, Ghana has the highest emigration rates for the highly skilled (46%) in West Africa. Estimating the size of Ghanaian diaspora is however difficult and the current range is from 1.5-3 million. Prof. Awumbila also gave a brief summary of the Profile of Ghana's Diaspora. She said Ghanaian migrants are concentrated in economic urban agglomerations and larger cities. In general, the Ghanaian migrants in terms of skills are a little higher than the indigenous people of the host countries. Lastly, a large number of Ghanaian students are pursuing tertiary education abroad, but most migrants are between 30-44 years old and approximately 60% of Ghanaian migrants are female.

In her presentation, Prof. Awumbila touched on the Diaspora in Ghana's Development, where she said Ghana is significantly a transnationalized nation. However, the link between remittances and poverty reduction is not that clear cut. Remittances have emerged as one of the major contributors to the country's GDP but tend not to be sent to the poorest regions of Ghana because they are sent to the families of migrants. However, remittances have a role in improving livelihoods at the household level. She noted that although research shows that most remittances are used for consumption and welfare purposes, it is dependent on the individual who receives the remittances. Further, approximately 40% of remittances are found to be for political, charitable, and investment purposes. The main recipients of remittances in Ghana are women.

Hometown associations and churches are also playing a role in linking the Ghanaian diaspora to development. However, under Initiatives to Engage the Diaspora, Prof. Awumbila said, until recently there had been limited responses from Ghana's governments to integrate the diaspora into the national development strategy. At local levels, however, traditional authorities have all played their part. Missions abroad, the IMSCM, and National Migration



have all also formulated responses in the past. She was optimistic therefore that with the Diaspora Engagement Project, the MFA will be dealing more with the diaspora.

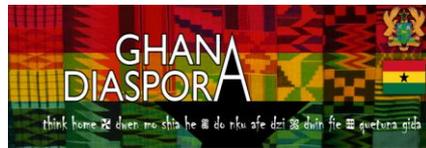
In conclusion she stressed that in strengthening government's engagement with the diaspora, there is a need to have improved data on migrants, the development of effective cooperation mechanisms, a focus on diaspora living outside the continent and the development of a comprehensive migration and diaspora policy.

During his turn, Prof. Kwankye took participants through the third draft of the National Migration Policy. He touched mainly on the Migration Trends and Patterns in Ghana as well as the Key Migration and Development Issues. According to him, since Ghana is becoming home to a large number of refugees, migration has become very critical. What the policy seeks to do therefore is maximize the gains of migration and reduce the costs and challenges of migration. The policy addresses both internal and external migration, in addition to the diaspora. He outlined the Key Migration and Development Issues as well as the respective Recommendations in addressing each key issue.

The policy addresses the following main issues that pertain, in some aspect, to the diaspora: migration of the highly skilled; low capacity of key stakeholders; poor funding of migration policies and programs; forced return, readmissions, and reintegration; poor collection and analysis of migration data; brain gain; student mobility; diversity of migration to new destinations; leveraging remittances; and harnessing diaspora resources for development. In regards to these issues, the policy targets the following: remittance costs; technological advances; removal of bottlenecks; opening of accounts in Ghana; registration of migration associations; and formalization of the working relationship between migrant associations and the government by designating a ministry to be assigned to overlook migration and diaspora policies, issues, and concerns.

He noted that during interviews with some embassies in Ghana, it was notable that the challenge that is being confronted the most, with regard to migration, is the issue of identification. The policy, however, proposes that a Migration Ministry is created in the long-term. Prof. Kwankye informed that during interactions with stakeholders in the Northern sector, the need came up to re-designate a ministry to deal with issues on migration rather than setting up an entire new ministry. In conclusion, he was hopeful that comments and suggestions on how the policy should be directed would come up in the colloquium.

After the presentations, comments and suggestions were invited from the participants. After several comments from various diaspora representatives, Prof. Kwankye stated that a parliamentary commission is not included in the institutional framework, but can be looked into. France could be an example for this. Mr Amegashie inquired about data acquisition, and Prof. Awumbila stated that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ghana Immigration Services play a central role in data acquisition. Currently, this is compartmentalized but needs to be brought together. Where cooperation exists, it needs to be expanded. A government

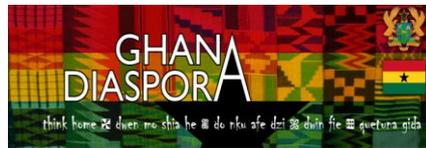


representative followed up by stating that the integration of all databases is currently being looked into in a pilot project that includes eleven agencies. Ms Epstein also mentioned that IOM is also working with the Ghanaian government on data management. Other issues raised by the diaspora representatives were the strengthening of the policy on investments for Ghanaians to improve the lack of information and communication; the need for a ministry on remittances and investment that is run by former members of the diaspora; and the need for a Diaspora Ministry to turn to when confusion occurs. Prof. Kwankye stated that as of now a commission is more politically and fiscally feasible than a ministry.

Session II: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and The Ghanaian Diaspora: Protecting The Interest of The Ghanaian Diaspora

Daniel Dake, Union of Ghanaian Association in Germany (UGAG), in his speech on the Protection of Ghanaians in the Diaspora stated that, the Anti-Migration Policy in Germany has compelled Ghanaians in Germany to form associations for the benefit of their home country. He stated that the multiplicity of organizations abroad is not bad unless the activities are not coordinated. He said that umbrella associations, however, fulfil common purposes of its member associations and promote investments to Ghana. He therefore suggested that government officials from Ghana, who travel overseas to interact with other government officials of the host countries, should on their arrival in these countries, take along on their tour, some representatives of the Ghanaian associations in those countries. He was hopeful that this will help build relationships that will strengthen the Ghanaian associations with their host countries.

According to him, these umbrella organizations give a formidable voice to the Ghanaian communities in the diaspora, hence the need for diaspora associations to network and come together. He also made mention of some challenges faced by Ghanaians in the diaspora as: rough treatment received by diaspora when coming home, high duty charges on goods sent into the country, and racism and discrimination in host countries. In addition, he drew attention to the pension, social security and insurance benefit challenges of the diaspora. He explained that most Ghanaian diaspora who retire do not have the luxury of coming home due to the lack of social security agreements between Ghana and the host countries. He petitioned the government to enter into bilateral agreements with host countries to resolve these issues since these pensioners could contribute significantly to the development of their home country. We might fall on these pensioners if we want to develop. In Germany, acquiring a Ghanaian passport is not an easy thing. He appealed to the Government of Ghana to give Ghanaian Embassy in Germany biometric machines to aid the process of providing applicants with biometric passports. He further suggested that the government institutes a Ghanaian diaspora day as well as enable the diaspora to elect their own representatives in the Parliament of Ghana. Additionally, a “Know Ghana Programme” should be instituted for the youth in the diaspora to send them a message that they are Ghanaian and important to Ghana. He concluded by saying that Ghanaians in the diaspora pledge their support to Ghana and



appeal that Ghanaians develop a new mind-set about partnership with the country's diaspora to help Ghana achieve its poverty reduction and millennium development goals.

