

# The New Statesman

GHANA'S OLDEST MAINSTREAM NEWSPAPER

Home	News	Politics	Sports	Entertainment	Business	Lifestyle	Technology
Health	World News	Photos	Contact				

HOT NEWS

'Corruption' of Election Petition Judgment VICKY HAMMAH VINDICATES GABBY? - NPP Takes Chi

## STRENGTHENING PARLIAMENT IS KEY TO FIGHTING CORRUPTION - Says Minority Leader

[Share](#)
[Tweet](#) 1
[g+1](#) 0
[Print](#)

[Like](#) 0
[Send](#)

LAST UPDATED ON 13 NOVEMBER 2013 BY FIIFI ARHIN HITS: 132



The Minority Leader in Parliament, Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu, yesterday stated that strengthening parliament's financial oversight responsibilities is critical to combating "the evil enterprise of

corruption which has become cancerous in Ghana." He further noted that corruption hurts the poor disproportionately, by diverting scarce funds intended for development, undermining government's ability to provide such basic services as potable water, schools, shelter, clinics, toilet facilities, farming inputs to the populace and thus aggravating inequality and injustice and thereby discouraging foreign aid and investment.



- \* BULK SMS
- \* DOMAIN NAMES
- \* DEDICATED HOSTING
- \* ICT CONSULTANCY
- \* LIVE STREAMING
- \* NEW MEDIA
- \* WEB DEVELOPMENT
- \* BUSINESS SUPPORT

WWW.SOLUTIONICONS.COM  
+233.26.2231

The Minority Leader made the observation when he delivered the 2013 Liberty Lecture at the Auditorium of the British Council on the theme: "The Deficit in Parliamentary Oversight in the Fight against Corruption."

Addressing a packed auditorium, he explained that Parliament has no option than to demonstrate extreme concern about the seriousness that the problems and threats that corruption pose to the stability and security of our communities and countries, undermining the institutions and values of democracy, cultural and traditional values and the justice system and jeopardizing sustainable development and the rule of law.

"As representatives of the people, Members of Parliament ought to be extremely concerned about the increasing links between corruption and the other forms of crime both domestic and international," he stated.

He explained that in modern Parliaments their MPs have seven main functions including: Representation (of voters); Legislation or law-making; Power of the purse or Financial Control; Oversight of the executive and the independent constitutional bodies; Deliberation; Information transmission or dissemination; and Problem resolution.

"The legitimacy of Parliament is measured by these roles that they perform and how effective they are. A strong Parliament is one that has fair and unbiased rules, a capacity to represent the will of the people and a reasonable and appropriate role in decision making. A Parliament with no substantial role in the political process or in making binding decisions is a toothless, rubber-stamp and inconsequential entity," he noted.

He outlined some tools with which parliament is equipped to exercise its oversight responsibilities, including question time, motions, statements in parliament, petitions, media and CSO Partnerships and the existence of parliamentary committees.

Thus for parliamentarians to exercise financial oversight responsibility over the Executive as well as ensuring good governance, "Parliament and Parliamentarians must be mindful of the principles of sound management of public affairs and public resources."

According to him, Members of Ghana's Parliament must themselves understand the principles of responsibility, equality before the law and urgent need to develop, imbibe and foster a culture of rejection of corruption and impurity.

Building the capacity of Parliamentarians to exercise this responsibility, he said, is of the urgent necessity, noting that this is not a one-year or even four-year effort as "it requires much time."

Any objective assessment of the performance of MPs in Ghana, he said, would yield

the names of Papa Owusu Ankomah, Alban Bagbin, Doe Adjaho (the current Speaker), W. O. Boafo, Anthony Akoto Osei, Benjamin Kunbuor, the Majority Leader and himself as very knowledgeable, experienced and prolific debaters and law-makers.

“These people are not instant products; they are men of the days before yesterday. The rather high attrition rate of MPs attributable, primarily to the increasing monetization of our internal party politics is proving detrimental to parliamentary work. The political parties have to do serious introspection as this practice of opening the slice gates at the end of every four years is not advancing our democracy in anyway,” he said.

He noted that it is important for Ghanaians “to acknowledge that the prevention, detection and fight against corruption and healing, reviving and uplifting the instruments for good democratic governance is a responsibility of all stakeholders including groups outside the public sector such as CSOs, NGOs and community-based organizations.”

“Many people recognize the deficit in the oversight responsibilities of Parliament. Notwithstanding, correcting the deficiencies in the system should be a collective responsibility even though, admittedly, the role of Parliament is, admittedly, very huge. Parliament is capable of elevating its performance since, as we have seen, a lot of the problems are self-inflicted,” he added.



Add a comment...

Comr

Facebook social plugin