

# GHANA



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## **STATEMENT**

**BY**

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**AT THE**

**47<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS**  
**COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**ON THE REPORT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**ON**

**AGENDA ITEM 3(b): REVIEW OF RELEVANT UNITED NATIONS**  
**PLANS AND PROGRAMMES OF ACTION PERTAINING TO THE**  
**SITUATION OF SOCIAL GROUPS**

**NEW YORK, 9<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2009**

**Madam Chairperson,**

May I at the outset, join previous speakers in congratulating you and the bureau on your election to steer the work of the 47<sup>th</sup> Session of this Commission. With your rich diplomatic experience, the delegation of Ghana is confident that you will successfully direct our deliberations.

The delegation of Ghana is also grateful to the Secretary General for the comprehensive reports on the agenda items under consideration. We associate ourselves with the statements made by the Honourable Minister of Health of Namibia and the distinguished representative of Sudan on behalf of the African Union and the Group of 77 and China, respectively.

**Madam Chairperson,**

A number of initiatives were taken over the last decade which put the issue of social development at the forefront of Ghana's development agenda. The issue of Social Protection and Gender were mainstreamed into the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy for Ghana, (GPRSII) 2006-2009 (Ghana's PRSP). The annual progress reports of the GPRS always report on social protection expenditure. Education Capitation Grant for all children in public basic schools was introduced and has resulted in increased School enrollment by 20% in 2 years. There is also a School Free Feeding Programme currently covering about 10% of children in public basic schools. There also exist a National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) which covers all children below 18 years and free medical care for all pregnant and lactating mothers.

**Madam Chairperson,**

**The Programme of Action on Disabled persons,**

The Government of Ghana in 2006 passed the Persons with Disabilities Act (Persons with Disabilities ACT, 2006, Act 715). The act seeks to provide the framework and the enabling environment for the total integration and development of the potentials of persons with disabilities. To facilitate the implementation of the provisions of the Act, the National Council on Persons with Disabilities was constituted and started work in 2008. Recruitment of staff and the establishment of the Secretariat for the Council are currently in progress. It is expected that the Secretariat will be fully functional by June 2009.

A microfinance scheme for a Women Development Fund and a Persons' with Disability microfinance scheme at national, regional and district levels are operated by the Department of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs.

**Madam Chairperson,**

**Programme of Action on the Youth,**

To promote the total development of the youth, the Government of Ghana in 2008 revised and developed a new National Youth Policy that deals with health, education, science and technology, culture, HIV/AIDS, skills training and employment. To facilitate the implementation of this policy, an Action plan which specified the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders was developed. It is our strategy to mainstream the implementation into the Medium Term Development Expenditure framework which will ensure sustainable funding of the Policy.

Since 2007 the Government of Ghana has developed and implemented a National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP). The programme has so far provided jobs for 108,403 youth in all the 10 regions of the country. The areas of employment include agriculture, education, health and sanitation, ICT, trades and vocations, paid internships and community protection.

Ghana has joined the United Nations Youth Employment Network (YEN) in order to benefit from technical assistance to fully push the agenda of Youth Employment and development

A National Apprenticeship Programme has also been developed to provide vocational skills training for the graduates of the junior and senior high schools who are not able to continue their education to make them employable in order to contribute their quota to national development.

Additionally, a new National Employment Policy and its implementation Action Plan have also been developed. The policy which is also mainstreamed into the GPRS focuses on employment in key economic sectors as well as special mass youth employment creation programmes. The policy also dealt with the institutional arrangements as well as building implementation capacity, monitoring and evaluation.

**Madam Chairperson,**

**Plan of Action on Ageing,**

The Government of Ghana is currently working on the revision of the existing Ageing policy. It is envisaged that the revised policy would provide for the special needs of the aged and for an institutional set-up to manage the affairs to ensure their fundamental rights including right to health care delivery, social security, income, housing and living environment, transport needs, food and nutritional requirements and to promote lifelong education and healthy active ageing. The revision which is expected to be completed by the mid of this year is expected to achieve the overall social economic, and cultural re-integration of older persons into mainstream society and to enable them as far as practicable, participate fully in the national development process using their time tested knowledge and experience.

**Madam Chairperson,**

**Family issues, Policies and Programmes**

Ghana participated in the AU conference of Ministers on Social development in Namibia in 2008 and Ghana has initiated action to develop a National Social Policy using the AU Framework adopted at this Conference.

Prior to the adoption of the AU framework, Ghana in 2007, in line with the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy II, developed and is implementing a National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS).

The NSPS represents the Government of Ghana's vision of creating an inclusive society through the provision of sustainable mechanisms for protecting persons living in situations of extreme poverty, vulnerability and exclusion. It also makes a shift from the piecemeal approach of designing and managing social protection programmes to a holistic approach.

The five pillars of the NSPS addresses the root causes of poverty in its totality, livelihood empowerment, productive investment, and a gender sensitive approach to poverty reduction and social empowerment.

In this regard, a Social Protection Livelihood Technical Committee was formed to coordinate the development and implementation of complementary Social Protection Interventions in all relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

As part of the implementation of the NSPS, a Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) (Social Grant/Cash Transfer programme) as developed and is being implemented. The LEAP is aimed at investing in people through social assistance schemes. Leap implementation started in February 2008 and as at December 2008, about 8,000 households have benefited from the cash transfer in 54 districts nationwide. It is projected that, 35,000 households from 80 districts will benefit by December 2009.

It is Ghana's flagship programme to empower the extreme poor, disadvantaged and vulnerable populations. It provides conditional and unconditional cash transfer to extreme poor households/families that have no alternative means of meeting the basic sustenance needs and have limited productive capacity.

**Madam Chairperson,**

In conclusion therefore, Ghana has made modest achievements and we will welcome constructive partnerships and assistance to accelerate and expand programmes targeted at the extreme poor and the vulnerable.

We still face a daunting world social situation. It is our hope that as we exchange ideas and share best practices at this forum, we will put forward new ideas aimed at achieving social development for all in a globalizing world.

**I thank you.**