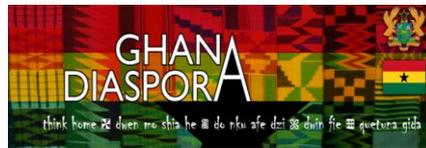
Mr Appreku, Legal and Consular Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, before his presentation, acknowledged noting the concerns of participants from the diaspora. He assured them that things are being put in place to get biometric passports produced for Ghanaians at the various embassies and added that compatriots in the various embassies will be educated to see to the issue of double taxation. In his speech he stressed that the first step in strengthening diaspora relations is building trust and confidence between the government and Ghanaians overseas. He went further to give examples of the government's interventions thus far in situations pertaining to the diaspora. According to him, the Ministry is currently ensuring that Ghanaians who need to be repatriated are treated in a humane manner. Usually, the right procedures toward implementation are not taken by host countries whenever agreements are signed.

Concerning the hostility of Embassy officials, Mr Appreku said, the Ministry is organising orientation for its staff to ensure they deliver quality service. He, therefore, admonished Ghanaians in the diaspora not to stop with issues or complaints at the embassy level, but to go further in reporting to the superiors. He asked the diaspora to complain to someone above the official, or even the Ministry or Minister himself.

In conclusion, he encouraged Ghanaians in the diaspora to invest in the country, stating that The Investment Act is for Ghanaians as well, hence the need for Ghanaian investors to take advantage.

After the presentations, comments and suggestions were invited from the participants. Mr Pappoe suggested that the Ministry establishes a consulate in Seattle. Mr Amegashie also drew attention to the fact that most people who are referred to the embassies on investment issues do not get the information they want since the embassies are inadequately informed about these issues and more. He also stated that the U.S. needs more consulates or honorary consulates outside of New York, D.C., and Texas. Mr Acheampong of the Netherlands also, among others, suggested that it be included in the policy, the need to engage Ghanaian experts in contracts instead of foreigners, the need to have a policy that will enable Ghanaians in the diaspora return for voluntary knowledge and skill transfer, and also the need to have exchange programmes for the youth. Mr Mardah from the U.S.A. also suggested that leaders of the diaspora associations educate their members to extend the same civility they expect from the embassy staff to them.

Session III: Partnership for Economic Growth and Development: Foreign Direct Investments and Remittances.



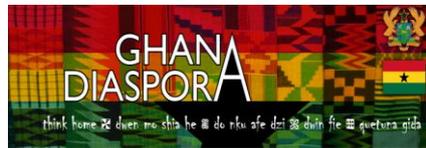
Prof. Awumbila who moderated this session, introduced **Mr Joseph Acheampong, Research Department, Bank of Ghana**, to give a presentation on Foreign Direct Investments and Remittances.

Mr Joseph Acheampong started by stating that, the Bank of Ghana regulates all the banks in Ghana and receives reports on remittances. He explained, briefly, the remittances trend in Ghana so far, which show that remittance flows have grown rapidly in recent years. Further, for Ghana, sometimes remittances have exceeded the inflow of foreign direct investments and at other times have not. This relationship fluctuates despite remittance levels being fairly stable. The government now considers remittances to be an important source of foreign exchange inflows and remittances now are perceived to be an important anti-poverty tool and item to gauge economic growth and development. Around 2005, the ratio of remittance-to-exports of goods and services and the ratio of remittance-to-GDP decreased due to the discovery of oil in Ghana.

He also showed the demographic perspective on remittances and outlined an array of demographic characteristics that are known to be associated with remittances and noted that 'Income' is recognized as the primary determinant in all remittances. He also outlined factors that influence the remitter's choice between the various channels of fund transfers. On the concepts and measurements of remittances, he noted that not all transfers are remittances. He explained that remittances consist mainly of funds and non-cash items sent in by migrants. In conclusion, he informed that a National Remittances Credit Registry (NRCR) is currently being established as a pilot project to assist the government in enhancing service delivery and development outcomes in relation to remittances. The NRCR will include an e-platform of a centralized database that compiles national remittance flows. However, he stated that other complementary policies are needed.

Dr. Richard Adjei, Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC), gave a presentation on GIPC's Relationship with the Ghanaian Diaspora. He said GIPC, which was re-established in 1994 under the Act 478, seeks to promote, facilitate and encourage investment in all sectors of the economy with the exception of core mining, petroleum exploration and free-zone activities. He outlined the sectors for investment which included Agriculture and Agri-businesses, Manufacturing and Industry, Tourism, ICT, Energy, Mining services (Logistics, Transport and Catering), Infrastructure, Financial Services, and Oil and Gas, among others.

He also outlined the processes involved for one to relate to the centre as: Development of proposal(s), Registration of business at the Registrar General's Department, Registration with GIPC and Registration with other applicable institutions. He explained that, registration with GIPC is subject to renewal every two years and free for local companies. According to him, when one registers his business with GIPC, he gets the advantage to clear most of his goods for free. In relating to the diaspora, GIPC has established a Non-Resident Ghanaian (NRG) Secretariat that offers non-resident Ghanaians a point of contact. In addition, the centre also embarks on institutional missions and interacts with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He



concluded by pledging GIPC's support to make available all that it can offer in making the Diaspora Engagement Project proactive.

Mr Toni Kofi, Representative Council of Ghanaian Organizations in the Netherlands (RECOGIN), in his presentation said, it is not institutions that deliver but individuals. He advocated the need for all Ghanaian diaspora groups to come together to form one umbrella group. The question he posed was, "Who takes the initiative"? According to him, many Ghanaians in the Netherlands are thinking of coming back home but are uncertain of the outcome of their decision. He therefore charged participants and the MFA to, at the end of the colloquium, come up with a system where monies can be transferred and charged only 2%. He also suggested that the five countries represented could come together and concentrate on food security thus food production and processing in Ghana as a way of contributing to the development of the country. He concluded by urging participants to challenge themselves to come up with concrete solutions to the problems faced by the diaspora and not merely discussing them.

After his speech, some comments and suggestions were raised by participants. Mr Isaac Acheampong suggested that Bank of Ghana should take some initiatives, like setting up a Diaspora Investment Fund and make all diaspora shareholders. Mr Dawson also drew attention to the fact that one reason charges on remittances are very expensive is due to the lack of competition and suggested that Bank of Ghana involves other traditional institutions. Mr Mardah also commented that each country has its own regulations and laws, hence the need to look at the laws that guide money transfers in the host countries. He also informed participants that he has, together with some Ghanaians in the U.S., come up with a licensed credit union and are currently looking for possible investors who are interested to be part.

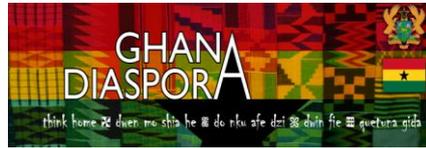
Prof. Awumbila also suggested that since there a lot of key personnel participating in the colloquium, it would be helpful to come up with some solutions right away.

Day2 :

Session IV: Addressing the Challenge of Dual Citizenship, Immigration and Residence of The Ghanaian Diaspora.

Mr Tsatsu Dawson, after welcoming participants to the second day of the colloquium, informed that participants are privileged to have two important officials in the persons of Mr. David Agorsor of the Migration Unit of the Ministry of Interior and Dr. Prosper Asima of the Ghana Immigration Service to make presentations on various topics. In addition, there will be a presentation from Mr Kwao Amegashie of the Ghana Association of Minnesota.

