

# CIVIC FORUM INITIATIVE (CFI)

C/O Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG)

No. 24 Garden Road, Ambassadorial Enclave, East Legon, P. O. Box CT 5767, Cantonments

Tel: 0302-543320/543295 Hotline: 0207574024; 0262691038; Fax: 0302-518018

E-mail: [civicforum@ideg.org](mailto:civicforum@ideg.org)

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**Press Release: Translating the Kumasi Declaration into Effective Action**

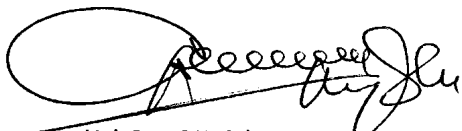
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1. The IDEG-CFI has reviewed the political and security situation in the country following the signing of the Kumasi Declaration on November 27, 2012. Under the Declaration the Presidential candidates and their political parties pledged to stand against any threat to the peaceful elections and to collaborate with the Police Service and other law enforcement agencies to professionally discharge their duties without fear or favour.
2. We note with concern that since the signing of the Declaration several cases of elections related violence and aggression has occurred, specifically in Kumasi and Takoradi. Among the reported cases were: physical assaults, shooting, and alleged stock piling of arms by political opponents, among others. Also, the major political parties have continued to express concern over the professionalism and impartiality of the police in providing elections security; however, they have done so in a manner that does not demonstrate firm adherence to their commitments under the Declaration.
3. Further, we are concerned that there is a risk that some registered voters may not be able to vote on December 7 either due to late registration or omission of their names in the Biometric Register. The likelihood of some citizens becoming disenfranchised could cause panic and trigger violent reactions. There is therefore the need for the Electoral Commission to outline clear remedial measures that would assure inclusive voting by all eligible voters.
4. On a positive note, the media had actually been active in encouraging extensive public awareness through reviews and debates on the Declaration. We also observed that the National Media Commission and the National Communications Authority, in the light of the Kumasi Declaration, have outlined measures for calling the media to order for "any aberrations intended to undermine our collective peace and security, and to throw our nation into chaos". These decisions are highly commendable and we urge the actors involved

5. In order to further strengthen the political and security conditions for achieving peaceful elections with credible results on December 7, 2012, we wish to reiterate that it is important for the political parties, the Police, and all others to conduct themselves in a way that reinforces adherence to the Declaration. Accordingly we recommend the following:
- i. The Political parties should declare their support for the Police in their investigation of reported cases of electoral violence and desist from utterances that will undermine public confidence in the Police's ability to provide effective elections security on December 7, 2012 and beyond.
  - ii. The Police should provide regular briefings and updates to the public in order to be seen to be investigating the cases impartially and professionally. This would contribute to the strengthening of public confidence in its operational effectiveness.
  - iii. The Government and all relevant state actors should support the security agencies in the discharge of their duties without fear or favour.
  - iv. All citizens should join the campaign against political violence ~~and~~ help to secure the conditions for peaceful elections with credible results on December 7 by being law abiding, denouncing violence and cooperating with the security agencies in the discharge of their functions before, during after the elections.
  - v. In addition citizens should hold political leaders, activists and supporters of the various political parties as well as the Police accountable for the commitments they made under the Kumasi Declaration.
  - vi. That the Electoral Commission takes all appropriate measures to ensure that all eligible voters are able to exercise their rights to vote in the December 7 elections.

Signed:



Maj. Gen. C.N. Coleman  
CFI Chair and Associate Director, ASDR



Dr. Emmanuel O. Akwetey  
CFI Steering Group Member and  
Executive Director, IDEG