

## **INAUGURATION OF CENTRE FOR DEMOCRATIC TRANSITIONS- GHANA- (CDT-GH)**

### **WELCOME ADDRESS BY: EXECUTIVE CO-ORDINATOR NANA ATO DADZIE (cv)**

Chairperson, Honorable Ministers and Members of Parliament, Members of the Diplomatic Corp, Friends from the Media, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of Centre for Democratic Transitions-Ghana, please permit me to welcome all of you here to the inauguration of the Centre.

The Centre is a Ghanaian-based international Think Tank that focuses on democratic political transitions world-wide. It is registered in Ghana as a company limited by guarantee.

The Centre has been established against the background of the very difficult transitions that Ghana has gone through since 1993 and the pivotal roles that the members of the Centre played in those transitions, as well as tremendous experiences gained by some of them working on international political transition programs in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Nigeria and The Gambia, as technical transition consultants to various international organizations such as, National Democratic Institute (NDI) (USA); United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations and UNOWAS.

Due to long periods of one-party systems and military rule, many African countries lack experience in constitutional transitions. Suddenly confronted with situations when they have to organize transitions for which their Constitutions and their laws have no provisions and for which they have no precedence or conventions, their transitions have been chaotic as Ghana experienced in 2001 and to a lesser extent in 2009 and in some other cases violent.

Several countries including the Republic of South Africa, Uganda, Togo and Zimbabwe have no experience of such transitions and are likely to run into the kind of problems that Ghana faced when it had to deal with such transitions in 1993 and 2001 and to a lesser extent in 2009 and 2016.

Madam Chairperson, the members of the Centre who have accumulated tremendous experience dealing with political transitions in the four major transitions in Ghana are willing to share this knowledge and their international experiences with other countries of the world which may face such situations in the future as they have already done in the countries that I mentioned earlier.

The Center's mandate includes;

- Advisory services on organization of transitions from one constitutional Government to another constitutional Government formed by different political party
- Advisory services on organization of transitions from a military Government to a civilian, constitutional Government
- Advisory services on transitions from centralized systems of administration to decentralized systems of administration
- Advisory services on Public Sector Reforms generally
- Capacity- building and training for newly-appointed political office-holders
- Capacity building and training for newly-elected Members of Parliament, Houses of Representatives and Senates
- Establish relationships with International organizations with established interest in political transitions such as ECOWAS, AU and the UN.

Two of the members of the Centre (Nana Ato Dadzie and Professor Kwamena Ahwoi) were direct participants in the transfer of power from the Ghanaian military Government of the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) to the first constitutional Government of the Fourth Republic of Ghana in 1993. They gained considerable experience in how to negotiate the terms of the exit of the military rulers.

The Centre also has expertise in the management of transitions from centralized systems of administration to decentralized systems of administration and public-sector reforms generally including preparing new legislations on the decentralized system and identifying revenue sources for the local governments in line with the requirements of fiscal decentralization;

The Centre is in a position to advise on ministerial realignments, civil service reforms, capacity-building and incentive-packaging, advising on an effective

interface between central government and local government as well as central control of local government such that the cohesion of the nation-state is maintained while at the same time, the local autonomy required under decentralization is also assured.

CDT-GH is a unique and veritable knowledge bank of seasoned political transition practitioners who have come together to serve the world, utilizing their knowledge and experience. Contribute to state stability, peace-building, advancement of democratic values and rapid development of Africa and other countries. CDT-GH will link up with international organizations and affiliated bodies.

Once firmly established, we will invite similarly experienced members of registered political parties to join the Centre and also establish an International Board of Advisors comprising eminent African and other international personalities with experience and expertise in its area of mandate to advise it from time to time.

Madam Chairperson, I have the pleasure to introduce to you and the world, the 4 guarantors and members of the Centre. They are Professor Kwamena Ahwoi, a Professor of Governance with a background in Law and Ghana's longest-serving Minister of Local Government (1988-2000); Honourable Julius Debrah, a sociologist and immediate past Chief of Staff to the President of the Republic of Ghana; Dr. Callistus Mahama, a land economist and planning expert and immediate past Head of Ghana's Local Government Service and Coordinator of the Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee on Decentralization and myself Nana Ato Dadzie, a private legal practitioner and one-time Chief of Staff to the President of the Republic of Ghana (Executive Coordinator) .

Nana Ato Dadzie cv