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>>> Menas Ghana Politics & Security

1.0. Executive Summary

- > Speaking at the *National Democratic Congress' (NDC)* National Delegates' Congress in Tamale, President **John Evans Atta Mills** said that the party would win the 2012 election by a landslide.
- > Asunafo North Constituency's Propaganda Secretary **Prince Diawuo** called on delegates attending the congress to reject contestants aligned with former president **Jerry John Rawlings**.
- > On the eve of the congress, Rawlings called on the delegates to elect people of proven integrity who have paid their dues to the party.
- > The *Convention People's Party's (CPP)* 2008 Presidential Candidate Dr **Paa Kwesi Nduom** has warned Mills to assert himself as President or risk becoming just a figurehead.
- > According to a group of *NDC* insiders, Mills told Rawlings that around 90 per cent of information given to him by his close confidants turned out to be false.
- > The opposition *New Patriotic Party's (NPP)* parliamentary leader **Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu** has described the first 12 months of the *NDC* administration as a "*total failure*".
- > The Ministry of Finance has launched the *Ghana Revenue Authority* to oversee the integration the *Internal Revenue Service (IRS)*, the *Value Added Tax Service (VAT)* and the *Customs, Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS)*
- > Governor of the *Bank of Ghana (BoG)*, **Kwesi Amissah-Arthur** has promised businesses that the bank will focus on reducing interest rates in response to inflationary trends.
- > Technical installations have begun at the *Jubilee* fields in the *West Cape Three Points (WCTP)* block, paving the way for the commercial production of oil and gas by the last quarter of 2010.

- > The *Progressive Nationalist Forum (PNF)* has petitioned the *Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ)* to investigate former Minister of Youth and Sports **Alhaji Mohammed Muntaka Mubarak**.
- > The *NPP's* former Minister of Information and National Orientation **Stephen Asamoah Boateng** has been caught with one of the missing *Ghana@50* vehicles.
- > *modernghana.com* writes that the *NDC Youth with Conviction of Principle (YWCP)* has described elections for its National Youth Organiser as '*undemocratic, cosmetic, and a sham*'.
- > The German Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development has committed €130 million (GH¢265.1 million) between 2009-11 as part of its financial and technical co-operation with Ghana.
- > Nigerian Foreign Minister **Chief Ojo Madueke** called on his Ghanaian counterpart **Alhaji Mohammed Mumuni** to promote bilateral co-operation, especially in the area of trade.
- > The British High Commission has warned visa applicants against submitting forged and fictitious documents, saying that offenders risk being prosecuted.

2.0. Key News Items

2.1. Government, Politics & Elections

- > Closing the *NDC's 8th National Delegates' Congress* in Tamale, President Mills stated emphatically that the *NDC* would win the 2012 election by a landslide. "*The campaign for 2012 Elections has just begun, and we will win*", he said at the end of the three-day meeting. "*If our detractors are disappointed, we owe them no apology because God is on our side. He listened to us and gave us more than we asked from Him*". His comments were met by thunderous applause in the packed-to-capacity Tamale WAEC Hall.
- > The 15-17th January *Congress* was on the theme of '*Overcoming the challenges of building a better Ghana*'. It was seen as crucial to forging party unity towards the achievement of probity, accountability and transparency.

- > Delegates also voted for new Executive Officers to lead the party in the coming months. The new Executive is a mixture of both old and new faces, with the incumbent Party Chairman and General Secretary Dr **Kwabena Adjei** and **Johnson Asiedu Nketia** respectively, retaining their positions.
- > Six new Vice Chairpersons were appointed:
 - former *First Lady* **Nana Konadu Agyeman-Rawlings**
 - former Communications Minister Dr **Ekwow Spio-Garbrah**
 - Former General Secretary **Alhaji Huudu Yahaya**
 - Director of the National Disaster Management Organisation **Kofi Portuphy**
 - former Minister of Science and Environment **Alhaji Said Sinare**
 - former Greater Accra Regional Chairman **Danny Annan**.
- > The position of National Treasurer went to **Kamel Noshie**, National Propaganda Secretary went to **Richard Quarshiga**, while the new *National Executive Committee (NEC)* members are: **Abu Lamin Sadat**; **Victoria Kuma**; **John Owusu Agyemang**; **Dr E.K. Hayford**; and **Richard Lantey Lawson**. **Yaw Gyan** and **Betty Agbornobor** were elected unopposed for the positions of National Organiser and Deputy National Organiser respectively.
- > On 14th January, Asunafo North Constituency Propaganda Secretary Prince Diawuo called on delegates attending the congress to reject contestants perceived to be aligned with Jerry John Rawlings and his wife.
- > He is quoted in the pro-*NDC Enquirer* newspaper as saying; *"Those vying for various positions with links with the former first couple should not be voted for at all because they have something up their sleeves. Rawlings has had his term as president and we all supported him and it is the time of Professor Mills and we must all support him for the NDC to succeed"*. Diawuo said that the *NDC* was now in a position where it would be wrong for anybody to impose his or her ideas on the President.
- > Diawuo said that the *NDC's* quest to retain power in 2012 depended on how party members carried themselves at the Congress. *"My point is very simple; we must have people who will serve the interest of the NDC and not certain individuals. It should never be about trying to please the former president but rather it should be pleasing the NDC as a party,"* he said.