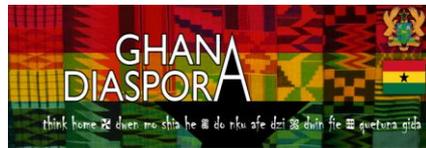
Mr David Agorsor, Director, Migration Unit, Ministry of Interior, who made a presentation on the Challenges of Dual Citizenship, started by explaining what dual



citizenship is and the circumstances surrounding the implementation of the Dual Citizenship Act, which regulates dual citizenship. He noted that Section 17 of the Ghana Immigration Act, which talks of the right of abode, seems to be an alternative to the dual citizenship. He explained that before January 1997, there was nothing on dual citizenship. If one was a Ghanaian and acquired another citizenship, other than through marriage, then that one ceased to be a Ghanaian. The dual citizenship law was, however, passed on 16 December 1996 but came to effect from the 1st of January 1997. This law stated that a citizen of Ghana may hold the citizenship of any other country in addition to his Ghanaian citizenship. This means that one has to be a Ghanaian in the first place in order to apply for dual citizenship. Previously these were not taken cognisance of. Dual citizenship was given to anyone who applied for it. The law later, was interpreted to mean that one who acquired citizenship before 1st Jan 1997 is disqualified for dual citizenship. With concurrent birth also, one was as well not qualified. In this light, when a Ghanaian marries a foreigner, irrespective of where their child is born, the child automatically has two citizenships. When these short falls were detected, the then Minister of Interior wrote a letter to Parliament and the Constitutional Review Commission to look into the law. The Ministry was also taken to the Supreme Court by an individual who wanted an interpretation of this law. Mr Agorsor read to participants the Supreme Court's judgement on the issue. The judgement now qualifies all those who acquired the Ghanaian citizenship before 1997 for dual citizenship. He added that the Supreme Court's judgement on 22nd May 2012 will be soon put in operation to cancel the previous laws.

Mr Acheampong from the Netherlands asked if this allows one an access to a passport. Mr Agorsor in his answer indicated that he was not too sure of the full implications of the judgement. Further, it was mentioned by the representatives from Germany that some countries do not allow dual citizenship and that to become a citizen in their host country they have to denounce their Ghanaian citizenship. Mr Agorsor responded by explaining that the new law, once enforced, will still consider people in this type of situation as Ghanaian and they will still be eligible for dual citizenship. It was also mentioned that dual citizens cannot vote or hold public office.

Dr. Prosper Asima, Assistant Director, Ghana Immigration Service (GIS), who made a presentation on Immigration and Residence of The Ghanaian Diaspora, started by noting that his presentation is a continuation of Mr Agorsor's presentation. This he explained was because GIS falls under the Ministry of Interior. He explained the two types of citizenship: Formal and Substantive Citizenship. He said, as a security officer and a researcher who has looked through political, civil, social, cultural and gender rights, dual citizenship is one of the ways of managing multiple identity. Furthermore, he stated that dual citizenship is one way for the diaspora to feel inclusion in both countries. He also informed participants that efforts are underway to ensure that the right to vote is granted to Ghanaians in the diaspora. He added that whatever rights one has, determines his relation to the state. According to Dr. Asima, indefinite residence, right of abode, dual citizenship among others, help one to move freely in the country. Since most Ghanaian diaspora want complete freedom of movement,



On interaction with the police, he said, international drivers' licences, although globally accepted, are usually not recognized and seized by the police in Ghana. The only answer the police give for their actions is that international drivers' licenses do not work in Ghana. Ghana is the only country that does not accept another country's driver's licence from a person who is not going to stay for long.

On the issue of Government Bureaucracy, Mr Kwao noted that the initial interest of government officials in every business or project is what they can personally get out of them; the frontline officials being the guiltiest of this act. According to him, consistent and correct information in Ghana is not readily accessible. Most information seen online is not practicable. He recommended that with the advent of internet, forms for all sort of applications should be put online and be paid for when properly completed only.

In conclusion, he recommended that citizens should be educated to ask for citation anytime been stopped by the police.

After his speech, some comments and suggestions were raised by participants. Issues discussed between the diaspora representatives and the presenters covered the right of abode, fingerprinting at the airport, and the issuing of dual citizenship. For right of abode, the diaspora were told that it requires a letter of sponsorship, correctly completed application, a passport, and fee and that from submission to issuance, the length of time should not take more than a month. Regarding dual citizenship, embassies cannot issue dual citizenship under the current law. Rather, missions abroad have the applications for dual citizenship, but the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Ghana has to issue it. However, this is disputed by some and is a legal issue.

Session V: Diaspora Participation in National Processes and Dialogue.

The moderator for this session, Dr. Adjei introduced Mrs Mary Mpreh to make the next presentation.

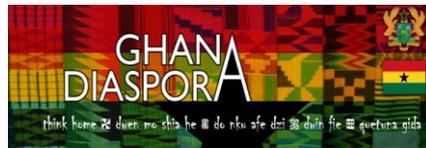
Mrs. Mary Mpreh, National Development Planning Commission (NDPC), who made a presentation on Diaspora Participation in National Processes and Dialogue started by stating that effective dialogue is powered by communication. According to her, the objective of the decentralisation process is to bring Government to the doorstep of the citizenry. The three key acts that the decentralized planning system works in are: Act 479 (1994) that sets up the

NDPC as the Apex Body for Coordinating Development Planning in Ghana, Act 480 (1994) the Planning System Law and the Civil Service Law (327) that spells out functions of Ministries. She briefed participants on the composition and mandate of the NDPC. Among NDPC's key mandate is to advise the President on development planning policy and strategy and keep under constant review, national development plans. In this, all stakeholders, public



and private, of the NDPC are to be represented in the formation of the National Development Framework at the sector, district, and monitoring and evaluation levels. It is therefore within its mandate to look at what is happening in the colloquium and recommend to the government. NDPC also has coordinating mechanisms. It works through Planning units, Ministries Departments and Agencies, District Assemblies, Private Sector, Research Institutions, Policy Think Tanks and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). NDPC also develops broad development policy framework for the country. She said, since Ghanaians in the diaspora are critical for Ghana's development by rights as citizens and as part of the national resource. The question then is how to engage diaspora participation and dialogue. She stated that the diaspora equals the 11th region of Ghana and has been involved in development in various ways, but in particular with the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy through consultations. However, according to her, the diaspora should be involved in policy formation and reviews in regards to development through commission and cross-sectoral planning groups of the NDPC and their chosen sectors and levels. The diaspora can be engaged at the NDPC and the Ministerial level. Past engagements with the diaspora have revolved around: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration engagements through consular and other services, Presidential visits and engagements, consultations around the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy, constitutional review process and investment expos. Paramount among the challenges NDPC has in dealing with the diaspora is lack of coherent institutional mechanism for both engagement and feedback, lack of coherent legal framework and representation and lack of a coherent Diaspora Policy and a strategic framework for engagement. She emphasized that information is VERY critical to effective dialogue. Some of the recommendations outlined in the presentation in addressing these challenges are the need to develop a Diaspora Policy and Engagement strategy for the country, the need to address information asymmetries through the diaspora's own organisational and communication capacities and the need to have diaspora representation on NDPC's Commission. She also suggested the need to give time frames to activities and proposed that the Diaspora Engagement Project should be linked to the NDPC website. She concluded by stating that the only true test for accountability will be to track and evaluate results.

