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The 2008 Budget Statement and Economic Policies of the Government is based on the latest information available as at the end of September 2007 and projections up to the end of December 2007. The information is based on inputs from all MDAs, General Public and other sources.

For Copies of the statement, please contact the Public Relations Office of the Ministry:

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Economic Planning***
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P.O. Box MB 40,
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The 2008 Budget Statement and Economic Policies of the Government is also available on the internet at: www.mofep.gov.gh

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AADC	Ashaiman Aquaculture Demonstration Centre
ACL	Audit Command Language
ACP	Automated Cheque Processing System
ACPEU	African Caribbean and Pacific and European Union
ADB	Agricultural Development Bank
AEAs	Agricultural Extension Agents
AfDB	African Development Bank
AfDF	African Development Fund
AFROSAI	African Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions
AGI	Association of Ghana Industries
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunities Act
AICC	Accra International Conference Centre
APC	African Population Commission
APD	Accra Plains Depot
APR	Annual Progress Report
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
ARICs	Audit Report Implementation Committees
ARLAC	African Regional Labour Administration Centre
ATMs	Automatic Teller Machines
AU	African Union
BACs	Business Advisory Centres
BECAS	Basic Education Comprehensive Assessment System
BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination
BIP	Business Improvement Programmes
BoG	Bank of Ghana
BOP	Balance of Payments
BOST	Bulk Oil Storage and Transportation
BOT	Build, Operate and Transfer
BPMS	Budget and Public Expenditure Management System
BPO	Business Process Outsourcing

BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
CAATS	Computer Assisted Auditing Techniques
CAF	Confederation of African Football
CAHWs	Community Animal Health Workers
CAN	African Cup of Nations
CB&DP	Community Business and Development Plans
CBD	Central Business District
CBFMC	Community Based Fisheries Management Committees
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CBPP	Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia
CCCs	Community Coordinating Committees
CDD	Centre for Democratic Development
CDP	Cashew Development Project
CDV	Coalition on Domestic Violence
CET	Common External Tariff
CFLs	Compact Fluorescent Lamps
CHPS	Community-based Health and Planning Services
CICs	Community Information Centres
CLS	Customary Land Secretariat
CMMCs	Community Maintenance Management Committees
COCOBOD	Ghana Cocoa Board
COPAL	Cocoa Producers' Alliance
COTVET	Council for Technical, Vocational Education and Training
CPA Africa	Commonwealth Parliamentarians Association Africa
CPA Inter	Commonwealth Parliamentarians Association International
CPC	Cleaner Production Centre
CPP	Cleaner Production Programme
CREMA	Community Resource Management Areas
CRIG	Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana
CSD	Central Securities Depository
CWSA	Community Water and Sanitation Agency
DACF	District Assemblies' Common Fund

DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DCEs	Districts Chief Executives
DDF	District Development Fund
DDS	District Database System
DFID	Department of Foreign and International Development
DFR	Department of Feeder Roads
DIC	Divestiture Implementation Committee
DIP	District Industrialization Programme
DISCAP	District Capacity Development Project
DMBs	Deposit Money Banks
DPCUs	District Planning Coordinating Units
DPs	Development Partners
DRH	Department of Rural Housing
DSA	Debt Sustainability Analysis
DSIP	Distribution System Improvement Project
DUR	Department of Urban Roads
DVA	Domestic Violence Act
DWAP	District Wide Assistance Project
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECG	Electricity Company of Ghana
ECOSAP	ECOWAS Small Arms Control Programme
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDIF	Export Development and Investment Fund
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EPCC	Economic Policy Coordinating Committee
EPI	Expanded Program on Immunization
EPP	Emergency Power Programme
ERPFM	External Review of Public Financial Management
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States

ETLS	ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme
ETU	Electricity Transmission Utility
EU	European Union
FAR	Financial Administration Regulation
FASDEP	Food and Agriculture Sector Development Programme
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FFF	Farmer Field Flora
FINSAP	Financial Sector Adjustment Program
FINSSP II	Financial Sector Strategic Plan II
FMIS	Forestry Management Information System
FOAT	Functional and Organizational Assessment Tool
FRIP	Feeder Roads Improvement Project
FWSC	Fair Wages and Salaries Commission
GAC	Ghana Aids Commission
GAEC	Ghana Atomic Energy Commission
GAF	Ghana Armed Forces
GAPP	Government Assisted PC Programme
GAS	Ghana Audit Service
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GCAA	Ghana Civil Aviation Authority
GCDL	Ghana Consolidated Diamonds Limited
GCMS	Ghana Customs Management System
GCNet	Ghana Community Network
GCPS	Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons
GDOs	Gender Desk Officers
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEDA	Ga East District Assembly
GEDAP	Ghana Energy Development and Access Project
GEPC	Ghana Export Promotion Council
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratios
GETFund	Ghana Education Trust Fund
GFZB	Ghana Free Zones Board

GHA	Ghana Highway Authority
GIAL	Ghana International Airlines Ltd
GIC	Ghana Investment Corporation
GICTeD	Ghana ICT Directorate
GIDA	Ghana Irrigation Development Authority
GIFTEL	Ghana Investment Fund for Telecommunications
GIHOC	Ghana Industrial Holding Company
GIPC	Ghana Investment Promotion Centre
GIS	Ghana Immigration Service
GLDB	Grains and Legumes Development Board
GLSS	Ghana Living Standards Survey
GMAC	Ghana Mortgage Assurance Company
GNACSA	Ghana National Commission on Small Arms
GNAT	Ghana National Association of Teachers
GNPC	Ghana National Petroleum Corporation
GNTC	Ghana National Trading Corporation
GOIL	Ghana Oil Company
GovNet	Government Network
GPHA	Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority
GPI	Gender Parity Index
GPRS II	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy II
GRIDCO	Ghana Grid Company
GRN	Geodetic Reference Network
GSB	Ghana Standards Board
GSC	Ghana Shippers' Council
GSE	Ghana Stock Exchange
GSFP	Ghana School Feeding Programme
GSPC	Global Strategy for Plant Conservation
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
GT	Ghana Telecom
GTTC	Government Technical Training Centre
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation

GWCL	Ghana Water Company Limited
GWDA	Ga West District Assembly
HATS	Health Assistant Training Schools
HIPC	Highly Indebted and Poor Countries
HIRD	High Impact Rapid Delivery
HMIS	Health Management Information System
IAUs	Internal Audit Units
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICB	International Competitive Bidding
ICCPR	International Convention on Civil and Political Rights
ICPD-PoA	International Conference on Population and Development- Programme of Action
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDEA	Interactive Data Extraction and Analysis
IDI	International Development Initiative
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IEA	Implementing Entity Agreements
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IFC	International Finance Cooperation
IFLs	Incandescent Filament Lamps
IGF	Internally Generated Funds
IIR	Institute of Industrial Research
ILGS	Institute of Local Government Studies
IMCI	Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INTOSAI	International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions
IOM	International Organization on Migration
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
IPPD	Integrated Personnel Payroll Database
IPU	International Parliamentary Union
IRS	Internal Revenue service

ISPM	International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures
ISSER	Institute for Social, Statistical and Economic Research
ISTA	International Seed Testing Association
ITES	Information Technology Enabled Services
JISM	Joint Irrigation System Management
JS	Judicial Service
KIA	Kotoka International Airport
KLERP	Korle Lagoon Ecological Restoration Project
KPCS	Kimberley Process Certification Scheme
KTC	Koforidua Training Centre
LBCs	Licensed Buying Companies
LEAP	Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty
LECIA	Legon Centre for International Affairs
LGB	Larger Grain Borer
LGPRSP	Local Governance Poverty Reduction Support Project
LMIS	Labour Market Information System
LONSUM	London, Sumatra, Indonesia TBK
LPIAs	Local Project Implementing Agencies
LRED	Local and Regional Economic Development Project
LVB	Land Valuation Board
MDAs	Ministries, Departments, and Agencies
MDBS	Multi-Donor Budgetary Support
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDPI	Management Development and Productivity Institute
MDRI	Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative
MFMI	Municipal Finance and Management Initiative
MIB	Migration Information Bureau
MiDA	Millennium Development Authority
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
MMR	Maternal Mortality Ratio
MMT	Metro Mass Transit
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding

MSEs	Micro and Small-Scale Enterprises
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
MTTU	Motor Transport and Traffic Unit
NABPTEx	National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations
NADMO	National Disaster Management Organisation
NAGRAT	National Association of Graduate Teachers
NBSSI	National Board for Small Scale Industries
NCA	National Communications Authority
NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education
NCD	New Castle Disease
NDAP	National Decentralization Action Plan
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NEP	National Employment Policy
NES	National Electrification Scheme
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
NHIF	National Health Insurance Fund
NHIL	National Health Insurance Levy
NHIS	National Health Insurance Scheme
NIA	National Identification Authority
NIS	National Identification Scheme
NITA	National Information Technology Agency
NLC	National Labour Commission
NMC	National Media Commission
NPA	National Petroleum Authority
NPC	National Population Council
NPECLC	National Programme for the Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour in Cocoa
NRDP	Nerica Rice Development Project
NREG	Natural Resource and Environmental Governance
NRSC	National Road Safety Commission
NSCL	National Society of Commonwealth Legislative

NSF	National Strategic Framework
NSP	Naval Slipway Project
NSPS	National Social Protection Strategy
NVTI	National Vocational Training Institutes
NYBOT	New York Board on Trade
NYC	National Youth Council
NYEP	National Youth Employment Programme
OL	Official Liquidator
OPCAT	Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture
OPEC	Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PAO	Project Advisory Office
PAYE	Pay-As-You-Earn
PCSRC	Postal and Courier Services Regulatory Commission
PEF	Private Enterprise Foundation
PFI	Private Finance Initiatives
PHMU	Post-harvest Management Unit
PLWHA	People Living With HIV/AIDS
PoA	Plan of Action
POTAG	Polytechnic Teachers' Association of Ghana
POW	Programme of Work
PPI	Producer Price Index
PPME	Public Procurement Model of Excellence
PPR	Pestes de Petit Ruminants
PRAAD	Public Records and Archives Department
PRIC	Pension Reform Implementation Committee
PRIMA	Price Index Management
PRODICAP	Promotion of District Capitals/District Towns Project
PSBR	Public Sector Borrowing Requirements
PSC	Public Services Commission
PSI	President Special Initiatives
PSIAs	Poverty Social Impact Assessments

PSOs	Private Security Organizations
PTR	Pupil/Teacher Ratio
PURC	Public Utilities Regulatory Commission
PWD	Public Works Department
RAP	Resettlement Action Plan
RCCs	Regional Coordinating Council
RFID	Radio Frequency Identification
RFP	Request for Proposals
RHNP	Regenerative Health & Nutrition Programme
ROPAA	Representation of the Peoples Amendment Act
RPAC	Regional Population Advisory Committee
RTIMP	Roots and Tubers Improvement and Marketing Project
SDR	Special Drawing Rights
SEC	Securities Exchange Commission
SESSA	Security Services Sports Association
SFDP	Support for Decentralization Programme
SGM	Secondary Gas Market
SHEP	Self Help Electrification Programme
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
SMEs	Small and Medium Scale Enterprises
SOEs	State Owned Enterprises
SSNIT	Social Security and National Insurance Trust
TALIF	Teaching and Learning Innovation Fund
TDEM	Time Domain Electro Magnetic
TIDD	Timber Industry & Development Division
TIP	Technology Improvement Programme
TMC	Treasury Management Committee
TOR	Tema Oil Refinery
TPU	Tax Policy Unit
TSDP	Transport Sector Development Programme
TSSP	Trade Sector Support Programme
TUCs	Timber Utilization Contracts

TVET	Technical, Vocational Education and Training
U.S.A	United States of America
UESP	Urban Environmental Sanitation Project
UNCLCS Shelf	United Nations Commission on Limits of the Continental Shelf
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UPPF	Unified Petroleum Price Fund
UPRP	Urban Poverty Reduction Project
UPTU	Urban Passenger Transport Units
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USTDA	United States Trade Development Agency
UTDBE	Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education
UTP	Urban Transport Project
UWP	Urban Water Project
VCC	VAT Clearance Certificate
VCT/PMTCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing/Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission
VIPS	VAT Information Processing System
VLTCL	Volta Lake Transport Company Limited
VLTP	Validation of Legal Timber Programme
VMS	Vessel Monitoring Systems
VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement
VRA	Volta River Authority
VSD	Veterinary Services Directorate
WAGP	West African Gas Pipeline
WAGPP	West African Gas Pipeline Project
WAIPA	World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies
WAPP	West African Power Pool
WD	Wildlife Division
WESTEL	Western Telecommunication Systems

WFCL	Worst Form of Child Labour
WHO	World Health Organisation
WIMAX	Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access
WPM	Wood Packaging Materials
WTO	World Trade Organisation

FOREWORD

Budget for a brighter future

Ghana is celebrating the 50th anniversary of her Independence this year. It is a matter of considerable pride to mark the event against a back drop of a stable economy that points to a bright future.

In September this year, Ghana became the first sub-Saharan country after South Africa and the first post-HIPC country to access the international capital market with a debut Eurobond which was highly over-subscribed. In each of the past two years, the international community has rated Ghana among the "Global Top-Ten" reformers, and the leading reformer in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2007, in the "Ease of Doing Business" category.

Notwithstanding the shocks from rapidly rising oil prices and the energy crisis, both inflation and interest rates are declining steadily. The Cedi has remained relatively stable against major currencies, and has been successfully re-denominated.

From 3% in 2000, GDP has risen to 6.4% in 2007. Poverty levels have reduced substantially and Ghana is tipped to become one of the few Third World countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of cutting extreme poverty by half by the scheduled date of 2015. Above all, Ghana is considered a haven of peace and security in the ECOWAS Sub-Region. On every count, the country's economy is ready for a major take-off.

This is how far Ghana has traveled since 2001 when she signed unto the HIPC initiative.

Building an economy for a brighter and secure future has meant laying a strong foundation, and pursuing prudent and sound macro-economic policies underpinned by the rule of law and good governance. It has entailed taking necessary but politically tough decisions in a timely manner, always counting on the understanding and goodwill of Ghanaians. The phenomenal transformation which has generated such high confidence in the investor community is therefore a tribute to the patience and forbearance of all Ghanaians, and our Development Partners who have stayed the course with us. Government will continue to pursue pragmatic policies and good governance to propel the nation to the level of a middle income economy within the next decade.

This will require higher productivity in all sectors of the economy to increase the current growth rate from 6.4 % to 8-10 % and even higher within the next three years. Critical infrastructural bottlenecks are being addressed to attract more investments for the acceleration of economic growth.

To prevent a recurrence of the frequent energy crisis and the attendant load-shedding exercise, government is implementing a comprehensive medium to long term energy programme which includes the search for alternative sources of energy. The construction of the Bui dam and the West African Gas Pipeline are important elements of the programme.

There are also measures to encourage more efficient use of energy, better management of the public utility companies and market pricing of electricity. Other efforts aim at attracting increased investment in the energy sector through greater involvement of the private sector.

Indeed, the 2008 Budget seeks to consolidate all gains that have been made over the past seven years and ensure that the increase in oil prices to new historic heights does not unduly burden the finances of the country and derail the hard-won achievements.

It is very important to mention the discovery of oil in commercial quantities in the country. This is certainly a blessing. However, government is fully aware of the potential problems that have come in the wake of oil discovery elsewhere, and is initiating measures to design plans that will minimize the dangers our find, and maximize its returns for the benefit of the entire citizenry.

In January next year, the country will host "Ghana 2008", the 26th Edition of the prestigious Cup of African Nations, with all its glamour and excitement. To this end, the nation has gone to great lengths to refurbish the Accra and Kumasi stadia and construct two new state of the art stadia in Tamale and Takoradi.

Political, economic and socio-cultural gains are expected from high inflow of tourists, and international exposure through television coverage of the tournament. It is the patriotic duty of every Ghanaian not only to cheer the national team, the Black Stars, to lift the trophy but also to contribute in whatever way possible to the overall success of the tournament.

Next year is an election year. Government is committed to ensuring the conduct of a free, fair and peaceful election. The 2004 election was conducted in such an atmosphere to the admiration of the world. I am therefore appealing to the entire nation, including all the political parties and other stakeholders to resolve to make next year's election violence-free and credible.

This Budget is designed to bring Ghana closer to its vision of a middle income economy. I am very confident that, with the cooperation of all, it will achieve its purpose.

The future is indeed bright and every effort must be made to secure it.

May God bless Ghana and bless us all.

HIS EXCELLENCY JOHN AGYEKUM KUFUOR
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA
15TH NOVEMBER, 2007

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. Mr. Speaker, I deem it both an honour and a privilege to present to this august House the 2008 Budget Statement and Economic Policy on behalf of His Excellency President John Agyekum Kufuor.
2. Mr. Speaker, the past seven years have witnessed sustained growth in the economy and positive changes in the lives of the people of Ghana. Government has achieved this by continuing to maintain the broad policy orientation of reducing the country's level of poverty whilst providing the appropriate environment for private business to grow and thrive.

Trend of Economic Performance

3. Mr. Speaker, all sectors of the economy have achieved varying degrees of success and the combined effect of this effort has culminated in a strong and thriving economy which has been able to withstand numerous domestic and external pressures. An analysis of the key economic indicators points to a stable, resilient and growing economy.
4. Mr. Speaker, this positive state of affairs can be attributed to government's strict adherence to a number of measures, including strong fiscal discipline, prudent monetary stance and the implementation of well focused policies even during the previous election year. Admittedly, some of these policies have not been politically favourable but we have been resolute in our conviction that we should not trade a better economy and improved livelihood for political gains.

