



Your Reference.....

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Our Reference **RECPAG/DOC/ICCO2**

MR. PRESIDENT, YOUR AGENDA 111 IS OVER-AMBITIOUS AND NOT FEASIBLE; GHANAIS DEMAND MORE ACTION AND LESS TALK IN YOUR SECOND TERM.

The Research Center for Policy Advocacy and Governance has taken notice of the “Agenda 111 Health infrastructure” initiative announced by H.E President Akufo-Addo in his State of the Nation Address on Tuesday, March 9, 2021 delivered in Parliament in accordance with article 67 of the 1992 constitution, to ensure access to healthcare and improve wellbeing

Giving additional details in the recent SONA, the President indicated that the Agenda 111, will see to the construction of 100-bed District Hospitals in One-Hundred and One (101) Districts with no hospitals, seven (7) Regional Hospitals for the new Regions, including one for the Western Region, the construction of two (2) new psychiatric hospitals for the Middle Belt and Northern Belt, respectively, and the rehabilitation of the Effia-Nkwanta Hospital in the Western Region.

In as much as we commend the President for such intent, we wish to state unequivocally that the President’s pledge is over-ambitious, unrealistic rehash of unfulfilled promises and mere sloganeering, taking into account the President’s inability to construct a single District hospital in four years and undesirable track-record in health infrastructure financing. .

It therefore begs the question as to where government is getting the money to implement these lofty promises granted that on the face of it, it would cost on the average US\$5million to US\$7million to put up a District hospital. The failure and inability of the Akufo-Addo government to commit at least 15% of the annual budget to health infrastructure in his first term, as required by the Abuja Declaration, would reduce the President’s declaration to a mirage rather than an achievable vision.

We reckon that it is the minimum expectation of the Ghanaian people, that President Akufo-Addo will provide additional details on the number of hospitals he intends to construct in the year 2021, his first year of his second term, as part of his “Agenda 111”. The President must further detail the source of funding in the yet to be read budget. It is only by so doing that we the citizens can measure government’s deliverables against its promises vis-à-vis public expectations in the health sector.

Another point worth noting is the matter of health hazards already created by medical waste following the inoculation of over two hundred and sixty-two thousand, three hundred and thirty-five (262,335) Ghanaians who have been vaccinated as of 9th March, 2021. The potential of poor handling and disposal of medical waste, and the target of dispensing

seventeen million, six hundred thousand (17,600,000) vaccine doses by June 2021, makes it highly improbable to construct the 14 medical waste treatment facilities that have been promised by the President. Being cognizant of the processes involved in public finance and procurement processes, it is incumbent on government to expedite action in this regard.

Furthermore, the failure of the President to update us on the “No Bed Syndrome” in our health facilities which has left patients to be receiving treatment such as infusion and transfusion of blood in plastic chairs proves that his address didn’t reflect the true state of the Nation. This bizarre situation further accentuates the failure in constructing health facilities to curb this menace.

However, our painstaking investigations have revealed that the percent (50%) basic salary allowance which was extended for three more months(July, August and September) on the 28th June 2020 as an incentive package to health workers particularly, the front liners have not being paid. This has led to health Workers in Tamale Teaching Hospital, to withdrawal their services and embarks on industrial action starting today, 12th March, 2021.

In conclusion, we encourage the President rise to the challenge of finding holistic and robust public health solutions and truly prioritize investing in health infrastructure, beyond the mere rhetoric and platitude they have championed in the last four years.

Signed:
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