

**SPEECH BY DR. ING. KENNETH EDEM ASHIGBEY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF GHANA TELECOMMUNICATIONS CHAMBER AT THE LAUNCH OF THE SERVICE DELIVERY CHARTERS DEVELOPED BY PEF IN COLLABORATING WITH THE ADMINISTERING PUBLIC SECTOR AGENCIES**

Honorable Minister for Planning (Prof. Gyan Baffour), Honorable Ministers present, Honorable members of Parliament, CEO of Private Enterprise Federation-PEF (Nana Osei-Bonsu), the President and members of PEF member associations and Chambers, representatives from other Trade and Business Associations, heads of Agencies, Members of Diplomatic Corps, friends from the Media, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is a great honor to deliver a statement on behalf of the private sector at the Launch of Service Delivery Charters, Reports on Administrative Corruption & the PEF Public Institutions Service Delivery Awards.

It is evident that the Private Sector in Ghana is faced with a lot of challenges that render their businesses uncompetitive and unprofitable. Notably among these are; cost of credit, high cost of utilities, high taxes, weak capacity, multiple permits and licensing regimes, bureaucratic and inefficient service delivery from the public sector characterized by solicitation of unapproved fees from businesses seeking various permits, licenses and certificates.

The later challenge is one of the major obstacles that undermines the effective and efficient performance of the private sector as identified by PEF. Delays associated with the acquisition of business permits, licenses and certificates as a result of the inefficient manner in which they are administered, goes a long way to significantly add layers of cost in doing business thereby affecting Ghana's ranking in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Report.

Additionally, these bribery and corrupt practices also makes businesses who want to do legitimate work uncompetitive and this largely affects the moral fibre of the country.

**“Our country is caught in an unending spiral of decadence. Every day we read and hear of unspeakable corruption and abuse of the public purse by individuals and institutions entrusted with public funds. The situation has reached tipping point and our citizens genuinely wonder if any public official or institution can stand up to scrutiny” - Chief Justice, Mrs Georgina Theodora Wood at the swearing-in ceremony of a professional magistrate and 21 career magistrates in Accra. (October, 2014)**

It is therefore welcoming news that the Private Enterprise Federation, representing the interest of its members of which the Ghana Chamber of Telecommunications is part has embarked on this project to find solutions to the delays and inefficiencies in the business permits, licenses and certificates. It is interesting to note that the Ghana Chamber of Telecommunications has suffered its fair share of challenges in the business environment, the problems of multiple points of obtaining permits and licenses including Building Permits and Right of Way from the multiple MMDAs etc. It is imperative that both the private and public sector collaborate to find sustainable solutions which will be a win-win for all. For example, streamlining the processes of obtaining permits and licenses from the multiple agencies and fighting corruption/fraud inherent for the telecoms industry will ensure our members the Telcos and Infrastructure Companies are able to keep as much of their capital to invest in their operations, provide better services to customers, generate income and continue to pay their fair share of taxes to government as responsible businesses for socio-economic development as well as reduce the cost of telecommunication services for our customers.

It is remarkable to note the way PEF and the respective public sector institutions have worked hand in hand over the past 4 years to achieve this milestone. This indeed, is proof that the public and private sectors can work as partners in ensuring the creation of an enabling business environment in Ghana. As a Chamber we can also attest to gains that is made when the Private and Public Sector work together, the partnership between the Chamber and the EPA has resulted in improvement in service delivery.

We therefore give thumbs up to the Federation and the respective public sector institutions for this great partnership to fight this canker through the improvement of public service delivery to clients such as the business community. This we believe will reduce if not eliminate the incidence of corruption in accessing these services.

The Chamber and the other members of the PEF fraternity congratulates PEF and the three administering agencies for this great collaborative effort and we believe this will be the launch pad to replicate similar initiatives across board.

***“The worst disease in the world today is corruption. And there is a cure: transparency”***. – Bono This project is beginning the transparency we need.

I wish you a very successful launch

Thank you