

*Communiqué issued at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Conference of The National Council of Ghana Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in Prampram, Greater Accra, Ghana, from 30th July – 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2009.*



**"We the youth of the Young Men's Christian Association of Ghana (Ghana YMCA), meeting at Prampram from the 30th July to 2nd August 2009 in our Sixth Annual Youth Convention hereby re-state and re-affirm the mission of our noble organisation worldwide to seek and attain the total development of mankind in body, mind and spirit. Recognising the need to empower the youth in Ghana for the African Renaissance in partial fulfillment of our worldwide mission, we hereby issue this communiqué for the attention of government and all stakeholders."**

The Association is a not-for-profit community-based international organisation with the vision of developing and harnessing the potential of young people and transforming them into worthy, responsible and productive citizens of their community in particular and the country at large.

It has, since the formation of a Youth Council in 2004, devoted a good part of its 6-year Youth Conferences to deliberations on topics of vital importance and interest to the youth of our dear country. The last conference held in Kumasi, Ashanti Region, reflected on Global Warming, its devastating effects and how young people can contribute to its prevention.

This year, meeting in Prampram in the Dangme-West District of the Greater Accra Region, from 30th July to 2nd of August, the Association thought it wise and indeed necessary to examine the phenomenon of Youth Civic Competence in Ghana. We consider this particularly appropriate as the Africa Alliance of YMCAs is in the process of initiating a concept of Civic Competence dubbed "From Subject to Citizen", with the quest of carving a niche for the voice on youth civic related issues on the continent, embracing the entire region in which youth civic issues has become a major challenge.

With prayerful reliance on the Holy Spirit, we have carefully considered with the help of experts the facts concerning the situation and arrived at some conclusions, which we would like to share with the Government and its relevant institutions, Churches, other religious bodies and the people of Ghana. It is our hope that, together with all these stakeholders, we will be able to map out a course of action to address and hopefully mitigate the negative effects of the upsurge posed by youth civic challenges.

We know that problem faced by the youth today is a universal human phenomenon and we see that it requires dialogue and prayer to deal with it adequately. We the YMCA are aware that there are various types and causative factors, some of which are positive and can meaningfully contribute to development at various levels of human existence.

We note with appreciation the priority accorded to the youth at various sessions of UN initiatives and conferences, NGO workshops and meetings and Stakeholders Consultative meetings and the emphasis placed on meeting the special needs of the youth on the continent as contained in the UN Millennium Declaration.

We welcome the efforts of Ghanaian leaders to develop a Ghanaian-owned and Ghanaian-led framework of action towards the sustainable implementation of provisions of our National Development Agenda. In this context, we recall that, we will support government in consolidating its provision on Technical and Vocational Training Programmes.

We call on the government to improve the process of assessing and monitoring progress in the implementation of economic and political reforms in the past decades and note with appreciation the support of civil society for these efforts. However, in spite of these combined efforts, the country still faces multi-faceted sustainable development challenges.

We also recognise the need to promote the role of women in social and economic development, by ensuring their participation in the political and economic life of the country. We further recognise the need for an increased focus on the rights and well-being of children, in particular their health and education.

**Our prioritised recommendations:**

- That government should possibly look at a policy to integrate civic education in the curriculum of both first and second cycle institutions.
- That priority and appreciable consideration be given to government provision for Technical and Vocational Training Programmes in the youth policy.
- That the structures of the National Youth Council should be strengthened and adequately resourced to enable the Council to identify with its core functions.
- Since religion and spirituality have a strong link with morality and ethical behaviour of an individual, religious and moral education should not be diminished but rather given more space and attention in the school curriculum at the basic and secondary levels.
- Government should create an educational attachment scheme such that industry is somehow 'compelled' to take on students from both secondary and tertiary for vacation jobs in their respective study areas of pursuit.
- Fully recognise the important role that sports can play in helping to promote social development as well as addressing the exclusion of disadvantaged groups in society. In this context, government should provide sports infrastructure in the various communities to enhance accessibility to such needful facilities by the citizenry.

Endorsed by:

Reginald Ffoulkes Crabbe, *Regional Secretary*, Greater Accra YMCAs  
for: (Prosper Hoeyi, National General Secretary)