- > The *Enquirer* article shows the depth of resentment against Rawlings and his wife. Until recently, open criticism of Rawlings by *NDC* members was extremely rare.
- > On the eve of the congress, Rawlings had called on the party's delegates to elect people of proven integrity who have paid their dues in the party. *"Let us not be intimidated by people who seek office because they have direct links to so-called powerful people in government or the party. This process is about the strength and structures of the party,"* he said in a pre-conference message.
- > He went on to say: *"If the Executive is not in touch with the party beyond the manifesto then the Executive jeopardises the future stability of the party, which in turn may not be able to put future Executives in government positions. The party gave birth to government and not vice-versa ... Our choices this weekend will determine which direction we want the NDC to go - into success or into a collapse. Let your conscience speak"*.
- > Rawlings noted that constituency and regional elections held across the country ahead of the *NDC* had all been witness to bribery. He said those distributing the monies were either members of government or government-sponsored candidates who had chosen to buy the delegates instead of winning them over with their campaigns. *"This is alien to the party"*, he said. *"We are undermining the very weapon that gave us victory - integrity."*
- > **Ben Ephson**, pollster and editor of the *Daily Dispatch*, is flagging up the secrecy which he claims is surrounding the process to amend sections of the *NDC's* constitution. The party has already made public a number of proposed amendments to its constitution, including the expansion of the *Electoral College*, and a change in the name of the position of Propaganda Secretary. There are also plans to tighten qualification criteria to make long service a pre-requisite for people aspiring to contest Executive positions.
- > In an interview on 13th January, Ephson said, however, that there had been no general debate about these amendments and that the process of changing the party constitution lacked transparency.
- > On 14th January, the *CPP's* 2008 presidential candidate Dr Paa Kwesi Nduom advised Mills to assert himself as president or risk becoming a leader in name only. *"President Mills must make it publicly clear by his deeds not words that he is in charge:"*

knows what he is doing and continues to have confidence in his people and the way forward, otherwise he may suffer an administrative coup', he said. Even though he conceded that the President was in charge, he questioned who was actually calling the shots at the Presidency.

- > According to a group of *NDC* insiders, Mills told Rawlings that about 90 per cent of information given to him by his close confidantes at *Osu Castle* turned out to be incorrect. Rawlings reportedly revealed this in a closed-door meeting with Volta Regional party executives at the home of the Regional Minister in Ho. According to him, Mills made his comments four weeks earlier when the two met at the *Castle* to discuss the party and his style of leadership.
- > According to a source who attended the Ho meeting, Rawlings said that when he asked Mills what he intended to do about the '*pack of liars*' surrounding him, he said he would fire 60 per cent of them soon, although he did not reveal when he would do so. Rawlings noted that among all the tales told about him, nothing seemed to provoke the President except negative comments made about his wife **Naadu**. Rawlings allegedly then advised the meeting to test Mills' endurance whenever they had the chance by saying something against his wife. This, he believed, would provoke the President into action.
- > Also at the Ho meeting, Rawlings revealed that when the *NDC* came into power he suggested that General **Arnold Quainoo**, currently a member of the *Council of State*, be made the Defence Minister, but Captain **Kojo Tsikata** advised against his choice. He wondered how, with his 11 years' experience as a military ruler, his advice on security issues could be thrown out in favour of those of Captain Tsikata - Rawlings' former security advisor.
- > There are wide-spread rumours that much of the in-fighting within the *NDC* is because Rawlings sees Tsikata as running the show.
- > The *NPP* has described the first 12 months of the *NDC* administration as a total failure. At a 14th January press conference, its parliamentary leader, Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu told the media that the government has failed to live up to its promise to create a congenial atmosphere for businesses, especially Ghanaian businesses. "*No one could be in doubt that the performance of the Professor Mills-led NDC has been most abysmal. The administration is nothing but a tale of failed promises,*" he said.

