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## Ghana: Parliament Renovates And Beefs Up Security Ahead Of Last Quarter Sitzings

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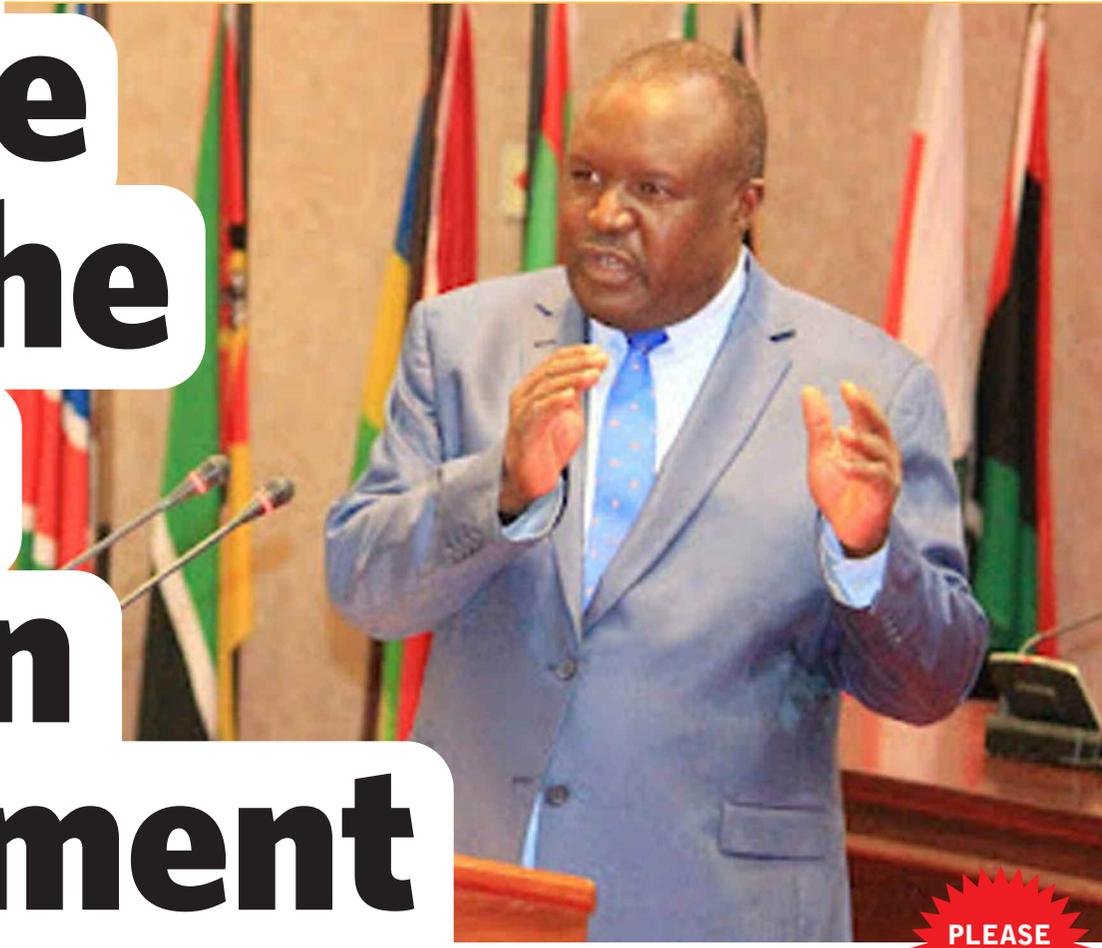
Rt. Hon. Thembekile Majola

## PAP Workshop on Review of the Rules of Procedure and matters arising

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# Let's Move Beyond The Rhetorics Of Women Empowerment

- *Chief Charumbira*



President of the Pan-African Parliament, His Excellency Chief Fortune Charumbira

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Hon Mohammed-Mubarak Muntaka

## Pan-African Parliament MP Moves For Sub-Regional Electoral Body To Supervise National Elections

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## Elections

# PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT MP MOVES FOR SUB-REGIONAL ELECTORAL BODY TO SUPERVISE NATIONAL ELECTIONS



**...most African citizens are disillusioned and have lost hope in the current electoral systems and how it is easily manipulated by the ruling class.**

By; Gilbert Borketey Boyefio

A member of Ghana's delegation to the Pan-African Parliament, Hon. Mohammed-Mubarak Muntaka, has strongly proposed the establishment of sub-regional electoral bodies to supervise elections of their Member States.

According to the Ghanaian MP, such a body will improve citizens' trust and confidence in national elections because the sub-regional electoral bodies will be non-partisan and will have no interest in who wins the elections.

Contributing to presentations made by experts during the High-Level Parliamentary Dialogue on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance, under the theme, "Unconstitutional Changes in Government and Political Transitions in Africa", Hon Muntaka pointed out that most African citizens are disillusioned and have lost hope in the current electoral systems and how it is easily manipulated by the ruling class.

He emphasized that if the situations that lead to unconstitutional changes in government are not addressed from the roots, a lasting solution will not be found, pointing out that, "The major problem is from the national Constitution of Member States."

According to him, most of the Constitutions of Member States were enacted by military leaders, who metamorphose into civilians, and their sole purpose was to protect

themselves and their interest, and not that of the citizenry.

Earlier on, Prof Adebayo Olukushi, Former Executive Secretary of IDEP, informed the Pan-African Parliament that citizens jubilate when there is a military takeover not because they support the action of the coup, but rather because they do not have other alternative avenues to do away with non-performing governments. "Citizens now do not believe whether their vote counts anymore. The majority of our citizens are losing hope in democracy because our leaders are not delivering on their mandate. The system is not working for them."

The high-level dialogue is the first of its kind by the PAP though dialogues of a such nature have been convened before by some Member States. The African Union and some of its Organs have in the course of this year held a series of deliberations on the rising phenomenon of unconstitutional changes of government and irregular political transitions. The outcomes of these engagements, include the declaration adopted by the 16th Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union on Terrorism and Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa, held on 28th May 2022 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea.

Acknowledging that the challenge of unconstitutional changes of government and its structural causes remains a pressing threat to democracy, governance, peace, security, and stability in Africa, the Pan-African Parliament seeks to contribute to addressing the phenomenon. As articulated in the PAP Protocol, PAP was established based on a vision to provide a common Platform for African citizens to be more engaged in discussions and decision-making on challenges and problems facing the Continent.

PAP's mandate seeks to encourage good governance, transparency, and accountability and to promote peace, security, stability, human rights, and democracy in Africa. Considering the impact of unconstitutional changes of government and political transitions on good governance, democracy, human rights, and peace and security as well as the need to enhance peaceful political transitions in the Continent, this High-Level Parliamentary Dialogue is within the mandate and objectives of PAP.

The overall objective of the PAP High-Level Parliamentary Dialogue is to assess, identify and explore



Hon. Mohammed-Mubarak Muntaka

ways to address unconstitutional changes of government and enhance peaceful political transitions in Africa. In particular, the dialogue will offer a platform to share evidence-based knowledge, analysis, and exchange of comparable lessons and experiences in addressing unconstitutional changes of government and enhancement of peaceful political transitions. It will also provide an opportunity to share recommendations to address the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government and measures to entrench peaceful political transitions in Africa.

It is expected that the High-Level Parliamentary Dialogue will contribute meaningfully towards the attainment of aspirations 3 and 4 of Agenda 2063, which expresses the African People's desire for 'An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law', and 'A

peaceful and Secure Africa.'

In particular, the Dialogue will be relevant in identifying and recommending specific measures that AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities, and non-state actors can take towards addressing unconstitutional changes of government and enhancement of peaceful political transitions on the Continent.

The High-Level Parliamentary Dialogue will produce four specific outputs: a PAP resolution on addressing Unconstitutional Changes of Government and Political Transitions in Africa; proceedings report that will be disseminated widely across new and traditional media; one Background Paper on UGC

and the role of PAP; and a Policy Brief based on the background paper, and discussions leading up to, during, and after the dialogue.

## Parliamentary Practice & Procedures

# History Made as Motion to Amend PAP Rules of Procedure Adopted in First Ordinary Session

### PAP Comms

**H**istory was made when a motion on the amendments to the Pan African Parliament's (PAP) Rules of Procedure was moved, seconded, and adopted in the First Ordinary Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Pan African Parliament (PAP) held in Midrand.

The long-awaited process effectively addresses loopholes and legal ambiguities contained in the Rules of Procedures and has caused disagreements among Parliamentarians over the past few years.

Among other amendments, the principle of rotation for leadership positions across all organs of the Pan-African Parliament has been adopted and entrenched, with immediate effect. The milestone is in line with the commitment of the new leadership of the Pan-African Parliament and previous decisions by African Union policy organs, calling for the examination and alignment of rules of procedure to create a conducive environment for the operation of the Organ.

"The amended document on the PAP's Rules of Procedure is the result of consultation and collaboration

between the five regional caucuses and all the members of PAP. The discussions and debates started at workshops held in September 2022 and again in October 2022," said H.E. Hon. Chief Fortune Charumbira.