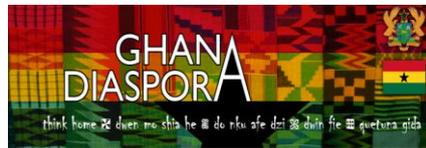
Dr. Raymond A. Atuguba, Faculty of Law, University of Ghana, was next to make a presentation on Diaspora Participation in National Processes and Dialogue: The Case of the Constitution Review Commission. He said IOM's Diaspora Engagement Project has targeted five of the 6 countries that the Constitution Review Commission (CRC) targeted for its Diaspora consultations. The only country that was left out was Canada, which he did not think was a coincidence. According to him, Ghana's nationality laws do not include nationality by birth, but only prescribes citizen by parentage and other means. This therefore means that if the law is applied strictly, there will be no Ghanaian found. The Supreme Court has, however, recently clarified that one does not need a dual nationality card to be a citizen of Ghana: *Kweku Asare v. AG SC Writ No. J1/6/2011*. Since there are 7.5 million estimated Ghanaians abroad, it is important to engage them. In addition, there are knowledgeable and experienced Ghanaians in the diaspora as well as Ghanaians who are intensely engaged in Ghana's politics, economy and society of their home country. Therefore, planning is not



credible unless they are consulted. The criteria used for choosing diaspora sites for the CRC's consultation was: Estimated population of Ghanaians there, Number and availability of Ghanaian experts living in the country, Capacity of Organizations of Ghanaians there and of the Embassy officials to mobilize citizens for consultations and Security considerations.

After the consultations, which seemed to align with discussions at that point in the colloquium, some of the submissions made were the need to create a Ministry for Diaspora affairs to respond more promptly and effectively to the needs of Ghanaians in the diaspora. All the recommendations were at the constitutional, legislative, and administrative level. The CRC also made some important findings and observations: "A distinct feature of the consultations with Ghanaians living abroad was that they concentrated on their specific concerns, although there were significant proposals from them on the reform of many other aspects of the 1992 Constitution. Their specific concerns related to issues of dual nationality, facilities for investment in Ghana, facilities for integration back into the Ghanaian community, their eligibility to vote, and their eligibility to hold public office in Ghana." The findings that led to these recommendations include the fact that the Commission discovered that the under-enforcement of the voting rights of Ghanaians living abroad also deviates from values and ideals underpinning the Constitution. He stated that the diaspora was not very satisfied with the recommendations overall, but they must closely read all the findings and observations that led to the recommendations. The Commission acknowledged that there may be practical challenges in accommodating Ghanaian residents abroad and prisoners to vote. There could, for instance, be challenges in determining the constituencies to which Ghanaians abroad and prisoners would cast their votes for. If they were to apply their votes to constituencies of their previous abodes or their hometowns, the Electoral Commission (EC) would be presented with immense logistical, financial and administrative nightmare in printing ballots papers for all 230 constituencies for as many polling centres as will be required to ensure that all qualified persons are able to exercise their franchise. Even more serious will be how to ensure that prisoners and Ghanaians abroad receive the campaign message of candidates for elections. Dr. Atuguba outlined a few things to be reflected upon, including the fact that Ghanaian officials usually forget the diaspora when designing consultation strategies. When cost savings are to be made in cost of consultations, diaspora consultations are often first to go. There are cheaper ways of having diaspora consultations; however, the state of preparedness of diaspora for consultations is critical. The reason for consulting is to conduct the experiential and expert knowledge of diaspora into policies and laws as well as programmes and projects in Ghana. It is also important to have the capacity and mechanisms for understanding the concerns of diaspora and articulating them effectively.

AL haji Mohammed Mardah, National Council of Ghanaian Associations, Inc. (NCGA) spoke from the perspective of Ghanaians in the New York. He said although he attended the consultation workshop of the CRC in New York, he did not have the opportunity to look through the documents before the consultation. He said one of the key things in engaging the

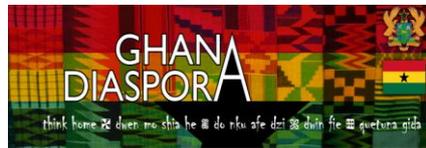


diaspora is building trust. He said the first engagement of his association was through interacting with government officials that came to New York. He said the National Council of Ghanaian Associations in the New York was one of the organizations that spearheaded the dual nationalism law. Again, the right to vote was spearheaded by two Ghanaians in the New York. He was glad the Supreme Court has made a move on that law. AL haji Mardah recommended that in addition to setting up a Ministry for Diaspora Affairs, there is a need to lobby by identifying parliamentarians who are supporting diaspora issues and support them and, on the other hand, raising opposition against those who are against diaspora. Again, regarding diaspora coming together, he said it is worth noting that it uniting at larger levels comes with challenges. He informed that in New York there is an on-going push for an International Organisation for Ghanaian diaspora. In concluding, he stated that to engage the diaspora, there is a need for a representation on the National Migration Commission. This, he said, will help to articulate the diaspora's point of view.

Dr. Richard Adjei, who moderated this session, invited precise questions and contributions from participants. Dr. Doku of the Mental Health Educators in the Diaspora commented that before trust comes there should be commitment followed by communication and listening with the intent to understand. He said, regarding the CRC's consultations, mental health professionals in the diaspora were not contacted. He also wanted to know how the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda could be linked to remittances and when the Mental Health Law was going to be passed. Dr. Doku also stated that the government should link the diaspora and remittances to the poverty reduction strategy. Dr. Atuguba reacted by saying that he believes a consultation strategy should to be designed before embarking on consultations. Concerning the Mental Health Law, he was of the view that there is a need for a standard operating practice for all the laws, not only for specific laws. For example, there could be a place online where draft legislation could be read and where diaspora with expertise on the topic could input comments.

Mrs. Maame O. Akumeah of the MFA also suggested that the diaspora associations arrange with the MFA for video conferences if they want government to take part in their meetings. She also informed that a lot of services have been put online to help diaspora engage and assured participants that addresses to these services will be made available to them.

Another major issue discussed was the youth, which was initially mentioned by Mr Richard Tandoh. He mentioned that the youth need to be engaged more and shown the vision for Ghana more explicitly as the aspect of marketing the Ghanaian culture and vision seems to be missing. Further, the youth cannot just be talked at. He stated that the youth want to challenge and truly have a conversation with the government and not be told what they want to hear, and then be expected to buy into it. They also do not need to be impressed with high officials. He said it would be okay seeing younger officials from time to time come to visit and talk with them. AL haji Mardah agreed and stated that, in general, there is a need to go beyond consultations with the diaspora and let them consult the government in their areas of expertise.



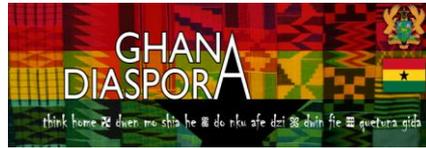
Session VI; Charitable Giving and Humanitarian Assistance: Understanding the Context: Project Management and Implementation in Ghana.