- > In his interview with *Joy FM*, he went on to query the quality of Mills' appointees, saying that they were not proficient in English. Speaking in an interview with *Sky FM*, **Jake Obetsebi-Lamphey**, a candidate for the position of *NPP* National Chairman, said Mills' style of governance is '*tragic*'.

3.0. Economic Development and Policy

- > On 15th January, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning launched the *Ghana Revenue Authority*. It is to oversee the integration of three revenue agencies: the *Internal Revenue Service (IRS)*, *Value Added Tax Service (VAT)* and the *Customs Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS)* under one umbrella, under the direction of a Commissioner General. Deputy Finance Minister **Seth Tekper** said the programme would "*transform manual systems into electronic platforms*."
- > Although the authority was formally introduced on 15th January, a number of reforms will have to take place within the next 24 months before a fully integrated authority materialises. Meanwhile, the *IRS* is promising to step up revenue from rent income taxes this year. The tax (eight per cent of rent income earned by landlords) doubled after it was re-launched in the latter part of last year. *IRS* Commissioner Major **Dan Ablorh Quarcoo** said the service is hoping to raise more revenue for the state as it plans to extend the tax to other areas.
- > Governor of the *Bank of Ghana (BoG)* Kwesi Amissah-Arthur has promised businesses that the bank will focus on reducing interest rates in response to inflationary trends this year. Speaking at the *Association of Ghana Industries (AGI)*'s induction ceremony in Accra, he said, "*Our objective for the coming year is to foster the growth of the national economy by encouraging further decline in interest rates as inflation declines and inflation expectations decline*." This would, according to him, "*Set the stage for the private sector to access credit at relatively cheaper costs to pursue productive ventures while the Central Bank works to preserve the microeconomic and financial stability*."
- > Inflation fell again in December to 15.97 per cent, its lowest level for the whole of 2009. This means that even though the price of goods and services generally went up in December, the rate of increase was less than that of November when it stood at 16.92 per cent. Government Statistician Dr **Grace Bediako**

said that recreation and culture was one inflation component that had registered a high rate of increase. The average inflation rate for the whole year was, however, 19.29 per cent, the highest since 2004.

- > On 12th January, Deputy Minister of Energy **Emmanuel Armah-Kofi Buah** announced that technical installations had begun on the *Jubilee* fields in the *West Cape Three Points (WCTP)* block to pave the way for the commercial production of oil and gas by the last quarter of 2010. The **Happy River** heavy lift vessel arrived in the country on 6th January and is expected to build subsea structures for the installation of a US\$1 billion (GH¢1.41 billion) FPSO vessel. The latter is nearing completion in Singapore and it is expected to sail to Ghana in March. A further nine vessels are expected to arrive in the country before and during the installation of the FPSO.
- > On 14th January, editor-in-chief of the *New Crusading Guide* **Abdul Malik Kweku Baako** said that there is no illegality in the way the **Kosmos Energy** and **EO Group** acquired its stake in the *Jubilee* fields. Baako said that according to his investigations, the companies had adhered to all substantive laws of the country. He noted that the government's investigations did not produce any evidence to support its allegations of "*causing financial loss to the state and money laundering*".
- > He said that the drama had been orchestrated in order to reduce the value of the companies' stake, ultimately creating an environment that provides the opportunity for the government to acquire the stake for far less than the US\$4 billion (GH¢5.67 billion) it is worth.
- > On 15th January, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration organised a training session for Regional Immigration Commanders and Information Service Officers on the new biometric passports which are due to be launched on 3rd February.
- > Deputy Director of Passports at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs **Martin Quansah** said the training programme would also afford stakeholders an opportunity to be conversant with the importance of the adoption of biometric passports, their features, mode of acquisition and all other relevant information. Quansah said that the government's decision to adopt the system was in compliance with a directive from the **International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)** that all member countries should follow suit by 2015.

