

CRC PRESS RELEASE ON NATIONAL CONSTITUTION REVIEW CONFERENCE

From the 1st to the 5th of March 2011, the National Constitution Review Conference was held at the Accra International Conference Centre, under the theme “The Constitution; Our Identity”.

For the first time in the history of Ghana, 2996 Ghanaians met under one roof over the course of 5 days to deliberate on the strengths and weaknesses of the 1992 Constitution and how to strengthen its operation.

The Conference, served as a representative national platform where summaries of some 85,000 submissions were tabled for national debate. The Conference also brought together persons with expert and experiential knowledge on the various themes and issues arising from the submissions. The Commission was assisted by 98 facilitators and consultants, including 10 international consultants.

Twelve (12) thematic areas, 77 sub-themes and hundreds of issues were discussed. No area of Ghana’s 1992 Constitution was left untouched as representatives of the private sector; gender groups; children; persons with disability; youth groups; professional bodies and associations; government, ministries, departments and agencies; Metropolitan/Municipal/District Assemblies; civil society organizations; Parliament, the Council of State; the Judiciary and many others spent several days critically examining the operation of our Constitution. Many Ghanaians at home and abroad also participated actively in the Conference by watching it live on Ghana Television and on the internet and sending in their views by SMS messages to the short code 1992 or through the internet. The views recorded from the internet were from as far apart as the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Tunisia.

As with the Community, District, Regional and Special Consultations, the Commission recorded multi-sectoral support and vigorous participation at the Conference.

The Commission would like to thank all those who participated in the conference, especially the 2996 representatives who attended at their own cost.

The Commission is currently undertaking a detailed evaluation of the Conference with a view to addressing any shortcomings. The Commission wishes to assure all those who testified before it that apart from the synthesis contained in the matrices tabled at the Conference, their full testimony will be the subject of active consideration by the Commission.

After ascertaining the views of the people of Ghana on the operation of the 1992 Constitution and submitting them for national debate, the Commission now moves into the next phase of its mandate; articulating those views in the form of a final Report and a draft Bill for possible amendments to the 1992 Constitution. The Commission intends to continue working with a select group of experts who attended the Conference in the task ahead.

The Commission would like to remind Ghanaians that the closing date for the receipt of submissions was 31st December, 2010. The only submissions that the Commission will receive and process after that date are the following:

1. Submissions in Braille, because the Braille versions of the Commission’s material was not sent out early enough;

2. Submissions from Ghanaians abroad, to allow for receipt of submissions by post; and
3. Submissions made through the text-in campaign by sending a text from any network to the short code “1992”. The text-in submissions are automated and are very easily processed.

To conclude, the Commission would like to place on record its sincere gratitude to all Ghanaians, especially the facilitators, consultants and the Media, for their support and cooperation during the Conference.

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(Chairman, Constitution Review Commission)