



PERMANENT MISSION OF GHANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

19 EAST 47TH STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017
TEL. NO. 212-832-1300

SCH-1/2

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Ghana to the United Nations presents its compliments to the President of the General Assembly and with reference to the first election of the members of the newly established Human Rights Council scheduled to be held on 9 May, 2006, has the honour to submit an Aide Memoire on Ghana's voluntary pledges and commitments for the promotion and protection of human rights in accordance with operative paragraph 8 of resolution A/RES/60/251 of 15 March, 2006.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Ghana to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the President of the General Assembly the assurances of its highest consideration.

NEW YORK, 25 APRIL, 2006

**PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ROOM C-204
UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK**



cc: General Assembly Affairs Branch
Room S-2925A
United Nations
New York

AIDE MEMOIRE GHANA'S VOLUNTARY PLEDGES AND COMMITMENTS

Respect for human rights has constituted a strong basis of Ghana's foreign policy from independence to date and still remains a high priority. During her membership for three consecutive terms, Ghana effectively participated in the work of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR).

The strides we have made in the area of democracy, human rights and the rule of law and good governance have also carved for us the image of a highly democratic African country. Ghana was both the first member of the African Union to subscribe to the African Peer Review Mechanism of NEPAD and the only country so far to be peer reviewed.

At the national level, the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana which remains a fundamental law of the land reaffirms the fundamental importance of respecting all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all its citizens, consistent with international law. Every person in Ghana, whatever his race, place of origin, political opinion, colour, religion, creed or gender is entitled to:

- ❖ Fundamental human rights and freedoms
- ❖ Protection of right to life
- ❖ Protection of personal liberty
- ❖ Protection from slavery and forced labour
- ❖ Equality and freedom from discrimination
- ❖ Protection of privacy of home and other property
- ❖ Fair trial
- ❖ Protection from deprivation of property
- ❖ General fundamental freedoms
- ❖ Property rights of spouses
- ❖ Administrative justice
- ❖ Economic rights
- ❖ Educational rights
- ❖ Cultural rights and practices

- ❖ Women's rights
- ❖ Children's rights
- ❖ Rights of disabled persons
- ❖ Rights of the sick

In order to further prevent violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the **Commission for Human Rights and Administration of Justice (CHRAJ)** was established as a redress machinery, under our 1992 Constitution. The functions of the Commission among others include:

- ❖ investigating complaints of violations of fundamental rights and freedoms, injustice, corruption, abuse of power and unfair treatment of any person by a public officer in the exercise of his official duty;
- ❖ investigate complaints concerning the functioning of the Public Services Commission, the administrative organs of the State, The Armed Forces, the Police Service and the Prison Service;
- ❖ investigate complaints concerning practices and actions by persons, private enterprises and other institutions where those complaints allege violations of fundamental rights and freedoms under the Constitution;
- ❖ take appropriate action to call for the remedying, correction and reversal of instances of human rights abuse through such means as are fair, proper and effective and
- ❖ to educate the public as to human rights and freedoms by such means as publications, lectures and symposia.

In contributing to the agenda of human rights at the international level, Ghana is party to key international instruments relating to the universal respect for all human rights as outlined below:

- ❖ **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)**
- ❖ **Optional Protocol to the ICCPR**
- ❖ **Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR**
- ❖ **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)**

- ❖ **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**
- ❖ **Optional Protocol to the CEDAW**
- ❖ **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)**
- ❖ **Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)**
- ❖ **Optional Protocol to the CAT**
- ❖ **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**
- ❖ **Optional Protocol to the CRC on children in armed conflict**
- ❖ **Optional Protocol to the CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography**
- ❖ **International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families**
- ❖ **Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court**
- ❖ **Convention Relating the Status of Refugees**
- ❖ **Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees**

Ghana has over the last decade worked closely with UNHCR to serve as an oasis of peace, security and stability for refugees in the West Africa sub-region and fulfilled its obligations in respect of international humanitarian law. In this connection, Ghana is a member of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Ghana has contributed to the resolution of West Africa's intra-state conflicts which had foisted an image of instability on the entire sub-region.

As eloquent manifestation of our commitment to gender balance and the protection of children, the Government of Ghana has created a Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, which is currently headed by a lady of cabinet rank.

In line with its long-standing commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights, the Government of the Republic of Ghana voluntarily commits itself to the following:

- ❖ to participate actively in the work of the new Human Rights Council;
- ❖ to cooperate with the new Council to establish an effective and efficient universal periodic review mechanism;
- ❖ to continue to strengthen policies for the advancement of women to eliminate laws that continue to discriminate against women;
- ❖ to promote the rights of the child;
- ❖ to continue to contribute actively in the negotiation process for the early adoption of the draft "International Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of persons with Disabilities";
- ❖ to extend standing invitations to United Nations Special Procedures;
- ❖ to continue to cooperate fully with UN human rights treaty bodies and promptly submit its periodic reports.

NEW YORK, APRIL 21, 2006