4.0. Domestic News

- > A pressure group calling itself the *Progressive Nationalist Forum (PNF)* has petitioned the *Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ)* to investigate former Minister of Youth and Sports and *NDCMP* for Asawase, *Alhaji Mohammed Muntaka Mubarak*.
- > In a petition dated 11th January, and signed by their spokesperson **Richard Kwesi Nyamah**, the *PNF* asks *CHRAJ* to investigate Mubarak for abuse of office, conflict of interest and fraud. They charge that he personally arranged for the accommodation of the *Black Stars* football team and officials in Navaisha, Kenya without the involvement of any other Ministry official; requested the refund of GH¢664.02 in respect of baby oil, baby food, mouthwash and other household items from the Ministry's cashier; and fraudulently acquired a German visa for his girlfriend **Edith Zinayela** under the pretext that she was an employee of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, when she was, in fact, an employee of Parliament.
- > On 14th January, the *NPP's* former Minister of Information and National Orientation Stephen Asamoah Boateng was caught with one of the missing *Ghana@50* vehicles. The Peugeot 607 was found by *National Security* operatives at the residence of a Lebanese woman, believed to be a friend of Boateng's, at Cantonments in Accra. Boateng told officials that he had paid for the car at the *BoG*, and had documents to support his claims but he was unable to produce them.
- > On 13th January, on *modernghana.com*, a group calling itself the *NDC Youth with Conviction of Principle (YWCP)* described elections for the party's National Youth Organiser at a Delegates' Congress in Sunyani on 9th January as '*undemocratic, cosmetic and a sham*' and accused the government of vote-buying and intimidation. The group insisted that newly-elected National Youth Organiser **Ludwig Hlordze** "*was chosen by the Castle and not the delegates*".
- > The group's spokesperson, **SaCut Amenga-Etego**, believed to be associated with former president Rawlings, said that the *Castle* sent a strong delegation to the Congress, including Deputy Minister of Environment, Science and Technology Dr **Omane Boamah**, Minister of Information **Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa** and Minister of Finance and Economic Planning **Fiifi Kwetey**, to make sure that delegates chose the '*Castle candidate*'.

- > *"We want to emphasise that the congress was cosmetic. The choices were determined at the 'Castle' and imposed. It was not a democratic congress. And to think that all this unacceptable effort put in by the presidency was to ensure that nobody associated with the party founder is elected youth leader, even if he is the right choice. This, to say the least, is very abhorrent," Amengo-Etego fumed.*
- > On 12th January, **Vitus Azeem**, the Executive Secretary of the ***Ghana Integrity Initiative***, asked President Mills to crack the whip on ministers and other public officials who have failed to declare their assets. Information he picked up in November 2009 indicated that only 37 out of 200 public officials have declared their assets. He said that this was a clear breach of the constitution, and advised Mills to publish the names of those who had not yet declared their assets, and impose sanctions upon them. Azeem insisted that by failing to ensure such declarations, the government was effectively dishonouring its campaign pledge to be transparent and accountable to the people.

5.0. Foreign and Regional News

- > The German Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development has committed €130 million (GH¢265.1 million) to Ghana's financial and technical co-operation between 2009 and 2011. This is a 60 per cent increase in assistance from the German government. An embassy statement on 13th January said that the new commitment increased the total German Development Co-operation support to Ghana since independence to more than €1.18 billion (GH¢2.40 billion). It said the release of the funds followed a December agreement signed in Bonn during an inter-governmental dialogue. The latter highlighted Ghana's strong commitment to achieving the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)** and promoting broad-based growth.
- > The statement said that the German delegation acknowledged the successes chalked up so far in poverty reduction, as well as Ghana's leading role in regional stability and democratisation. It said that during the dialogue both delegations stressed the importance of oil and gas for Ghana's sustainable growth and the consideration of international best practice.

- > On 11th January, Nigerian Foreign Affairs Minister *Chief*Ojo Madueke paid a courtesy call on his counterpart *Alhaji* Mohammed Mumuni, accompanied by an eight-member delegation, including the Nigerian High Commissioner to Ghana Senator **Musiliu Obanikoro**. The visit was intended to promote bilateral co-operation, most importantly in the area of trade. The private meeting discussed the *West Africa Gas Pipeline* project, the provision of oil to Ghana at a concessionary rate and the training of Ghanaian oil technicians.
- > *Chief*Madueke said that Ghana and Nigeria had to set the pace for Africa's integration agenda by promoting bilateral trade. This, however, needed to go beyond paper and must be translated into concrete actions. He said that issues affecting Ghana had equal repercussions in Nigeria; therefore, avenues should be created for citizens to do business with each other without any hindrance.
- > Mumuni stressed the need to deepen bilateral relations for the mutual benefit of the two countries. Both countries, he said, had played a major role in establishing the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**. Such a fruitful relationship, the Minister said, should be harnessed not only for the mutual benefit of the two countries but also for the sub-region at large.
- > On 13th January, Mills consoled the Togolese people and condemned "*the tragic and unwarranted attack on the national football team of Togo on Friday 8th January 2010 as it journeyed to Cabinda, Angola to participate in the CAN 2010 football tournament.*" According to a statement, Mills expressed the hope that those who committed "*the senseless attack that led to the loss of innocent lives and injuries to members of the Togolese team*" would be brought to book.
- > "*Football as a popular sport is one of the unifying forces of all peoples and thus it is unfortunate that the incident has impaired the joy and excitement with which the international community had anticipated the CAN 2010 competition,*" the President said. "*On this sad occasion, I wish to convey, on behalf of the government and people of Ghana and in my own name deepest condolences to the bereaved families and sympathies to the government and people of Togo*".