Medium Term Strategy

5. Mr. Speaker, the Medium Term Strategy as spelt out in the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II) is to achieve middle income country status by 2015. Within this framework, government has harnessed efforts in all sectors towards accelerated growth and reducing poverty. In this, the focus has been wealth creation through developing our human resources, promoting the private sector and ensuring good governance.

Performance in 2007

6. Mr. Speaker, economic performance as measured by growth in the real GDP stood at 6.3 per cent, slightly lower than the projected 6.5 per cent. This was achieved despite the major energy challenge that the country faced. The growth recorded further attests to the resilience of the economy.

Resolution of the Energy Crisis

7. Mr. Speaker, in an effort to address the energy crisis, a number of short, medium and long-term interventions targeted at resolving the problem permanently were pursued. Significant among them is the successful negotiation of the \$622.0 million loan for the construction of the Bui dam and Bui City. Mr. Speaker, we are glad to mention that this investment is the second largest single investment in the history of the country after the Akosombo Dam.
8. Mr. Speaker, as part of measures to reverse the energy crisis and to improve upon the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity, significant expenditures have been made since 2006 and by end-2008, government's total budgetary expenses would have exceeded US\$2 billion. This includes purchase of crude oil and generation and transmission equipment. Crude oil alone

would have received an allocation of about US\$1 billion for the same period. Given the desire of all Ghanaians for an enduring solution to the power crisis, we believe that we are all ready and willing to pay realistic rates to ensure a much more efficient and reliable energy supply.

Re-Denomination of the Cedi

9. Mr. Speaker, the Bank of Ghana on July 1, 2007 re-denominated the cedi by setting ten thousand cedis to one Ghana Cedi, equivalent to one hundred Ghana Pesewas (i.e. ₵10,000=Gh₵1=100Gp). The reason for adopting this policy decision was to help remove the significant dead weight burden that the old cedi regime placed on the economy. This measure, taken in the context of strong economic fundamentals and macroeconomic stability, has already resulted in significant efficiency gains which are expected to enhance the way we do business.

Entry into Capital Market

10. Mr. Speaker, the successful entry of Ghana into the Eurobond market is another unparalleled achievement this year. The oversubscription of the bond, together with the quality and internationality of the investors is, for us, a clear indication of the confidence that the international community reposes in the Ghanaian economy and the evidence that our political direction is on the right track.

Celebration of Ghana@50

11. Mr. Speaker, the country celebrated its fiftieth anniversary and successfully hosted the AU Summit and the AGOA conference in June and August respectively. The AU Summit in particular

witnessed the highest turnout of Presidents and Heads of Government in recent times.

The New Educational Reforms

12. Mr. Speaker, the new educational reforms, which seek to improve upon our educational system in response to the needs and expectations of both individuals and industry, was launched in 2007. A comprehensive package of reforms has been introduced with the main components including teacher upgrading and deployment, attainment of gender parity, the active promotion of science, technology and research; and mainstreaming of pre-schools into the basic education system.

Decentralisation

13. Mr. Speaker, as a demonstration of government's commitment to decentralisation, the District Assemblies' Common Fund which had been pegged at 5 per cent of tax revenue since 1993 has been increased to 7.5 per cent. In addition to this, 25 more districts have been created to facilitate better governance and accelerate socio-economic development at the district level. A draft comprehensive policy on decentralisation has been developed, together with an intergovernmental fiscal framework to guide the fiscal relations between central government and the sub-national governments.

Fair Wages and Salaries Commission

14. Mr. Speaker, in fulfilment of government's commitment to rationalize public sector wages, the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission Act, (Act 737) has been enacted. The Fair Wages and Salaries Commission, which is legally mandated to administer

a new comprehensive pay structure and ensure equity in the government payroll, has been constituted.

15. Mr. Speaker, to pave the way for the successful implementation of the Commission's work, government had earlier removed distortions and corrected placements on the Ghana Universal Salary Structure (GUSS). The reform process is on-going; the obvious challenge is to manage labour expectations particularly in an election year. To this end, the necessary consultations will be undertaken with and among stakeholders, with a view to comprehensively and successfully dealing with the issue of wage reform once and for all.

Oil Discovery

16. Mr. Speaker, with the country poised for accelerated growth, a massive infusion of capital is required to undertake the necessary infrastructure to facilitate such growth. The discovery of oil in commercial quantities could therefore not have come at a more opportune time.
17. Mr. Speaker, in order to ensure that the oil resources are utilised in a judicious manner aimed at deriving the maximum benefit for the country, measures are being taken to put in place the appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks, as well as fiscal rules; and to ensure the training of our human resources in various disciplines to manage this God given resource. A technical team has also been constituted to undertake the necessary analysis of the impact of the oil discovery on the economy in the long term.

National Youth Employment

18. Mr Speaker, the overall objective of the programme is to empower the youth to enable them contribute more productively towards the socio-economic and sustainable development of the nation. This is in line with government's commitment to provide jobs for the youth as articulated in the GPRS II.
19. Mr. Speaker, 7 out of the 10 employment modules have been rolled out and are being implemented across the length and breadth of the country. A total of **107,114** youth have been engaged on the seven modules as at August 2007.

Poverty Trends

20. Mr Speaker, in April 2007, the Ghana Statistical Service published a book on the pattern and trends of poverty in Ghana from 1991 – 2006, which utilized data from the fifth round of the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS 5). From the data provided, it is evident that poverty has reduced significantly and Ghanaians are obviously better off today than they were seven years ago. The indicators show a downward trend in poverty from 39.5 per cent in 1998/1999 to 28.5 per cent in 2005/2006.
21. Mr. Speaker, we want to reiterate that this achievement did not just happen; it was made possible through the deliberate implementation of coherent and comprehensive policies and reflects the effect of increased government expenditure on poverty-reduction activities.
22. Mr. Speaker, an analysis of poverty expenditures reveals that poverty-related expenditures increased from GH¢233.9 million in 2002 to GH¢1,237.4 million in 2006, representing 21.67 per cent and 34.86 per cent respectively of total government expenditure.

Natural Disaster Management

23. Mr. Speaker, in August and early September of this year, unprecedented heavy rainfall led to severe flooding in Ghana, wreaking havoc in areas that were already socio-economically disadvantaged. Government is mindful of the suffering experienced by those so affected and has initiated actions to address the existing vulnerabilities in parallel with life-saving interventions.

Budget 2008

Policy Orientation and Fiscal Strategy

24. Mr Speaker, recognising the challenges we face in the coming election year, the primary policy focus of the 2008 budget will be to sustain the stable economic environment that we have created over the past seven years through accelerated growth supported by infrastructural development. We are resolved to maintain the strong fiscal discipline that we have exercised to attain the vibrant and resilient macro-economic environment that we currently have.
25. Mr. Speaker, the prospects for economic growth are bright, especially with the anticipated massive injection of capital for infrastructure development in the energy, road and rail sectors. We hope that this will enhance the opportunity for industry to expand and generate employment and ultimately improve the living standards of our people.

Macro Framework and Budget Priorities

26. Mr Speaker, the macroeconomic framework for the year 2008 projects a GDP growth rate of 7.0 per cent and an annual inflation rate of 6 – 8 per cent.

27. Mr Speaker, in line with GPRS II government's priorities for the 2008 budget will focus on facilitating growth and reducing poverty through major infrastructural development.
28. In that regard, Mr. Speaker, the 2008 budgetary allocations reflect and reinforce government's commitment to this objective. Human resource development continues to receive a significant percentage of the resource envelope.
29. Mr. Speaker, out of a total projected discretionary expenditure of GH¢4,294.5 million for MDAs comprising GOG, donor, IGF, HIPC, and MDRI resources, the human resource development, private sector competitiveness and good governance and civic responsibility thematic areas were allocated 38.3 per cent, 33.1 per cent and 21.9 per cent respectively.

Major policies and programmes

30. Mr. Speaker, in 2008 government will accelerate the pace of infrastructural development. The funds generated from the bond market will be utilised for this major investment drive. The key projects will be the dualisation of the Accra - Kumasi road and the rehabilitation of the Takoradi, Kumasi and Tamale regional airports. Outstanding projects in the energy sector will be completed.

Cocoa

31. Mr. Speaker, in the 2008 financial year, cocoa is expected to contribute to increased export earnings. Cocoa output is expected to perform above 600,000 metric tonnes for the 2007/2008 crop season. It is interesting to note that since 2003/2004 when cocoa posted a remarkable output of about 736,000.0 metric tonnes,

output has not fallen below 600,000.0 metric tonnes, implying that such record outputs are sustainable.

32. Mr Speaker, the Ghana Cocoa Board has been able to raise an offshore syndicated loan facility of US\$ 900.0 million, the biggest in the history of the cocoa industry. This will amply cover cocoa purchases for the 2007/2008 crop season, estimated to be about 650,000.0 metric tonnes. Government together with COCOBOD has also secured a US\$190.0 million medium term loan facility for infrastructural development and cocoa development initiatives. This is an indication of the trust the international community reposes in the economy.

Ghana (CAN) 2008

33. Mr. Speaker, in January the country will host the African Cup of Nations and government is determined to deliver an excellent programme. In that regard, considerable efforts have been made towards the realisation of this agenda. Three out of the four stadia have already been completed; the remaining one is expected to be completed by the end of this month. The necessary infrastructure and logistics have also been provided to ensure a successful tournament.
34. Mr. Speaker, it is our expectation that the tournament will have a positive impact on our economy, given the large number of visitors expected in the country for this event. We therefore anticipate a high degree of vibrancy in the tourism industry, not only with the hosting of Ghana 2008, but also with the hosting of the UNCTAD Conference in mid-October.
35. Consequently, Mr. Speaker, we hope to provide the sector with the needed support, in order to maximise the benefits that will accrue to the industry in particular and the country as a whole.

We trust that the entire nation will rally around this event, to evoke a truly African spirit consistent with Ghanaian hospitality.

36. Mr. Speaker, you will be pleased to note that, based on assurances received from our technical people in respect of the capabilities of the Black Stars, we are confident that we will win the African Cup of Nations this year.

Health

37. Mr. Speaker, in 2008 a total of GH¢512.8 million will be allocated to the health sector. This includes both the GOG and the expected HIPC resources. The target areas in health will include major challenging areas like infant and child mortality.
38. Mr. Speaker, there has been a shift in the policy orientation of the health sector. Stronger emphasis is being placed on preventive rather than curative health. Another area of focus will be regenerative health through adjustments and changes in the lifestyles of Ghanaians.

Educational Reforms

39. Mr Speaker, activities in the educational sector towards the implementation of the new educational reforms will be scaled up. The model schools programme will be completed and teacher training facilities will be expanded.

Oil Management

40. Mr. Speaker, the discovery of oil has generated a lot of excitement and expectations both within and outside the country and for good reasons too. We believe that the prospects for any country as regards the discovery of oil in commercial quantities are mixed. We want to believe that the oil that has been discovered off the

shores of Ghana will be for our good and not for evil, to provide us with the kind of future that we expect for ourselves and for the generations to come.

41. Towards this end, Mr. Speaker, we are preparing for the establishment of the appropriate regulatory and institutional framework to ensure that we maximise the expected outputs from this resource.

Presidential and Parliamentary Elections

42. Mr. Speaker, the country will be organising its fifth presidential and parliamentary elections in 2008. In connection with that, government has made a budgetary allocation of GH¢36.8 million. Government is cognisant of the challenges of an election year, like budgetary overruns. We are determined to exercise the necessary fiscal discipline and prudence as we did in 2004 to ensure that we do not derail our hard work and accomplishments of the past seven years.
43. Mr Speaker, the government has introduced a number of policy initiatives over the past seven years. In 2008, while a few new interventions will be introduced, focus will be on completing most of the ongoing and existing policies and projects as much as possible, so that we can derive the benefits that we expect from them.

SECTION TWO: WORLD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS AND OUTLOOK

The World Economy Developments in 2007

General Overview

44. Mr. Speaker, according to the October 2007 issue of the World Economic Outlook (WEO), the world economy has expanded for the fifth consecutive year in 2007, with an estimated overall output growth running above 5 per cent in the first half of 2007, slower than the 5.4 per cent growth in 2006. The moderation in growth can largely be attributed to a slow down in growth in the United States which resulted from deceleration in the housing market.
45. Growth has been widespread, encompassing the advanced, emerging and developing economies. China's economy gained further momentum in 2007, growing at 11.5 per cent, while India, Russia and other resource-rich countries followed closely. Central and Eastern Europe is projected to grow at a slower pace from the 6.3 per cent in 2006, to reach 5.8 per cent in 2007 and further decline to 5.2 per cent in 2008.
46. In many developing countries, including those in Africa, positive trends in the terms of trade since 2003, have contributed to improved external and fiscal balances. This improvement is attributed to the strong demand for primary commodities at the global level, leading to a rise in commodity prices. These have also paved the way for more expansionary policies, and for a widespread recovery in investment rates. Thus, Africa is forecast to continue growing at around 5.7 per cent in 2007, while growth

rates in the Western Hemisphere are expected to slow down slightly to about 5 per cent in 2007 and 4.3 per cent in 2008.

47. Data from UNCTAD sources suggest that East and South Asia are expected to continue as the fastest growing regions in the world, as both China and India continue to grow strongly in 2007. This growth pattern will continue for a lot more years to the extent that investment ratios of these Asian giants continue to be high.
48. This expected growth presents a downside risk, being that, the inevitable correction of the imbalances in the global economy does not occur at the expense of a major recession in the United States, which is a very significant market for Asian exports. There are signs that sources of world economic growth are shifting slightly, with the United States economy slowing down, emerging market and developing economies maintaining a strong growth momentum and the domestic demand in Western Europe increasing. China, India and Russia contributed to about one half of global growth in the last year. Stronger domestic demand growth in emerging market economies is expected to be the main driver to global growth in 2008.
49. Mr. Speaker, the performance of developing countries and their potential for catching up with the developed countries has improved considerably. Although enormous differences in absolute incomes persist, developing countries increased per capita GDP by almost 30 per cent between 2003 and 2007, compared to 10 per cent in the G-7 countries (UNCTAD September, 2007). Real per capita income has picked up in recent years in Latin America, Africa and West Asia after more than two decades of stagnation.
50. In East and South Asia, economic growth accelerated from already high growth rates, which allowed these sub regions to more than double their per capita GDP in only 14 years. The

transition economies of South-East Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) have experienced rapid growth in recent years, with an accumulated increase in per capita income of almost 75 per cent.

51. The global output of emerging market economies and developing countries has remained relatively robust and beyond 5 per cent in the past five years. It is projected to remain at the 8.1 per cent in 2007 but slow down to 7.4 per cent in 2008. The expected growth in 2007 is largely attributed to the coming on stream of new production facilities in oil- exporting developing countries.
52. The down side risk to the growth prospects would be the impact of the recent floods which threatens to wipe away large tracts of crop lands in East, Central and West Africa continuing; oil price increase and the regional energy crisis. Also, the terms of trade in the region is expected to deteriorate in 2008 slightly, with further increases in crude oil prices in 2008.

Inflation

53. Global inflation continued to be low in 2007, but has moved up in the emerging markets due to rising oil prices and accelerated food price. However, there are concerns about inflationary pressures emanating from the recent financial market turbulence, rising food prices, dwindling spare capacity, persistent high oil prices and strong exchange inflows, especially, in emerging markets and developing countries.
54. In the Euro area, annual inflation is expected to be 1.7 per cent in 2007, lower than the 2.3 per cent recorded in 2006. Inflation is expected to be more stable in 2008, ranging from 1.7 per cent to 1.9 per cent.

55. Similarly, in the US, consumer price index for 2007 is expected to be 2.7 per cent, lower than the 3.2 per cent achieved in 2006. This is projected to further decline to 2.3 per cent in 2008.
56. In the case of Japan, inflation will continue to be around 0.3 per cent in 2007, just as the 2006 rate, but will increase slightly to 0.5 per cent in 2008.
57. In most of the African region, consumer prices are expected to follow a similar trend with single digit rate in most areas, with the exception of Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of Congo and Ethiopia. In 2007 the average inflation in sub-Saharan Africa is projected to stay within 6-9 per cent range for the first time.
58. While the annual average inflation is expected to remain at the 2006 rate of 7.5 per cent, inflation in middle income countries in Africa is likely to accelerate from 5 per cent to 6.75 per cent in 2007. Notwithstanding the strong domestic demand in low income countries, the African Region inflation is expected to moderate further due to overall increased food supply, notwithstanding recent floods in some parts of West Africa. Average inflation will remain above 10 per cent in fragile economies.

Risk to Growth Outlook

59. Although the growth prospects are bright for 2008, there still remain some downside risks. They include a deepening in the crisis of the housing sector in the US and upward trend in crude oil prices. Other threats worth considering are: the retrenchment from risky assets should financial markets volatility rise; and inflationary pressures which could heighten as output gaps close.

60. In the long run, any developments that can undermine the current buoyant productivity performance could be a downside risk that could impair global growth. These may include technological progress, open global trading system, cross country capital flows as well as resilient macroeconomic policy framework and financial systems
61. In the medium term, average growth in the WAMZ region is expected to be strong and broadly stable. But the Zone would have to do more to grow sufficiently to achieve the targets of the MDGs. Inflation pressures from the escalating crude oil prices is expected to be a challenge to the economies, and this would require continued prudent fiscal and monetary policies to control inflation expectations to meet the single digit target.