Amending the Rules of Procedures is part of the PAP's new roadmap to revive and reinvigorate the PAP. "The PAP Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline started the process to evaluate the Rules of Procedures to access whether there were gaps started four years ago. The Committee then identified that amendments were required," said Hon. Thembekile Richard Majola, chairperson of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline, when he presented the paper in the Plenary this morning.

The five regional caucuses agreed last night on 99.9% of the rules put forward for amendments. There were minor differences on seven rules (7.4%) and nine material differences (9.5%), which prompted the discussions and eventual collaboration.

After Hon. Majola's presentation, the five regional caucus chairpersons were called upon to confirm the content of the report was correct and to move the motion.

According to Hon. Alhagie Mbow, Chairperson of the Western Caucus, the report is the foundation to start

building a stronger institution. "We have made history today. We have tried to amend these rules before and failed. Through collaboration and under strong leadership, we have made it a reality," Hon. Mbow said. "We are moving forward and putting the PAP back on the map. We were very impressed by the political maturity that member states have displayed throughout this entire process," said Hon. Pemmy Castelina Majodina, the Chairperson of the Southern Africa Caucus.

East African Chairperson Hon. Terrence Mondon from Seychelles concurred that it was an inclusive and participatory process to get to a point where the PAP now had a tool for the transformation of the institution.

According to Hon. Sen. Azzeddine Abdelmadjid, the Northern Caucus' chairperson from Algeria, the debate between member states were rich and alive. "Although the end result is not perfect, amending the Rules of Procedures is something that had to be done and we are in full agreement with the new document," said Hon. Sen. Abdelmadjid.

"Although we did not agree on all amend-

ments, we eventually reached a consensus and now speak with one voice," said Hon. Jaynet Kabila, the Central Caucus' Chairperson from the DRC. "The Central African Caucus is in agreement with this report," she concluded.

"The Caucuses have spoken!" exclaimed H.E. Hon. Chief Fortune Charumbira at the conclusion of the sitting. "We have agreed as the PAP that the Rules of Procedure will be amended," he added.

The PAP is sitting under the African Union theme for 2022: "Building resilience in nutrition on the African continent: Accelerate the human capital, social and economic development."

**"The amended document on the PAP's Rules of Procedure is the result of consultation and collaboration between the five regional caucuses and all the members of PAP. The discussions and debates started at workshops held in September 2022 and again in October 2022,"**



Hon. Thembekile Richard Majola, Chairperson of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline

## Political and Presidential Affairs

# First Ordinary Session of the 6th Parliament of the PAP Cogito on unconstitutional changes of governments

By: Florence D.Y. Gbolu

**O**n 2 November 2022, a high-level parliamentary dialogue on the resurgence of unconstitutional government changes in some PAP member states was officially opened.

This parliamentary dialogue is not only an opportunity to reflect on the outcomes of the Malabo Extraordinary Summit, but also an opportunity to develop a strategy based on the PAP mandate on how to help prevent, mitigate and counter the growing impacts of unconstitutional changes to government.

During these exchanges, the President of the PAP, the Honourable Chief Fortune Charumbira noted that the objective of this gathering for dialogue is to ensure reflection, deliberation, exchange of ideas and formulation of proposals

on the role of the PAP in addressing the growing incidents of unconstitutional changes of government in some Member States.

According to the honorable Charumbira informed, this is a first of its kind, although dialogues of this nature have been convened and the Union and some of its bodies have held a series of deliberations this year on the growing phenomenon of unconstitutional changes in government and irregular political transitions.

The outcomes of these commitments, he said, include the declaration adopted by the 16th Special Session of the Assembly of the African Union on Terrorism and Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa, held on May 28, 2022 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. The PAP is thus the voice of African citizens within the Union in search of peace and political stability," he said.

He stressed and implored that the dialogue of the day be practical and focused on what and how to support the AU, Member States and how their institutions should promote democratic governance in general by reversing incidents of unconstitutional government changes.

In accordance with "Article 4(1)(c) of the PAP Rules of Procedure, according to the Pap President, we must participate in raising awareness among African peoples of "the promotion of peace, security and stability on the African continent."

The Honourable Charumbira reiterated his call, since the last elections in June of this year, that this dialogue not be reduced to another empty rhetoric, but that it be a strategy and an action of Parliament. He called for this to be a dialogue aimed at safeguarding and protecting constitutional democracy, human rights, the rule of law and good governance in Africa, as provided for in Article 4(1)(b) of the PAP's Rules of Procedure as read in the Africa Agenda 2063.



President of the PAP, His Excellency Chief Fortune Charumbira

"Need I remind you that this dialogue is also echoed in the AU 2020 theme "Silencing Arms: Creating the Conditions for Africa's Development". Peace and security are essential because of the magnitude of their positive impact on many African Union priorities, including stability, economic growth, provision of public services, poverty reduction, Fighting corruption and building trust.

In this context, we will hear from some of the leading African experts on the subject. Therefore, I ask each of us to be frank in the proper diagnosis of the challenges we face and to propose practical and innovative solutions that give citizens the primacy and power to defend democracy." Pap's president said.

"Before continuing, We have developed and passed many laws, frameworks and policies, but unfortunately it seems to me that they have not been enough to counter the rise of unconstitutional changes in government. We must therefore re-examine our interventions and find strategies to counter this growing abrogation of popular will. We cannot continue on the same path if our interventions do not work. As Albert Einstein said, "Madness is about doing the same things over and over again and expecting different results."

Hon. Charumbira also urged members to increase their engagement with their national parliaments and other government bodies to ensure domestication, implementation and monitoring of progress on these shared values. He stressed that the African Union's Transitional Justice Policy also offers strategies and mechanisms that we should use to promote peace, stability, democracy and prevent unconstitutional government changes.

AU Member States in their commitment to ensure and maintain peace, democracy and good governance on the African continent, in accordance with the Constitutions and Protocols of the African Union, must ensure that this high-level dialogue aims to find a lasting solution to the disturbing resurgence of military coups in countries such as Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali and Sudan in recent years.

Parliamentarians from AU member states are meeting in Midrand, South Africa, for the first ordinary session of the sixth legislature of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP). The session, which opened from Monday 31 October to 1 November under the theme of the African Union 2022 "Strengthening resilience in nutrition on the African continent: accelerating human capital, social and economic development".



**"Before continuing, We have developed and passed many laws, frameworks and policies, but unfortunately it seems to me that they have not been enough to counter the rise of unconstitutional changes in government...**

**...We cannot continue on the same path if our interventions do not work. As Albert Einstein said, "Madness is about doing the same things over and over again and expecting different results."**

# Privileges and Ethics

## Bagbin Rules: Only Plenary Can Decide Fate Of Adwoa Safo And Two Others Over Alleged Absenteeism

By Clement Akoloh

The Speaker of Ghana's Parliament, Rt. Hon. Alban Sumana Bagbin has ruled that the recommendation by the Privileges Committee for the Parliamentary seat of Honourable Sarah Adwoa Safo to be declared vacant, is not final and that the entire plenary has to decide on the fate of the Member of Parliament for Dome Kwabenya and 2 others for absenting themselves for more than 15 days.

The Speaker's ruling was as the result of a preliminary objection raised by the Majority Leader and Leader of Government Business, Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu, against the presentation of the Report of the Privileges Committee to Parliament for the entire House to take a decision on the recommendation of the Committee.

It would be recalled that, in the last meeting during the consideration of the matter concerning some three Members of Parliament including Sarah Adwoa Safo, Kennedy Agyapong, and Henry Quartey, the Majority Leader took an exception to a motion being laid.

The said motion was for the adoption of the report of the Committee on Privileges on the alleged breach of article 97(1)(c) of the Constitution of the Republic. Mr. Osei Kyei-Mensa-Bonsu took the view that the motion should not have been



Honourable Sarah Adwoa Safo

listed on the Order Paper and thus same should be withdrawn. His submission was that the determination of the Committee was conclusive and same should not be subjected to the House in plenary for a debate and determination.

"The Privileges Committee has presented its report and, in my considered opinion, based on the Constitution and not sentiments, is that, there should be that automaticity, once the Committee makes a determination. I disagree that the decision should be taken by the House," he said.

However, the Speaker has categorically stated in his ruling that the position of the Majority Leader on the matter is untenable and that, just like any other committee, the report of the Privileges Committee is subject to the consideration of the whole House.

"I find the position canvased strong-

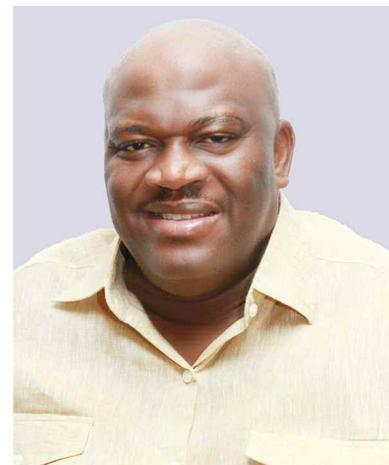


Honourable Kennedy Agyapong

ly by the Majority Leader as untenable. For the simple reason that, where the framers of the constitution intended that a committee be clothed with exclusive jurisdiction on a matter without reference to the House, it has expressly as in the case of Article 106 (13) and 107 indicated in the text of the constitution.

