



## **COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF A TWO (2) DAY IPAC REVIEW WORKSHOP ON THE 2020 PRESIDENTIAL AND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS OF GHANA**

**Dates: 18<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

**Venue: Alisa Hotel, Accra.**

### **PREAMBLE**

As part of its commitment to strengthen and deepen Ghana's electoral processes and elections, the Electoral Commission of Ghana held a two (2)-day meeting with the Inter Party Advisory Committee (IPAC) aimed at assessing the processes leading to the 2020 Elections and the Election itself with the view to proposing recommendations for reforms.

### **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

The Chairperson of the Commission, Mrs. Jean Mensa in her Opening Remarks noted that any learning and assessment processes ought to reflect and take account of successes as well as achievements and possible areas of reform.

She noted that "as a nation, as a Commission and as stakeholders, it is important that we recognize the feats we achieved through the 2020 electoral processes for the purpose of documenting best practices and experience, and to ensure that the successful strategies we adopted do not fall through the cracks of inordinate fault-finding and critique. Constructive critique is a vital part of any institutional-building and learning process, but so is celebration of success."

As state institutions we tend to gloss over our achievements. Instead, as a country, our default mode is to cast assessments of public initiatives or exercises in the mould of fault-finding missions armed with a fine-tooth comb, seeking earnestly to find fault. Sadly, we are slow to recognise where we have put good processes and systems in place, much less document them. In a bid to improve upon our past performance, we rush to propose new recommendations when the old processes and structures are working very well. We need to be guided by the adage that *"if it ain't broke, don't fix it"*, she said.

For the purposes of learning and institutionalising best practices, she indicated that it was important to highlight and document the processes and policies that led and contributed to the achievements chalked during the 2020 Elections:

1. Ability to conduct Presidential and Parliamentary Elections in six (6) months in a COVID environment.
2. Ability to successfully conduct all our electoral activities (Registration, Exhibition, Nomination, Special Voting and Election Day Activities) in the height of COVID-19.
3. High participation of citizens in spite of fears and apprehensions of the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. Absence of long queues at Polling Stations.
5. Ability to deploy technology to guarantee that only unique individuals were registered to vote thereby enhancing credibility of the Register and Electoral Processes.
6. Ability to prepare a brand-new Voters Register with over 17 million persons in 38 days without the spread of COVID-19.
7. Ability to reduce the cost of Elections from USD 13.00 to USD 7.70 per person and save the country GHS 522 million at a time when costs of elections the world-over was rising.
8. Ability to attain election participation of 79% on Election day.



## **OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

1. For the first time in Ghana's electoral history, the 2020 Elections were fully financed by the Government of Ghana without any donor funding.
2. Deployment of technology to enable the citizenry to check their registration details all through to Election Day.

In his remarks, Dr. Serebour Quarcoe, the Director of Electoral Services noted that significant progress had been made since 1992. He indicated that the level of transparency and accountability displayed by the Commission in the 2020 Elections through the medium of the **Let the Citizen Know platform**, where the Commission provided bi-weekly briefings on key aspects of its work and answered questions from the citizenry was unprecedented.

## **CHALLENGES**

In spite of the gains made, Mrs. Mensa outlined the following challenges:

1. Phenomenon of rejected ballots.
2. Incidence of Manual Verification.
3. Carting and encouragement of registration of unqualified persons such as minors and foreigners.
4. Violence in some centres.

## **PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD BY THE COMMISSION FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE IPAC**

1. Closing of polls at 3:00 pm instead of at 5:00 pm.
2. Instituting an all year-round system where citizens who turn 18, or persons who have not previously registered, may visit any district office with their Ghana Card or passport and register as voters.

3. Introducing an all year-round voter exhibition exercise through the use of technology (SMS short code) as well as have periodic mass physical verification at Exhibition Centres.
4. Building further efficiency into the collation processes by focusing on data entry only at the Constituency Collation Centre (CCC) which is the entry point. The captured data at the CCC will be made available to all stakeholders at the Regional and National levels, from which regional and national reports will be generated.

