

ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO GHANA

CANADA

- Canada is pleased to note continued improvements in respect for human rights in Ghana. The Constitution of Ghana (1992) provides the basis for the protection of fundamental human rights - civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights -and is supplemented by numerous laws. In particular, Canada commends Ghana for its overall respect of freedom of speech and the press. Opportunities for vibrant political debate and a free press help to strengthen democracy in Ghana. At the same time, challenges are posed by corruption and by the lack of enforcement and operationalization of the human rights laws. What measures does the Government of Ghana intend to take to strengthen the implementation of human rights laws?
- Public officials and police play a critical role in the enforcement of human rights. Human rights abuses could be avoided through sufficient training and awareness-raising initiatives. Is the Government of Ghana planning to conduct activities to further educate public officials and police about the promotion and protection of human rights?
- The right to information, a fundamental element of the right to freedom of expression, constitutes one of the pillars for the respect of all other human rights and is particularly important in the fight against corruption. Enactment of Ghana's Freedom of Information Bill, drafted in 2002, would constitute a significant step towards realization of this right. We would appreciate further inform

DENMARK

- OP-CAT
Why has the Government of Ghana not yet ratified the OP-CAT? Does it plan to do so in the near future?
- The CEDAW and OP-CEDAW
When will Ghana ratify the OP-CEDAW and implement the very thorough gender policies that the country has?
- Protection of Children
When will Ghana sign and ratify the following conventions aimed at the protection of children:
OP CRC SC (signed in 2003, not ratified yet), OP CRC AC (signed in 2003, not ratified yet), The Palermo Protocol, ILO Convention no.138 (on minimum age for employment), and UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education?

GERMANY

- It appears from the compilation prepared by OHCHR (A/HRC/WG.6/2/GHA/2), para. 18, as well as from the submissions made by stakeholders, paras.16-17, that trafficking in persons, in particular child trafficking remains a serious issue of concern. The necessary legislation has been provided with the "Human Trafficking Act" of 2005. How can the implementation of the Human Trafficking Act be improved in order to better address and fight the issue of human trafficking ?
- The stakeholders submission provides the information that human rights are severely affected by large-scale mining operations, paras. 33-37, especially as among the consequences of those operations were forced evictions, loss of access to safe drinking water or access to farm land. What measures is the Ghanaese Government prepared to take to protect the rights, including the Economic, social and cultural rights, of those affected by large scale mining?

NETHERLANDS

- An important aspect of access to justice and prevention of human rights violations is the education of the public to know their rights and demand them. What is done by the government of Ghana to reach out to the general public to know their rights and to know how to obtain access to justice, even if there is a lack of financial means?
- An important tool to prevent torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading forms of treatment or punishment is the instrument of regular visits to prisons by independent international and national bodies. Ghana signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture (OPCAT) on 6 November 2006. What is the current state of affairs of the ratification of this important human rights instrument?
- How is the government of Ghana addressing the apparent lack of confidence in the police system which encourages "mob justice" by the public?
- What is Ghana's main strategy in tackling the cultural challenges related to human rights violations, such as the persistence of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), the *trokosi* system and the witch camps?
- With elections foreseen in December 2008, and Ghana's intentions on the promotion of women in governance (affirmative action policy of 1998), what is the Government of Ghana doing in order to increase the number of women that participate in government and parliament?

SWEDEN

- The constitution of Ghana prohibits torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Ghana is party to the Convention against Torture. In its national report to the 2008 Universal Periodic Review, the government of Ghana noted further specific legal provisions against torture and maltreatment in prisons, within the context of working to ensure the humane and dignified treatment of prisoners. Civil society organisations have continued to report cases, however, of alleged abuse of prisoners, while poor conditions in prisons and other places of detentions have threatened the health and physical safety of detainees. Could the government of Ghana elaborate on measures it is taking to ensure the well-being of prisoners and other detainees in compliance with the Convention Against Torture and other international standards, and on the process of ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention which it has signed? Does the Government of Ghana face specific needs in terms of capacity building in this area?

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

- Could you please elaborate further on the role civil society played in the preparation of your national report for this process?
- We would like to know how many victims the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) helps each year and what steps are being taken to review and improve its service?
- Could you tell us how Ghana is working to expand legal aid to rural areas?
- Could you tell us whether Ghana is considering separating the position of Attorney General and the Minister of Justice? Is Ghana likely to appoint an independent public prosecutor?
- What is Ghana doing to improve prison conditions and reduce the amount of time prisoners serve while on remand?
- Could you tell us what the position is on the draft Right to Information Bill? When might it be presented to Parliament?
- What steps are being taken, in line with Ghana's 3rd, 4th, and 5th periodic reports to CEDAW, to increase women's participation in politics?
- When will Ghana extend the Child Labour Monitoring Programme to other districts?

- Could you tell us when Ghana intends to ratify the Optional protocol to the UN Convention on Torture?
- We would be grateful for information on what Ghana plans to do to improve the relationship between mining companies, the security forces (private and public) and communities in mining areas?
- Could you please tell us whether Ghana intends to turn their de facto moratorium on the death penalty into an official moratorium?
- Could you please elaborate on the existence of a national human rights institution in the Ghana and if it is in full compliance with the Paris principles?