"Pursuant to Article 110 of the constitution, my understanding is that, where the constitution does not provide a procedure, Parliament may regulate the procedure within that space as long as it does not offend the constitution. It is in accordance with these power that Parliament captures the dictates of Article 97(1)(c) and Order 16 (1) which is to the effect that once a Member is alleged to be in breach of the provisions, his conduct is referred to the Committee on Privileges for enquiries.

"For the purpose of reiterating my



Honourable Henry Quartey

own ruling, once a referral is made, the report of a committee does not complete the enquiry into the matter. The report of the Committee on Privileges is just like any other committee subject to the constitution and the Standing Orders," the ruling said.

The Majority Leader, Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu, registered his disagreement to the ruling of the Speaker and referred to it as unfortunate. He also served notice that he was going to come by a substantive motion to challenge the ruling.

The Rt. Hon. Speaker Alban Bagbin, took exception to the fact that the Majority Leader referred to his ruling as unfortunate. When he was asked to withdraw the word and apologize because it was unparliamentary, he argued that he did not see any offence in using the word "unfortunate" but obliged and withdrew the word reluctantly.

### News Desk Report

The Pan African Parliament (PAP) has hosted a Technical Consultative Workshop for Experts on the Draft Model Law on Food Security and Nutrition (FSN).

The technical consultative workshop took place from 05 to 06 November 2022, in Midrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, the seat of the PAP.

"The model law shall govern issues related to food and nutrition security, including the availability, accessibility, stability, and utilization of food and the realization of the right to adequate food. It shall in-

## CRAFTING MODEL LAW ON FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY IMMINENT AS PAP ENGAGES STAKEHOLDERS

clude essential elements of FNS that may be governed by one or more legislation, including the definition of rights and entitlements, duties and responsibilities at all levels, and enabling environment for the production, processing, distribution, and consumption of safe and nutritious food, FNS governance structures and accountability mechanisms, Sisay Yeshanew, FAO Development Law Specialist, during a presentation and discussion on Articles in the draft Model Law of Food Security and Nutrition.

Despite important progress made in some sub-regions and

countries, the overall situation of food security and nutrition (FSN) in Africa continues to lag behind global trends. Approximately one out of four persons in Sub-Saharan Africa and one out of five on the continent were estimated to be undernourished.

The workshop brought together over 20 participants consisting of relevant stakeholders: Bureau of the Committee on Agriculture, PAP FSN Committee Representatives NGOs, Civil Society, and Academia, FAO, WFP, DARBE – AUC, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, AUDA-NEPAD, and APRM.



## General News

## New PAP Members of Parliament inducted

## Pap Comms

The Secretariat of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) has conducted an induction session for newly elected Members of Parliament from various countries and swore them-in at the continental Parliament's headquarters in Midrand, South Africa at the First Ordinary Session of the Sixth Parliament which was officially opened on October 31.

However, the session has been running since October 24 guided



by the African Union theme of 2022 "Building resilience in nutrition on the African continent: Accelerate the human capital, social and economic development."

Considering the task at hand as a new Member of Parliament at the continental Parliament, Hon Sarfina Filipe Chindaculema from Mozambique said she was ready to contribute to a better Africa.

"It is an honour for me to be here representing Mozambique. I have so much to learn from this continental platform just as I have so much to also share. I am ready to contribute to building a better Africa for future genera-

tions," said Hon Sarfina Filipe Chindaculema.

Sharing her expectations ahead of her being sworn in, Hon Anatrophia Theonest from Tanzania said:

"My expectations to be one of the contributors in building the African continent are high and I have already experienced the unity and togetherness that prevails at the PAP. As a youth, a woman and a Member of Parliament I will contribute to building an Africa we want by representing my fellow Africans to the best of my ability through observation, learning and actively participating."

Mindful of where he is coming from, Hon Mohamed Jama Mursal Gelle of Somalia said he carries the aspirations of not only the Somali people but those of all African people.

"This is an advanced Parliament and I am committed to fully working for the people of Somalia and all Africans at large to tackle

issues that affect us as African people. The pressing issues that come to mind are climate change, drought and issues to do with trade. It will be quiet enriching for me to interact at such a high level with Members of Parliament from other African countries," said Hon Mohamed Jama Mursal Gelle.

The new members were equipped with critical information on the PAP's rules of procedure, functions of the Parliament, their duties as members, matters related to finance and matters related to their personal safety and security.

The members who were sworn in on Monday are Hon Bernadette Nduwamana (Burundi), Hon Hannaa Aboulkhir (Morocco), Hon Sarfina Filipe Franco Chindaculema (Mozambique); Hon Sen Prof Abdi Ismael Samatar, Hon Mohamed Jama Mursal, Hon Abdurahman Mohamed Hussein, Hon Zamzam Muhumed Omar (Somalia); and Hon TouflqSalim Turkey, Hon Ng'wasi Damas Kamani, Hon Anatrophia Theonest (Tanzania).

## By Clement Akoloh

The Majority Group in Ghana's Parliament has beaten a fast retreat on its request for the President to sack the Finance Minister, Ken Ofori Atta and the Minister of State at the Presidency in charge of Finance, Charles Adu Boahen for the abysmal performance of the Ghanaian economy and the fast depreciating currency against the major trading currencies such as the dollar.

The Majority Group at a press conference on Monday, October 25, 2022, addressed by the Member of Parliament for Asante Akim South, Andy Appiah Kubi on behalf of the Majority Caucus, informed the public that over 80 MPs from the Governing party NPP have already signed a petition where they are calling on President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo to remove the Finance Minister and the Minister of state or else, they will not support any policy initiative by him nor participate in any debate on the Government's 2023 budget which will be presented to Parliament in a couple of weeks.

Only for the Majority Group to issue a press release two days after to revise their position on their request, citing a consideration of an intervention made by the

## NPP MPs Reverse Decision To Remove Ken Ofori-Atta After Meeting Prez Akufo Addo

President to be given a little more time to conclude negotiations with the IMF and finish the preparations for the 2023 Budget.

The release signed by the Majority Leader, Leader of Government's Business and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu, indicated that:

"following the Press Conference held on Tuesday, October 25, 2022 by some Members of the Majority Caucus in Parliament demanding the removal of the Minister of Finance, Mr. Ken Ofori Atta, and the Minister of State at the Ministry of Finance, Mr. Charles Adu Boahen from office, the President engaged Members of the Caucus and requested that the issue be stood down until the conclusion of the round of negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the presentation of the presentation of the Budget Statement and Economic Policy in November, 2022 and the subsequent passage of the Appropriation Bill after which time the demand shall be acted upon.

"After deliberations among the Majority Caucus today Wednesday, 26th October, 2022, it was agreed

to accede to the President's appeal."

The Majority press conference which was held on the very first day of the reopening of Parliament for the third Meeting of the Second Session of the Fourth Republic of Ghana, after a three and a half month of recess, was followed by a counter press conference from the Minority Group which accused the NPP MPs of insincerity in their call for the removal of the Finance Minister.

And that they only held the press conference because the Minority Leader, Haruna Iddrisu, had indicated to the Majority Leader, Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu, in a meeting the previous day that he was going to file a motion in Parliament for the removal of Mr. Ken Ofori Atta as the Finance Minister.

They further challenged the Majority Group to demonstrate their sincerity by supporting the Minority Leader's motion for a Vote of Censure on the Finance Minister since the motion will require a minimum of 2/3 majority of all Members of Parliament which comes up to 183 MPs. With this latest move by the Majority Group,

the motion for a vote of censure to be moved by the Minority Leader against the Finance Minister is bound to suffer an obvious defeat since the Minority Group made up of 136 MPs of the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC) can barely make up the full complement of the 137 seats it has due to the Court injunction on one of its members, let alone make up for the minimum 183 MPs required for the Vote of Censure.

Some political connoisseurs have marked these moves by the Majority Group in Parliament as a masterpiece of political dribbling, in that their strategic press con-



Finance Minister, Ken Ofori Atta

ference in Parliament ahead of the Minority Group on the first day of Parliamentary sitting after a long recess where there was a lot of public outcry over the worsening economic situation in the country amid a fast depreciating currency and high cost of living, took the wind out of the sale of the Minority Group.

The latest rationale for the stay of execution on the demand for the removal of the Finance Minister by the Majority Group, has watered down the possible effect of a popular support for his removal had it been initiated by the Minority on the back of the initial public anger.



Hon. Andy Appiah Kubi

General News

# PAP should strengthen democracy and the rule of law: President Ramaphosa

By Byron Adonis Mutingwende

The Pan-African Parliament has an important mandate of contributing to the strengthening of the culture of democracy, good governance, and the rule of law on the continent, HE Cyril Ramaphosa, the President of South Africa has said.

The Minister of Justice and Correctional Services for South Africa, Mr. Ronald Lamola (MP) on behalf of the President of the Republic of South Africa, HE Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, made the remarks on the occasion of the Opening Session of the First Ordinary session of the Sixth Parliament of the Pan-African Parliament today in Johannesburg.

“The Pan-African Parliament has an important mandate of contributing to the strengthening of the culture of democracy, good governance, and the rule of law in the continent.