Mr Tsatsu Dawson, who moderated this session, introduced the session by stating that understanding the local context is a prerequisite of the successful implementation of projects. He informed that the session will discuss some of the challenges that diaspora associations face when they attempt to undertake projects. It will also look at the local context and what is required for a successful implementation of programmes. The discussions will also look at building successful local partners for development and seek to explain the criteria, procedures, mechanisms and requirements for charitable giving and humanitarian assistance provided by the diaspora.

Mr Larbi-Siaw, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, who was first to make a presentation under this session, outlined some incomes that are tax exempt in Ghana. These included income of a local authority, income of a person receiving instruction at educational institution from a scholarship, exhibition, bursary or similar educational endowment, industry concessions: income of a person from a farming business in Ghana and the first 3 years' income of a company in a processing business.

Regarding custom duties, he said tax exemptions are given to charitable organisations for charitable purposes. Again under recommendations from appropriate ministries, import duties, import sales taxes, import excise duties can be exempted. For an organisation to be eligible for tax exemption, it has to be properly registered and the items being sent have to be approved by the appropriate ministry concerned. An institution or organisation can sign a contract with the government for the period those reliefs are wanted. Once approved by government, import duties, import excise duties among others will be free. An institution could also go to the appropriate ministry and prove that it wants exemptions. This, however, should be started early. If a charitable organisation makes money outside its social activities or strays to commercial business, its corporate tax will be 25%. Organisations that deal in natural resources, oil and gas are taxed 35%. A rebate of 2.5% is available for firms listed on the stock exchange. He gave the breakdown of the valued added tax as: Basic rate – 10%, Get fund- 2.5%, NHIS – 2.5%. With Valued Added Tax (VAT), exports and pharmaceutical products are zero rated. In order to allow companies to compete, the VAT on basic raw material is reduced to 5%. Tax exemptions are also given for vehicles not exceeding Ghc20,000 for doctors, officials working in government approved hospitals and institutions, lecturers and senior staff of the university.

Dr. William Brown, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), was next to make a presentation on the experiences and activities of ADRA. He explained that ADRA is a global humanitarian organization established to do humanitarian work in 120 different countries. In Ghana, it is in all the 10 regions. It was started in 1983 as Seventh Day



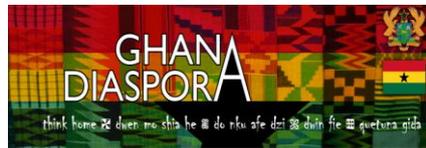
Adventist Welfare Services (SAWS), with its main focus on relief. He outlined the core portfolios of ADRA as: food security, primary health, and education, among others. From 1996 -2007 it has, under the food security project, supported 30,000 farmer households. It has, together with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, been able to promote and support soya bean, citrus, mango and cashew productions in Ghana. ADRA, with the support of The Millennium Development Authority (MiDA), has supported dry season farming. It also has value chain associations. Value chain crops, he explained, are crops ADRA is promoting for export. These include cassava, plantain, maize, vegetables (pepper, okra, garden eggs) and legumes (cowpeas). ADRA has also trained and given technical supports to farmers. Dr. Brown went further to outline the outcomes of ADRA's collaborations. As a result of its activities, factories have been established to process cashew and citrus. With woodlot cultivation also, farmers are made to enter into woodlot cultivation for both income and environmental preservation. He also briefed participants on the ecological zones and the unique opportunities in each zone. According to him, Ghana is a nation blessed with all kinds of resources but food security is a big area of concern that has to be tackled. Ghana can produce so much to even export. According to him, ADRA has worked in are all areas that would be fruitful for the diaspora to invest in.

Among the challenges ADRA faces are with mechanized farming and rain fed agriculture – irrigation, problems with glut. These are also areas that the diaspora could invest in. He concluded by informing that the Export Development and Agriculture Development(EDAV) fund has signed a Memorandum of Understanding to support farmers in five regions to produce mango.

Mr Isaac Adu Acheampong, Council of Ghanaian Organisations in the Netherlands (COGHAN) and CEO of the Dutch International SAMENWERK Foundation- Almere, before his presentation, introduced both organizations. He said COGHAN and SAMENWERK takes conscious and strategic approach to engage Dutch National Institutions in the formulation of effective policies that are beneficial to the Ghanaian community. He said SAMENWERK Foundation has contributed to a lot of social and economic developments in Ghana, especially in Kumasi. It is also involved in local partnership.

He outlined some of the challenges in its project implementation as: Local partners do not react promptly to e-mails and phone calls; Reports are not delivered on time; Local partners do not know exactly what direction to take because there are no pre-defined "what-if" scenarios; Lack of understanding(clarity)in the scope of the project; shifting partner priorities (unstable partner can seriously impact the entire project); and sustainability (lack of partners, ability to maintain project after delivery and sense of ownership).

In view of these challenges, he outlined strategies for successful project implementation as: Recognition of the need for local community involvement, Formulate or set indicators, Local capacity building (LCB), Develop standard reporting format, and have Clear responsibility and accountability of project partners.



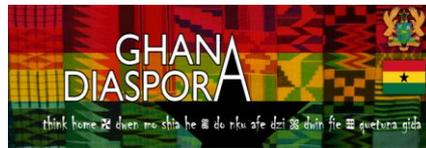
He also made some recommendations for selecting projects and partner organisations by charitable and humanitarian organisations. To ensure and to allow maximum effectiveness and sustainability for projects in Ghana, the project should:

- have a relation to poverty, i.e. focus on developing neglected productive resources among a target population defined as poor;
- consider the community's priorities (rather than pursuing priorities in which the community has no interest);
- take account of the conditions under which development objectives are to be attained, in addition to considering the effectiveness and sustainability of the intervention;
- consider the commitments of other donors (in negative terms: avoid duplicating the efforts of other donors; in positive terms: determine whether the commitments of other donors can be effectively complemented to benefit from the effect of synergy);
- and last but not least: consider the level of resources available to your organisation: money, personnel, and logistics (since this determines the extent and the focus your contribution can make in solving a significant problem).

Mr Dawson, who moderated the session, set the ball rolling by asking how one can understand the context in which one lives with the reality of what is happening in Ghana. Mr Issifu of the Ghana Union Mannheim – Ludwigshafene suggested the need to have a centre to help coordinate the processes concerned with bringing in goods. He added that since quality and standards of vehicles sent to Ghana vary, there is a need to consider the technical aspects. He also suggested that, although as a country there is need for processors to process perishable foods in Ghana, the concern therefore is the energy to power these processors. Dorothy Ameyaw (The Netherlands) also raised a concern on some goods she shipped for charitable purposes. She said, although these goods were meant for charitable purposes, they were taxed. Mr Pappoe recounted the experience of one member of his association. He said this person, after discussions with the Ministry of Health, shipped some items for the hospitals. These items were sent back to him because the Ministry failed to take delivery of them.

Mr Larbi Siaw, in reacting, said from time to time literatures are sent to the embassies through the MFA and that there is a system of which minister is responsible for approving charitable goods. He encouraged the diaspora to let someone know when this system is not being followed. He added that basic pharmaceutical products are tax exempted. Once the right procedures are followed, exemptions will be given. He also expressed how frustrated he gets when good Samaritans are being frustrated. He therefore assured participants that he will leave his email address behind for follow-up contacts.

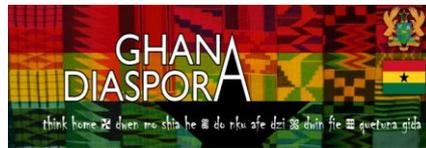
Session VII: Return and Reintegration: Opportunities and Challenges.



