

**STATEMENT BY THE MAJORITY LEADER OF PARLIAMENT,
HON. ALBAN S.K. BAGBIN
ON THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENT OF GHANA IN THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN GHANA**

I thank the National Development Planning Commission and the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator in Ghana for inviting me to the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals in Ghana.

I would like to also use this opportunity on behalf of myself and Parliament to congratulate the President ,His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, on his appointment by the UN Secretary-General as a Co-Chair of the Group of Eminent Advocates for the Sustainable Development Goals.

Indeed, many Ghanaians, particularly Members of Parliament are elated at your appointment. We see it as a recognition at the global level of your exemplary leadership and the high democratic credentials of our country. We are very grateful to the United Nations and the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon for this recognition and honour.

In September 2015, Member States of the United Nations adopted Seventeen (17) new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to build on progress made at the end of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

Among the many voices that helped shape the SDGs, are those of Parliamentarians, the representatives of the people. The overarching aim of the involvement of Parliamentarians was to engender inclusiveness as well as ensure that the goals respond to the needs and reflect the aspirations of the people.

This was done having in mind the critical role Parliament would have to play in the realization of these goals through lawmaking, oversight and representation. Country ownership, national policy and government accountability will be essential to ensure that the targets are met.

As many of us are aware, the adoption of the SDGs does not automatically translate these goals into binding laws on the UN member states. Each country needs to domesticate these principles and goals in national legislation. We all know that it is Parliament that has been clothed with the mandate to pass these laws.

I must say that Ghana is very fortunate as a country, given that the adoption and implementation of the SDGs are occurring at the time that the country is in the process of reforming its Constitution.

We thus have a unique opportunity as a country to ensure that both the letter and spirit of the SDGs are wholly and truly captured in the amendments to the constitution.

Apart from leading the process of amending the Constitution, Parliament has the onerous responsibility of updating existing laws to incorporate the SDGs Agenda. Some Parliaments have already shown the way. For example, in March, 2015, the House of Commons in the United Kingdom, in anticipation of the adoption of the SDGs, passed a law legalizing its commitment to spend 0.7% of its gross national income (GNI) on Official Development Assistance yearly towards the attainment of the SDGs.

The successful implementation of SDGs hinges on the adequacy of financial resources. Again parliament comes in handy, Parliament has the constitutional duty to develop appropriate revenue measures to generate enough financial resources and to allocate same for the total implementation of the SDGs. Further to that, the implementation of the SDGs will be done under the scrutiny and eagle eyes of Parliament.

To be able to live up to this billing, the Parliament of Ghana has to strengthen and restructure itself, stand up to the challenge and deliver on its mandate. Some Countries have taken the lead in this direction. Pakistan has established an SDG Task Force in the National Assembly, the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago has established a new Joint Select Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development, and Zambia formed an SDGs

Caucus in July 2015. The Parliament of Ghana is revising its Standing Orders to create new Structures, Committees and properly position it to effectively partner government and other actors to implement the SDGs.

In conclusion, I assure Your Excellency the President and all gathered here of the commitment of Parliament to the realization of the SDGs. In this respect, Members of Parliament are ready and willing to act as effective tools of the SDGs Advocates, Co-Chaired by Your Excellency, in your task to engage with the people to develop new and ground-breaking ideas and ways to promote and accelerate the implementation of such a visionary and transformational Sustainable Development Agenda.

Your Excellency, you have Parliament's support. Once again, congratulations.

I thank you very much for your attention.