“This includes the implementation of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance which provides a framework for election monitoring on our continent. Some of our countries have held elections this year, but still, more are expected to hold



Delegates at the official opening of the First Session the Sixth Parliament of PAP

them in 2023.

“We need to interrogate the responsibility of the PAP as an institution in supporting the AU. The High-Level Parliamentary dialogue on Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance that you are scheduled to have during this session as well as the roundtable on advancing democratic governance, will contribute towards that effort,” President Ramaphosa said.

On his part, Hon Chief Fortune Charumbira, the PAP President, said

the leadership of the Pan African Parliament has an obligation in its collective ability to accelerate the institutional development and growth of the continental law-making body.

“We embrace this task and the solemnity of our oath mindful that four Presidents have taken the presidential oath before me, including the preceding five Bureaus and five Parliaments. The promissory words of the oath have been spoken as much during rising tides of prosperity and still waters of peace as they have been during gathering clouds of conflict

and raging storms of persistent economic challenges.

“At these moments, Africa has carried on not simply because of the skill or vision of those in high office, but also because of the resilience of our people. As we open the First Ordinary Session of this 6th Parliament, my question to all of us is, what is going to be our place in history? What will differentiate the 6th Parliament of the Pan-African Parliament from our predecessors?” Chief Charumbira said.

He said the presence today of representatives of ECOWAS, the Arab League, Speakers of National and Regional Parliaments is a demonstration of PAP’s commitment to give full and practical effect to the vision of its founding fathers and play an effective role in the continental governance matrix.

The PAP has gone even further than that by spreading its tentacles to establish mutually beneficial relationship with the European Parliament, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and the Commonwealth represented by its Secretary General, Rt. Hon. Baroness Patricia Scotland here today and other Parliaments beyond the continent.

“Our aim is to ensure that the voice of African peoples also finds expression in the global development agenda. The interests of Africa should always find space on the global discussion table and, who better to articulate them, than the people’s elected representatives?”

Rt. Hon. Baroness Patricia Scotland, addressing journalists at a press conference, said the Commonwealth will be reviewing prospects of re-admitting Zimbabwe into the Commonwealth, with a visit for the country under Western-sponsored sanctions earmarked for November. There are hopes that the sanctions on Zimbabwe will be removed as the Second Republic embarked on a re-engagement exercise.

## MP Laments Fuel Price Hikes on Parliament; Wants Sitting Days Cut to Make Amends

News Desk

Member of Parliament for Asuogyaman Constituency in the Eastern Region, Thomas Ampem Nyarko, has implored the leadership of Parliament to consider scheduling the House to sit for two days instead of the four to spare members the cost of fuel.

He observed that since Parliament resumed sitting two weeks ago, plenary has only been spending two hours or less each day and wondered if the days could not be reduced and the working hours extended to six or eight hours instead.

He said, “The business for this particular meeting is the budget and I have observed that for the days that we’ve been here,



Hon Thomas Ampem Nyarko

sometimes we come and in less than two hours we adjourn for the next day.”

“I’m asking whether it will not be possible for the Business Committee to consolidate and pack the activities so that instead of four days we can come like two days in a week in order to be able to save on the amount of money we are using to fuel our vehicles each day.”

The member narrated that on Wednesday he visited a Goil Filling Station to have his tank filled and was given a bill of GH¢3,000, and had to call a colleague for an extra GH¢900 to be able to pay for the fuel as he only had GH¢2,100 on him at the time.

“I had to call my colleague, Hon. Jaja to send me money through the Momo that I avoid using before I was able to pay my bill.”

“So looking at the kind of business that we have, is it not possible... because we can stay for six hours a day instead of coming for two hours and we go back. Drive here, and two hours we go back. Pack the day, if even it is eight hours we’ll be willing to stay and do the business for like two days. That way we can save like GH¢500 on fuel every week.”

“This is in line with a proposal

by President John Mahama to organizations to allow those who can work from home to do so because the fuel situation is killing us.”

Majority leader Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu, however, rebuffed the call and stressed it is when the state is in dire consequences that members of Parliament are called upon to increase productivity.

He argued that for a member of Parliament to say the House should work just two days in a week, “Mr. Speaker is a very apocalyptic declaration from the Member of Parliament.”

“What will be the effect on national productivity, this call that you are making? And what would be the effect on GDP,” he quizzed.

The Majority leader expressed regret and described the call as very unfortunate.

## Gender, Children and Social Welfare

# Let's Move Beyond The Rhetorics Of Women Empowerment - Chief Charumbira

By Gilbert Borketey Boyefio

The President of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), His Excellency Chief Fortune Charumbira, has urged women's groups to move beyond the rhetorics of gender empowerment and be pragmatic on the actions that need to be taken to empower women.

Speaking at the 13th Pan-African Parliament Conference on Women's Rights, under the theme, "Women Empowerment and in-



President of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), His Excellency Chief Fortune Charumbira

clusion in Governance", Chief Fortune Charumbira observed that the word empowerment has been abused over the years to pay lip service to the actions that needed to be taken to ensure women are included in governance and positions of power.

He noted that the inclusion of women in governance is one of the best solutions to solving corruption in Africa, adding, "Women are more responsible and accountable. They always think about the consequences of their actions and the rippling effect on their families."

The Pan-Africa Parliament has made strides in giving women more opportunities. Out of the four Vice Presidents, two are women, also, two of the five re-

gional caucus chairpersons are women. In addition, the PAP has established a Gender Committee and the Women Caucus, with both chaired by women.

In her opening remarks, Her Excellency Hon Lucia Dos Passos, third Vice President of the Pan-African Parliament, indicated the significant contribution of women to the economy of Africa. She noted that women have always been at the forefront of the fight for freedom and the breaking of new frontiers.

She appealed to countries that have not ratified the Maputo Protocol to do so. She encouraged all stakeholders to get actively involved to intensify the publicity of the Maputo Protocol to get it fully ratified by all countries.

The Maputo Protocol provides amongst other things that States Parties shall combat all forms of discrimination against women

through appropriate legislative, institutional, and other measures. In this regard they shall: a) include in their national constitutions and other legislative instruments, if not already done, the principle of equality between women and men and ensure its effective application; b) enact and effectively implement appropriate legislative or regulatory measures, including those prohibiting and curbing all forms of discrimination, particularly those harmful practices which endanger the health and general well-being of women; c) integrate a gender perspective in their policy decisions, legislation, development plans, programmes and activities and in all other spheres of life; d) take corrective and positive action in those areas where discrimination against women in law and in fact continues to exist;

e) support the local, national, regional, and continental initiatives directed at eradicating all forms of discrimination against women. It further states that States Parties shall commit themselves to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of women and men through public education, information, education, and communication strategies, with a view to achieving the elimination of harmful cultural and traditional practices and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for women and men.

The two days conference brought together gender experts, gender-based civil society organizations, and members of the diplomatic corps. It is expected to end with recommendations for action

...the word empowerment has been abused over the years to pay lip service to the actions that needed to be taken to ensure women are included in governance and positions of power

...the inclusion of women in governance is one of the best solutions to solving corruption in Africa, adding, "Women are more responsible and accountable. They always think about the consequences of their actions and the rippling effect on their families."



Her Excellency Hon Lucia Dos Passos, third Vice President of the Pan-African Parliament

## Gender, Children and Social Welfare

# Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of South Africa addresses the 13th Conference on Women's Rights

### PAP Comms

**M**uch progress has been made by the African continent, not only to reverse the impact of gender inequality but also to prepare itself to benefit from the advantage of increased participation of Women in leadership and in the Economy, said Guest of Honour, Rt. Hon. Nosiviwe Nolutshando Mapisa-Nqakula, Speaker of the Republic of South Africa National Assembly at the 13th Conference on Women's Rights held in Midrand, South Africa.

Hosted by the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) Women's Caucus, the conference is held on the sidelines of the currently underway First Ordinary Session of the Sixth Parliament of the PAP, under the theme: "Women empowerment and inclusion in governance".

The conference seeks to tackle issues affecting women across the continent and afford a platform to interrogate the role of women in governance. It also aims to unpack issues about

women in decision-making positions and the role of women legislators in addressing the existing gaps between policy frameworks on women's rights and the actual realities of African women.

"Over the years since the establishment of the African Union (AU), our continent has shown commitment to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women," said Rt. Hon. Mapisa-Nqakula.

"From laying the necessary legal framework and instruments, to our own declaration of 2010 to 2020 as the African Women's Decade, mother Africa has shown great strides both in addressing the plight of women and growing representation and involvement in decision making. Nearly all of the members of the AU and by extension this Parliament, have now ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, while more than half have ratified the African Union's Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa. In this regard, as far as a demonstration of real commitment, Africa's leaders are not doing very bad, in fact, we compare favorably against

many other continents in this regard."

Rt. Hon. Mapisa-Nqakula also mentioned that the women's conference sits at an opportune moment, at a time when the world is grappling with reorganising itself to respond to the wide-ranging socio-economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The post-Covid-19 Recovery is not going to be about some isolated pockets of interventions to return the world to normality and reignite eco-

nomie growth, but a total re-imagination of our society as we know it. A New World Order.