The objective of this session was to look at the experiences and challenges faced by returnees and consider programmes which aim at encouraging returns to Ghana. The session is also to look at the opportunities that exist in Ghana and look at the attempts being made by various actors to encourage returns and reintegration in Ghana.

Mr David Tette, Advisor, Migration and Diaspora, Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM) presented on the Returning Experts Programme. He said CIM is a joint operation of Deutsche Gesellschaft Für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the German Federal Employment Agency. GIZ has a worldwide presence in 130 countries worldwide. In Germany it is in almost all the provinces. Every three years Germany has bilateral talks with the Government of Ghana. This year, the areas discussed were agriculture, decentralisation and economic development. CIM has been the placement agency for the GIZ for some years now. Today migration is seen having a positive face. This has led to CIM adapting the theme, “It’s people that make a difference”. Today migrants are not seen as negative people, but as people who have contribution for the country. There is a working group in GIZ, looking at the positive ways of putting remittances into products to help the country. Returning migrants are therefore seen as agents of change, which is also referred to as circular labour migration. CIM started with Integrated Experts Programme (IE) and moved to the Returning Experts Program (PRF). Due to the changing phase of migration, CIM’s new programs have been to support migrant organizations, support migrant entrepreneurs, triple-win migration, alumni portal(bring together all professionals that worked, schooled or stayed in Germany) and policy advisory service e.g. Mobility Partnership Agreements. CIM/GIZ also supports Ghanaians who study in Germany and want to return to Ghana to work; however, the number of Ghanaian students in Germany is reducing due to a change in visa requirements. Among its achievement are that they have made about 11,000 placements since 1994, placed over 500 returning experts in development corporation-related positions (2011), have more than 30,000 members on the alumni portal, have had cooperation with foreign Chambers of Commerce and finally, has received more than 40 applications from migrant organisations in which 13 have been approved and 20 being evaluated for approval. CIM’s vision is to continue with returning the Returning Experts Programme and Diaspora projects among others. In conclusion, Mr Tette noted that CIM has offers for all phases of migration. However, the Triple Win Migration programme is not yet applicable to Ghana since Ghana does not have experts in excess to export.

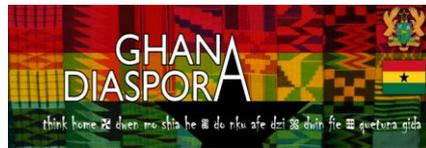
Reverend Frank P. Twumasi, Scholars in Transit (SIT), Nkoranza, Brong Ahafo Region, who also made a presentation under this session, started by outlining the objectives of his organization. He said the objectives of SIT is to conduct research on pertinent social issues, organize anti-human smuggling and trafficking campaigns, educate potential migrants and the general public on the risks involved in irregular migration, provide and disseminate relevant information on migration and migration related issues and encourage and facilitate the formation of migrant associations amongst those who have returned. According to Rev. Twumasi, from interactions with returnees, it shows that pressure from peers and family members are enough to push them to return to the diaspora. Migrants who return without



anything substantive are seen as liabilities to families. Most of the migrants from Libya who learnt masonry (malaga) in Libya are compelled to go back to Libya to work as masons. The question some Ghanaians in the diaspora ask is: What are we to return to? Some returnees who entered into farming ended up incurring losses, and, as a result, committed suicide because they could no longer take the embarrassment. These farmers do their best to produce but do not have storage facilities to store the excess as well as good roads to even transport these produce to town to sell. To solve these reintegration problems, Rev. Twumasi suggested the need to extend the IOM/UNDP Reintegration Support Program to reach out to more, the need to expedite the National Migration Policy, waiver duty payments on particular goods and machinery, reduce frustrating bureaucratic processes at ports and harbors, give attractive incentives to entrepreneurs who return to establish businesses in deprived areas, the need to extend IOM's Reintegration Support Program to cover Migrants who intend to go to school, and finally to form a National Association for Migrants in Ghana for an effective diaspora network and partnership.

Mr Daniel Sam, MIDA Project, IOM, was next to make a presentation on Migration and Development. He noted that his presentation is based on the premise that the relationship between countries of origin and their overseas communities is key to successful development.

According to him, there are three main ways in which migration impacts development: transfer of population and workforce, transfer of know-how and knowledge and transfer of financial assets. Linking theory and practice, there are five key areas for migration and development. These include research on data and statistics, policy coherence and coordination, mapping out of the process and means, inter dialogue and cooperation and diaspora option. MIDA, the acronym for Migration for the Development of Africa, is mobilizing the Africa diaspora to harness their potential for the development of the continent. MIDA targets all human resources. The role of IOM, however, is to serve as a catalyst in the attainment of the MIDA objective. MIDA has the political will and commitment from the Africa Union (AU) Heads of State. Among the implementation modalities are MIDA Ghana Health and MIDA Italy. The third phase of the MIDA Ghana project was launched on the 4th of June 2008. It is a health sector brain gain project and human resource capacity-building initiative. It offers opportunities for health professionals in Europe with African descent to temporarily return to Ghana to undertake assignments in health institutions, including training schools. Additionally it offers internships in United Kingdom (UK) for health officials in Ghana. The project, which has funding support from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, has been implemented since 2005 by IOM Ghana and IOM the Netherlands with strong collaboration with the Ghanaian Ministry of Health and Ghanaian diaspora organizations in Europe. Mr Sam also acknowledged Dr. Doku of the Mental Health Educators in the Diaspora and Mr Acheampong of the Council of Ghanaian Organizations in the Netherlands as being very instrumental in the mobilisation of the Ghanaian diaspora from their respective host countries to be engaged by the project. He stressed that the project is demand driven and since it consisted of short term assignments for health professionals, health regulatory bodies waive the licensing in order for these professionals to operate. In



terms of evaluation, host institutions come up with post assignment evaluations. This considers how the project imparted on knowledge and skill of the institution and monitors services offered. Resource persons are also made to submit reports. MIDA's contribution to the health sector of Ghana has been in the area of faculty development, continuous professional development (for personnel on-site) and medical services. In its accomplishment since 2006, over 30,000 health workers and students in Ghana directly benefited from capacity building initiatives, over 40 Ghanaian institutions have benefited directly and all 10 regions in Ghana have benefited from the short term assignments provided by resource persons. Certificates of appreciation are also awarded to migrants who carry out assignments. For a single example of the contributions of the project, in the quest to bridge the information and communication technology (ICT) gap in health care delivery, one migrant, Clement Adu Twum, has, through MIDA project, transported servers and mobilised a container load of computers, office furniture among others to the Tamale Teaching Hospital in 2012.

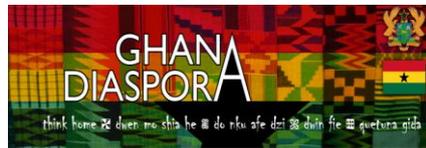
During the time for questions and suggestions, Dr. Doku suggested that the MIDA project be extended to North America as North American colleagues in the health sector come entirely on their own. Further, large numbers of health professionals are coming from North America. Therefore, a program would greatly aid these people. This Mr Sam reacted by suggesting that the IOM representative from North America, Jennifer Bubke, moves forward with this suggestion. Richard Tandoh of Star 100 also commented that people in the diaspora have erroneous expectation about how things are done in Ghana. This usually results in conflict of expectations. He suggested the need for more talk on the realities of migration in Ghana. It was agreed by others that migration must be demystified and the realities must be highlighted.