International Commodity Prices

62. Three global conditions - strong GDP growth, ample liquidity and a weak US dollar – have underpinned the current boom in commodity prices. Even though, these factors still exist, the signals are becoming more mixed. For instance, crude oil prices have reached all-time high, while base and precious metals have experienced some fluctuations in prices hence a safe haven against the dollar. These could further enforce the upward trend of commodity prices on the international market.

Cocoa

63. Cocoa prices on the London International Future and Funds Exchange (LIFFE) assumed an increasing trend from £886 in January, peaking at £1,121.00 in July 2007. However, it has assumed a declining path towards the third and fourth quarter of the year.

64. The high commodity price for cocoa has been driven mainly by low crop yields in West Africa and Indonesia in the 2006/2007 main crop season. Favourable rainfall has improved prospects of cocoa production in the largest producing countries la Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana for the 2007/2008 main crop which opened in October, 2007.
65. La Cote d'Ivoire's output is estimated at about 1.3 million tonnes compared to about 1.28 million tonnes for the last cocoa season while Ghana's output is projected at 650,000 metric tonnes as against 614,000 metric tonnes in the 2006/07 crop season. There are however concerns about the effect of the black pod disease in West Africa which could also affect the supply fundamentals of cocoa in 2008.

Gold

66. Gold prices have increased steadily from US\$ 650 in the first quarter of the year to US\$ 680 per ounce in the third quarter of 2007. The general weakening of the US dollar has contributed to the increasing commodity prices, most notably gold. The price of gold is projected to hit \$850/oz by end 2007, as investors will continue to increase their holdings in gold and other commodities.

Oil

67. Crude oil prices have far exceeded their projected levels since August 2006, with analysts warning that intense pressures from US reserves and refineries are likely to worsen the situation. Despite the high crude oil prices, there is little evidence of a slowdown in US gasoline demand. The situation has been compounded by increasing demand in the Euro area and Japan. Demand from China and India continues to be particularly strong growing at about 20 per cent.

68. On the other hand, growth in the supply has been sluggish as Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is keen to keep prices high to preserve the non-dollar value of their exports. Moreover, shortage of refinery capacity is becoming increasingly constrained. OPEC's rising price aspirations are mainly due to the erosion of purchasing power as the US dollar weakens.

SECTION THREE: DEVELOPMENTS AND OUTLOOK IN THE WEST AFRICA SUB-REGION

The West African Economy

69. Mr. Speaker, the West Africa sub-region continues to sustain the growth momentum of the previous years albeit at a slower pace. Among non-oil economies in the sub-region, growth slowed down mainly due to high oil prices and energy crisis. In the face of this, average growth rate is expected to experience a slight decline to about 5.5 per cent in 2007 as against 5.7 per cent in 2006.
70. However, countries like Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal and Burkina Faso are likely to experience relatively high growth rates averaging about 6 per cent in 2007. This can be attributed to favourable trends in international commodity prices and/or volumes of commodity exports, good public services, larger openness to trade and improved institutions. In addition, increased external inflows in the form of remittances, HIPC and MDRI assistance to countries helped to spur the economies of countries like Ghana and Senegal.
71. Mr. Speaker, inflation rate has also followed a downward trend in 2007 despite the incessant pressures from rising crude oil prices. The Gambia and Nigeria are expected to achieve single digit inflation in 2007. The 2007 average inflation projection for the ECOWAS sub-region is projected at 6.5 per cent, which is lower than the 2006 rate of 7.2 per cent. The region is projected to experience a further lower inflation of 5.5 per cent in 2008. Almost all the countries in the sub-region with the exception of Sierra Leone, and Guinea are projected to achieve single digit average inflation rates in 2008.

Creating a Borderless Region

72. Mr. Speaker, ECOWAS Heads of States on 15 June 2007 adopted the ECOWAS Strategic Vision which seeks to convert West Africa into a borderless region whereby citizens can create and avail themselves of opportunities emanating from unrestricted movement of goods, services and persons.
73. The vision as reiterated at the Second Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Parliament in September 2007, envisages the creation of a "region-wide space for people to transact business, and live in dignity and peace under the rule of law and good governance".
74. The Zone will be based on the "guiding principles of citizen ownership, service, transparency, partnership, subsidiary, result-based management and sustainability and is intended to eventually enable the region move from 'ECOWAS of states' into 'ECOWAS of people' by 2020". The creation of the zone will champion the desire to transform its existing integration structures at regional and district levels into a single Regional Economic Community with specialized agencies.
75. The Region remains resolute in pursuit of its principal objective of promoting regional cooperation and integration and ensuring sustainable development of the whole region. In this regard, ECOWAS is vigorously pursuing the process of achieving the Common External Tariff and the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS) with a view to deepening the integration and cooperation process.

Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)

76. With regard to EPA, the first phase of scheduled negotiations have been completed, however, some challenges are still outstanding and need to be resolved if the agreement were to present mutual benefits to both parties. The ECOWAS position on this matter is that EPAs should come into force by 1st January 2011 instead of the January 2008 as provided under the Cotonou Partnership Agreement. The extension is deemed necessary to allow for further negotiations of the many outstanding issues including the following:

- strengthening of the regional integration process;
- implementing a region-wide Common External Tariff;
- implementing fully the ECOWAS ELTS;
- harmonizing tax and investment regimes in the region;
- unresolved issue of market access; and
- liberalization of services and the absence of support measures through the establishment of an EPA regional funding mechanism.

Energy Issues

77. Mr. Speaker, energy continues to be one of the critical challenges to growth and development in the sub-region. To this end, ECOWAS has been implementing some key energy programmes to ensure sustainable and affordable energy supplies to the region and to mitigate the impact of the current crisis that the sub-region faces. These include the West African Gas Pipeline (WAGP), the West African Power Pool (WAPP) and the ECOWAS Initiative on Access to Energy Services. Major construction activities with respect to the WAGP have been completed. Deliveries are expected to begin as soon as some unforeseen technical difficulties that have cropped up have been resolved.

78. Mr. Speaker, priority projects under the WAPP are also at various stages of implementation in Ghana, Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Mali, Burkina Faso and the Cote d'Ivoire. The ECOWAS Commission is also supporting member States to build the necessary institutional framework, and formulate national energy access strategy and investment programmes for the implementation of the ECOWAS Initiative on Access to Energy. When all these programmes and projects come on stream, West Africa will have sufficient energy in the medium term to achieve accelerated growth and development.

The West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ)

Macroeconomic Developments

79. Mr. Speaker, the WAMZ region continued to maintain appropriate fiscal and monetary policies during the period under review. Half year convergence report of the West African Monetary Institute (WAMI) for the zone indicates that macroeconomic performance over the period has been broadly satisfactory. Real GDP growth picked up modestly, with inflation pressures easing significantly despite unfavourable oil price trends. Marked improvements were also recorded in the external sector.
80. Even though zone-wide real GDP growth is projected around 7.9 per cent in 2007 as against the 5.7 per cent real growth achieved in 2006, preliminary data indicates that the zone is likely to achieve a slower growth rate. Real economic growth rate in the Gambia, for instance, is expected to reach 5.8 per cent as against an earlier projection of 6 per cent for 2007.
81. Mr. Speaker, GDP growth in Nigeria is also expected to finish off at 6.8 per cent, significantly below the annual projection of 8.2 per cent. The reason for the shortfall has been attributed to the

partial disruption of oil production in the Niger Delta. Inflation for the period 2007 is expected to decline to 5.3 per cent but rise to 7.4 per cent in 2008

82. In Sierra Leone, strong growth which began last year is expected to continue in 2007, with sustained support from her development partners and considerable increase in gold and diamond production. Growth is thus expected to be about 7.4% in 2007. Inflation in Sierra Leone is projected to reach 10.8 in 2007 but decline to 10.2 in 2008.
83. Mr. Speaker, Guinea's economic growth rate is, however, expected to decline from 2.2 per cent in 2006 to 1.5 per cent in 2007 due to constraints in the macroeconomic fundamentals occasioned by civil disturbances. Nonetheless, inflation is expected to decline from the 2006 rate of 34.7 per cent to 23.4 per cent in 2007 and to further decline to 13.8 per cent in 2008.

SECTION FOUR: MACROECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

Overview of Economic Performance

84. Mr. Speaker, since the beginning of 2001, the Government has implemented an economic and financial framework oriented toward stabilization. A major fiscal consolidation effort has been pursued aimed at improving revenue mobilisation and streamlining expenditures with the ultimate aim of reducing the domestic debt to GDP ratio along with an anti inflationary monetary policy stance. The operationalisation of the enhanced HIPC initiative and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative reduced the pressure on the budget and helped create fiscal space to fund social sector, poverty-reduction and growth enhancing expenditures. Monetary policy has been focused on sharply reducing inflation pressures and stabilising price and exchange rate expectations on the market.
85. The economy has responded well to these policies, with significantly **reduced inflation, rising output growth, improved external account balances and rising foreign exchange reserves. Headline inflation** has been reduced from 40.0 per cent in 2000 to just 10.1 per cent at the end of October 2007 and is projected to fall further within single digits.
86. The **exchange rate of the cedi** has been relatively stable against the major international currencies. GDP growth has risen steadily from 3.7 per cent in 2000 to an estimated 6.3 per cent in 2007, averaging 5.5 per cent over the last five years. The **external payment position** has proved resilient to external shocks, particularly the high oil prices. The **domestic public**

debt to GDP ratio (net) has been cut from about 24 per cent in 2002 to about 12 per cent in 2007.

87. The current account position (including official transfers) moved from a deficit of 6.1 per cent of GDP in 2001 to a deficit of \$812.67 million, equivalent to 6.5 per cent of GDP in 2006. Gross international reserves have improved from US\$233.4 million (0.8 months of imports of goods and services) in 2000 to US\$2,266.7 million (equivalent to 3 months of imports of goods and services) in 2006. Ghana's external debt has also been reduced from 120.5 per cent of GDP in 2001 (US\$6,325.6 million) to about 17.6 per cent (US\$2,637 million) of GDP at the end of September 2007, as a result of debt cancellation. Total public external and domestic debt is expected to be at the equivalent of 48.5 per cent of GDP at the end of December 2007.
88. Mr. Speaker, we wish to emphasise that all the macroeconomic gains have been achieved in the face of rising crude oil prices and the energy crisis.

Summary of Performance in 2006

89. Mr. Speaker, in our Budget Statement and Economic Policy for the 2007 Financial Year, we presented Economic performance based on available data from January to September 2006. We are using this opportunity to update you on the actual Budget outturn for 2006.
90. Mr. Speaker, the macroeconomic targets for 2006 were the following:
- real GDP growth of at least 6 per cent;
 - a lowering of end of period inflation to single digit of between 7 and 9 per cent by end-year;

- average yearly inflation rate of 8.8 per cent;
 - a further accumulation of international reserves to a target of 4 months of import cover;
 - domestic primary deficit of 1.4 per cent of GDP; and
 - an overall budget deficit of 4.5 per cent of GDP.
91. Mr. Speaker, provisional actual outturn for 2006 indicates that economic performance as measured by Gross Domestic Product remained robust in 2006, recording a growth of 6.4 per cent, continuing its steady increase from 3.7 per cent in 2000. Consumer price inflation declined from 14.8 at end December 2005 to 10.5 per cent as at end December 2006. This compares with the end December 2000 inflation rate of 40.5 per cent.
92. The external position was relatively strong, with rapid growth in exports and imports, and gross international reserves standing at US\$2.0 billion at the end of 2006 covering about 3.4 months of projected imports of goods and services (first time in the history of the country), and the cedi remained relatively stable against all the major international currencies.
93. Monetary policy in 2006 remained focused on reducing inflation to low and stable levels. Broad money supply, including foreign currency deposits (M2+), increased from 14.3 per cent in 2005 to 38.8 per cent in 2006. This development was underpinned by strong growth in savings and time deposits (47.5 per cent) and demand deposits (43.7 per cent) during the period. The increase in M2+ resulted from the expansion in net foreign assets (NFA) of the banking system and net domestic assets (NDA).
94. Interest rates on the money market continued to respond to the easing of the prime rate during the year. Money market interest

rates eased downwards, with the 91-day treasury bill rate dropping from 11.77 per cent at end 2005 to 10.19 per cent at end December 2006. Average base rates of banks also declined steadily from 24 per cent at the beginning of the year to 19 per cent.

95. Mr. Speaker, in spite of the relatively strong macroeconomic stability achieved over the years, the numbers for the 2006 budget outturn indicate that the fiscal situation came under severe stress.
96. Mr. Speaker, the overall fiscal outturn in 2006 resulted in an overall budget deficit equivalent to 7.8 per cent of GDP, against a budget target of 4.5 per cent of GDP. Domestic financing of the budget was a net borrowing of 4.1 per cent of GDP, against a budget target of 0.2 per cent of GDP. The domestic primary balance for the year was equivalent to 4.9 per cent of GDP, against a budget estimate of a deficit equivalent to 1.4 per cent of GDP.
97. Mr. Speaker, the details of the actual outturn for receipts and payments for 2006 are outlined below.

Receipts

98. Mr. Speaker, the fiscal outturn indicates that **total receipts**, including domestic revenue, donor grants, foreign loans and HIPC relief for 2006, amounted to GH¢4,331.7 million, equivalent to 37.7 per cent of GDP. This was about 0.3 per cent lower than the budget estimate for 2006.
99. **Domestic revenue** made up of tax and non-tax revenue amounted to GH¢2,556.9 million, against a budget estimate of

GH¢2,643.8 million. This indicates an increase of 10.4 per cent over the outturn for 2005.

100. Mr. Speaker, **total tax revenue** for the 2006 fiscal year was GH¢2,326.3 million (20.2 per cent of GDP), against a budget estimate of GH¢2,421.4 million, equivalent to 21.6 per cent of GDP. The underperformance was mainly due to lower outturn of company taxes, import VAT and import duties.
101. **Non-Tax Revenue** contributed an amount of GH¢92.3 million, 29.8 per cent higher than the Budget target of GH¢71.1 million.
102. **Total grant** disbursements amounted to GH¢634.9 million, 17.5 per cent below the Budget estimate of GH¢769.7 million. **Multilateral HIPC Assistance** was 37.8 per cent below the budget target, while **Programme grants** also fell short of target by 4.0 per cent. The outturn for Project grants, was GH¢228.5 million against a budget target of GH¢300.0 million.
103. **Total loans** received for 2006 was GH¢460.1 million, against a budget estimate of GH¢670.0 million. Of this amount **project loans** amounted to GH¢299.4 million, while the outturn for **programme loans** was GH¢160.7 million.

Payments

104. Mr. Speaker, the provisional actual outturn for **total payments** in 2006 fiscal year, made up of statutory and discretionary payments was GH¢4,331.7 million against a budget estimate of GH¢4,346.8 million.

Statutory Payments

105. **Total statutory payments**, including interest payments, amortization, and transfers to households and dedicated funds

amounted to GH¢1,248.7 million, representing about 89.2 per cent of the budget estimate for the year. The outturn reflects an increase of 12.2 per cent over the outturn recorded in 2005.

106. **External Debt Service** amounted to GH¢325.4 million, against a budget estimate of GH¢.453.7 million. The principal component of the external debt due was GH¢235.1 million, against a targeted amount of GH¢347.3 million, while payments on external interest amounted to GH¢90.3 million, compared to a budget target of GH¢ 106.4 million.
107. **Domestic interest payments** including interest paid on TOR bonds during the 2006 fiscal year amounted to GH¢303.1 million, against a target of GH¢242.7 million.
108. The outturn for payments into the **District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF)** indicate that a total amount of GH¢104.7 million, against a target of GH¢120.4 million was paid into the DACF. The shortfall was as a result of the under-performance of tax revenues.
109. Total transfers into the **Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund)** amounted to GH¢106.3 million. The transfers were lower than the budget estimate by GH¢32.4 million due to the shortfall in VAT revenue for the year. The outturn however, reflects an increase of 8.4 per cent over the outturn recorded in 2005.

Discretionary Payments

110. Mr. Speaker, **discretionary payments** for the year totaled GH¢3,083.0 million, against a budget estimate of GH¢2,947.5 million.

111. The 2006 outturn for **personal emoluments** amounted to GH¢1,137.1 million, 13.8 per cent more than the budget estimate. The reasons for this over expenditure include extraordinary pressures from the labour front which led to higher nominal increases in the wage bill during the fiscal year.
112. **Administration and Service** recorded an outturn of GH¢427.7 million, out of which Service expenditure amounted to GH¢125.8 million. The expenditure on Administration for the year exceeded its budget estimate by GH¢78.6 million.
113. **Domestically-financed investment**, registered an outturn of GH¢294.3 million, about 20.1 per cent lower than the budgeted amount of GH¢368.2 million. **Foreign-financed investment** amounted to GH¢527.9 million, GH¢278.4 million lower than the budget estimate for the year. The lower performance is as a result of the lower disbursements of project loans and grants by our development partners.
114. Mr. Speaker, the outturn for **HIPC-financed expenditure** was GH¢179.2 million, about 1.7 per cent lower than the budget target of GH¢182.2 million. The outturn indicates a 8.0 per cent increase over the outturn for the 2005 fiscal year.

Clearance of Arrears

115. Mr. Speaker, a total amount of GH¢39.2 million of non-road outstanding commitments were cleared during the course of the year. Of this amount, outstanding arrears of GH¢5.4 million and GH¢4.3 million were transferred into the DACF and GETFund, respectively, as clearance of the arrears for 2006, while an amount of GH ¢9.6 million was cleared in respect of road arrears.