"For far too long, our continent's women and girls have suffered the twin challenges of women's oppression and poverty, in a continent that has so much potential to harness for qualitative economic and social development for all. In fact, the very exclusion of women and the skewed development focus on young girls is the reason why our own ability to harness such potential remains limited," she said.

Furthermore, she underscored that in the context of opportunities brought about by the post-Covid-19 Recovery and the 4th industrial revolution, the biggest threat to Africa harnessing such potential will be gender inequality.

She also noted that more needs to be done to improve the lives of women.

"Despite this, however, the quality of life amongst many Africans, especially women have not improved for the better. Women continue to struggle to break into any jobs, and when they do the majority is still employed as low-skill labour, in an unsupported informal market and under dangerous and unsafe conditions. The wage gaps for paid work between men and women continue to widen."

"It is important therefore that Africa, and the global community, moves beyond just demonstrating commitment, and take measurable actions to rid ourselves of all barriers to women's and girls' participation in the socio-economic development of their nations and the continent.

"In addition, it is also going to be important that women are involved in structures of decision making, including in leadership if women's issues

are to be prioritized in both national and continental development agendas," added Rt. Hon. Mapisa-Nqakula.

Rt. Hon. Mapisa-Nqakula also called for a more empowered PAP.

"In this regard, the roles of Parliaments become very important, as the duty to ensure accountability for our plans rests. Without a strong system of oversight and accountability, all the plans, commitments and treaties will remain pipe dreams that will never be realized. In the absence of strong activist Parliaments, including a more empowered PAP, we run the risk of failing future generations and plans and goals such as the SGDs and Agenda 2063 will never be realised."

Meanwhile, the Speaker also disclosed that while in Kigali, Rwanda during the 145th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Women Speakers of the Africa Geopolitical group, a Women Speakers Consultative Forum (WSCF) was established. WSCF is a structure that will coordinate different African Parliament's positions on gender mainstreaming in all IPU activities.

"We believe that this platform can be very instrumental in influencing and shaping gender-sensitive policies in the Continent as well, including within the PAP. The Speaker of the Zambian Parliament, Hon Nelly Butete Kashumba was elected as the inaugural Chairperson of the Africa Geopolitical Group of Women Speakers," she said.

**"Over the years since the establishment of the African Union (AU), our continent has shown commitment to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women,"**



Rt. Hon. Nosiviwe Nolutshando Mapisa-Nqakula, Speaker of the Republic of South Africa National Assembly



## Finance & Economy

# Stop undermining Africa - Prez Akufo-Addo tells global investment community

### News Desk

President Akufo-Addo has made a passionate appeal to the global investment community to as a matter of urgency, remove the risk premium tag it has placed on Africa in order to give the continent equal access to the capital markets as is the case with other economic blocks in the world.

The perception that it is too risky to invest in Africa according to President Akufo-Addo, is no longer tenable because Africa's debt servicing and returns on investment records are outstanding.

Speaking during a panel discussion at the Africa Investment Forum (AIF) under the theme; "Building Economic Resilience Through Sustainable Investments" at the Sofitel Hotel Ivoire, in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, President Akufo-Addo, said in spite of the prevailing challenges confronting the African continent, it remains the best place for investors to put their money.

"At the heart of it is this perception that investing in our continent is a risk and yet, the continent has an ex-

cellent record as far as default on loans are concerned. It has an excellent record in terms of return on investment.

"My appeal to the investor community that is sitting here is yes, there are problems, there are difficulties, there are major challenges, but look beyond the challenges to what the future holds," President Akufo-Addo said.

### Demographic advantage

"You are dealing with a continent that in less than 25 years time, is going to account for one in every four people in the universe. That is a huge demographic dividend that needs to be taken advantage of.

"75% of the population that I am referring to are going to be people that are below the age of 35. So you have got dynamism, you have opportunity, you have longevity in investments which is guaranteed by this population" Akufo-Addo added.

To this end, President Akufo-Addo said "I think that if [the investment community] puts all of these things together and of course the very significant efforts that is being made by African governments to create a proper legal and regulatory environment to incentivize investments as well as protect investments on the continent, we have a mix that potentially could be very dynamic for people who are prepared to take the risk".

The president observed that out of "the US\$3 to US\$4 trillion of investable capital in the private sector floating in the world", adding that if "1% to 2% of that money comes into the African continent, it will completely transform the African economy."



President Akufo-Addo

### \$15 million project

President Akufo-Addo, as part of his schedule, attended a boardroom meeting on the proposed construction of the Lagos – Abidjan motorway.

The road corridor, which will mainly be between Abidjan and Lagos via Accra (Ghana), Lome, (Togo) and Cotonou (Benin), will have 62 km in Côte d'Ivoire, 521km in Ghana (the largest stretch), 90 km in Togo, 127 km in Benin and 82 km in Nigeria.

Attendees of the board meeting, which included President Akufo-Addo, Dr. Akinwumi A. Adesina, president of the African Development Bank Group, Alassane Ouattara, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, among others, agreed that the secretariat of the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Highway Development Project, should be stationed in Abidjan since it is the host city of the financier (African Development Bank (AfDB) of the project.

### Economic potential of A-LM

The yet to be constructed Abidjan-Lagos motorway (A-LM) is estimated to cost about US\$15.59 million. The project will have six

lanes from Abidjan through to the Legos end.

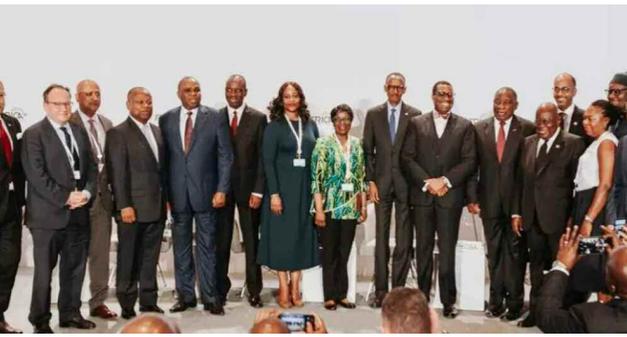
The corridor is located on the coastal axis of the West Africa region and crosses the economic centres and most densely populated cities of five countries in the region – Ghana, Nigeria, Benin, Togo, and Côte d'Ivoire.

The population along this axis is estimated at 70 million and they will be the direct beneficiaries when the project is implemented. The AfDB funded highway will boost trade and transportation in West Africa.

### Bi-lateral talks

The President as part of his visit also paid a courtesy call on Alassane Ouattara, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. The two leaders held bi-lateral talks on the production of cocoa and the security and stability situation in West Africa.

According to President Akufo-Addo, he and his Ivorian counterpart have agreed to strengthen the ties of co-operation between their respective countries for the mutual benefit of their two peoples.



## Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry Report on Privatization of Cape Verdean Air Carrier Set for December 7

### Lusa News

The President of the Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry (CPI), Walter Évora, promised to deliver an objective report that clarifies to the Cape Verdean nation how the privatization process of the flag airline (TACV) took place. The deadline for submitting this report is December 7th.

Walter Évora made these statements after a parliamentary hear-

ing, via videoconference, with Victor Fidalgo, a shareholder of TACV (Air Transport of Cape Verde), which, due to internet connection problems, was not concluded.

"Right now, many hearings are taking place online because several people linked to the privatization of the flagship airline are out of the country. For example, shareholders, people who have been linked to the management of the company, Icelanders and there is some difficulty in their hearing due to internet connection problems."

Another constraint pointed out by that parliamentarian is the crossed agendas. "There was a lot of parliamentary activity at that time. Deputies are members of the CPI, but they are also members of other committees, but in that case the work of the CPI will have to have priority because in the CPI, Deputies cannot ask for a replacement"

And because the CPI is a priority, the hearings continue this week with consultations with the Ministers of Finance and Minister of Tourism and Transport, political leaders who were involved in the

decisions that were taken with the airline, according to Walter Évora. In addition to Deputy Walter Évora, from the PAICV, who presides over it, the committee on the privatization of Transportes Aéreos de Cabo Verde SA, including the liquidation of the TACV operation on domestic flights, are part of this committee, six MPs from the MpD (Damião Medina, Luís Carlos Silva, Euclides Silva, Aniceto Barbosa, Isa Monteiro and Celso Ribeiro), four PAICV deputies (Carla Lima, Démis Almeida, Adélsia Almeida) and the UCID deputy, António Monteiro. The CPI was created

by Resolution n° 41/X/2022 of March 7th and aims, among others, to ascertain the Government's vision and strategy for the transport sector, to investigate studies, data or facts that motivated the Government's decision to move forward with the privatization of TACV.

Also, what relationships were developed with LofLeidir and with the other mentioned businesses, what is the nature of these relationships, verify the fairness of the business with Binter/TICV, Icelandair, Bestfly Angola and Bestfly WorldWide.

# Parliamentary Practice & Procedures

## PAP Workshop on Review of the Rules of Procedure and matters arising

By Olu. Ibekwe

**C**hairperson of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP)'s Permanent Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline, Rt. Hon. Thembekile Majola, hosted a four-day Consultative Workshop on the Revision of the PAP Rules of Procedure at the Indaba Hotel, Johannesburg from Monday 05 to Thursday, 08 September 2022.

