

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY MRS. JEAN MENSA, CHAIRPERSON OF THE ELECTORAL  
COMMISSION AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE OF THE ELECTORAL  
COMMISSION ON TUESDAY, 5<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2019**

Good afternoon, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen. We thank the good Lord for a new day and for new mercies. This is the day the Lord has made, and we rejoice and we are glad in it.

Today marks an important milestone in the history of the Electoral Commission. We are gathered here to inaugurate an important accountability/transparency mechanism, the Audit Committee of the Electoral Commission. As a new Commission, we are mindful of our recent past, particularly the numerous issues relating to procurement breaches and financial scandals that characterized our past operations. We are determined to correct the ills and weaknesses in our system and to move forward in truth and light. Therefore, the requirement by the Public Financial Management Act enjoining public institutions to establish Audit Committees could not have come at a better time. As a new Commission we warmly embrace this requirement and pledge our support to make the Committee meaningful and effective.

Ladies and Gentlemen, as a Commission, we are of the firm conviction that we should not only conduct accountable, transparent and credible elections but also that we should live by and demonstrate the same principles of accountability and transparency in the use and management of the tax payers' money. We believe that the integrity of our electoral process starts from how we use and manage the public's resources entrusted to us. We are committed to building systems and processes that will promote value for money in all our operations and ultimately ensure the judicious use of the public purse.

We are committed to shedding light and building transparency into all our operations and to activities right from the preparation of workplans and budgets to our procurement activities and through to our activities organised before, during and after our elections. We are determined therefore to remove the cloak and shrouds of secrecy that have characterized our operations and beam the torchlight on all our activities. As a first step, we intend to publish our audited reports going forward and inform the public about how much each election costs. By so doing, we have no doubt that will gain the confidence of the good people of this nation and be considered a credible and trusted partner in our democracy.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are fully mindful of the fact that the success of this Audit Committee does not rest on the members of the Committee alone. We are also guided by the fact that, the quality and independence of members is key to the success of this Committee. We therefore welcome the three (3) members from the Institute of Chartered Accountants and the Internal Audit Agency. On our part, we have carefully selected two (2) members of our Commission, Madam Rebecca Adjalo and Madam Adwoa Abrefa, both lawyers but with considerable experience in governance and financial matters, to represent the Commission on the Committee. I would like to add that both ladies are passionate to ensure transparency, accountability and prudence in the use of our finances. As a Commission, we are determined to work with you to ensure that this Committee functions effectively and efficiently. We are keen to witness the institutionalization of systems, policies and processes that will safeguard the taxpayers' money.

As the head of the institution, I am aware of my duties and responsibilities. God being my helper, I will undertake my role with diligence and precision. I resolve to implement the recommendations from various reports including the Internal Audit report, Parliament's decisions from the Auditor General's Reports, the Auditor General's Management Letter, among others. I will also ensure that I prepare in a timely manner, annual statements showing the status of implementation of the recommendations outlined in the above-mentioned reports. Together, we can and we will build a credible system that we can all be proud of.

Before I take my seat, let me end by emphasizing the following:

- Never again should the Electoral Commission of Ghana be engulfed in issues relating to the misapplication of funds.
- Never again should the Electoral Commission operate without systems and policies to guide our financial operations.
- Never again should there be an abuse and misapplication of the taxpayers' funds.
- Never again should the Commission flout procurement rules to the detriment of the public purse.

As a new Commission, we leave the past behind and move forward into a new era of transparency and light guided by truth, and the principles of accountability, integrity, fairness and transparency as enshrined in our motto.

This is a new era and a new dawn for the Electoral Commission of Ghana. I therefore charge the bells of accountability, transparency, integrity and fairness to ring throughout the Commission and Ghana.

May God bless the Electoral Commission of Ghana and bless our homeland Ghana and make us great and strong.

Thank you.