116. **Domestic Financing** of the budget for 2006 amounted to a net borrowing of GH¢476.5 million, equivalent to 4.2 per cent of GDP, against a budget target of a net borrowing of GH¢21.5 million. The major reasons for this outturn can be attributed to the shortfall in total revenue and grants, unanticipated transfers to VRA as a result of the energy crisis, transfers to TOR for under recovery, and the extraordinary pressures on the labour front which led to effective nominal increases in the wage bill and the consequential increase in salary-related expenditures, such as, pensions, social security contributions, and allowances.
117. Mr. Speaker, the main factors underlying the fiscal outturn were the following:
- shortfalls in revenue target amounting to 0.8 per cent of GDP;
 - shortfalls in divestiture receipts of about 0.7 per cent of GDP;
 - unbudgeted transfers of about US\$90 million to the Volta River Authority (VRA) for the purchase of crude oil for thermal operation in the face of the looming energy shortage and high crude oil prices;
 - public sector wage overrun equivalent to 0.9 per cent of GDP;
 - substantial MDRI spending that translated into high domestic expenditure
118. With an overall budget deficit of GH¢897.1 million in 2006, discounting for some one-off and critical emergency expenditures that will not recur in the medium-term brings the underlying budget deficit to ₵537.0 million, equivalent to 4.7 per cent of GDP. This compares with the budget estimate of 4.5 per cent of GDP.

119. Mr. Speaker, we believe that the underlying **overall budget deficit** is still sustainable, in 2007 and in the medium term.

Performance and Outlook

120. Mr. Speaker, in our review of the economic performance for 2007, available data up to September 2007 and projections to end 2007 have been used.

121. Mr. Speaker, it may be recalled that in order to address the energy situation and other international obligations, we submitted supplementary estimates to this august House in July 2007 which revised our fiscal framework. The overall macroeconomic framework was anchored on the following macroeconomic targets:

- a real GDP growth of at least 6.5 per cent;
- an end-period inflation rate of single digit between 7 and 9 per cent;
- an average inflation rate of 8.8 per cent;
- an accumulation of international reserves to at least three months of import cover;
- a domestic primary deficit of 6.5 per cent of GDP; and
- an overall budget deficit of 5.7 per cent of GDP.

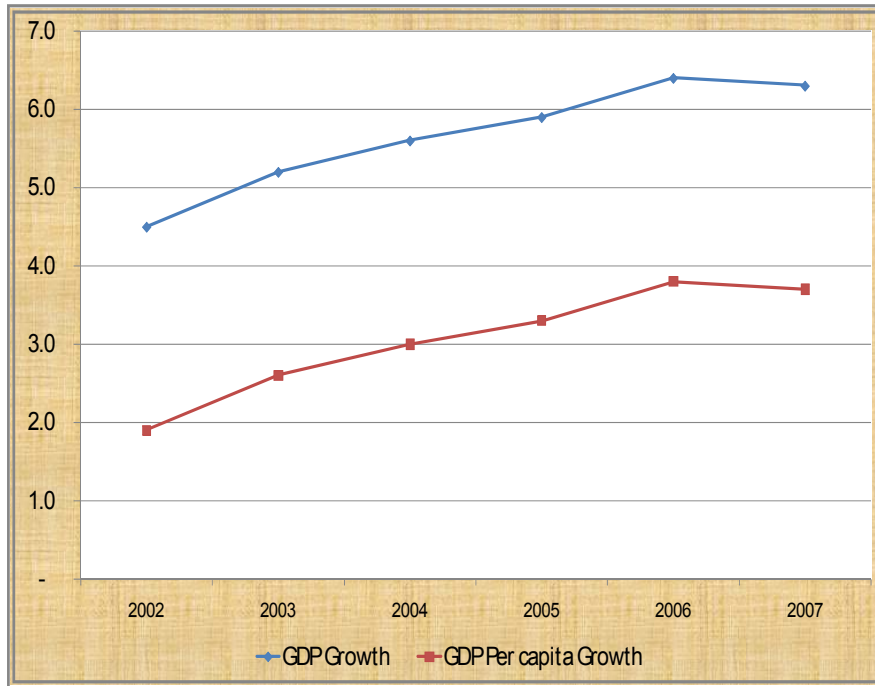
122. Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the challenges of the energy crisis, rising fuel prices associated with the increases in oil prices on the international market, output has been robust and the economy remains resilient.

123. Real GDP growth rate has been relatively high, and inflation has been on the decline. The consistent coordination and implementation of fiscal and monetary policy provided an environment for increased economic activities. All indications are that the energy crisis has shaved off about 0.5 to 1.0 percentage points in real GDP growth.
124. Mr. Speaker, the details of our economic performance in 2007 are presented below.

Real Sector Developments
Growth in GDP

125. Mr. Speaker, available information based on September 2007 data indicates that real GDP growth is projected at 6.3 per cent, marginally below the budget estimate of 6.5 per cent.

Figure 1: Real GDP Growth Rate



Agriculture

126. Mr. Speaker, agricultural sector growth is projected at 4.3 per cent as against a target of 6.1 per cent, indicating a projected margin of 1.8 percentage points below the target. The decline can be attributed to the erratic rainfall pattern which swept the northern part of the country and a relative decline in the Fishing sub-sector as a result of dwindling fisheries resources.

Table 1: Percentage Growth in Agriculture

Activity	2005	2006	2007*	2007**
AGRICULTURE	4.1	4.5	6.1	4.3
Agriculture & Livestock	3.3	3.5	6.6	4.0
Cocoa Production & Marketing	13.2	2.0	6.0	6.5

Forestry & Logging	5.6	2.6	4.0	2.5
Fishing	-1.2	15.0	5.0	5.0

Source: Ghana Statistical Service
*Target, ** Proj. Outturn

Table 2: Share of Agriculture in GDP and Contribution to overall growth (in per cent)

Activity	Share of GDP			Contribution to Growth		
	2005	2006	2007**	2005	2006	2007**
AGRICULTURE	36.0	35.4	34.7	1.5	1.6	1.4
Agriculture & Livestock	23.8	23.	22.7	0.8	0.8	0.9
Cocoa Production & Marketing	4.6	4.4	4.3	0.6	0.1	0.2
Forestry & Logging	3.6	3.4	3.3	0.2	0.1	0.1
Fishing	4.1	4.4	4.4	0.0	0.7	0.2

Source: Ghana Statistical Service
*Target, ** Proj. Outturn

Industry

127. Mr. Speaker, the Industrial sector is projected to grow by 7.4 per cent, a decline from the 2006 growth rate of 9.5 per cent. This is mainly due to the energy crisis. The Electricity and Water sub-sector was the hardest hit by the energy crisis as there was a decline from 24.2 per cent in 2006 to minus 15 per cent in 2007. The effect of the energy crisis, as well as the importation of cheaper goods were the main factors that affected the manufacturing sub-sector, leading to a reduction in growth by 2.3 per cent.

128. The robust activity on account of Government's continuous focus on the agenda of providing basic infrastructure such as roads,

schools, and the construction of various infrastructure towards the hosting of the CAN 2008 led to a growth of 11.0 per cent in the Construction sub-sector. The high growth of 30.0 per cent in the Mining and Quarrying sub sector is attributed to increases in Gold (as the Newmont mine was brought into full production) and Bauxite output, though Diamond exhibited the worst performance in the sub-sector.

Table 3: Growth in Industry (in per cent)

ACTIVITY	2005	2006	2007*	2007**
Industry	7.7	9.5	7.7	7.4
Mining & Quarrying	6.3	13.3	6.0	30.0
Manufacturing	5.0	4.2	5.5	-2.3
Electricity & Water	12.4	24.2	10.0	-15.0
Construction	10.0	8.2	10.0	11.0

Source: Ghana Statistical Service
*Target, ** Proj. Outturn

Table 4: Industry's Share of GDP and Contribution to Overall Growth

ACTIVITY	Share of GDP			Contribution to Growth		
	2005	2006	2007**	2005	2006	2007**
INDUSTRY	25.1	25.9	26.0	1.9	2.5	1.7
Mining & Quarrying	5.1	5.5	6.7	0.3	0.7	2.0
Manufacturing	8.9	8.8	8.1	0.4	0.4	-0.2
Electricity & Water	2.6	3.1	2.3	0.3	0.7	-0.5
Construction	8.4	8.6	9.0	0.8	0.7	1.0

Source: Ghana Statistical Service
*Target, ** Proj. Outturn

Services

129. Mr. Speaker, the Services sector which is not so dependent on electricity is projected to grow at 8.2 per cent exceeding the 6.7

per cent target by 1.5 percentage points. Apart from the Transport, Storage and Communication sub-sector which grew below the 2006 level, the other sub-sectors exceeded the 2006 outturn. The wholesale and retail trade and the financial sub-sectors exceeded their targets. The deepening of reforms in the financial sector has led to robust growth in the sub-sector, resulting in a significant growth of 15 per cent, compared to a target of 10.0 per cent.

130. Mr. Speaker, we are of the conviction that, but for the energy crisis and escalating crude oil prices, the economy would have grown higher at around 7.0 per cent.

Table 5: Growth in Services (in per cent)

ACTIVITY	2005	2006	2007*	2007**
SERVICES	6.9	6.5	6.7	8.2
Transport, Storage & Communication	7.9	7.2	6.0	6.0
Wholesale & Retail Trade, Restaurants & Hotels	10.0	7.5	7.0	10.0
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate & Business Services	7.6	7.6	10.0	15.0
Government Services	5.0	5.7	6.0	6.0
Community, Social & Personal Services	4.3	4.2	5.0	5.0
Producers of Private Non-profit Services	3.6	4.0	5.0	5.0

Source: Ghana Statistical Service
*Target, ** Proj. Outturn

Table 6: Share of Services in GDP and Contribution to Overall Growth (in per cent)

	Shares to GDP	Contribution to
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ACTIVITY				Growth		
	2005	2006	2007**	2005	2006	2007**
SERVICES	29.9	30.0	30.6	2.1	2.0	2.5
Transport, Storage & Communication	5.0	5.0	5.0	0.4	0.4	0.3
Wholesale & Retail Trade, Restaurants & Hotels	7.2	7.3	7.5	0.7	0.5	0.7
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate & Business Services	4.4	4.4	4.6	0.3	0.3	0.5
Government Services	10.6	10.6	10.8	0.5	0.6	0.9
Community, Social & Personal Services	1.9	1.8	1.8	0.1	0.1	0.1
Producers of Private Non-profit Services	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0

Source: Ghana Statistical Service
 *Target, ** Proj. Outturn

Fiscal Developments and Outlook for 2007

131. Mr. Speaker, for the first three quarters of the 2007 fiscal year, (January to September 2007), the **overall Budget balance** showed a deficit of GH¢767.2 million equivalent to 5.5 per cent of GDP, compared with a deficit of GH¢522.7 million equivalent to 4.5 per cent of GDP recorded in the corresponding period of 2006.
132. The **domestic primary balance** also recorded a deficit of GH¢578.9 million, equivalent to 4.1 per cent of GDP, compared with a deficit of GH¢387.0 million equivalent to 3.4 per cent of GDP during the same period of 2006.
133. Mr. Speaker the details of the performance for the first nine months of the implementation of the 2007 Budget are presented below.

Receipts

134. The provisional fiscal outturn for the period under review indicates that **total receipts** amounted to GH¢4,254.4 million, representing 30.4 per cent of GDP. This compares with an outturn of GH¢3,236.8 million (28.2 per cent of GDP) registered for the same period during 2006. This indicates a 31.4 per cent increase over the outturn for the corresponding period in 2006.
135. Mr. Speaker, given the performance of receipts for the first nine months of the year, total receipts for the whole year are projected at GH¢5,901.2 million, 5.7 per cent lower than the budget estimate of GH¢6,259.0 million.
136. **Total revenue** for the period under review amounted to GH¢2,619.1 million (18.7 per cent of GDP). The outturn indicates

a 55.1 per cent increase over the outturn for the same period in 2006. Discounting for the exemptions and non-tax revenue retention, the outturn shows a 34.6 per cent increase over the outturn for the same period in 2006. For the year as whole, total revenue is projected at GH¢ 3,566.7 million, against a budget estimate of GH¢3,762.6 million.

137. Out of the total revenue, **tax revenue** for the first nine months of the year was robust, amounting to GH¢2,381.2 million (17.0 per cent of GDP), against an outturn of GH¢1,542.5 million (13.4 per cent of GDP) recorded during the corresponding period in 2006. Total tax revenue for the year is projected to be GH¢3,195.8 million, 7.0 per cent lower than the budget estimate of GH¢3,435.7 million.
138. **Direct taxes** which comprise personal, self employed, companies and others such as royalties and airport tax, amounted to GH¢666.6 million, 41.8 per cent higher than the outturn recorded during the corresponding period in 2006. Direct taxes for the 2007 fiscal year are projected to be GH¢896.4 million marginally higher than the budget estimate of GH¢887.7 million.
139. For the period under review, **indirect taxes** made up of Value Added Taxes, petroleum and excise taxes amounted to GH¢955.1 million. The outturn is a 26.3 per cent increase over the outturn recorded during the corresponding period in 2006. Indirect taxes are projected to be GH¢81.9 million lower than the budget estimate of GH¢1,412.5 million.
140. **Domestic VAT** for the first nine months of the year amounted to GH¢251.6 million. The outturn was 58.1 per cent higher than the outturn for the corresponding period in 2006. Given the outturn, domestic VAT is projected to be GH¢301 million at the end of 2007.

141. Mr. Speaker, **Import VAT** for the period under review amounted to GH¢349.7 million. The outturn is 45.5 per cent higher than the outturn for the corresponding period in 2006. As a result of the performance of import VAT, it is projected to be GH¢537.1 million, GH¢54.2 million lower than the budget estimate for 2007.
142. The outturn for **International Trade Taxes** for the three quarters was GH¢389.4 million, a 23.2 per cent increase over the outturn for the same period in 2006. International trade taxes are projected to be GH¢629.3 million at the end of 2007.
143. **National Health Insurance Levy (NHIL)** for the first three quarters of the year amounted to GH¢187.0 million, against an outturn of GH¢97.5 million recorded during the same period in 2006.
144. **Total Non-Tax Revenue** receipts for January to September amounted to GH¢237.9 million. Of this amount, GH¢163.5 million was retained by the MDAs and GH¢74.4 million was lodged into the consolidated fund. The outturn for lodgment was about 53.0 per cent higher than the amount lodged in the corresponding period in 2006. Non-Tax revenue receipts are expected to reach GH¢356.9 million at the end of 2007.
145. Mr. Speaker, **total grant** disbursement from our development partners for the period under review amounted to GH¢575.3 million. The outturn reflects a 7.5 per cent increase over the outturn for the same period in 2006. **Multilateral HIPC Assistance** recorded an 18.1 per cent increase over the level recorded during the same period in 2006, and **programme grants** recorded about 31.7 per cent increase over the outturn for the same period in 2006. The outturn for **project grants** was GH¢151.7 million, about 15.0 per cent lower than the outturn for the corresponding period in 2006. Total grants are projected to

be GH¢185.4 million lower than the budget estimate of GH¢894.5 million, reflecting a general declining trend in aid assistance.

146. **Total loans** amounted to GH¢ 357.3 million, 5.7 per cent higher than the outturn for the same period in 2006. **Project loan disbursements** were GH¢255.4 million, compared to GH¢178.5 million during the corresponding period in 2006. **Programme loans** for the period under review amounted to GH¢101.9 million against an amount of GH¢131.9 million recorded in the same period of 2006. Total loan disbursements are projected at GH¢446.3 million for the year, out of which programme loans are projected at GH¢101.9 million and project loans at GH¢ 344.4 million.
147. Mr. Speaker, estimated **divestiture receipts** for the first three quarters of the year did not materialise. However, it is projected that by the end of 2007, an amount of GH¢252.9 million will be realised from the partial sale of Government shares in GOIL, SIC, WESTEL and Ghana Telecom.
148. **Exceptional Financing** of the budget, which is predominantly debt relief from our bilateral partners amounted to GH¢70.6 million for the period under review, about 5.4 per cent lower than the amount recorded for the same period in 2006. Debt relief from our bilateral partners, estimated at GH¢100.0 million at the end of the year, is expected to be lower by GH¢17.7 million.

Payments

149. Mr. Speaker, the provisional outturn for **total payments** for the first nine months of the year, comprising **statutory and discretionary payments** was GH¢4,254.4 million. This outturn compares to GH¢3,236.8 million recorded for the corresponding period in 2006. The details are outlined below.

Statutory Payments

150. **Total statutory payments** which includes interest payments, amortization, transfers to households, and statutory funds, amounted to GH¢1,232.0 million. The outturn indicates a 46.4 per cent increase over the outturn for the same period in 2006. For the year as a whole, total statutory payments are projected at GH¢1,548.6 million, compared to budget estimate of GH¢1,481.8 million.
151. **External Debt Service** for the period under review amounted to GH¢302.6 million (2.2 per cent of GDP), against an outturn of GH¢240.3 million (2.1 per cent of GDP) for the corresponding period in 2006. The principal component of the external debt due was GH¢216.5 million, representing a 19.4 per cent increase over the outturn for the same period in 2006. Payments on external interest amounted to GH¢86.1 million, GH¢27.2 million higher than the outturn recorded during the corresponding period in 2006. Total external debt service is projected at GH¢354.8 million for the year as a whole, of which principal and interest payments are projected at GH¢256.4 million and GH¢98.4 million respectively.
152. Mr. Speaker, **domestic interest payments**, amounted to GH¢192.7 million (1.4 per cent of GDP), 0.9 per cent lower than the outturn during the same period in 2006. Domestic interest payments due for the whole year is projected at GH¢252.7 million.
153. **Transfers to households**, consisting of **pensions, gratuities**, and **social security** contributions by Government on behalf of public servants, collectively amounted to GH¢196.9 million. This compares with a payment amounting to GH¢169.9 million made during the corresponding period in 2006. Together these

expenditure items are projected to register an outturn of GH¢530.0 million by the end of 2007.