The aim of the workshop according to a presentation by the Legal Office of PAP captioned "Review of the Gaps and Areas of Improvement in the Rules of Procedure of the Pan-African parliament" was to identify gaps and areas of improvements in the current Rules.

Having gone through that presentation, I am of the opinion that some of the alleged gaps so identified in the presentation are controversial, ill-advised and unnecessary.

For example, how come the author did not consult for inspiration, such very crucial and relevant documents as the Modalities for the June 2022 Bureau Election prepared by the Office of the Legal Counsel of the African Union Commission (OLC); PAP's Revised (Malabo) Protocol so as to align the Rules with the provisions of the Protocol that do not require ratification by the AU member-states; Decisions of the 39th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council (Decision 1128) and; the Outcome of the Capacity Building Workshop for the members of the PAP held 22 – 24 August, 2022.

**Election of the President and members of the Bureau (rotation).** The presentation appear to be making a case for the adoption of the principle of rotation in the election of the President of the Parliament which to me, is very interesting considering the fact that this was the issue that generated the disagreement that led to the suspension of parliamentary activities at the PAP for almost a year. The rotation argument was resolved by the policy organs of the African Union (AU) which led to the issuance of the modalities on basis of which the last Bureau election was conducted on 29 June 2022. Why did the PAP Legal Office not draw inspiration from the May 30, 2021 opinion of the OLC in addition to the modalities used for the last Bureau election?

The point is that both the issue of rotation of the presidency of the parliament and the sequence of the rotation are settled issues as per the modalities used for that election. I must also add that the Bureau election conducted based on the said modalities resulted in a credible, rancor-free and seamless election.

What PAP needs to do at this time is to codify those modalities into the Rules of Procedure and not to attempt to reopen debate on the propriety of adopting the rotation principle. The Parliament has moved on beyond that argument and the rotation sequence has also been established in the following order: Southern Region, Northern Region, Eastern Region, Western Region and Central Region. It now needs to be codified. That's all.

Accordingly, this seeming attempt to reopen debate on an already resolved issue should be rejected.

**The Role of the Ad Hoc Committee (Rule 16(3)).** In his presentation, the Legal Officer observed that the last election recorded motions being moved during the election proceedings and raised the question of whether the Ad Hoc Committee should have the power to entertain motions. He therefore submitted that the issue should be considered in the course of the review exercise.

Let's make no mistake about it, Rule 16(3) is very explicit on the limited role of the Ad Hoc Committee to "organize and preside over the election of the President". The election is to be conducted in accordance with the rules and decisions of the parliament which includes the rulings by the Presiding Officer all which are binding on the Ad Hoc Committee. This attempt to create a new normal where the Ad Hoc Committee will be empowered to entertain motions and to reconsider issues already decided in such a political environment is bound to create more problems for the Parliament.

It would be recalled that before the 31 May 2021 botched Bureau election, the OLC had on or about 30 May 2021, issued an opinion which resolved the issue of rotation. The OLC letter was presented and admitted into the record proceedings during plenary on the basis of which the Presiding Officer made a ruling on the eligible regions that can present candidates for election as President. So does the Ad Hoc Committee have the power to veto or disregard such a ruling backed by the opinion of the OLC whose statutory duty it is to issue such legal opinions?

**Removal of Bureau members from office.** The Legal Officer submitted that the PAP Rules of Procedure are silent on the procedure for the removal from office of the President of PAP. He then went on to examine the practice in other supposedly similar jurisdictions on the basis of which he argued on the need to make provision for the conditions under which members of the Bureau can individually or collectively be removed from office. Did I hear him say collectively remove members of the Bureau from office? As in remove all the members of the Bureau from office in one swoop?

I humbly submit that there is no need looking for jurisdictions to draw inspiration on the process for the removal of members of the Bureau because the current PAP Protocol contains such provisions. It only requires codification in the Rules of Procedure.

Article 12(8) of the PAP Protocol lists the circumstances under which the office of the President or Vice President can become vacant and this includes removal on grounds of misconduct (Article 8(d)) while Article 12(9) stipulates that Removal on the grounds of misconduct shall be on a motion to be decided on by secret ballot and supported at the end of debate by two-thirds majority of all the Pan-African Parliamentarians. I wonder what other inspiration the Legal Officer is looking for!

**Functions of the Bureau.** Article 12(5) of the PAP Protocol states that the President and the Vice-Presidents shall be the Officers of the Pan-African Parliament. The officers, under the control and direction of the President and subject to such directives as may be issued by the Pan-African Parliament, shall be responsible for the management and administration of the affairs and facilities of the Pan-African Parliament and its organs. In the discharge of their duties, the Officers shall be assisted by the Clerk and the two Deputy Clerks. See also Rule 17 (functions of the Bureau).

Article 12(6) states that the Pan-African Parliament shall appoint a



Chairperson of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP)'s Permanent Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline, Rt. Hon. Thembekile Majola

Clerk, two Deputy Clerks and such other staff and functionaries as it may deem necessary for the proper discharge of its functions and may by regulations provide for their terms and conditions of office in accordance with AU Rules and Regulations. The Legal Officer is now positing that the employer and the employee should share powers!

Obviously, Article 12(5) of the Protocol makes it clear that the Bureau is responsible for the management and administration of the affairs and facilities of the Pan-African Parliament and its organs and that they will be assisted by the Clerk and two Deputy Clerks. The suggestion that the operational and administrative issues should be brought under the exclusive control of the Clerk especially in an AU organ with political leadership is contrary to the spirit and intent of Article 12(5) of the Protocol and therefore misplaced. The Bureau may delegate or assign responsibilities to the Clerk but not to share powers as the ultimate responsibility for the administration of the Parliament rests with the Bureau.

**Rules of Procedure for the Bureau.** The legal Officer also made presentations on the need for the enactment of Rules of Procedure for the Bureau meetings which to me is also misplaced.

I make bold to state, without any fear of contradiction that only the Bureau has the power to enact Rules of Procedure for the conduct of its internal business and may also amend or jettison such rules as it deems without recourse to the Parliament. It is not for the Parliament or plenary to make rules for the conduct of Bureau meetings and this seeming attempt to instigate crisis of authority must be nipped in the bud.

The Legal Officer may advise the Bureau on the desirability of promulgating Rules of Procedure to guide the conduct of Bureau meetings or business. But to attempt to use the process of the review of the rules of procedure of the Parliament to impose one on the Bureau is clearly not tenable.



**Obviously, Article 12(5) of the Protocol makes it clear that the Bureau is responsible for the management and administration of the affairs and facilities of the Pan-African Parliament and its organs and that they will be assisted by the Clerk and two Deputy Clerks.**

# Environment, Lands and Forestry

## Make COP27 A Success - Lands Minister Urges Stakeholders



### News Desk

The Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, Hon. Samuel A. Jinapor has called on all stakeholders of the Twenty-seventh session of the Conference of Parties (COP27) to join hands with the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources and the organizers to make this year's event a success.

The event is scheduled to take place in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt from 6th -18th November, 2022. Speaking at a Pre-COP27 event on Thursday organized to bring together stakeholders in the na-



Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, Hon. Samuel A. Jinapor

ture-based Climate actions, the Minister called on them to rise up and rally behind the Ministry to promote forest and climate-based initiatives to climate change.

“We look forward to an even greater participation and contribution to global conference at Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt and let us all join hands in solidarity to make COP27 a great success” He said.

Highlighting the need and importance of COP27 Pre-event, he indicated that the event was to create a platform for stakeholders to share ideas and contribute to discussions on the country's expectations in order to build on the Momentum garnered at COP26 last year.

He announced that this year, with the help of the World bank, the partnership for Forest and other stakeholders, Ghana has secured a pavilion at Sharm El Sheikh to showcase her Climate actions, woo investors and have partnership engagements while appreciating the effort and contribution of the UK government which culminated into Ghana getting for the first time, a pavilion at the COP26 last year.

Hon. Jinapor outlined some of the activities scheduled to take place at the COP27 Ghana Pavilion, sighting a side event to be hosted by the office of the President as a pertinent example, he also mentioned a roundtable tropical forest ministerial event to be hosted by the Ministry and this he said will be to discuss forest solutions to climate change.

He noted that a Key engagement

at COP 27 is Ghana's participation in the Forest and Climate Leader's Partnership (FCLP), a COP26 Presidency initiative which is intended to give steam to the Glasgow declarations on forest and land use.

He continued that the FCLP will create a platform for member states to scale up forest conservation and restoration action to implement climate solutions and provide sustainable development.

He again alluded that the partnership will, also, provide a unique space for intergovernmental collaboration and coordinated action with partners and stakeholders while announcing that President Akufo-Addo will join President Biden of the United States, and other Heads of State and Government at a Forests and Climate Leaders' Summit, on 7th November in Sharm El-Sheikh, to officially open FCLP.

The Lands Minister asserted that Ghana's membership of FCLP is a testimony that the country's efforts to accelerate emissions reductions has been recognized globally.

He disclosed that through these efforts, Ghana is set to receive some 4,862,208 dollars as payment for the country's efforts in reducing carbon in 2019. This he said will be distributed according to a highly consultative and transparent benefit sharing plan.

