



Dagbon-Net
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December 30, 2004

The President
Republic of Ghana
Through Ghana High Commission
Ottawa, Ontario,
Canada

Your Excellency:

Open Letter to the President of the Republic of Ghana – His Excellency John A. Kufour

Accept our congratulations on your recent re-election to the office of the President of the Republic of Ghana. Your re-election is a reaffirmation of the conviction of Ghanaians in your ability and that of the NPP in steering the affairs of the Nation during this momentous time of our national development.

Dagbon Net, a development oriented internet based group with membership in Ghana and the Diaspora wish to plead with you as a matter of utmost urgency to use your office to bring the security situation in Dagbon under control.

Your excellency, the unnecessary killings of Alhaji Issah Mobilla, Mr. Abu Hanifa Basha and many others in the aftermath of the December 07 election forms a part of a pattern of killings, molestations, intimidations, weapon brandishing that have occurred in Dagbon since the killing of Ya Naa Yakubu Andani II and 40 others of his court over two years ago. The people of Tamale and Dagbon have since lived in perpetual fear not knowing when and where the next killings will occur.

In broad daylight and in the presence of the security forces we have witnessed individuals take the law into their own hands to molest, intimidate, threaten and kill innocent citizens of Dagbon. It is worrisome that these people are never brought to answer for their actions and in each subsequent incident the perpetrators get bolder in their actions.

The people of Dagbon deserve to live in peace and carry on their various professions in peaceful and lawful settings. The charter of human rights mandates that the government provide for the security of every citizen of the country. The people of

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Dagbon are no exception and deserve this basic human right; the right to live without fear or favour, the right to security.

Your excellency, as you would recount, Ya Naa Yakubu Andani II was killed on March 27, 2002 in his own palace without assistance from the police and army in Yendi. This unfortunate and gruesome murder has yet to be fully investigated and the perpetrators brought to justice. Since the murder of the Ya Naa the following incidents and murders have occurred in the Tamale Metropolitan area alone.

- April 23, 2003: Mr. Ghali Fuseini was killed during clashes between supporters of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC) in Tamale. Eight people charged with the murder were subsequently freed by the Tamale High Court.
- September 16, 2004: An incident in Tamale between different factions of butchers led to gun shot injuries to Mr. Alhassan Abdul-Kahad, Mr. Alhassan Mohammed Hafiz, and Mr. Mohammed Abdul Abdallah. No arrests were made and no one has ever been charged.
- October 10, 2004: Mr. Ibrahim Amidu, a 14 year old boy, was shot and killed in Tamale. No arrests were made and no one has ever been charged.
- November 28, 2004: Two people sustained gun shot during an NDC rally in Tamale. No one has been charged.

Mr. President, these incidents are just a few of the many that have occurred in the past two years. Many more reports of such incidents abound in the history of Tamale and Dagbon. It is time that something concrete were done to ensure peace and security in Dagbon and to ensure that those who take the law into their own hand to cause wanton destruction or death in the name of the chieftaincy conflict or party politics are punished according to the laws of the Republic of Ghana.

The information Minister recently asked the media to be mindful of the workings of the commissions of inquiries that are being set up to investigate the various cases of wanton killings and maiming in Dagbon. We would like to put you on notice that hence forth Dagbon Net shall follow diligently the workings of these commissions of inquiry and shall remind you of your duty to the people of Dagbon when you falter in your resolve to bring peace and justice to the people of Dagbon. And rest assured, your Excellency, we shall applaud you when you bring the perpetrators of all the heinous crimes of the past two years in Dagbon to justice.

Mr. President, Dagbon Net was formed to bring about meaningful development to our underdeveloped and deprived region. In this, we have resolved to spend our time and energies and have in the past undertaken projects to ensure a conducive atmosphere for learning and teaching in a number of schools in the Northern Region. But we have come to realize that development cannot and does not thrive where there is no peace. In order, therefore to get back to the objectives for which this

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organization was set up we have to first and foremost ensure that the people of Dagbon are able to go about their daily lives without fear of intimidation, public association, or political affiliation.

Mr. President, most people are of the view that the current spate of lawlessness and violence in Dagbon stems from the government's unwillingness to treat the killing of Ya Naa Yakubu Andani as a regicide. We would like to remind you that such lawlessness and violence is not confined to the boundaries of Dagbon. Far from that, it is exported to every place in Ghana where Dagbamba reside. The recent disturbances in Accra between the Abudu and Andani factions confirms the observation that the Dagbon chieftaincy crisis is not a Dagbon problem but of national dimension and we hope that it will not be left to degenerate into a regional conflict the likes of which are being witnessed in the West African sub-region. We hope you will accord the security problems in Dagbon and the Northern Region the seriousness they truly deserve.

Sincerely,



Ahmed Bawa Kuyini



Osman Abukari

Cc:

The Speaker, Parliament of the Republic of Ghana.
The High Commissioner, Ghana High Commission, Ottawa, Canada.
The Ambassador, Ghana Embassy, Washington DC, USA.
The High Commissioner, Ghana High Commission, Australia.
The High Commissioner, Canadian High Commission, Accra.
The Ambassador, US Embassy, Accra.
The High Commissioner, British High Commission, Accra.
The Amnesty International, Africa Division.
The Journalists for Human Rights.
The Delegation of the Commission of the European Communities (EEC), Ghana.
The President, Ghana Bar Association.
The Ghanaian Press.

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