

NATIONAL LAND CONFERENCE 2022

ACCRA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE

06 – 09 2022

Communique

We, the participants of the National Land Conference, 2022 drawn from government, Parliamentary Select Committee on lands, land sector agencies, traditional authorities, Queen Mothers, civil society, farmers and fishermen’s organizations, professional associations, religious groups, private sector, academia, development partners and INGO’s, meeting at the Accra International Conference Centre (AICC) from 06 – 09 December 2022:

Show our appreciation to the President of the Republic of Ghana, H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo for opening the Conference and calling for comprehensive digitalization of the land administration system in Ghana and unflinching support of the Minister towards improvement of the land sector;

Fully aware of the challenges in both the state and customary land tenure systems of Ghana, particularly, indeterminate boundaries of customary and state land boundaries, metropolitan, municipal and district assembly boundaries, uncontrolled sprawl of human settlements encroaching on fertile agricultural lands, destruction of water bodies through illegal mining, under-resourced land sector agencies, limitations in coordinated land sector services, land data capture, management and related security challenges;

Laud the government for the efforts made so far to address some of the challenges of the land and other natural resources sectors including the restoration of lands degraded through illegal mining, the implementation of the land administration project Phases I and II and passing of the Land Use and Spatial Planning Act, 2016 (Act 925), the Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036), establishment of the enterprise land information system (ELIS) and digitalization of the operations of the Lands Commission;

Cognisant of the fact that the National Land Policy of Ghana launched in 1999 has been used for the reforms of the sector but the same has been overtaken by emerging challenges including climate change, women/youth access to land, the digitized nature of the world today, migration and specific requirements of large-scale land-based investments;

Note the absence of any convening platform for the key stakeholders of the land sector to periodically review, deliberate and propose solutions to improve the workings of the sector;

Further note the weak enforcement of laws on spatial planning and land development, land tenure and weak collaboration among government agencies leading to haphazard and uncoordinated spatial development, poor resourced public and customary land sector entities;

Further note that only one-third of the land-related SDGs are currently being monitored and for which data is being collected and measured and two-thirds of the land related SDGs for which no data is being collected;

Affirm our resolve to establish a multi-stakeholder platform involving all the key stakeholders of the land and other natural resources sectors to be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the recommendations of this Conference, the transformation agenda of the land sector, and provide support to the government in the efforts to implement the provisions in the Land Act and the Land Use and Spatial Planning Act to improve the functioning of the land sector;

Do make the following recommendations for the consideration of government

- Prioritize the systematic surveying and mapping of customary and state land boundaries and the boundaries of metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies to reduce the numerous land ownership disputes in the country; to set out comprehensive program for the registration of title in land as mandated by the 1992 constitution and the Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036)
- Call on the government to comprehensively map the country at large, medium and small scales to facilitate land use planning and spatial development for rapid economic development and provide resources for a holistic and participatory approach to land use planning;
- Support efforts of all key stakeholders to raise awareness of the citizenry on the Land Use and Spatial Planning Act, 2016 (Act 925) and the Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036);
- Create seamless collaboration between landowners and Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies who should commit more funds from their internally generated funds to spatial planning and development;
- Facilitate prompt action towards the development of regulations of the Land Act and a Land Act implementation strategy
- Provide adequate resources for the implementation/ enforcement of the land laws, land use planning laws and spatial development laws
- Complete the digitalization of the land administration system over a three year period.
- Provided resources for the establishment and strengthening of customary land secretariats to effectively support customary land administration.

We further call on government to:

- Review the formula for disbursing customary land revenue to provide more resources to customary land owners for sustaining CLSs for customary land administration
- Provide needed support to stakeholders in the land sector (both public, customary, private academia, NGOs) to actively educate the citizenry on land related issues
- Urge MMDAs to recognize the existence and operations of CLS as an extension of the land administration infrastructure and work with them to improve land administration in their metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies
- Convene a national land conference every two years to enable effective assessment of the work done by the multi-stakeholder platform and to provide opportunity for national level dialogue to further improve the functioning of the land and other natural resources sectors.
- Promote an enabling environment for the private sector to play its role in housing delivery to persons of all income categories with relative ease;
- Improve the quality of housing for the poor.
- Provide opportunities for the 'unemployed graduates of the built environment' to improve the capacity for land service delivery;
- Institute an immediate comprehensive assessment of the local environmental impact of activities of small scale mining which detrimental to water bodies, sustainable livelihoods and rural development with a view to imposing a moratorium on small scale mining noting that 'water cannot accommodate mining'.
- Develop land specific ADR mechanisms to facilitate dispute resolution in the land sector.
- Call on both the public and customary land sectors to take further steps to promote good land governance and ensure greater transparency and accountability in their dealings in land;
- Call on land sector professionals and other stakeholders to establish more CSOs with clear focus on land and KPI that will help achieve desired results in the sector;

- Call on the professional associations in the land sector and the land sector agencies to partner with the NDPC to capture data needed for the remaining two-thirds of the land related SDGs
- Call for change of mindset for the Ghanaian, whether in leadership position or not, as a fundamental shift in the approach to land governance in accordance with the land laws of the country and international instruments.
- Target engagement of the chieftaincy institution in all matters related to land administration reforms in the country.
- Provide resources to review the 1999 National Land Policy and formulate a new one that takes on board the new challenges and emerging issues of the sector.

Dated this 9th Day of December 2022. Accra International Conference Centre, Accra.