Day 3:

Session VIII: Understanding the Ports, Customs and Excise Procedures.

This session was dedicated to understanding the mechanisms of Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority, the Excise and Custom duty as well as efforts at simplifying and modernizing the system.

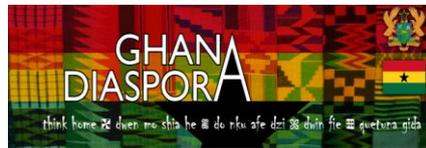
Mr Nii Amasa, Ghana Ports and Harbour Authority, was the first to make a presentation on the Mechanisms of the Ghana Ports under this session. According to him, the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA), which is a statutory body, handles only 25% of the country's revenue. He explained the processes involved at the ports. He informed that there are 14 institutions responsible for the discharge and load of cargo as well as providing space for loading cargo among others. These fourteen institutions include: Ghana Standards Authority, Food and Drugs Board, Narcotics Control Board (NACOB), National Security, Ghana Police Service, Port Health, Bureau of National Investigation, National Petroleum



Board, Parliament Protection Agency, Customs and Excise, Ports and Harbour Authority (GPHA), and Vehicles and Cars Board. To deal with these institutions, which are physically located in different localities, is a challenge that results in bureaucracy. However, it is important that these all work together and do not overlap. The roles of the state institutions are to be rationalised so that in performing their duties, they do not impede trade activities. There is, therefore, a need for the GPHA to provide a one stop shop for all the activities done by all these institutions. There is also a need for an all-purpose modern laboratory for all these institutions as well as the need for all the security organizations among these fourteen institutions to conduct joint examination of goods at one place. The Ministries of Food and Agriculture, and Trade and Industry should also provide online means of assessing permits. Best practices say that there is no need to conduct 100% inspection of goods. The Durban Harbour, which is used as a case study, conducts rigorous and accurate risk profiling. Premises inspection will also help in the activities of the ports as well as equipment like scanners. In Ghana, however, there are well documented reports of instances where importers want to cheat the system. A committee has been inaugurated by the minister to look into facilitation of processes at the ports. He concluded by suggesting that importers who cheat the system are severely punished.

Mr Robert Nana Mensah, Customs and Exercise Division of the Ghana Revenue Authority, was the next to speak on Customs (Tax) Administration in Ghana. He started by stating that efficient policy framework and good human and logistical resource management are important for effective customs administration. This is especially important as Customs is a vital part of the Ghana Revenue Authority due to a recent organizational reform. More information on the reform can be found at www.gra.gov.gh. According to him, the mandate of Customs is the collection and protection of tax revenue on imports and exports, expedite clearing processes (facilitation), ensure compliance with national laws, ensure environmental security and protection of society, and collect and store trade data for statistical regulatory purposes, and for policy regulation. For public servants, the bottom line is to serve, and for citizens to comply. He discussed how Customs is going through a modernization process by implementing best practices. This includes implementation of the Kyoto Convention, Arusha Declaration, and the SAFE Framework of Standards. The diaspora is a key stakeholder for Customs that demand effective policies and procedures that are devoid of corruption. The diaspora should report any officer that is corrupt or not doing his/her job properly in order to improve Customs.

Ghanaians who have stayed outside Ghana for more than twelve continuous months and are relocating to Ghana may import their removal articles free of tax. Removal articles include personal belongings or effects, domestic appliances, provisions normally kept in stock, pet animals, and equipment necessary for one's work/job. Vehicles are not included in removal articles. The element of discretion comes into play on domestic appliances when one is deciding if they look used or not. Belongings of those who died outside of Ghana may be imported free of duties and taxes. There are, however, restrictions on the physical conveyance of currency to and from Ghana. Residents and non-residents travelling abroad are permitted



to carry up to \$10,000 or its cedi equivalent. Although there are fraudulent documents imitating the Ghana Revenue Authority, valuation and classification are critical Customs functions in the clearance of goods. The valuation module in Customs provides a structured database of validated reference values for selected commodities by officers and relevant customs departments. The use of the valuation database is mandatory for selected HS Codes that have been carefully chosen based on their risk. A computerized system of valuation of vehicles was introduced in 2005. The system includes the make, model, year, engine capacity, and intended use of the car or vehicle. The goal of the system is to reduce bias in determining the level of taxes imposed on the car or vehicle. Customs subscribes to the ISO certification as well as hold regular tax education, stakeholder forums and training for clearing agents. It has also introduced an internal affairs and intelligence unit as well as a client service unit. He concluded by recommending the need to facilitate easy communication, relationships, information and complaints handling at various foreign missions on custom issues. He also recommended the need to have custom officials posted to duty points in various countries to handle critical functions in order to develop international trade and national investment. Lastly he provided the following contact information for Customs: info@gra.gov.gh, ronamen@gmail.com, 233-244-363269, 233-302-668272, 233-28-0530218, 233-302-668319.

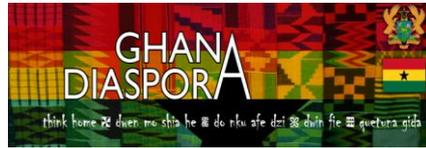
After the various presentations, comments and suggestions were invited from participants. Mr Toni suggested that the various institutions should think of alternative ways of getting information to the diaspora communities (having video documentaries on CDs). Mr Appreku who supported Mr Mensah's suggestion of having custom officials at duty points in various countries also suggested that the Births and Deaths Registry should be transformed. He added that there is a need to relocate the Births and Deaths registry to the National Identification Authority (NIA) offices and in addition, have appropriate systems to back efforts of trustworthy officials.

Session IX: Follow-up and Next Steps.

Mr Tsatsu Dawson informed that under this session, participants will breakup into three groups. Each group will have representatives from each of the five countries. Government officials participating will also be shared among the groups. The objective of this session is to task participants to further examine follow-up recommendations and outcomes from the video conferences. It will also be used as a wrap up of all the discussions in the last two days.

After the group discussions, each group presented its deliberations and concerns. The first group, led by Mr Isaac Acheampong, outlined the group's suggestions:

- The Diaspora Support Unit should be the beginning of a permanent contact for the diaspora within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



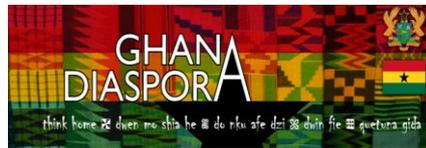
- The diaspora need a Diaspora Investment Bond, which would be good for both Ghana and the diaspora.
- There is a need to look into the diaspora savings account to solve the remittance problems.
- The new Diaspora Support Unit should look at reducing the fee for the right of abode for Ghanaians with foreign passports.
- There is a need for adequate information at all embassies on dual citizenship.
- The diaspora requests permanent representation in terms of consultation from the Diaspora Support Unit.
- Regarding pension schemes, there is a need for the government to have agreements to ensure that these benefits can be transferred and the diaspora requests that the government looks into this.
- Look into the possibility of tapping into the skill of Ghanaians in the diaspora rather than always hiring foreign professionals by considering hiring Ghanaian expats and diaspora experts.
- Organize diaspora exchange programs for the youth.
- There is a need for coordination and proper control of affairs at the ports and harbours.
- There should be a modern and simplified way of clearing goods.
- Explore the possibility of using the registration and manufacturing dates of vehicles imported for value assurance.