154. During the first nine months of the year the **Road Fund and other Petroleum-Related Funds** received a total of GH¢76 million, of which GH¢74.0 million was disbursed to the Road Fund. The outturn for the year as a whole is projected to be equal to the budget estimate of GH¢114.4 million.
155. Payments into the **District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF)** for the period under review amounted to GH¢104.9 million, indicating an increase of 33.7 per cent over the outturn for the same period in 2006, while transfers into the **Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund)** amounted to GH¢103.7 million. Transfers into the **National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF)** was GH¢255.3 million. As a result of the projected lower-than-budgeted tax revenues, it is expected that by the end of the year, transfers into the DACF, the GETFund and the NHIF, will amount to GH¢146.2 million, GH¢150.5 million and GH¢255.3 million, respectively.

Discretionary Payments

156. Mr. Speaker, **total discretionary payments** amounted to GH¢3,022.4 million (21.6 per cent of GDP), against an outturn of GH¢3,236.8 million (28.2 per cent) obtained during the corresponding period of 2006.
157. Payments for **Wages and Salaries** amounted to GH¢1,031.8 million (7.4 per cent of GDP). The outturn for wages and salaries is projected to be GH¢1,376.8 million, equivalent to 9.8 per cent of GDP.

158. During the period under review **Administration (Item 2)**, recorded an amount of GH¢282.2 million, while **Service (Item 3)** registered GH¢101.3 million. These compare with amounts of GH¢226 million and GH¢87.3 million, respectively, recorded during the same period in 2006. Total expenditure on Administration is projected to be 10.1 per cent lower than the budget estimate of GH¢356.7, while expenditure on service is projected to be 1.5 per cent higher than the budget target of GH¢99.8 million.
159. Mr. Speaker, **Total Investment Outlays (Item 4)** amounted to GH¢703.5 million (5.0 per cent of GDP), made up of GH¢296.4 million from domestic sources, and GH¢ 407.1 million from foreign sources. The outturn for total investment indicates a 40.0 per cent increase over the outturn recorded during the corresponding period in 2006. Total Investment outlays for the year are projected to be GH¢971.5 million, 40.7 per cent lower than the estimated amount in the 2007 Budget Statement.
160. **MDRI-financed expenditures** amounted to GH¢133.4 million. For the year as a whole, MDRI-financed expenditures are expected to be broadly in line with the budget estimate of GH¢159.9 million.
161. **HIPC-financed Expenditure** for the first three quarters of the year amounted to GH¢149.7 million, compared with GH¢132.4 million expended on HIPC-related projects and programmes during the same period in 2006. Expenditure on HIPC-financed projects and programmes is projected to be in line with the budget estimate of GH¢176.9 million.
162. Mr. Speaker, in the Supplementary Budget presented to this august House in July, an amount of GH¢287.0 million was budgeted for under **Reserve Fund**, for the purchase of crude oil, and also to set up an escrow account for the purchase of gas from

the West African Gas Pipeline. As at the end of the third quarter a total amount of GH¢113.8 million had been utilized from the reserve fund, mainly for the purchase of crude oil for the operations of the Volta River Authority (VRA). For the year as a whole an amount of GH¢160.8 million is projected to be utilized from the Reserve Fund.

163. **Other transfers**, made up of retention of internally-generated funds, safety net for deregulation, lifeline consumers of electricity and tax exemptions, amounted to GH¢369.6 million. These transfers are projected to amount to GH¢576.5 million by the end of 2007.

Clearance of Arrears and Liquidation of Commitments

164. Mr. Speaker, during the period under review a total amount of GH¢77.7 million was paid in respect of arrears clearance and liquidation of commitments carried over from 2006. The outturn for the period was made up of road arrears of GH¢15.9 million and non-road commitments of GH¢61.8 million. It is projected that payment for outstanding commitments will exceed the budget estimate of GH¢56.2 million by GH¢21.5 million.
165. Mr. Speaker, in 2003, Government made a commitment to ring-fence and pay over a five year period, the arrears of the GETFund and DACF that had accumulated over the years. These payments have been effected on a yearly basis and, Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to inform this House that in fulfillment of the promise, the last and final installments for these arrears, GH¢5.4 million and GH¢4.3 million for the DACF and the GETFund, respectively, have been fully liquidated.
166. **Domestic Financing** of the Budget for the first three quarters of the year amounted to a net borrowing of GH¢555.8 million. With

the expected inflow of divestiture receipts, it is projected that the domestic financing of the budget will register a net borrowing of GH¢75.2 million by the end of 2007.

Overall Budget Balance

167. Mr. Speaker, given the fiscal performance for the first nine months of the year and the projections that have been made for the end of the year, the overall budget balance is projected to record a deficit of GH¢559.0 million, equivalent to 4.0 per cent of GDP against the budget estimate of GH¢799.5 million, equivalent to 5.7 per cent of GDP.
168. The domestic primary balance is also projected to be a deficit equivalent to 3.9 per cent of GDP against the budget estimate of a deficit of 6.5 per cent of GDP. As a result, the main fiscal anchor - domestic debt-to-GDP in net terms - is projected at 11.4 per cent.
169. Mr. Speaker, the fortunate thing is that the deficit does not emanate from increased consumption expenditure. The NPP Government has implemented investments in high yielding infrastructure to grow the economy for higher wealth creation. Consequently, the projected underlying deficits without the financing from the international capital market and the corresponding investment expenditure is 2.6 per cent of GDP.
170. Government's effort at eliminating the electricity load shedding has been achieved, but at a great cost to the country. Candidly, the purchase of emergency thermal plants and, especially, the procurement of crude oil at high prices for the thermal plants, the importation of compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) for distribution free of charge, the purchase of prepaid meters, and the massive

injection of capital into energy sector investments, have all put a severe stress on our public finances.

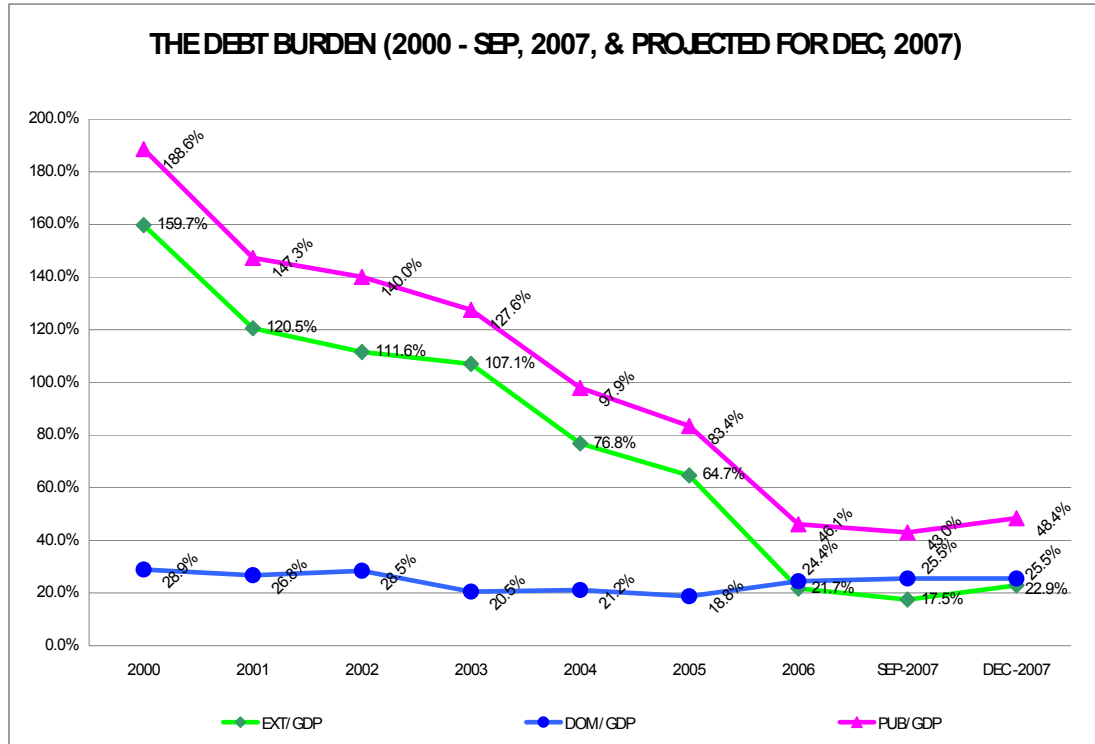
171. Mr. Speaker, without the increased expenditure on energy, some unanticipated, the budget deficit would have been even smaller at 1.6 per cent of GDP.

Developments in Public Debt

Public Debt

172. Mr. Speaker, the objectives of public debt management have been mainly to source for funds to satisfy Government's financial needs, including cash and liquidity requirements, at minimum cost, under an acceptable level of risk, and subject to an ultimate goal of long term debt sustainability. It is also to support a well functioning domestic capital market, and facilitate long term access to both domestic and international financial capital markets.
173. Mr. Speaker, the gross total public debt (external and domestic) as a percentage of GDP rose by about 9.0 per cent from the end 2006 figure of US\$5,915.6 million to US\$6,449.7 million as at the end of September 2007. It is, however, expected to increase to about US\$7,237.7 million by end December 2007 with a positive net resource flow including the US\$750 million international capital market funds. As a share of GDP, the total debt stock is expected to decline to about 48.4 per cent by end December 2007, compared to 50.9 per cent in 2006, and 188.6 per cent in 2000. The trend in the public debt as depicted in figure ...is consistent with Government strategy of reducing the rate of growth of the public debt.

Figure 2: The Debt Burden(2000 – Projected Dec, 2007



174. Following the substantial reduction in the external debt under debt relief initiatives, the external debt which until 2006 constituted over 80 per cent of public debt, will now constitute about 47 per cent of public debt as compared to 53 per cent for domestic debt by end December 2007.

External Debt

175. Mr. Speaker, Ghana’s total external debt including debt owed to the IMF stood at US\$ 2,637.0 million by end September, 2007, representing 17.6 per cent of GDP. In terms of creditor category, multilateral debt continues to dominate with about 60.4 per cent

of total external debt in spite of the substantial debt relief from MDRI. Bilateral debt constitutes 32.8 per cent with the remaining 6.8 per cent from commercial creditors. The World Bank continues to be the largest creditor, contributing not less than one third of the total external debt.

176. The currency composition of external debt, as in previous years, shows the dominance of the Special Drawing Rights (all SDR are repaid in the US\$) contributing about 44.1 per cent, 31.1 per cent for the US Dollar, 15.0 per cent for the Euro, 1.96 per cent for the Japanese yen, 1.6 per cent for the Chinese Yuan, and 6.24 per cent for other currencies. Given the relatively stable Cedi to the major currencies, no adverse risk is expected.

Table 7: Currency Composition in Percent of Total External Debt Stock (2000-2007)

CURRENCY COMPOSITION IN PERCENT OF TOTAL EXTERNAL DEBT STOCK (2000-2007)								
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	SEP-2007
Special Drawing Rights (SDR)	55.80	75.97	75.16	74.85	75.25	70.43	38.94	44.05
United States Dollar (USD)	12.72	15.63	15.41	14.48	13.85	14.28	35.53	31.13
Euro (EUR)	10.48	4.71	5.16	6.14	5.92	10.75	17.03	14.96
Great Britain Pound (GBP)	3.43	1.10	1.09	0.92	0.80	0.68	0.08	0.05
Japanese Yen (YEN)	16.08	2.33	2.50	2.51	2.60	2.21	1.21	1.96
Chinese Yuan Renminbi (CNY)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.11	1.63
Others	1.49	0.26	0.68	1.11	1.58	1.66	6.10	6.22

177. Mr. Speaker, currently the interest rate composition of the external debt is about 88.3 per cent fixed rate, 10.5 per cent floating rate and about 1.2 per cent interest free. Though there has been an increase in the floating rate debt (predominantly in Euribor) it is still well below the internationally accepted range of

25 per cent to 35 per cent and, therefore, does not pose any imminent risk in terms of the high fluctuations in floating rates.

New Aid Commitments

Loans

178. Mr. Speaker, Government will continue to seek external financing to support the growth agenda under GPRS II. Traditional creditors will remain the preferred source of borrowing.
179. Mr. Speaker, by end September 2007, Government had contracted thirteen (13) new medium to long-term loans from multilateral, bilateral and commercial sources totalling US\$1,400.9 million to undertake projects in Government's priority sectors, including Energy, Agriculture, Communication, Water and Health. The 65 per cent increase in commitments this year is mainly the result of the buyer credit component of US\$ 292 million loan signed with the Chinese Government for the Bui Dam Project, and the US\$ 750 million sovereign bond benchmark issue. This was part of our strategy to diversify and broaden the resource base while simultaneously paving the way for other local corporate institutions to access long term financing on the international capital market.

Grants

180. Mr. Speaker, Government as of September 2007, had mobilised 19 grant facilities in the amount of about US\$ 283.6million for development assistance. The amount which represents 11.7 per cent programme, and 88.3 per cent project grants, came to

support the budget and socially responsive sectors of the economy respectively.

Developments under Debt Relief Initiatives

The HIPC and MDRI Initiatives

181. Mr. Speaker, total projected HIPC resource for 2007 is about US\$236.7 million. By end September 2007, an amount of GH¢134.9 million (US\$125.1 million) from bilateral and multilateral creditors had been transferred into the HIPC account.
182. Following the commitment of the three multilateral creditors, namely the World Bank, IMF and the AfDF to the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI), an amount of about GH¢203.3 million (US\$225.4 million) has also been credited to the MDRI account at the Bank of Ghana. IMF relief was front-loaded totalling GH¢164.3 million (US\$176.1 million).

Domestic Debt

Sale of Treasury Securities (Auctions)

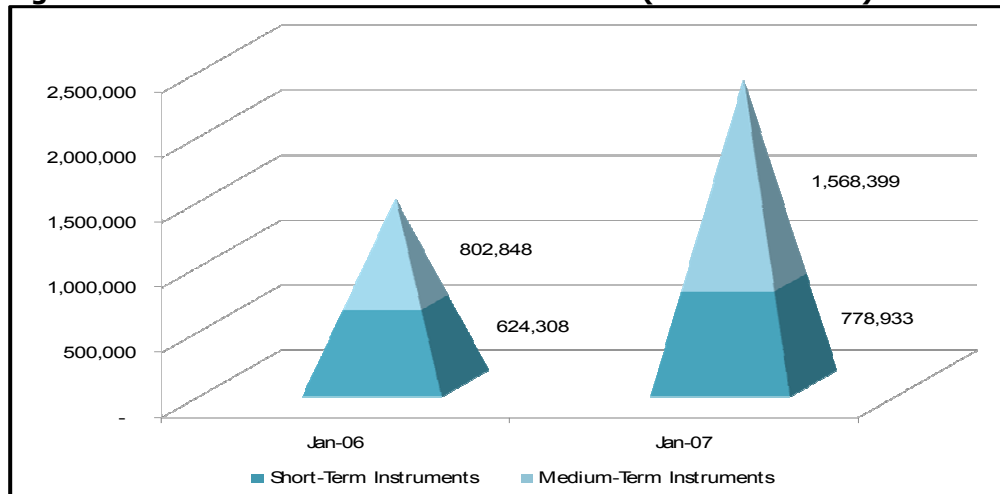
183. Mr. Speaker, the main goal of domestic debt management policy in 2007 was to deepen the money market, maintain the domestic debt stock at sustainable levels, and to improve on the achievement of 2006.
184. The domestic debt portfolio in 2007 was realigned by extending the maturity profile, diversifying the investor base to include non resident investors and promoting and facilitating the development of the domestic capital markets.

185. The total issue of Government of Ghana money market instruments from the beginning of the year to end September 2007 amounted to GH¢1,935.75 million. Compared to the figure of GH¢1,293.25 million for the same period in 2006, this signifies a 49.7 per cent increase.

Domestic Debt Stock

186. The marketable debt stock arising from the primary issuance of securities stood at GH¢2,347.33 million as at end September 2007. This represents an increase of 64.5 per cent over the end September 2006 stock and 42.1 per cent over the end 2006 stock of GH¢1,652.09 million.