He said communities will realize the result of their immense contributions as the benefit is shared which will boost their confidence in government climate interventions.

He therefore challenged all that the need to scale up forest and other nature-based solutions is more important now than ever particularly for the country's where he believes most of the emissions emanates from agriculture, forest and land use activities.

On her part, the United Kingdom High Commissioner to Ghana, H.E Harriet Thompson disclosed UK'S support towards series of events on Forestry at COP27 as well as the Forest and Climate Leaders Partnership event this year.

She continued that, “Ghana will be represented at the UK's Forest Agriculture Commodity Trade Dialogue to update on progress one year from its launch at COP26. There is also the Cocoa Forest Initiative event to mobilize action from global chocolate makers and cocoa companies, with the Government of Ghana taking part”.

H.E Thompson told the stakeholders that although the annual deforestation rate in Ghana is running at 3.5% with her forests under threat from agricultural expansion and illegal mining yet tackling the menace will require a huge, complex and sustained effort that must recognise how climate, poverty, and business interests all interact both as part of the problem, and, ultimately, as part of the solution.

The well-organized event was attended by members of the Diplomatic corps, Foresters, Representatives of the various MDA's, members of the Business community, among other stakeholders.

**...a Key engagement at COP 27 is Ghana's participation in the Forest and Climate Leader's Partnership (FCLP), a COP26 Presidency initiative which is intended to give steam to the Glasgow declarations on forest and land use.**

## Environment, Lands and Forestry

# New observatory an asset for mitigating climate change

**“In cooperation with African universities and higher education institutions, RROEC must also work on designing new educational and training programmes in climate impacts on food security,”**

The Regional Research Observatory on the Environment and Climate (RROEC) has been inaugurated in Djibouti in a bid to produce data and climate models to inform political decisions on climate adaptation and resilience for the country and across the East African region.

Established with the assistance of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), RROEC was instated at an international summit in Djibouti from 23-25 October 2022. Scientists, students, researchers and decision-makers from Comoros, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda in the East African region discussed regional environmental and climate issues.

The theme of the summit was ‘Climate Change and Research (2CR): The path toward adaptation and lasting resilience’. 2CR is part of the COP27 perspective – the 27th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change 2022 that will take place in the Red Sea city of Sharm el-Sheikh, South Sinai, from 7-18 November 2022.

### Population vulnerable to climate change

“Thanks to the IAEA and other partners, this observatory became a reality – we are able to put in place reliable and operational models for climate change adaptation and lasting resilience,” the President of Djibouti and head of the government, Ismaïl Omar Guelleh, said during the RROEC opening ceremony on 23 October 2022, according to an article on the IAEA

website.

According to the Climate Change Knowledge Portal, Djibouti, which is located on the Horn of Africa and bordered by the Red Sea, is facing water scarcity due to low levels of precipitation, higher temperatures, increased aridity, and rising sea levels. These challenges are expected to continue to affect the country, making its population of one million highly vulnerable to climate change.

RROEC will help Djibouti to better manage water and food resources threatened by global warming. RROEC will use nuclear and related techniques to produce data and climate models as well as mapping tools governments and aid agencies can use to help manage and prevent water or other environmental crises.

### Best practices in region to be tracked

The observatory also aims to act as an essential scientific tool at the service of the East African region in terms of monitoring the climate, its impacts and conflict prevention. East Africa is known for its arid to semi-arid conditions and extreme interannual rainfall variations conducive to protracted droughts and occasional devastating floods, according to a 2022 report titled Climate risk report for the East Africa region.

Professor Adipala Ekwamu, executive secretary of the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFO-

RUM) in Uganda, welcomed the news of the official RROEC inauguration.

“RROEC will help to track climate change research and best practices in the East African region and identify areas which need more research as well as developing policy documents and design along with implementing both adaptation and mitigation actions,” he told University World News.

### Large network needed for cooperation

“The regional observatory will need to work with existing mandated institutions as well as leveraging for resources for its day-to-day operations and sustainability,” Ekwamu said. “Climate change-mandated institutions will include the National Meteorological Institutions, climate change units at the ministry of water and environment, and Kenya-based IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC),” he added. Universities offering climate change programmes should also be involved.

ICPAC is an East African Climate Centre of Excellence of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) that focuses on providing climate services, early warnings, and earth observation for sustainable development to the 11 East African countries of Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

Ekwamu said universities in East Africa will benefit from the observatory that will give direction about actions required for climate change research, integrate best practices in curricula and facilitate networking of practitioners, experts and institutions.

“RROEC would also help to coordinate technical and policy support to national agencies and regional organisations,” Ekwamu said. “There is a need to demarcate the role of existing and future centres of excellence in climate change and related discipline and that of this observatory. The role of the observatory will, therefore, be like a database of climate change, and provide syntheses of the progress and their regular dissemination.”

Samir Khalaf Abd-El-Aal, research professor at the Biotechnology Research Institute of the National Research Centre in Cairo, told University World News that RROEC must act as a “food security research and education hub” for East Africa by generating vital knowledge to improve agricultural technologies and practices as well as preparing policy and research-relevant solutions for tackling hunger and poverty resulting from climate change.

“In cooperation with African universities and higher education institutions, RROEC must also work on designing new educational and training programmes in climate impacts on food security,” Abd-El-Aal said.

*Source: University World News*



## General News

## Lusa News

# Opposition Accuses Government Of Failing To Combat Judicial Delays

The Cape Verdean opposition has accused the Government of failing in public policies to combat procedural delays and crime, as it assessed the state of justice in the country in parliament, asking for more means.

He reports from the superior councils, the Judiciary [CSMJ] and the Public Prosecutor's Office [CSMP] attest, in short, that Cape Verdean justice continues to suffer from old and already classic problems, among which the slowness in carrying out of justice and pending procedural issues", said deputy Démis Almeida, speaking in the National Assembly on behalf of the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV, opposition).

With the presence of the Minister of Justice, Joana Rosa, the parliament

today holds the annual debate on the state of the sector in Cape Verde, based on the annual reports of the CSMJ and the CSMP.

"The data included in the councils' reports show that there is a direct relationship between the increase in crime, the increase in cases filed and the increase in pending issues. This reality shows that the Government has failed not only in its public policies of primary crime prevention, as well as in social reintegration and prevention of criminal recidivism", stated Démis Almeida.

For the PAICV, "the trend towards an increase in cases brought to the courts and prosecutors is extremely worrying, associated with an almost crystallization of the number of pending cases that successively

move from one judicial year to the next", and "without knowing a considerable reduction in these pending cases, capable of setting the stage for a real trend towards a decrease in pending issues for residual numbers in the medium term".

In the Comarca da Praia, he also described, "the situation is truly critical", representing 45% of the cases carried across the country, 33% of the cases entered, 38% of the cases in process and 45% of the pending cases. The Public Prosecutor's Office of the Comarca da Praia represents 56% of the cases filed and 73% of the national pending matters.

"Now, without prejudice to policies aimed at the national as a whole, it is evident that the Comarca da Praia needs special attention, otherwise it will reach a state of unsustainability. Procedural steps are the opposite of the principle of access to justice, effective judicial protection of the legally protected rights and interests of citizens and other people who sue the courts and the achievement of justice in a timely manner", pointed out Démis Almeida, blaming the Government immediately for the lack of human resources to mitigate the problem.

"The length of time and procedural pending issues must, therefore, be vigorously fought. It happens, however, that, subject to a strong budget constraint by the Government, the CSMJ and CSMP cannot truly be self-government of the respective judiciaries and are severely limited in their tasks constitutionally consecrated to autonomously administer the human, financial and material resources of the courts and prose-

cutors, respectively", he accused.

On the part of the Movement for Democracy (MpD, majority), the leader of the parliamentary bench, Paulo Veiga, acknowledged that justice in Cape Verde still faces "challenges", despite the gains in recent years. However, he stressed the "reform of the judicial system" with a view to "fighting pending procedural issues" and crime, as a priority of the Government, since 2016.

António Monteiro, from the Independent and Democratic Cape Verdean Union (UCID, opposition), accused the justice system of "persecuting" and not complying with the Constitution, alluding to the arrest of the now former deputy of that party, Amadeu Oliveira.

Cape Verdean courts closed last year with the lowest number of cases pending in several years, less than 10,200, despite the number of cases decided having dropped to 308, on average, per judge.

According to the report of the judicial year ended last July (2021/2022), prepared by the CSMJ, "in recent years, the number of cases decided has been following the number of cases entered" in the Cape Verdean courts. "While, on the one hand, it has not achieved a reduction in pending issues to the desired extent, on the other hand, it has acted as an impediment for the pending issues not to increase.

However, in the year to which this report relates, 13,565 cases were decided, against 14,743 in the previous judicial year, that is, 1,178 cases less than in the previous year",

explains the document, whose history points to the second best year of productivity since 2015/2016 (11,696 cases decided in the country's courts).

In the relationship between the number of cases resolved and entered, in 2021/2022 the number of cases judged was 13,565 (14,743 in the previous year), "which represents an annual average of 308 cases judged by each judge", the document also states.

