Delegation from the Republic of Ghana
Position Paper for the General Assembly

The topics before the United Nations (UN) General Assembly (GA) are: The Role of Emerging Technologies in International Security and Disarmament, Improving Mechanisms for Accountability and Transparency within the UN System and Intensification of Efforts to Eliminate All Forms of Violence Against Women. The Republic of Ghana (Ghana) is deeply committed to the contributing to global security, ethical rules in related authorities of the UN System and stays for active moving forwards for gender equality and against all visible and invisible signs of violence against women.

I. The Role of Emerging Technologies in International Security and Disarmament

Many technological and scientific innovations have reached Ghana in the last decades. In a short time, these developments, which have become the forefront of the global security debate, have clearly influenced everyday life and scientific background also for Ghana. Our country, as an active supporter of digitized solutions, strives and assists technology as an element of sustainable growth, a factor for economic development and as a framework for security and disarmament for the future.

As a Member of the African Union and signatory of its Agenda 2063: “The Africa We Want” and also as a part of Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Ghana works on implementation and integration of emerging technologies for the Ghanaian national welfare. Due to the population growth and the high demand for increasing quantities of food, biotechnology is a key innovation of technological background in relation to food security and nutrition not only for our country but also for the whole African continent. Ghana focuses on becoming a self-sustaining food producer, reducing dependencies on other countries, especially regarding the effects of droughts caused by global climate change. Furthermore, Ghana, in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) plans to contribute to effective and environment-friendly usage of marine and deep water resources with help of biotechnological innovations. A next significant element of Ghana's national security plays cyber security. This year, as an effect of governmental cooperation and the need of national security, the National Cyber Security Center was founded. Its goals combine public and private sector activity, which is united to protect the cyber security sphere. The activities of the Center base i.a. on capacity and cooperation building, implementation of technical standards and measures against the threat of cyber crime, especially with the purpose to protect children from pornography. On this occasion, the Ghanaian government is a part of the African Union Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection and opens cooperation with supranational institutions and companies such as with the European Union (EU), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization (CTO), Google, Facebook and Microsoft. Also according to the proliferation of mass destruction weapons and Ghanaian National Implementation Plan for 2015-2020 for the Security Council resolution 1540 Ghana cooperates with several organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) and the United Nations Inter-Regional Crime and Justice Research Initiative. Moreover, first positive aspects about the usage of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) on Ghana’s territory for transportation of vaccinations and medicine to remote regions and helping smallholder farmers with yield estimation or farm mapping are visible.

The role of emerging technologies is still a challenge for Ghana. The technology structure, mainly by using of Artificial Intelligence (AI), needs to be supported and developed. It is also to remember, that such solutions can be used against civilian safety. With the help of UN these risks could be minimized. On its recommendation, an international panel of experts could be established with the aim of providing expertise on potential risks associated with the usage of the emerging technologies. Military innovations, such as UAVs, which are often used for negative purposes, should be checked, monitored and grounded by public authorized companies. In general, the situation calls for legislative regulation to ensure that such instruments are only used for humanitarian aid and civil protection.

II. Improving Mechanisms for Accountability and Transparency within the UN System

As a country with a democratic spirit and rule of law, Ghana attaches particular importance to transparency and accountability both within its own government and within the 24 UN-agencies currently operating in the country. The responsibility lies on both sides to provide full, efficient and effective cooperation with fair services and clear results at all institutional levels.

Through its programs, the UN supports responsible and transparent decision making processes at all levels within Ghana and thus among the UN organizations present in the country. Already in the UN country program NKONSONKONSON ("in unity lies strength"), which was based on the UNDAF Action Plan 2012-2016, the goals of transparency were mentioned. For Ghana, accountability and transparency are embodied by efficient cooperation between the government and UN organizations on the ground. The Action Plan for the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for this time period also focused on the implementation of greater transparency and accountability in UN program planning by analyzing key agency-specific actions to reach the UNDAF results. In addition to these intentions, there should be included a summary of the United Nations program budget, together with the description of needs and chances for joint mobilization of UN resources. Moreover, The United Nations Sustainable Development Partnerships (UNSDP) for 2018-2022 with Ghana, which is its current Action Plan of UN is also dedicated to the strengthening of efficient and effective clear UN-work in Ghana. In addition, the United Nations Development Plan (UNDP) uses the support of the external International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) to strengthen the purpose of improving the mechanisms of transparency of development cooperation in the country. Finally, in response to corruption and wrongdoings, Ghana passed Whistleblower Act in 2006 with the purpose of protecting them against retaliation. Ghana believes that national plans help to maintain the transparent vision of work with and within UN in Ghana.

To avoid misconduct in programs and to improve better standards of work ethics, future progress on transparency requires the introduction of innovative ideas and sharing of good practices such as United Nations Organizations on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) evaluations, but also forums for dialogue between government, parliament, and, above all, leadership dialogue for improvement and future plans on more needed accountability. In addition, it is highly recommended to introduce external and inter-agency working mechanisms on all levels for monitoring, communication or coordination with the purpose of improving and development the current transparency tools.

III. Intensification of Efforts to Eliminate All Forms of Violence Against Women

According to UN Women Global Database on Violence Against Women from 2016 every year above 20 % of all woman experience Lifetime Physical and/or Sexual Intimate Partner Violence. 21 % of young girls experience child marriage. The Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre (Gender Centre) in Accra reported 2017 about domestic violence acts against women on three out of ten women.

Ghana is fully committed in its efforts to the guarantee of best possible standards and continuous improvement of gender equality and the elimination of all forms and fields of violence against women. Above all, The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) has been ratified by Ghana in 1989 and incorporated into the law. Additional documents on anti-violence regulations include The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo-Protocol) with its 25 articles regarding women rights. Especially, the most frequent form of violence against women in Ghana – the domestic violence – is legally regulated and subject to punishment. The Domestic Violence Act from 2007 (DV Act) explains the rights of male and female persons, who experience this form of assault. In attendance with the Ghana Labour Act from 2003 female employees are protected in the workplace and enjoy rights i.a. on maternity leaves and limited work times in pregnancy. Additionally, the Ghanaian women are actively supported by governmental organizations such as the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MOGCSP) and Domestic Violence Victim Support Unit (DOVVISU) or several NGOs, which are involved in this matter and provide help in emergency situations. Moreover, these authorities can count on on-site support of UN Women and UN Gender Team (UNGT). Many problems in the country affect women, but these are under-represented in the legislature, which is crucial for the decision-making processes in Ghana. Even in the last year, the participation of women in parliament was about 10 %. Ghana sees an urgent need to change this situation in the near future.

The first and main objective of female support is the official promotion of their rights at the local, national and global level. Public campaigns, targeted workshops and training in schools for girls, boys and school staff can increase awareness and attention to existing inequalities. Ghana truly believes that also regional successful programs could be implemented globally in this way. Finally, an important tool for empowerment of women is their official representation in institutions and authorities and their voice in politics and governance.