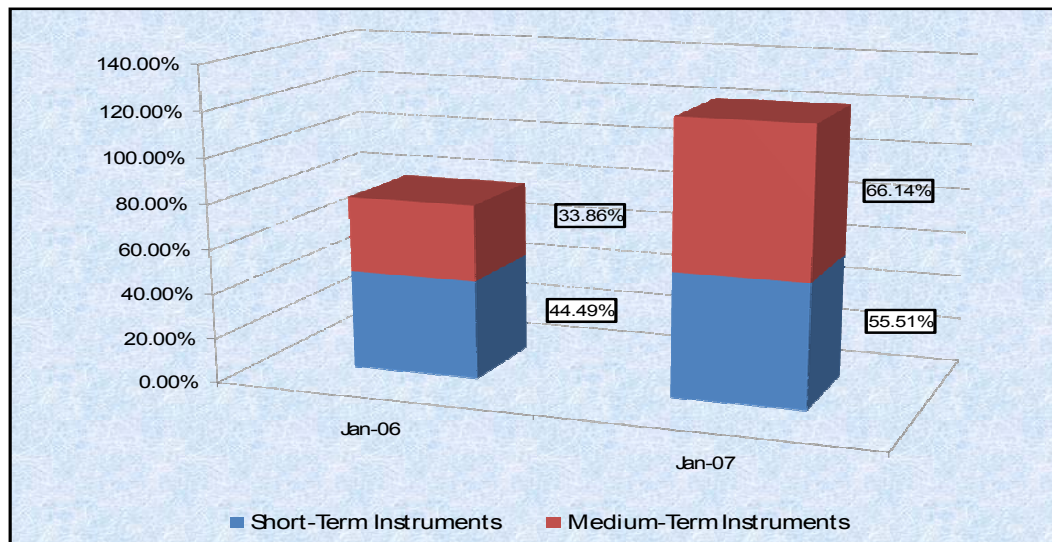
Figure 3: Government Marketable Instruments (in million cedis)



187. As part of prudent debt management strategy, government elongated the maturity profile of the outstanding stock by issuing securities of longer maturity. The medium term debt instruments increased by 66.14 per cent from GH¢802.85 million in September

2006 to GH¢1,568.40 million by end September 2007. This category of debt now constitutes about 62.8 per cent of the total government marketable debt, of which the 5-Year bond issue constituted about 9.3 per cent (See figure 3 for the breakdown of the total marketable instrument).

Figure 4: Government Marketable Instruments (Per cent)



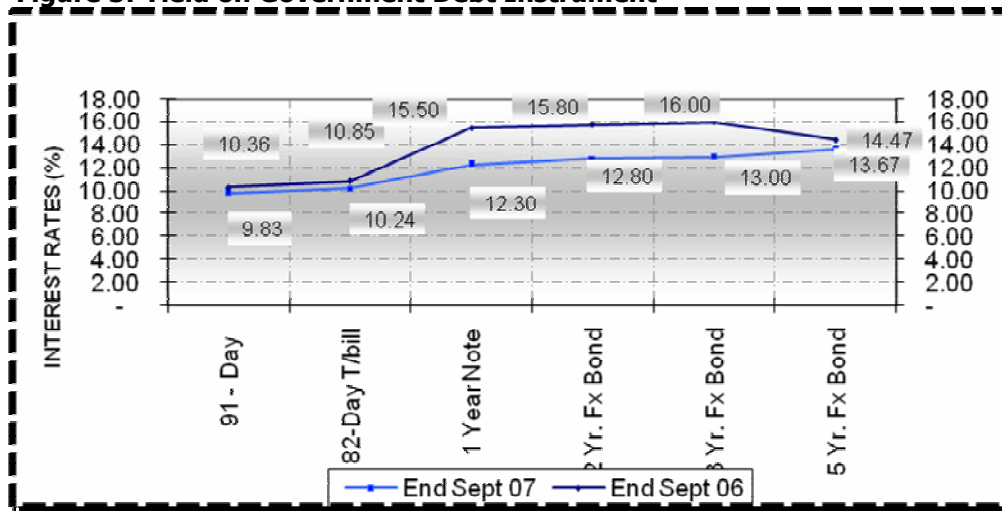
Structure of Domestic Debt by Holder

188. The main holders of government securities are the Banking Sector, the Non-Bank Sector and the Foreign Sector (Non – Residents). In terms of proportion, the Banking and Non-bank sectors' shares decreased from 80.4 per cent to 69.9 per cent and 19.6 per cent to 19.3 per cent respectively.

Interest Rate on Government Securities

189. The interest rates on marketable debt instruments continued with the downward trend over the period of review. The discount rate instruments, which is the 91 day T/bill & 182 day T/bill declined by 53 and 61 basis points to 9.8 per cent and 10.2 per cent respectively. Interest bearing instruments also witnessed significant decline. The 1-year note, 2, 3 and 5 year fixed bonds declined by 320, 300, 300 and 80 basis points to 12.3 per cent, 12.8 per cent 13.0 per cent and 13.7 per cent respectively. There has been an extension of the yield curve with the issue of the 5-year bond.

Figure 5: Yield on Government Debt Instrument



Developments in Monetary Policy

190. Monetary policy during the year has aimed at continuing the path of disinflation by steering inflation expectations towards the single-digit target range of 7-9 per cent.

Monetary Developments

191. Broad money including foreign currency deposits (M2+) grew by 37.5 per cent to GH¢4,962.6 million over the first eight months of the year compared with 25.8 per cent for the corresponding period of 2006.

Sources of Change in Total Liquidity

192. Broad money excluding foreign currency deposits (M2) rose by 37.6 per cent (GH¢1,127.8 million) mainly on account of currency outside banks (49.2 per cent or GH¢385.2 million) and quasi money (31.6 per cent or GH¢472.6 million). Foreign currency deposits also increased by 37.2 per cent (GH¢314.8 million) during the period.

Credit to Public Sector by Deposit Money Banks

193. The Deposit Money Banks' (DMBs') lending to the various sectors of the economy remained robust against the backdrop of heightened competition. The annual growth rate of DMBs' outstanding credit to public institutions during the month of August 2007 went up significantly by 87.3 per cent (GH¢356.1 million) compared with the 13.3 per cent (GH¢47.9 million) increase recorded for the same period of 2006. In real terms, however, public sector credit was up by 69.6 per cent during the review period, compared to the marginal increase of 0.7 per cent recorded a year ago. The public sector share of disbursed credit stood at 21.9 per cent during the review period, up from the 19.2 per cent level recorded during the same period in 2006.

Lending to the Private Sector by Deposit Money Banks

194. Mr. Speaker, the DMBs' remained upbeat in lending to the private sector. Total DMBs' outstanding credit to the private sector grew

by 59.9 per cent (GH¢1,348.5 million) on an annual basis in September 2007 up from the 38.9 per cent (GH¢542.1 million) registered during the same period in 2006. In real terms, total private sector credit rose by 44.4 per cent, from the 17.9 per cent level achieved in 2006.

195. The three top sectors in terms of allocated credit remained as follows: Services 29.1 per cent; Electricity, Gas & Water - 16.4 per cent; and Miscellaneous (including personal loans and mortgages - 15.9 per cent. Other sectors together accounted for 28.0 per cent.
196. The Households sub-sector under the private sector, experienced the most significant growth (105.5 per cent or GH¢283.5 million) in credit access.

Quality of Loan Portfolio

197. The quality of DMBs' outstanding credit to public and private institutions improved, as the level of non-performing loans dropped from 12.3% in 2006 to 6.1 per cent at the end of September 2007.

Developments in Interest Rates

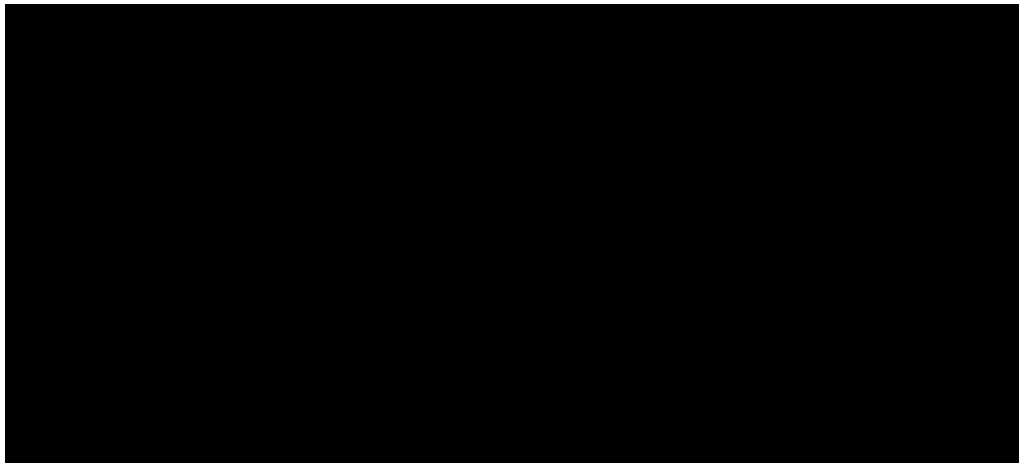
198. Mr. Speaker, in the money market, average interest rates followed a generally downward trend during the period. On the other hand, deposit money banks' average deposit rates trended upwards, while average lending rates were generally unchanged during the period. The Bank of Ghana Prime Rate was at 12.5 per cent at the end of September 2007.

Price Developments

Headline Inflation

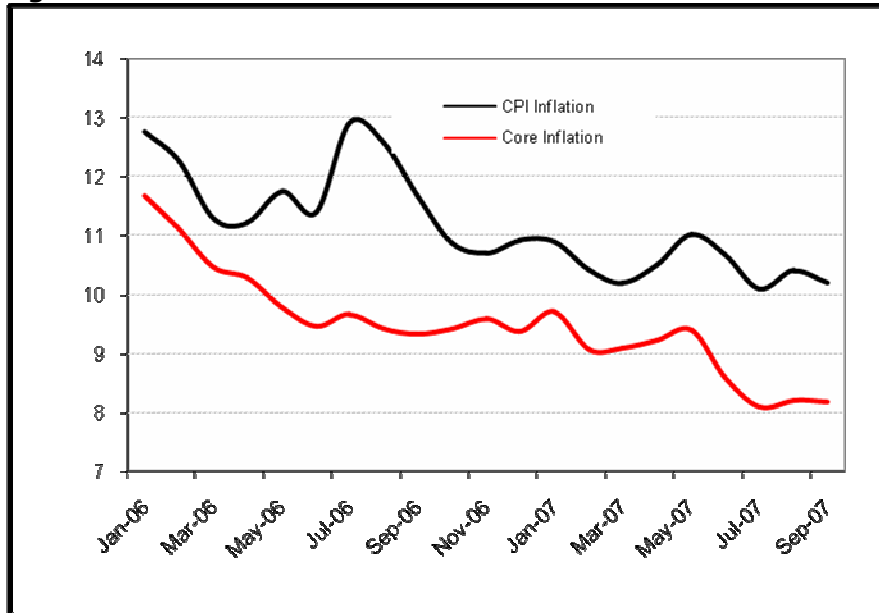
199. Notwithstanding the rising international oil prices in the first nine months of the year, inflationary pressures have evolved broadly in line with the path consistent with the end year target. Headline inflation, measured as year-on-year changes in the consumer price index, which began the year at 10.9 per cent, stood at 10.1 per cent at the end of October 2007, after peaking at 11.0 per cent in May 2007. Over the nine month period, food inflation which stood at 8.1 per cent at the beginning of the year, rose by 1.2 percentage points to 9.1 per cent at the end of the review period while the non-food declined by 2.2 percentage points to 10.9 per cent.

Figure 6: Headline Inflation (1999-2007)



200. The Bank of Ghana's measure of core inflation defined to exclude price changes of energy and utility items from the consumer basket, and which measures underlying inflation, has decreased from 9.4 per cent at the beginning of the year to 7.5 per cent in August and picked up by 0.7 percentage points to 8.2 per cent in September.

Figure 7: Core CPI Inflation



Producer Price Index (PPI)

201. The PPI index which measures the rate of change in the prices of goods and services bought and sold by producers indicated that the total index inched up by 0.83 per cent in August 2007, after increasing by 0.99 per cent in July 2007. This development was driven by increases of 0.81 and 1.29 per cent in the

manufacturing and mining sectors respectively. Producer prices in the Utilities sub-group remained unchanged.

Seasonally Adjusted CPI Inflation

202. Since May 2007, the overall movement of actual inflation showed a lower inflationary pressure than its estimated seasonally adjusted trend, therefore, reflecting the continued favourable seasonal impact on the general price level. This development continues to be driven mainly by the strong favourable seasonal impact on food prices.

Outlook for Inflation

203. The assessment at the end of the first nine months of the year suggests that inflation continues to trend downwards towards the upper single digit objective for the year.

Exchange Rate Developments

204. Trends in exchange rate developments indicate that the Ghanaian foreign exchange market has remained stable in 2007, notwithstanding some marginal fluctuations. For the nine months to September 2007, the Cedi lost value to the US Dollar by 2.0 per cent, and by 5.4 per cent and 9.0 per cent to the British Pound and the Euro respectively. In the same period in 2006, the Cedi had depreciated by 0.9 per cent against the US Dollar, 9.7 per cent against the Pound and 7.9 per cent against the Euro.

205. The higher depreciation of the Cedi vis-à-vis the Pound and the Euro during the review period could be explained by the relative strength of the Pound and the Euro in the international currency markets. Though the external sector position of the country has been strong, as reflected in higher export earnings, debt relief and improving remittances, the impact of the rising crude oil prices

and the effect of the energy crisis on the import bill culminated in the reduction of the level of gross international reserves.

External Sector Developments

Balance of Payments

206. The provisional estimate of the balance of payments for the nine months ended September 2007 indicates a deficit position of US\$411.0 million, compared with a deficit of US\$46.76 million, for the corresponding period of 2006. Projections to the end of the year, taking into account the proceeds from the sovereign bonds, points to an overall balance of payments surplus of about US\$649.24 million.

Reserve Assets

207. The stock of gross reserves at the end of the September 2007 was estimated at US\$1,812.22 million. This is expected to rise to about US\$2,394.26 million by the end of the year.

The Current Account

208. For the first nine months of the year, the current account recorded a deficit of US\$1,087.06 million compared with a smaller deficit of US\$812.67 million recorded for the corresponding period of 2006. It is projected that the current account deficit will reach US\$1,893.01 million by the end of 2007.

Trade Balance

209. For the period from January to September 2007, total exports amounted to US\$3,155.69 million and imports were US\$5,724.40 million, resulting in a trade deficit of US\$2,568.71 million.

210. **Cocoa** and **gold** remain the dominant export commodities. In the first nine months of the year, cocoa exports (beans and products) was estimated at US\$961.96 million, and is expected to reach US\$1,362.96 million by the end of the year. Similarly, **gold exports** amounted to US\$1,223.36 million, and are expected to reach US\$1,672.13 at the end of 2007, on account of higher export prices and increased volume of exports. **Timber exports** have remained quite flat and are expected to reach US\$240.94 million by the end of the year. 'Other' exports, an omnibus term used to describe all other exports are provisionally estimated at a value of US\$781.38 million for the first nine months of the year and are projected to be US\$1,016.59 million by the end of 2007.
211. Import of goods have been quite high within the year, accentuated by the energy crises that the economy experienced since the last quarter of 2006, the high and rising crude oil prices, and imports that were made in anticipation of Ghana@50 celebrations, as well as various equipment and materials for the construction industry. Imports of oil and related products are provisionally estimated at US\$1,478.26 million, and projected to reach about US\$2,168.76 billion at the end of 2007.
212. Import of non-oil merchandise is provisionally estimated at US\$4,246.14 million, and is expected to reach about US\$6,134.20 million by the end of 2007. In total, imports are estimated at US\$5,724.40 million for the period to September, and are projected to end the year at US\$8,302.96 million.

Unrequited Transfers

213. Net unrequited transfers have been provisionally estimated at US\$1,719.14 million for the first nine months of this year, but estimated to reach US\$2,422.54 million by the end of the year.

Re-denomination of the Cedi

214. The Bank of Ghana on July 1, 2007 re-denominated the cedi by setting ten thousand cedis to one Ghana Cedi, equivalent to one hundred Ghana pesewas (That is ₵10,000=Gh₵1=100Gp). The reason for adopting this policy decision was to help remove the significant dead weight burden that the old cedi regime placed on the economy. This took several forms such as the high transactions costs at the cashiers, general inconvenience and high risks involved in carrying loads of currency for transaction purposes, increasing difficulties in maintaining bookkeeping and statistical records and ensuring compatibility with data processing software, and the strain on the payments systems, particularly the ATMs. There are significant efficiency gains which are expected to enhance the way we do business.

SECTION FIVE: MACROECONOMIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE MEDIUM-TERM

215. Mr. Speaker, the macroeconomic objective of Government continues to be drawn from the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II), in line with its overall objectives. The programme of increased growth, within a stable macroeconomic environment continues to occupy top priority on Government's agenda.

216. Mr. Speaker, we wish to recall that the medium-term growth targets in the GPRS II is between 6 and 8 per cent per annum with the following assumptions:

- macroeconomic stability, especially, by containing inflation within a single digit range;
- a stable Ghana cedi exchange rate with prudent management that will keep the depreciation of the cedi below 4 per cent per annum;
- reduced cost of investment loans as incentives for stimulating investment in support of private sector-led growth;
- containment of fiscal deficits, and preventing them from being a major source of monetary instability and price inflation;
- a vigorous domestic revenue mobilization and its effective use in driving the prioritized development targets. This is to be attained through mostly administrative measures and enhancing the capacity of existing tax collection instruments and personnel;
- an efficient expenditure re-prioritization in favour of development expenditure and to ensure efficiency in the use of public resources; and

- growth in aggregate investment, especially in energy and infrastructure, including the use of Public Private Sector Partnerships.
217. Mr. Speaker, the accelerated growth of the economy will result from continued macroeconomic stability, a vibrant private sector, vigorous human resource development underpinned by deepening good governance and civic responsibility.
218. As indicated in the 2007 Budget Statement, Government will continue with policies that will sustain the gains made in macroeconomic stability by ensuring:
- prudent fiscal policy management;
 - a monetary policy that is flexible enough to respond to external shocks, promote growth and ensure price stability;
 - real interest rates that enhance effective mobilization of savings and make credits affordable to the private sector;
 - relatively stable real exchange rates that promote international trade.