The Political Parties at the meeting unanimously agreed that the 2020 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections were effectively and successfully organised; that the elections were transparent, credible, fair and met international standards.

### **THE PARTICIPANTS AT THE MEETING AGREED AS FOLLOWS:**

#### **Registration**

1. Implement the Continuous Voter Registration Exercise to enable citizens who turned 18 years and those who had not previously registered to do so.
2. Set up a committee to deliberate on the implementation modalities for the Continuous Voter Registration.
3. Continuous Voter Registration should be implemented with proof of citizenship being limited to the use of Ghana Card and Ghana Passport since the guarantee system is often abused.

#### **Exhibition**

1. Introduce an all year-round Voter Exhibition Exercise through the use of technology (SMS short code). Additionally, maintain the periodic mass verification at Exhibition Centres.
2. Put in place a cut-off time for the Continuous Voter Register Exhibition to allow for the compilation of the Register for voting on Election Day.



## **Filing of Nominations**

1. The Five (5) day period for filing of Nominations introduced in 2020 should be maintained.
2. The period set aside to enable the Political Parties to obtain signatures from their supporters should be increased.
3. The period for Election Campaign should be defined. It should commence after the nominations are filed.
4. Encourage nominations of female and persons with disabilities (PWDs) candidates by reducing their filing fees by 50%.

## **Special Voting**

1. Current arrangement whereby the Media, Security Services and Election Officials are allowed to apply and vote under the Special Voting period should be maintained until such time that the process is fully entrenched.

## **Elections**

1. The polls should end at 3:00 pm instead of at 5:00 pm.
2. Certified Regional Collated Results should be announced by the Chairperson to reduce tension and suspicion. However, the Commission should state clearly the percentage of results yet to be released, etc.

## **Security**

1. Security around elections is the responsibility of the Ghana Police Service.
2. Ghana Police Service should arrange a periodic platform to engage IPAC and other Stakeholders.
3. Ghana Police Service should provide updates on the 2020 Elections malpractices and violence.

4. Political Parties and the Media must show commitment to the democratic process and be mindful of their comments, as some of their statements have the tendency to provoke violence and inflame tensions and suspicions.

**IT WAS AGREED THAT THE EC AND IPAC WILL FURTHER DELIBERATE ON THE FOLLOWING ISSUES:**

**Exhibition**

1. Validation of voters during exhibition to indicate that Voters will be available for the impending Elections.

**Filing of Nominations**

1. Encourage nominations of female and persons with disabilities (PWDs) candidates by reducing their filing fees by 50%.
2. The refund of nomination deposits for all contesting candidates.

**Elections**

1. The recommendation to have data entry only at the Constituency Collation Centre so as to reduce manual inputs at all levels and other technological suggestions to strengthen results collation.
2. Introduce results collation at the Electoral Area.
3. Affixing ballot boxes to tables/stands in a bid to avoid ballot box snatching.



Name of Political Party	Name of Representative	Signature
New Vision Party	Margaret Adjei	
New Vision Party	Serah Mensah	
Nana Yaa A. (CPD)	(CPD)	
K.P.D	Yakubu Harbala	
PNC	Yakubu Fhemden	
PNC	Jamet Nabla	
Nana <del>Boateng</del> <sup>NABP</sup>	Nana Boateng	
<del>NABP</del>	Ahaji Eunyey	
UDS Party	Wad Jallah	
Accor Denter GFP	Akwa Duvor	
APP	Asonko Mny	
ULF	Jonathan Brw	
ULF	Ramon Osei Akoto	
PUP	Elsin Cojoe	
P.U.P	Michael Agui, AD	
GNP	George W. Kingson	
GNP	Felix Nyaa	
QUM	Frank O. Jempoy	
GCP.P	GEORGE HANSAH	
GCP.P	GITSAH <del>AD</del> DADIE	
PPP	Berlinda Bulby	
PPP	Remy the low Eche	
IPG	Jacob Yeloh	
LPG	John Amekoh	
APC	MORBERTI THOMAS	
APC	Ahmeda L. Ashu	
L.P.G	JEERY OYUSU	