The second group led by Mr Kwao Amegashie also outlined three submissions that focused on how the diaspora can offer various expertise to Ghana, and internship program, and involving the youth of the diaspora:

- Since the diaspora is offering various expertise to the country, there should be a skills bank where all these skills and expertise can be organised and can then be assessed based on the country's needs for temporary return.
- There should be Internship and Exchange programs organised for the youth. This should be created for the youth in the diaspora and internships should be relevant to the country. This should also work in reverse where Ghanaian youth go abroad to learn new skills.
- There should be a link on the new diaspora website where the youth in the diaspora could communicate to exchange ideas.

Mr Toni Kofi who also led the third group outlined these submissions:

- There is a need for diaspora to appreciate the opportunity the country has given to them to engage.
- Since there is a tremendous store of expertise among the diaspora, there is a need to come together, stay united post-colloquium, and focus on a single activity, such as food security, in order to best help Ghana. This means staying united to think, plan,



and invest together. The group proposed staying united through a project that focuses on food security in Ghana. The project includes farming, processing, and marketing. All constituents in the five countries represented at the colloquium that are interested should be involved. Diaspora associations present must use their resources and good will together with all their constituents to invest in the production, storage and marketing of food in Ghana.

- Diaspora should continue engaging with the Diaspora Support Unit and the Centre for Migration Studies' policy-writing process.

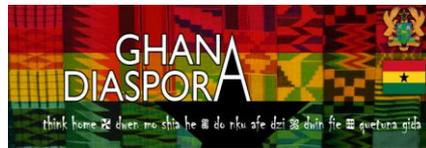
Mr Dawson entreated participants from the diaspora to send all the information that have been received to the members of their various associations. He said before relocating to Ghana about 8 months ago, his life would have been different if he knew all what he knew now. He acknowledged the inputs of Mr Appreku and thanked Jamilla, Jennifer, Richard and colleagues from Geneva for the support provided.

Antonietta Sagoe of GhanaVi, Italy on behalf of the diaspora thanked the various ministries and agencies that presented and IOM for a successful colloquium.

Dr. Doku also added that in his job as a psychiatrist, quality of life is related to the quality of relationships one has. He said he had greatly benefited for participating in the programme. He expressed his appreciation to the IOM Ghana and IOM missions abroad and commended Mr Appreku for his good diplomacy. He encouraged participants to look after themselves and stay united.

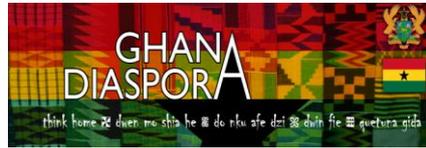
Session X: Launch of The Diaspora Website and Diaspora Support Unit.

Ms. Dyane Epstein thanked the IOM Ghana team who worked tirelessly to ensure the implementation of the project. She commended the Government of Ghana for always being available and showing interest in diaspora issues. She said, IOM started the Diaspora Engagement Project in 2010 when the government asked to raise key migration issues, the diaspora being one of them, and engaged government officials as key partners. IOM secured funding from its headquarters in Geneva. She said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration (MFA) has been supportive of the project from the beginning to the end. She identified the following as major accomplishments of the project: mapping in five key countries, video conferences in each of the five countries, Diaspora Support Unit in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the colloquium, the diaspora website, and the upcoming policy on migration. She informed participants that the establishment of the Diaspora Support Unit at the MFA will be seen very soon. She added that the policy development and the colloquium all came in at the right time. In conclusion, she was hopeful that this project will ensure ownership between the diaspora and the government. She thanked participants, government officials and IOM colleagues for a fruitful colloquium.



Ambassador Chris Kpodo, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, commended the organisers of the colloquium, which he has been assured has been a great success, and expressed appreciation to his fellow Ghanaians in the diaspora, especially those selected from the five countries; Italy, the Netherlands, USA, UK and Germany for honouring the invitation to the colloquium. He said he was happy to observe the success of the colloquium and added that the Government of Ghana has placed the welfare of Ghanaians, both home and abroad, on top of its priorities. The mandate of his ministry is to protect and promote the interest of Ghanaian nationals abroad and coordinate the network of Ghanaian embassies and consulates around the world. He said the MFA is working with other institutions to undertake various initiatives to offer more efficient services. Ambassador Kpodo added that the development of the country cannot be taken for granted, hence the need to review working methods of service. Further, the MFA must constantly review and improve mechanisms to best serve the diaspora, which is why the Diaspora Support Unit and website will be seated in the MFA. The Diaspora Support Unit will be maintained by the Legal and Consular Bureau of MFA and the IT unit. This will allow the MFA to more proactively aid the diaspora. He reassured all Ghanaians of the full cooperation of his ministry. The website he believed will enhance the coordination of the government agencies and go a long way in executing the government's goal in ensuring the welfare of Ghanaians but the diaspora should constantly provide comments and feedback on the website to the MFA. He said he looks forward to the adoption of the National Migration Policy. He therefore tasked CMS to expedite its actions. In conclusion, he was hopeful the project will facilitate the collective effort of mainstreaming the diaspora for development. He also informed that a Memorandum of Understanding had been concluded by his ministry and IOM. He however pronounced the Diaspora Support Unit and diaspora website launched and declared the meeting closed, while wishing the participants safe journeys as they return to their various destinations.

Mr Tsatsu Dawson informed that, regarding the website, the idea was to make it as useful as possible. This is why it is based on the feedback provided from the diaspora on the draft version. He explained that the website has a list of diaspora associations and the roles they play. This he hoped will lead to more interaction among the organisations. Also on the website is information on opportunities on education, work etc. On the website are also outlined some legal framework, which he explained will be updated as information changes. The website also has information on banking, investment opportunities, returnee stories and a space for those you want to return. The site provides as much information as possible to make returning smooth for those who wish to do so. Links are provided to all the institutions that were represented in the colloquium. Mr Dawson further stated that the website will be updated when any relevant information is received. He said going forward, participants' contributions will be very beneficial. He thanked Mr Richard Tandoh for helping in the design and reformulation of the site. He also thanked Dyane and the IOM team and all participants, especially Mr Appreku for their immense contribution.



There was an exchange of notes for the Diaspora Support Unit between IOM and the MFA. Ms. Epstein, on behalf of IOM, also presented some items to the MFA. Mr Appreku, on behalf of the MFA, thanked IOM and the participants for their contribution.

Mr Appreku, acknowledged the project stakeholder committee. He also acknowledged Mr. Adumako (Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning), Mrs. Maame Akumeah (MFA), Mr. David Agorsor(MoI), Mr. Kweku Odame Okyere, Mr. KORLETEY, Mr. Robbert Mensah, Mr. Edward Asubonteng-Manu, Dr. Prosper Asima, Mr. Rueben Okine, Dr. Adjei, Dr. Brown and IOM. He wished participants safe journey and added that the main strategic concern, however, is to find the people who can continue the work even if he is not around. He concluded by stating that his heart will always be with the diaspora.