



ONEGHANA MOVEMENT REJECTS THE NATIONAL SECURITY STATEMENT AND DEMANDS THE VIDEO FOOTAGE AND COMMENCEMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION.

The OneGhana Movement refers to our earlier demand, and calls for swift action by way of an independent investigation into the serious claims of torture, breach of human rights and due process in the arrest and handling of Mr. Ajarfor. It is disheartening that the Minister has still not commenced any steps to investigate the matter.

The deafening silence of the Minister is a breach of trust and the duty of care he owes the citizenry over issues of such magnitude as an allegation of torture and abuse of human rights. This silence and inertia to act for the citizenry leaves many in a state of mistrust and disappointment in his person and the National Security.

Abuse of Human Rights

The reports that the National Security Operatives:

- a. Raided the ModernGhana offices and seized laptops and phones without a warrant.
- b. Failed to read Mr. Ajarfor his Miranda rights during the arrest
- c. Covered his head with a polythene bag during the arrest
- d. Unlawfully detained Mr. Ajarfor for 2 days
- e. Deprived Mr. Ajarfor access to legal counsel throughout the interrogation
- f. Unlawfully acquired passwords to phones and access to his laptop and tablet...

...constitute a clear breach of fundamental human rights and must be condemned and investigated thoroughly. The cumulative reports above are in itself a shameful act of psychological torture.

The National Security Council Secretariat in their statement, only sought to deny the claim of torture. This strongly implies that the Minister who heads the National Security has incontrovertible evidence that there was no torture.

We therefore request the urgent release of the unedited video of Emmanuel Ajarfor's interrogation as we are reliably informed by past and present operatives of the National Security that the facility has covert and overt cameras, in tandem with international practices.

We are very concerned about the injustice being meted out to Mr. Emmanuel Ajarfor. His laptop (not passworded) and phones remain seized 9-days after confiscation, and we are concerned that the police or the National Security may plant fake evidence against the marginalized journalist. It is no surprise that after 7 days, police were now fishing for a complainant and charges only to have same struck and the accused

discharged on the afternoon of Friday the 5th of July 2019. The prosecutors argued that they were dropping charges under the pretext of “New Developments”.

We pray that operatives of the State shall not be overwhelmed by evil to manufacture their own “**new developments**” onto the gadgets of Mr. Ajarfor which they have confiscated illegally for 9 days, in the case of the laptop and tablet and 5 days in the case of the phones.

Abuse of Function

The OneGhana Movement wishes to strongly draw attention to an erroneous practice in which allied institutions assume the role of the police in Ghana. In this regard, the fact that the National Security Council assumed the role of the police in interrogating and purportedly investigating the allegation of theft against Mr. Ajarfor, is not only a worrisome practice, but grossly undermining the role of the police in criminal justice administration and the rule of law in general in Ghana. Respectfully, of what national security threat is the supposed access to a Peace FM computer or server?

Medical Report and Related Issues

Mr. Ajarfor was first examined 2 days after the incident and reviewed more thoroughly 6 days after. His first visit which was on the day of his release, was a voluntary visit seeking to treat his immense pain. The second visit was in fulfillment of the need to procure the Police medical report and attention for his increasing pain. The medical examination of Mr. Ajarfor after a review on the 3rd of July 2019 by doctors at the Police Hospital concluded with diagnosis of

1. Musculoskeletal pain secondary to trauma

The attending doctors indicated and same confirmed by our team of local and international doctors that the first diagnosis indicates the possibility of battery. This therefore does not rule out the possibility of torture as being propagated by some media reports. They however note that this is suggestive but not unequivocally diagnostic of the reported torture.

The doctors also observed **small lesions on both arms which looked like insect bite marks**.

The observation of small lesions, per our team of doctors suggests that Mr. Ajarfor may have been confined in a poor and inhumane environment. The use of stun guns (sometimes called tasers) to transmit intermittent electric shocks may leave small skin signs similar to insect bite marks.

The doctors also suggested that the lapse of time between the reported torture and presentation for a thorough examination as well as he being on non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (prescribed by the attending doctors), may have masked any additional overt signs of the reported battery.

It is instructive to note that Mr. Ajarfor was interrogated on Thursday the 27th of June 2019 and was not interrogated any further but kept all through to Saturday 29th of June 2019. He reports that the National Security operatives checked on his health from time to time, guided him through some exercise when he complained of back pains and fed him well on the Friday of his detention. Could this have possibly been to allow for swellings and signs of torture to recede or resolve?

The doctor who examined Mr. Ajarfor first prescribed diclofenac injection and subsequently doreta tablets which is a mixture of tramadol and paracetamol, to help him manage his immense pain (These are very strong pain killers).

In conclusion the medical report suggests signs of a possible traumatized event and physical torture but does not provide conclusive evidence.

Our Demands:

- We demand the immediate release of the unedited video footage of the interrogation of Mr. Ajarfor at the National Security if indeed there was no torture. This we believe, will enable us **“The People”** to make our own judgment and reaffirm our confidence in the National Security and its ethics. The failure to do so will affirm the allegations and explain the reasons for their failure to allow Mr. Ajarfor to have access to counsel or even make a phone call for family to be present.
- We demand that the President initiates radical reforms in the protocols and terms of engagement in all security services to respect and uphold the human rights of all citizens. Ensuring their right to counsel in every interrogation, and ensuring absolute audio-visual coverage of interrogations.
- We demand the immediate and unconditional release of Mr. Ajarfor’s electronic gadgets.
- We re-emphasize the demand for an Independent investigation into the allegations of torture and urge the Ghana Journalists Association and its members not to relent until justice is served.

Our Actions and Next steps

1. We are commissioning a clinical psychologist to attend to Mr. Ajarfor’s psychological torture.
2. We have commissioned lawyers to commence civil proceedings against operatives of the National Security and the State for the breaches of his human rights and the suffering of psychological and physical torture.
3. We have also commissioned lawyers to provide representation and defense against any fresh charges that may be proffered by the State against Mr. Ajarfor. To this extent, we wish to express our gratitude to Samson Lardy Anyenini, Nii Kpakpo Samoa Addo and Justice Srem-Sai for offering their legal services, pro bono.
4. We will continue to provide social and economic support to Mr. Ajarfor as he negotiates this phase of his life.

Conclusion

Our object as OneGhana in this matter, is to ride on the back of this case, to trigger needed institutional reforms in the conduct of our security institutions, enforce the principles of public policy accountability, promote citizen responsibility and educate citizens of their rights. We aim to drive a change in the general government modus operandi for the purposes of upholding and defending the good name of Ghana not just in speak, but in deed.

Letting the abuse of Mr. Ajarfor stand is the normalization of oppression which our National anthem charges us to resist. As it is said by Edmund Burke, “the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing”.

OneGhana, Honour the Pledge!

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