Medium-Term Macroeconomic Framework

219. Mr. Speaker, Government's policies for the medium term are designed to raise the current growth rate of 6.3 per cent to 8 per cent by end 2009, and maintain it around that level over the medium term; to achieve an inflation target of 5 per cent by 2009; and preserve relative exchange rate stability, in a stable macroeconomic environment. The pursuit of continued consolidation of public finances will hold the overall fiscal deficit down to an average of 4 per cent of GDP and the gross public domestic and external debt maintained below 60 per cent of GDP.
220. The medium term framework has an estimated set of investments required to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

These investments are to be made in identified growth catalytic projects concentrated in energy, transportation, and ICT. They are designed to remove bottlenecks constraining output in the short-run and build the infrastructural foundation to facilitate private sector investment, and increase economic capacity and productivity.

Fiscal Policy

221. Government will continue to pursue the established policy priority of investing in human resource development, promoting the private sector, and deepening good governance, as anchors of social and political stability.
222. Fiscal consolidation over the last few years has entailed reforms with significant improvement in the tax system. These include:
 - introduction of NHIS tax on a value added basis;
 - reducing corporate income tax, and raising the minimum income tax threshold to the level of annual minimum wage;
 - eliminating a number of distorting special taxes and levies;
 - maintaining external tariffs within relatively low dispersions (between 0-20 per cent).
 - improving efficiency of the tax administration to enhance the yield of the existing tax system;
 - review of the import duty exemptions regime; and
 - further rationalization of expenditures, including transfers to public entities.
223. Improved administration of the tax system will enhance the revenue mobilization effort. Revenue as percentage of GDP, which averaged about 23.8 per cent in 2004 and 2005, went down to 22.3 per cent in 2006, and is projected to be maintained at around 23 per cent of GDP over the medium term. Fiscal

deficit (excluding divestiture) is estimated to fall from the 7.8% of GDP in 2006 to no more than 4.0 per cent by 2009, which will be maintained over the medium term.

224. Government is committed to implementing a **“Growth with Stability Compact”**. This is aimed at ensuring that stability is not compromised while scaling up investment in the critical growth areas.

225. Under this compact, Government will introduce:

- a fiscal rule using total public debt to GDP ratio as a quantitative target;
- a high level Value-For-Money Unit in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning to ensure proper selection of projects for inclusion in the public investment budget, and efficient use of funds;
- an enhanced public debt management strategy to ensure a rigorous debt sustainability analysis; and
- an enhanced Public Private Partnership (PPP) policy to encourage the private sector to participate in key infrastructure aspects of the accelerated growth agenda.

Monetary Policy

226. The Bank of Ghana (BoG) will direct monetary policy towards reducing the end period inflation to 7.0 per cent in 2008, and further down to 4 to 6 per cent by end 2009, and to commit to an inflation target not exceeding 5 per cent over the medium term. The Bank of Ghana has moved to a formal Inflation Targeting (IT) framework, which has been the operating framework over the past four years. This more formal arrangement with a commitment to pre-announced inflation targets and publication of forecasts will help anchor long-term inflation expectations. The

flexible exchange rate regime will be maintained with foreign exchange interventions used as an instrument to smooth out volatility in the exchange market.

227. A comprehensive legal and regulatory framework, and strengthened risk-based prudential supervision policies have been put in place to further deepen the financial sector and safeguard the safety and soundness of the financial system.

Structural Policies

228. To remove identified bottlenecks to facilitate growth, Government is committed to further reforms and institutional set-ups to underpin the growth strategy. Among other things, Government has put the following in place:

- a comprehensive energy policy to guide the critical investment in the sector to optimize the generation, transmission and distribution of energy. This will come with the rationalization of prices in the utilities sectors to ensure full cost recovery and facilitate private sector participation in energy delivery;
- reforms in the public sector to improve productivity and to rationalize public sector wages and compensation. A Fair Wages and Salaries Commission Act has already been passed by Parliament to kick-start the public sector reforms, with responsibility for ensuring wage settlements that are fair and justifiable in line with productivity gains and performance;
- Government is vigorously pursuing the privatization program to induce foreign direct investment to drive growth.

229. In sum, **Mr. Speaker**, the NPP Government has designed and intends to pursue consistent and predictable macroeconomic policies to provide the underpinnings for a private sector- led growth of the Ghanaian economy. These policies will build on the foundation already created over the past years by investing in growth catalytic infrastructure to create space and improve incentives for private sector development in a competitive market economy. These policies and structural reforms are expected to induce investments needed to boost productivity and expand output in line with the objectives of becoming a middle income country by 2015.

Macroeconomic Policies, Strategies and Targets for 2008

230. Mr. Speaker, the three thematic areas of Private Sector Development; Human Resource Development; Good Governance and Civic Responsibility; will continue to anchor the 2008 economic and financial policies. To this end, Government will seek to accelerate the Growth Agenda outlined in the GPRS II, which stresses the importance of growth for wealth creation and sustainable poverty reduction.

231. This requires a scaling-up of the resource envelope to provide for investments in energy, roads, railways, information and communications technology.

232. For 2008 in particular, and the medium term in general, attention will be focused on increased revenue mobilisation; continued strengthening of public expenditure management including public sector wages; and privatization of SOEs.

233. Mr. Speaker, these assumptions will continue to inform the annual budget and our medium-term macroeconomic targets. In

consideration, therefore, the following macroeconomic targets have been set for 2008:

- a real GDP growth of at least 7.0 per cent ;
- an end period inflation rate of between 6.0 and 8.0 per cent;
- an average inflation of 7.0 per cent;
- accumulation of international reserves of the equivalence of at least three months of import cover; and
- an overall budget deficit of 4.0 per cent of GDP

234. Mr. Speaker, conscious of its implications to the budget deficit, we will pursue a prudent use of resources from the borrowing from the international capital market to achieve our growth objective. The conflicts in policy objective of increasing growth and at the same time maintaining a sustainable fiscal deficit will have to be well managed.

235. The use of HIPC and MDRI inflows, concessional funding from our development partners and the proceeds from the Sovereign bonds floated on the international capital market are also expected to supplement domestic resource mobilization.

236. Mr. Speaker, the main challenges facing our macroeconomic objectives are the high oil prices in the international market. In addition, the other dimensions of the energy crisis still linger on. As a result of the shift in the generation mix in favour of thermal generation, the Volta River Authority (VRA) will be required to purchase more cargoes of oil to operate its thermal plants. This has serious consequences for the country's fiscal outlook and, indeed, foreign exchange reserves.

237. Mr. Speaker, Government will continue to maintain very healthy relations with the international financial institutions, the international financial markets, private sector operators and

development partners in general. We believe that this will enable us mobilise the optimal mix of resources to achieve our growth agenda.

Outlook for Growth in 2008

238. Mr. Speaker, real GDP is targeted to grow at 7.0 per cent, in 2008. The target growth rate is expected to be propelled by a 5.0 per cent growth in agriculture, a 9.2 per cent growth in industry, and a 7.3 per cent growth in Services.

239. Growth in the **Agriculture sector** is expected to be driven by a strong growth in crops and livestock production (5.5 per cent). In the **Industry sector**, growth is expected to be driven by Electricity and water (22.0 per cent), while in the **Services sector**, Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Business services (13.0 per cent) is projected to lead the growth in 2008.

Resource Mobilisation and Allocation For 2008

Resource Mobilisation

240. Mr. Speaker, the **total resource envelope** connoted as **total receipts** for the 2008 fiscal year is projected at GH¢7,107.2 million, equivalent to 43.6 per cent of GDP. **Domestic revenue**, consisting of tax and non-tax revenue is projected at GH¢4,763.2 million.

241. **Total tax revenue** comprising all tax revenue from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Customs Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS) and Value Added Tax Service (VATS) is projected at GH¢3,973.8 million, representing 24.4 per cent of GDP.

242. Out of the projected tax revenue, **direct taxes** are estimated at GH¢1,112.4 million, accounting for 28.2 per cent of total tax

revenue. This amount indicates a 24.1 per cent increase over the 2007 projected actual collection.

243. The projected growth in direct taxes is the result of measures put in place to broaden the tax base, computerisation of district offices of the IRS and increased enforcement actions, among others.
244. **Indirect taxes** are expected to increase from the 2007 projected level of GH¢1,330.6 to GH¢1,548.5 million in 2008. This is made up of GH¢1,000.1 million for total VAT with petroleum and excise taxes yielding GH¢490.0 million and GH¢58.3 million, respectively.
245. **International Trade taxes**, comprising import and export duties, are projected at GH¢746.3 million, representing 4.6 per cent of GDP and an 18.6 per cent increase over the 2007 projected outturn. Out of the projected amount for 2008, import and export duties are projected to yield GH¢672.8 million and GH¢73.5 million, respectively.
246. **The National Health Insurance Levy** is projected to yield an amount of GH¢235.4 million, representing 1.4 per cent of GDP.
247. Mr. Speaker, **Non-Tax Revenue** is projected at GH¢424.0 million, equivalent to 2.6 per cent of GDP. Out of this amount, GH¢299.2 million is estimated to be retained by the MDAs and GH¢124.8 million is projected to be lodged for general government use.
248. **Grants** from donors are projected at GH¢853.4 million. This is made up of **Project** and **Programme grants** of GH¢514.8 million and GH¢201.0 million, respectively. **Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) Assistance** from multilateral institutions

and, **Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI)**, are expected to yield GH¢81.9 million and GH¢55.6 million respectively.

249. **Project** and **Programme Loans** are estimated at GH¢485.3 million and GH¢136.2 million, respectively.
250. **Divestiture Receipts** are projected at GH¢275.7 million, representing 1.7 per cent of GDP.
251. **Exceptional financing** made up of HIPC relief from our bilateral partners is projected at GH¢77.5 million.
252. Mr. Speaker, Ghana has successfully accessed the **International Capital Market**, by raising US\$750 million equivalent to GH¢713.1 million, through the issue of a sovereign bond.
253. An amount of US\$207.5 million, equivalent to GH¢193.9 million of the amount has been earmarked for specific energy and road projects in 2007. The remaining amount of US\$542.5 million, equivalent to GH¢515.8 million, is earmarked to be utilised in 2008, also for specific projects in the energy, roads and railways sectors.

Payments

254. Mr. Speaker, total payments for 2008 is projected at GH¢7,107.2 million. Out of this amount, GH¢1,728.9 million, equivalent to 10.6 per cent of GDP is estimated for statutory payments, and GH¢5,378.2 million is projected to be used for discretionary payments.

Statutory Payments

255. Mr. Speaker, **Statutory payments**, comprising all expenditure items which are mandatory, are projected at GH¢1,728.9 million.
256. **External Debt Service** is estimated at GH¢293.2 million, out of which interest payments are GH¢114.2 million.
257. **Domestic interest payments** for the 2008 fiscal year are projected to be GH¢352.3 million.
258. Mr. Speaker, Central Government transfers into the **District Assemblies Common Fund** and **Ghana Education Trust Fund** are estimated to be GH¢234.3 million and GH¢163.0 million, respectively.
259. It is estimated that an amount of GH¢235.4 million will be transferred to the **National Health Insurance Fund** in 2008. An amount of GH¢129.2 million is projected to be transferred into the **Road Fund**, while GH¢3.5 million will be transferred into the **Petroleum-related Fund**, for the funding of exploration and other petroleum-related activities.
260. **Transfers to Households**, which is made up of an amount of GH¢127.4 million for **Pensions**, GH¢58 million for **Gratuities** and GH¢132.7 million for **Social Security** contributions by Government on behalf of its employees, will amount to GH¢318.0 million, equivalent to 2.0 per cent of GDP.

Discretionary Payments

261. Mr. Speaker, **total discretionary payments** is estimated at GH¢5,378.2 million, equivalent to 33.0 per cent of GDP, and 75.7 per cent of total payments.

262. Out of this amount, **personal emoluments** is estimated to be GH¢1,559.9 million, representing 9.6 per cent of GDP, 32.7 per cent of domestic revenue, and 29.0 per cent of total discretionary payments.
263. Mr. Speaker, **Administration and Service (Items 2 and 3)** expenses for MDAs are estimated at GH¢385.6 million and GH¢120.6 million, respectively. The two together represent 3.1 per cent of GDP, 10.6 per cent of domestic revenue, and 9.4 per cent of discretionary payments.
264. **Domestic-Financed Investment** (excluding those financed from statutory funds) are projected to be GH¢745.8 million. Out of this amount, GH¢515.8 million which was borrowed from the International Capital Market is earmarked for specific projects in the energy, roads and railways sectors.
265. An amount of GH¢1,000.2 million, equivalent to 6.1 per cent of GDP and 18.6 per cent of total discretionary expenditures is estimated for **Foreign Financed Investment**.
266. **Other transfers** are estimated at GH¢679.2 million, out of which GH¢13.4 million will be used to **mitigate the impact of petroleum price liberalization**, while an amount of GH¢10.0 million has been set aside projected for reimbursement to ECG in respect of subsidies to lifeline consumers of electricity. An amount of GH¢299.2 million of internally generated funds is expected to be retained by MDAs, while import duty exemptions are estimated at GH¢356.6.
267. Mr. Speaker, as has been the practice, 20 per cent of debt relief from the **HIPC debt relief initiative** will be used for the reduction of domestic debt. The remaining 80 per cent will be distributed to MDAs, MMDAs and other institutions for the

implementation of activities aimed at reducing poverty and improving the economic and social conditions of Ghanaians. In 2008, the 80 per cent of HIPC relief to be distributed is estimated to be GH¢127.6 million, while **MDRI-financed expenditure** is projected at GH¢55.6 million.

268. Mr. Speaker, an amount of GH¢243.7 million has been set aside in a **reserve fund** for the purchase of crude oil, payment of judgment debts and setting up of an escrow account for the purchase of gas from the West African Gas Pipeline. Additionally, an amount of GH¢25 million has been earmarked in the Reserve fund for **disaster management**, particularly in northern Ghana.
269. Mr. Speaker, the 2008 budget results in a net domestic debt repayment of GH¢382.4 million equivalent to 2.3 per cent of GDP.

Overall Budget Balances

270. Mr. Speaker, as a result of the revenue and expenditure projections indicated above, the 2008 budget envisages an overall budget deficit equivalent to 4.0 per cent of GDP.
271. The domestic primary balance is expected to be a deficit equivalent to 1.7 per cent of GDP.
272. Mr. Speaker, the domestic-debt-to GDP ratio continues to be the fiscal anchor, and we will keep monitoring the target to ensure that this remains sustainable over the medium to long term. The net domestic-debt-to GDP ratio is projected to be 8.0 per cent in 2008 declining from a projected 12.0 per cent in 2007. It is estimated that the gross domestic-debt-to GDP ratio will go down from the projected 21.2 per cent in 2007 to about 16.0 per cent in 2008.

273. The fiscal outlook is critical to Government in achieving the objective of maintaining long-term fiscal and debt sustainability. We believe that the underlying overall budget deficit is still sustainable in 2008 and in the medium term.
274. Government is aware of the need to maintain prudence, and to safeguard the fiscal stance against contingent liabilities stemming from the rationalization of the public sector. Government is committed to managing and preserving the legacy of the macroeconomic gains achieved thus far, particularly, with respect to the fiscal consolidation, and continued track record of accomplishment in all areas – governance, respect for the rule of law, property rights and a liberal economic system where the private sector plays a key role.

Price and Monetary Outlook

275. The broad macroeconomic and financial programme objectives for 2008 require that inflation reduces from its current level of 10.1 per cent (at the end of October) to a target range of 6-8 per cent in 2008 and reduce further to 4-6 per cent in the medium term. Bank of Ghana would continue to implement monetary policies aimed at steering inflation expectations towards the mid single digit range and to ensure an optimal liquidity position which is consistent with the macroeconomic objectives for 2008. Among the key challenges to the forecast for 2008 remain the escalating world crude oil prices and the consequent pass through to domestic costs and dynamics in the labour market.

External Outlook

276. Government policy on the external sector will continue to focus on building up enough reserves to cover at least three months of imports of goods and services. Policies introduced to improve the

productivity of the cocoa sector over the past few years will continue to sustain the increased trend in export revenue. In order to encourage more private inward remittances, the gains achieved in the general macroeconomic environment will be consolidated, and all the issues associated with official transfer charges will be streamlined.

277. The projections of the balance of payments (BOP) for 2008 indicate a growth rate of 15.9 per cent in exports to a level of about US\$4,973.66 million, while at the same time imports are projected to grow marginally by about 4 per cent to US\$8,633.63 million in 2008, resulting in a projected narrowing of the trade deficit US\$3,659.97 million in 2008.
278. It is expected that there will be a slow down in imports for two reasons. First, oil-related imports are likely to go down in both volume and value when we begin to access cheaper natural gas from the West African Gas Pipeline. Second, with the national power crises now seemingly under control, imports of merchandise that relate to energy provision are expected to decline.
279. In view of the recent developments in the international financial markets vis-à-vis Ghana, we expect international finance to begin to have a greater impact on the growth prospects of the country. At the same time, we expect a sharp rise in income to non-residents when coupon payments begin. As a result, the deficit in the income account will somewhat begin to grow.
280. The unrequited transfers account will remain in surplus and, generally, prospects for the achievement of our external sector objectives in the medium-term look bright.