6.0. Comment & Analysis

- > The *NDC's 8th National Delegates' Congress* took place in Tamale on 15-17th January. It can be counted as a triumph for Mills, who successfully fought off attempts to weaken his own position within the party, as well as that of his supporters. After the elections, which saw most of the party's opposing factions represented at the highest level on the party executive – the delegates wound up proceedings peacefully, singing unity songs.
- > The *NDC's* most obvious division is between the supporters of Mills and those of Rawlings; yet there are also factions (mainly from the country's three Northern regions) supporting Vice President **John Mahama**; as well as a faction known as the *Fante Confederation* supporting the claims of **Kwesi Ahwoi** – a public supporter of Mills but one who has his own strong ambitions.
- > Most of these factions mobilise on the basis of personalities and their regional support: Mills enjoys strong support from the *Fante*-dominated Central Region and the Western region; Mahama is strong in the North; and Rawlings has a powerful following in the Volta Region and Accra, but remains popular across the country, despite his intemperate utterances.
- > At the Congress, around 2,000 delegates went to the polls to elect new National Executive Officers for the next four years. The delegates decided the fate of 65 candidates vying for 30 positions. The intense competition for the six Vice-Chairperson slots generated a great deal of media attention before the Congress.
- > Rawlings' wife, Nana Konadu Agyemang Rawlings, won the first Vice-Chairperson slot; with 1,433 out of some 1,900 votes. Mrs Rawlings still harbours hopes of getting the nomination as Mills's running mate, which would put her in contention for the Presidency if he should fall ill again. Mahama, harbouring deep animosity towards the Rawlings, strongly opposes such a move and has his own plans for the succession.
- > Three other so called Rawlings loyalists – Dr Ekwow Spio-Garbrah, *Alhaji* Hudu Yahaya, and *Alhaji* Saeed Sinare – also won Vice-Chairperson positions. Kofi Poturphy and Danny Annan won the remaining two slots.

- > Then pro-Mills Dr Kwabena Adjei and Johnson Asiedu Nketia retained their respective Chairman and General Secretary positions. The *NDC's* parliamentary leader **Alban Bagbin** had thrown his weight behind their re-election bids. He also affirmed his unflinching support for Nana Rawlings, and condemned allegations of vote buying within the *NDC*, calling on delegates to reject hopefuls who used money and gifts to influence the outcome of Saturday's polls.

7.0. Security Conditions

- > On 13th January, the British High Commission warned visa applicants against submitting forged and fictitious documents, saying that offenders risked prosecution. British High Commissioner **Nicholas Westcott** said, "*The penalties for giving false information or documents are increasingly severe, so don't do it*". Between October and December, the High Commission tracked 349 forged documents, and arrested 243 people for presenting them.
- > A hardened criminal, **Johnson Kombia** alias "**Boga**", who once broke out of jail in 2005 and is standing trial for robbery and attempted murder, has once again escaped from the Tamale Regional Prisons. Until his escape, which occurred on 15th January 2010, he was said to have been bound in chains on the leg in a separate cell under the guard of prison officers. He was alleged to have broken free by climbing a water tanker which enabled him to scale over the walls of the prison. Regional Commander for the Tamale Prisons, Deputy Director of Prisons (DDP) **Philip Laari** has held emergency meetings with staff on the matter.
- > On 13th January, Assistant Commissioner of Police in charge of International Police Organisation's Deportation and Extradition Unit (IDEU) **Alex Amponsah Asiamah** said that **Mathew Alex Osei**, a 33 year-old Ghanaian wanted in the US for various robbery offences, has been extradited there for trial. Osei, who was based in the US, was arrested in Accra last October when he went to the British High Commission for a visa.

8.0. Flashpoints to Monitor

- > Internal battles will continue within the ruling *NDC*, despite the relatively amicable national delegates conference in Tamale on 15 -17th January; supporters of Vice President John Mahama will

try to capitalise on the relative weakening of Jerry John Rawlings in the party.

- > Nigerian Foreign Minister Ojo Madueke's visit to Ghana last week was, in part, an attempt to assure the Ghanaian government that a constitutional crisis over President **Umaru Yar'Adua's** prolonged illness would be averted. Accra is worried by the prospect of further Nigerian migration to Ghana should the crisis worsen.
- > The launch of a consolidated *Ghana Revenue Authority* presages a much more aggressive approach to the collection of corporate and personal taxes.



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