In 2017, the Cape Verdean courts closed with 12,196 pending cases, a record that dropped to 10,160 at the start of the new judicial year, this month (2022/2023). At the end of the 2021/2022 judicial year, the CSMJ comprised a total of seven advisory judges, 11 judges judges and 51 judges of law - but only 55 in total in the exercise of functions -, in addition to 217 justice officers, in this case with 204 working in the courts.

The number of criminal cases filed by the Cape Verdean Public Prosecutor's Office increased 31.9% in the last year, to 28,882, more than half in Praia, with homicide crimes on the rise, according to the annual report on the situation of the Justice of the CSMP.

According to the document, concerning the judicial year 2021/2022 (August 1st to July 31st), prepared by the CSMP, at national level, crimes against property increased by 55.6% compared to the previous year, to 14,436 (50 % of cases filed), namely 6,053 complaints for theft, 3,468 for theft, 1,070 for damage and 3,392 for qualified theft, among others.



Minister of Justice, Joana Rosa

## Sissoco In Russia: Demonstration Of Power Instead Of Message Of Peace?

## News Desk

The Guinean President showed interest in acquiring Russian frigates and helicopters. Analyst says that the speech is in line with Sissoco Embaló's conception of power and the need to show signs of strength.

The President of Guinea-Bissau, as acting president of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), promised to bring "a message of peace" to Russia. But Umaro Sissoco Embaló also took advantage of the meeting with his counterpart Vladimir Putin to show interest in acquiring Russian frigates and helicopters. The Russian President called for cooperation between Russia and Guinea-Bissau in the

fight against piracy and in the exploitation of fishing resources.

For analyst Fodé Mané, Embaló's speech is coherent within the framework of the Guinean President's conception of power and the need to show signs of military power.

Fodé Mané proclaimed that the country has the problem of the effectiveness of this type of diplomacy. I don't know if Africa has any power to exert pressure- he stated. Another issue is that the purchase of arms has always been the strategy of this regime. Perhaps this statement by Sissoco Embaló on the purchase of weapons and helicopters has more coherence in the context of his conception of power, because he knows that he has contestations of various natures. It was already threatened with the events of February 1, so it was always necessary to show signs of strength, of mil-

itary might, if not, power continues to be sustained from the outside, with weapons, with soldiers.

It can be said that, after all, it is not transmitting the message of peace, but of military interests. It cannot be expected that it will be a visit that will bring something to Guinea-Bissau. In Fodé Mané statements, Embaló ended up admitting, indirectly, that he did not know how Guinea-Bissau would pay for these acquisitions. Are these purchases a priority at a time when the country is going through such a severe crisis?

First, there are no conditions to pay, unless the acquisitions were guaranteed through natural resources. For example, with natural resources that are of interest to Russia, such as ores - bauxite and phosphate - and fisheries resources. But seeing the country's needs, Guinea-Bissau is not able to pay around 3,000 teachers, it

has no hospitals, it is not capable of producing anything from rice, which is the main food product, to the simplest medicines. How are you going to prioritize the issue of armaments and increase this type of debt, without guarantees? Looking at this situation, it is possible to understand the logic of governance, the logic of the State that we have.

Sissoco Embaló also made it clear that he is making these trips to Moscow and Kiev not as head of state of Guinea-Bissau, but as acting president of ECOWAS. Could it be that the interests of the community were "forgotten" in the meeting with Putin?

When ECOWAS is not in a position and is subject to internal criticism, it still does not reflect the interest of the people and the community. At the moment, ECOWAS itself is not in a position to collectively defend its interests.

One cannot believe in the existence of a common interest, especially in international relations. And if you have political prisoners in your country, every day people are interrogated and detained for the threat of creating instability of a military nature, how is it possible to go and solve the problems of other countries? - Fodé Mané expressed in an interview.



Guinean President Umaro Sissoco Embaló

## General News

# GHANA: PARLIAMENT RENOVATES AND BEEFS UP SECURITY AHEAD OF LAST QUARTER SITTINGS

By Clement Akoloh

The Parliament of Ghana has been preparing itself in readiness for the last quarter sittings which is scheduled to begin on Tuesday, October 25, 2022 after a long recess.



While some newly acquired sophisticated security scanning machines are being installed at the lobby and the entrance to the main Parliamentary Chamber, fishing touches on the renovation of the Speaker's block situated right at the center of the overbearing structure of the Job 600 building could be observed upon entering into the premises of the legislative enclave.

The renovation works which have been ongoing for some time, is gradually grinding to a halt with the Chinese workers winding down on their work with less activity, except for a few workers seen removing the scaffolding mounted for the painting of the building.



Newly installed scanning machine within the Parliament

The sea blue blended cream-colored painting of the Speaker's block, contrasts nicely with the blue tinted glass multi-story building which serves as office accommodations for Members of Parliament and some essential Parliamentary staff.

The beautifully trimmed flowers along the edges of the nicely mowed green grass in the forecourt within the premises of Parliament, makes the exterior of the Parliamentary enclave a soothing welcome for these Members of Parliament who are coming back after having conducted various forms of surgeries in their constituencies.

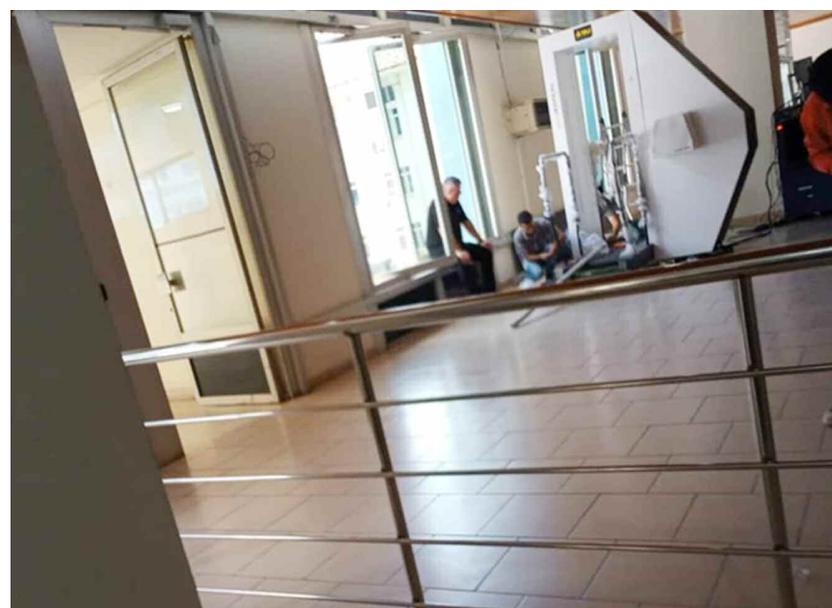
The Third Meeting of the Second Session of the Eight Parliament of the Fourth Republic of Ghana will

commence on Tuesday, October 25, 2022 at ten O'clock in the forenoon at the Parliament House in Accra.

A press release for the commencement of the meeting signed by the Public Affairs Director of Parliament, Madam Kate Addo, indicates that a "total of 66 bills are expected to be presented before the House."

Some of these Bills include: the Affirmative Action Bill, 2022; Ghana Housing Authority Bill, 2022; Minerals and Mining (Amendment), 2022; Small Scale Mining Bill, 2022; and the Petroleum Revenue Management (Amendment Bill), 2022.

Also, a Private Members Bill on the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana (Amendment) Bill, 2021, which was referred to the Council of State will be presented before the House among others.



One of the scanning machines being installed at the Speaker's entrance tunnel

## World's Largest Lung Health Conference Launches

News Desk

The Union World Conference on Lung Health 2022 (WCOLH) will take place between November 8-11 and aim to shed light on health epidemics present and future. Taking place against the backdrop of global tuberculosis (TB) and COVID-19 pandemics, the event will begin to focus on the pandemics of to-

morrow and highlight how scientific developments can help prevent them before it's too late.

The Union is proud to announce the selection of globally renowned researchers, experts, and public health leadership set to speak at the virtual WCOLH. The panels and press conferences will be discussing breakthrough data on tuberculosis (TB), the leading infectious disease killer on a global rise, the impact of COVID-19 on TB testing, the power of social media to increase TB awareness and outreach,

monitoring of TB treatment in Ukraine, and much more.

Speakers at The Union World Conference on Lung Health 2022 Official Opening Ceremony include:

- Dr. Madhukar Pai, Professor & Canada Research Chair of Epidemiology & Global Health, McGill University, Montreal, Canada
- Olya Klymenko, TB survivor from Ukraine, TBpeople Ukraine, Ukraine
- Prof Guy Marks, President and Interim Executive Director,

International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union)

### About The Union

Established in 1920, the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union) is committed to creating a healthier world for all, free of tuberculosis and lung disease. The Union is the world's first global health organisation and a global leader in ending TB. Its members, staff, and consultants work in more than 140

countries.

The Union strives to end suffering due to tuberculosis and lung diseases, old and new, by advancing better prevention and care. It seeks to achieve this by the generation, dissemination, and implementation of knowledge into policy and practice.

The Union aims to ensure that no one is left behind, people are treated equally and we have a focus on vulnerable and marginalised populations and communities

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