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Press Release

Enough Laws Already: Ghana's Parliament Must Hit Pause Accra, Ghana.

The Center for Africa Development and Progress (CADEP) is urging Ghana's Parliament to place a moratorium on the passage of new laws and instead focus the nation's energy on enforcing the many laws already on the books. Ghana is drowning in statutes, yet accountability remains elusive.

Background:

Ghana's legislative machinery continues to churn out laws year after year, but enforcement is weak and institutional will is lacking. The result is a cycle of waste, corruption, and impunity.

Auditor-General's Reports: Every year, these reports highlight financial irregularities amounting to billions of Cedis. In the 2022 report alone, nearly GH¢17 billion in irregularities were flagged covering procurement breaches, unaccounted-for expenditures, and unlawful payments. Yet recovery of these sums remains insignificant, with culprits often escaping without sanctions.

Public Accounts Committee (PAC): Parliament's own oversight committee repeatedly hears the same stories of mismanagement. Ministries, Departments, and Agencies appear before PAC year after year, yet the breaches recur with little deference. For example, PAC recently lamented that some institutions fail to even produce basic receipts for public spending, an indictment of accountability systems.

Office of the Special Prosecutor (OSP): Launched with the promise of fighting high-level corruption, the OSP has had notable cases such as the Cecilia Dapaah cash scandal. Yet prosecutions stall, files linger, and convictions are scarce undermining public faith in the office.

Economic and Organized Crime Office (EOCO): With a mandate to investigate serious financial crimes, EOCO's work often ends at investigations, with very few cases reaching final conviction in the courts.

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Africa that ensures opportunity for all*

Judiciary: Corruption-related cases in Ghana continue to drag on for years without closure. The protracted 8-year prosecution of MenzGold's Nana Appiah Mensah (NAM 1), alongside unresolved judgment debt cases, has become emblematic of a justice system plagued by delays. Even where partial recoveries are made, the lingering public question remains: **why so slow, and why so little?**

State-Owned Corporations: The 2021 Auditor-General report revealed that SOEs alone accounted for GH¢5 billion in financial irregularities, including payroll fraud, procurement breaches, and ghost workers. Yet these continue unchecked.

CADeP's Position:

Ghana does not need more laws. It needs the political will and institutional courage to enforce the ones already in place.

"Passing laws while ignoring enforcement is like patching a leaking roof by adding another floor to the house," said Mr. Johannes Koku Nyagblordzro, the Executive Chairman of CADeP. He added that, "Ghanaians are frustrated. They see reports piling up, culprits named, yet no meaningful punishment or recovery of stolen funds. We cannot legislate our way out of corruption; we must enforce our way out."

Call to Action:

CADeP is therefore calling for:

A Parliamentary Pause: Parliament must halt the passage of new laws for now and focus on strengthening oversight to ensure compliance with existing legislation.

Institutional Accountability: Bodies such as the Auditor-General's Office, PAC, OSP, EOCO, CHRAJ, and the Judiciary must prioritize sanctions, prosecutions, and recoveries. Reports must translate into real consequences.

Civil Society Vigilance: Media, advocacy groups, and citizens must amplify the demand for enforcement over endless lawmaking.

CADeP's Warning:

If Ghana continues to pass new laws without enforcing old ones, the cycle of waste and corruption will only deepen. Development funds will keep disappearing, institutions will lose credibility, and citizens will grow more disillusioned with democracy itself.

For further information, please contact:

Center for Africa Development and Progress (CADeP)

Email: africapprogress@live.com

Phone: +233244739332

Website: africadev-progress.org

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E222/9 Abongo Street, Kanda Estates, Accra. P.O. Box KA 9909,
Airport - Accra, Ghana. West Africa

Tel: +233 244 739 332 / +233 201 462 446
E-mail: africapprogress@live.com