



## **Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO)**

### **CONTACT**

Mr. Albert Arhin, CODEO National Coordinator

+233 (0) 24 474 6791 / (0) 20 822 1068

Secretariat: +233 (0) 244 350 266/ 0277 744 777

Email: info@codeoghana.org; Website: www.codeoghana.org

## **CODEO Launches its Roadmap for Elections 2016**

In line with its objective of promoting credible and peaceful elections, the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) has launched a comprehensive four interrelated activities to support the upcoming presidential and parliamentary polls. At a launch ceremony in Accra, CODEO's project on the theme '*Civil Society Advocacy and Support for Credible 2016 Elections - A CODEO Project*', as announced by its co-chairs Prof. Miranda Greenstreet and Prof. Justice V.C.R.A.C Crabbe, includes tracking and advocacy on the implementation of the accepted Electoral Reforms as announced by the Electoral Commission, domestic election observation, implementation of a Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT) and the promotion of Civic and Voter Education at District Levels.

According to Prof. Greenstreet, CODEO will recruit, train and deploy over 4,000 Rapid Response Observers (RROs) on Election Day. The co-chairs explained that CODEO RROs will provide general reports on the elections at their assigned sampled polling stations and will use SMS technology to transmit observation findings from their polling stations to the PVT database at the CODEO National Observation Information Center in Accra. The co-chairs were confident that the PVT would equip CODEO with adequate information to confidently and independently verify the 2016 presidential results.

On his part, co-chair of CODEO Justice Crabbe noted that 'the main challenge facing the country on December 7, 2016 elections is whether Ghana can hold another reasonably peaceful and transparent election, whose outcomes are considered credible and accepted by the main contestants and all Ghanaians'. To this end, he appealed to all stakeholders, contesting political leaders and their supporters to do all in their power to conduct themselves properly during this electioneering campaign and help achieve credible elections and maintain the peace in our country.

The Coalition made some recommendations to the key stakeholders outlined below:

### *To the EC:*

- Should continue to work to enhance its public image, trust and credibility by making transparency, inclusiveness, accountability and proactive communication guide its work. CODEO has taken note of the favourable citizens view of the EC in the recent CDD-Ghana pre-election survey, where 60% of respondents applauded the EC for its performance during the limited voter registration exercise, and where 63% believe that the EC performs its duties as 'neutral body guided by law'. The EC should be guided by these favourable ratings to strive to scale up its performance come December 7, 2016.
- Should continue to work to improve its guidelines and training of temporary officials and continue to apply the strict measures to enforce compliance. CODEO welcomes the recent announcement of engaging professionals, such as members of the Ghana Bar Association (GBA) and members of Institute of Chartered Accountants Ghana (ICAG) on Election Day. CODEO however advises that such groups have to be also vetted to ensure that they can perform their task in a non-partisan and competent manner.

- Should conduct a thorough accessibility audit of all polling stations so as to improve accessibility for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).
- Should take advantage of all platforms available to it to advance education on electoral processes to the general public. CODEO has taken note of the EC's communication strategy launched recently.

*To the Political Parties:*

- Should take cognizance that every activity on the EC's calendar is equally important in helping to ensure the credibility of the electoral process and its outcomes, hence they should not be selective in their participation.
- Should promote decent electioneering campaign, fair playing field for competition, and focus on policy issues that will contribute to the development of the country;

*To the National Media Commission, Ghana Journalist Association, Ghana Independent Broadcasters Association and other media accountability organisations*

- Should as a matter of urgency build consensus on a code of conduct to regulate media programming online and offline and to promote fair and decent reporting before, during and after the 2016 polls, particularly in the light of Montie 3 affair. 'We expect that these institutions will play their expected roles towards a peaceful and credible election 2016 polls'.

*To the Security Agencies: Election Security Task Force:*

- Should continue to step up its preparatory activities and ensure that the law applies equally to all offenders of electoral rules and perpetrators of violence, irrespective of political party affiliation;

*To the General Public:*

- Should actively participate in any activity that forms part of the electoral process being carried out by the EC. The public should comport themselves during the electioneering campaign, engage parties and candidates on policy issues, and come out to vote on Election Day.

CODEO, a coalition dedicated to promoting free, fair, transparent and credible elections through non-partisan election observation, is made up of 42 circular and faith-based civil society organisations and has been independently observing elections in Ghana since 2000. CODEO acknowledges the generous support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) which has over the past elections remained an important partner. CODEO further acknowledges STAR Ghana, Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA) and Ford Foundation for their diverse support for its 2016 election programs.

Signed jointly by:

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 Professor Miranda Greenstreet  
 (Co-Chair)

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 Justice VCRAC Crabbe  
 (Co-Chair)

Dated: Tuesday, September 6, 2016