SECTION SIX: **SECTORAL PERFORMANCE AND OUTLOOK**

Private Sector Competitiveness

281. Mr. Speaker, the focus of private sector competitiveness under the GPRS II is to ensure accelerated growth through modernised agriculture and led by a vibrant private sector. To achieve this key objective, Government's policy direction will be geared towards improving access to global and regional markets, enhancing efficiency and accessibility to national markets, improving the business and investment environment for agriculture - led growth, developing agro-industries and support services and developing additional sectors to enhance employment creation and income generation potentials

282. The MDAs whose activities will enhance the capacity of the private sector as a partner for growth are the following:

- Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA)
- Ministry of Lands, Forestry and Mines (MLFM)
- Ministry of Energy (MOE)
- Ministry of Trade, Industry, PSD and PSI (MOTI, PSD & PSI)
- Ministry of Tourism and Diasporan Relations (MTDR)
- Ministry of Fisheries (MOF)
- Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing (MWRWH)
- Ministry of Transportation (MOT)
- Ministry of Communication (MOC)
- Ministry of Harbours and Railways (MHR)
- Ministry of Aviation (MOA)

Ministry of Food and Agriculture

283. Mr. Speaker, the goal of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) is to develop a progressive, dynamic and viable agricultural economy that will ensure food security, (vulnerability and emergency preparedness), income growth and hence poverty reduction.

284. MOFA is tasked to promote sustainable agriculture and thriving agribusiness through research and technology development, effective extension and other support services to farmers, processors, and traders for an improved human livelihood.

Performance in 2007

Crops Sub-Sector

285. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry under the Food Security objective continued to supply quality seeds and planting materials to farmers to boost increases in crop production. Under its cereal programme, the Grains and Legumes Development Board (GLDB) produced 70mt, 16mt and 2mt of maize, rice and sorghum foundation seeds, respectively, for the production of 3,500 ha of certified seeds of maize and 400 ha each of rice and sorghum seeds by seed growers. In addition, 20 metric tonnes of rice foundation seeds and 405 metric tonnes of certified rice seed is expected to be harvested by December, 2007 under the Nerica Rice Development Project (NRDP). Under the legumes production programme, GLDB also made available 16mt and 40mt of cowpea and soybean foundation seed to farmers for the production of certified seeds.

286. Mr. Speaker, to increase the production of root and tuber crops in the country, varietal trials for cassava, yam, cocoyam, sweet

potato and Frafra potato are being carried out at various locations under the Roots and Tubers Improvement and Marketing Project (RTIMP). This is to select high yielding varieties for multiplication and distribution to farmers. Also, GLDB produced about 100,000 high yielding plantain suckers for farmers to plant 60 ha of plantation for the multiplication of plantain planting material. These farmers were trained on improved technology for plantain production through demonstrations and provision of production guides.

287. Mr. Speaker, effort has been made to increase the supply of seed and planting material for horticultural crops. To supply quality planting materials to farmers in the cashew industry, about 4mt of improved cashew seed nuts were procured from Benin for distribution to farmers for planting. Furthermore, to promote citrus cultivation, GLDB produced 20,000 citrus seedlings at the Afraku nursery in the Ashanti Region for supply to farmers for cultivation.
288. Mr. Speaker, in response to the high demand of MD2 pineapple variety on the world market, the Ministry supplied 1,000,000 plantlets of this variety to 20 nursery operators (farmers) for the production of 6,000,000 units of pineapple suckers for small holders.
289. Mr. Speaker, to improve on the export of the horticulture crops the rehabilitation of shed 9 at Tema Harbour has been completed and will be handed over to the private sector to manage. Under the Cashew Development Project, about 15,258 unproductive cashew trees were grafted with scions. The Ministry also facilitated the establishment of about 901.8ha of new cashew farms.

290. Mr. Speaker, to reduce post harvest losses and to improve the quality of local crops, 2 sites for the establishment of demonstration centres were identified for the construction of Pack Houses. In addition, the Post-harvest Management Unit (PHMU) of the Ministry procured 10,000mt grain pro-cocoon for distribution to farmers to improve the quality of stored grains. The Ministry has gone a step further to use the pro-cocoon technology to store 400 and 500 mt of maize at Ejura and Sunyani, respectively, as part of the National Strategic Stock.

Plant Protection and Regulatory Services

291. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry continued its surveillance on our borders to check locust build up and is holding strategic pesticides stocks in readiness to combat any unexpected outbreak of pests. Army worm infestation was discovered in Ejura Sekyedumasi in Ashanti Region and Nkoranza in the Brong-Ahafo Region, but this was promptly brought under control by the Plant Protection and Regulatory Services unit of the Ministry.

292. To reduce the frequency of interception of our agricultural exports to foreign markets, as well as ensuring compliance with phytosanitary regulations and pest free trade in agricultural produce, 52 Wood Packaging Materials (WPM) manufacturers were trained and accredited with certifications that meet International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) No. 15.

293. In order to control the Larger Grain Borer (LGB), 35,000 bio-agents of *terrestrius nigrescens* were produced and released. About 805,000 bio-agents of *typhrodromalus manihoti* have also been mass-produced and released.

294. Mr. Speaker, the Ghana Irrigation Development Authority (GIDA) has prepared a draft National Irrigation Policy, Strategy and Regulatory Measures that will support the food security objective of the Ministry. To increase public-private partnership, about 280 farmers from 14 irrigation schemes were provided with training in Joint Irrigation System Management (JISM). Civil works for the rehabilitation of the following schemes have also been completed:

- Weija
- Aveyime, Afife and Kpando Torkor;
- Sata and Akumadan
- Tanoso and Subinja
- Bontanga

295. Mr. Speaker, under the Small Scale Irrigation Project, an area of 100 ha has been developed and handed over to farmers for cropping while another 2,236.5 ha is being developed. The underground and surface water exploitation for irrigation purposes is also on course. In the Dangme West and Accra Metropolitan Assembly Districts 15 mechanised boreholes were drilled in a pilot programme.

Extension services

296. Mr. Speaker, to enhance the application of science and technology in food and agricultural development 18,000 demonstration plots were established to show to farmers the effect of modern inputs such as fertilizer on production. The outputs of this activity contributed to the storage of 900mt of maize as National Strategic Stock in Ejura and Sunyani as mentioned earlier.

Agricultural Mechanisation Services

297. Mr. Speaker, the use of animal traction as a viable mechanization option was vigorously promoted. A total of 120 farmers (including 50 women) were trained in the technology as trainer of trainers.
298. To enhance farmers' access to mechanized services, 900 tractors, 21 power tillers and 39 water pumps were assembled and distributed to individual farmers, farmer groups and district assemblies throughout the country.

Livestock Services

299. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry supplied improved breeds of livestock to farmers and also trained farmers in good animal husbandry practices. Key services and activities included the supply of 339 pigs, 608 sheep/goats and 59 cattle as breeding stock to farmers; awareness creation on rangeland management, establishment of 139 acres of fodder bank to ensure the availability of fodder and the production of stylosanthes seeds and training of 1,721 ruminant farmers (1,308 males and 413 females) on hay silage conservation and utilization of forage; and in the use of Urea to treat crop residue (rice straw and maize stover) for use as feed in the dry season.
300. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry has also secured permanent sites for the establishment of 2 communal grazing grounds at Maame Krobo in the Afram Plains District and Dawadawa in the Kintampo District. The Ministry also continued the training of farmers on how to recognize, prevent and control African Swine Fever (ASF); Foot and Mouth disease; Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia (CBPP); New Castle Disease (NCD) and Pestis de Petit Ruminants (PPR).

Outbreak of Avian Influenza

301. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry in collaboration with other relevant MDAs instituted appropriate measures to control the incidence and spread of the Avian Influenza. Due to the early warning system of the Veterinary Services Directorate (VSD), the Ministry detected and controlled the first outbreak of the Bird Flu in the country at Tema. Two other outbreaks at Sunyani and Aflao were also detected and contained.
302. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry took the following measures to control the spread of the disease; creating awareness in the public about the Bird Flu; movement control inside the outbreak district; sampling out; quarantine of outbreak districts; disinfection of affected premises; screening of all poultry farms within the outbreak districts and bio-security on poultry farms; and surveillance and monitoring of poultry farms and live birds markets within the outbreak districts. More importantly, an amount of about GH¢160,000 has been paid as compensation to affected poultry farmers.
303. Again, to control endemic poultry diseases such as New Castle, 5 million doses of gumboro vaccines and 14 million doses of live newcastle disease vaccines were procured and administered in the poultry industry. The Accra Veterinary Laboratory produced 4,250,000 doses of I2 vaccines for the control of New Castle Disease in village chicken.

Agricultural Financing

304. Mr. Speaker, on agricultural financing the Ministry in collaboration with Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) extended credit to a significant number of farmers under the National Livestock

Development Project and Cashew Development Project. A total sum of GH¢544,238.92 was disbursed as credit to farmer groups in production, storage, processing and marketing activities in the project districts.

Outlook for 2008

305. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will pursue its goal through the Second Food and Agriculture Sector Development Programme (FASDEP II) which seeks to achieve inter alia the following objectives:

- Food security
- Improved growth in incomes
- Increased competitiveness and enhanced integration into domestic and international markets
- Sustainable management of land and environment
- Application of science and technology in food and agriculture development; and
- Enhanced institutional coordination.

306. The Ministry's medium term targets are as follows:

- maintain self sufficiency in staple food production (maize, yam and cassava)
- increase production of rice and cowpea by 50 per cent respectively by 2010;
- secure 5 per cent of maize demand for human consumption, animal feed and seed as national strategic stocks;
- increase population of small ruminants (sheep and goats) and rural poultry (including guinea fowls) by 50 per cent by 2010;
- increase production of tree crops (oil palm, citrus, mangoes and cashew) by 5,000 hectares each by 2010;

- provide 66,400 youth farmers with entrepreneurial skills and farm plots by 2010;
- develop and implement national agricultural youth programme by December 2008
- train farmers, processors and exporters in the export sector in export production, processing and marketing by 2010; and
- empower 30 per cent of Ghanaian farmers to receive extension information through audio-visual aids by 2010.

Food Security

307. Mr. Speaker, under this objective the focus will be addressing food security issues through contingency planning, emergency preparedness including establishment of strategic stocks to address the negative effects of climatic change and natural disasters. The Ministry will pursue the following interventions to achieve this objective:
308. The Grains and Legumes Development Board (GLDB) will continue to provide improved seeds and planting materials to ensure increased food production. About 80 mt of foundation seeds of maize is planned to be made available to seed growers. In addition, 30 mt of rice and 10 mt of sorghum foundation seeds are targeted for production. A target of 25mt of cowpea, 50mt of soybean and 15mt of groundnut foundation seeds will also be cultivated by GLDB.
309. An estimated 720mt of certified seed will be procured from private seed growers for processing and storage by GLDB. Out of this quantity, GLDB will also store and manage 600mt of certified seeds of maize and other crops in 2008.
310. Mr. Speaker, to boost the production of yam, about 250,000 yam sets will be produced by GLDB. Again, about 500 ha of cassava

planting material will be established. Furthermore, the RTIMP will multiply 50 ha of breeder seed and identify and train 5 private commercial seed growers and distributors to develop market based planting materials production systems. The RTIMP will also support the distribution of certified planting material in 59 districts.

Agricultural Mechanisation

311. The Agricultural Engineering Services Directorate will continue the promotion of sustainable water harvesting and efficient water management by the installation of 22 tractor mounted drill rigs for underground water exploitation. Training will be provided for mechanics/technicians in ground water technology. About 11 tractor services centres in 11 strategic areas will be established to facilitate access to farm power machinery.
312. Mr. Speaker, as part of efforts to modernize agriculture in this country, the Ministry also plans to procure and distribute to farmers about 1000 tractors, 500 power tillers and 500 tractor mounted harvesters.

Pest Management

313. The RTIMP will strengthen the implementation of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) systems by establishing an effective capacity for biological control of common pests and disease of Roots and Tubers (R&T) by adopting appropriate control measures for the management of tuber root disease, Polyporous sulphurous and mass producing, releasing and monitoring the spread, establishment, and impact of 50,000 actives of *teretrius nigrescens* against the Larger Grain Borer (LGB) and 5 million actives of *typhlodromalus manohoti* against the Cassava Green mite (CGM) from 3 insectaries.

314. Mr. Speaker, in addition, the Ministry will equip and provide logistics for the running of 3 insectaries and conduct 6 pest and disease surveys, 30 fields in each of 3 zones (southern, mid and northern) of the country. It will also establish 20 IPM related Farmer Field Fora (FFF) in 5 districts for cassava, yam, sweet-potato and cocoyam.

Irrigation

315. Mr. Speaker, under the new National Irrigation Policy, MOFA will improve the operational efficiency of existing and new irrigation schemes to contribute to food security objective. This will be pursued by sensitizing and training 500 stakeholders in irrigation technology and providing marketing infrastructure such as drying floors, packing houses, farm tracks, among others, to facilitate production on irrigation schemes.

316. The Ministry will also facilitate the utilization of 10,000 ha under both formal and informal irrigation. This will be achieved by implementing the following activities:

- Training of 100 contractors in the construction and management of dams and dugouts
- Rehabilitating Tono Irrigation Scheme to put an area of 3,000 ha back into production
- Establishing about 5,000 ha farms using surface water extraction method along perennial rivers in the country;
- Completing the irrigation of 820ha of farmland under the Small Farms Irrigation Development Project;
- Completing 1,200ha under the Small Scale Irrigation Development Project;
- Rehabilitating of Nakori Dam in the Upper West Region to put about 81ha under irrigated crop production; and
- Sinking 5,000 boreholes in 5 regions in the country

317. Mr. Speaker, GIDA will continue to identify potential areas for irrigation and review existing studies for update of data and subsequent implementation through the review of feasibility studies for Accra Plains Irrigation Project. GIDA will conduct feasibility studies into surface water extraction irrigation to identify an area of 5,000ha, review feasibility studies of Kamba Irrigation Project in the Upper West Region and conduct detailed designs for a net area of 1,500ha. Furthermore, GIDA will create and update studies on culvert diversion in the Upper East and West Regions.

Strategic Stocks

318. Mr. Speaker, in order to respond adequately to the food needs of victims of natural hazards and other calamities, the Ministry will use the pro-cocoon technology to store about 53,000 mt of maize as national strategic stock. In addition, warehouses, dryers and other facilities of the former Ghana Food Distribution Corporation will be rehabilitated for use in the national buffer stock programme.

Improved Growth in Incomes

319. Mr. Speaker, the purpose of interventions for enhancing growth in incomes in the sector is to provide opportunities for diversification into cash crops and livestock, and for value addition on all commodities. Diversification will be pursued by the introduction of new commodities and creation of opportunities for value addition to primary commodities. The planned interventions are as follows:

Tree Crop Development

320. Mr. Speaker, to expand further on the area under cashew, the Cashew Development Project will procure additional 4mt of improved cashew seed nuts from the Republic of Benin for distribution to farmers. This will plant an additional 2,000 ha of cashew farms intercropped with food crops. The project will also supervise canopy substitution of 20,000 unproductive cashew trees and improve the performance of poorly maintained farms. The GLDB will again make available in 2008, 20,000 seedlings of citrus for the establishment of new plantations.

Livestock Subsector

321. Mr. Speaker, in the livestock sector, the main focus is to improve the animal protein intake of the average Ghanaian through the increase of livestock numbers. This will be achieved through various services to be provided by the Animal Production and Veterinary Service Directorates as well as the Livestock Development Project. The key services to be provided in 2008 include:

- rehabilitating 6 breeding stations (Babile, Ejura, Nungua and Armhia, Pong-Tamale and Kintampo)
- restocking breeding stations at Ejura and Kintampo with 50,000 sheep and goats for out breeders
- supplying 2000 small ruminants farmers with 100,000 sheep and goats; and monitor the performance of participating breeders
- facilitating the establishment of 150 acres of pastures (stylosanthes fields) by livestock farmers
- rehabilitating office blocks and existing quarantine stations at Paga, Zebilla, Mognori and Pusiga
- constructing 20 dugouts and 10 boreholes for selected communities in the project districts

- training of 7,000 livestock farmers in credit management and 20 livestock Specialist in meat processing
 - supporting 200 private sector operators with simple equipment to add value to livestock products through processing
322. The Veterinary Services Directorate (VSD) will provide health services by conducting TB and brucellosis screening of peri-urban dairy cattle and train 10 Veterinary Technicians in meat inspection. It will also train 3 Veterinarians in epidemiology, parasitology and entomology and continue to conduct active surveillance for Avian Influenza (Bird Flu). In addition, the VSD will produce 30 million doses of I2 vaccine for rural chicken, 400,000 doses of Antrax Spore vaccine and also train and equip 138 Veterinary Technicians as trainers of Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs).

Youth in Modern Agriculture Programme

323. Mr. Speaker, the main objective of the Youth in Modern Agriculture Programme is to provide gainful employment for the unemployed and underemployed youth, particularly those in the rural areas, so as to improve their living conditions and encourage them to stay in the rural areas instead of migrating to urban areas. The Programme will support at least 66,400 unemployed youth in each district to cultivate a minimum of 2 hectares each of economic trees, intercropped with food crops under the block farming system by 2010. Further, it will support at least 100 unemployed youth in each district to undertake dry season gardening by 2010 and to support at least 100 unemployed youth in each district, except the forest ecological zone, to undertake rearing of animals using improved methods by 2010.

Agricultural Credit

324. Mr. Speaker, under the Inland Valley Development Project, a total credit of GH¢2.43 million (US\$2.6 Million) will be disbursed to 360 beneficiary groups for production, processing and marketing activities. Similarly The Livestock Development Project will also disburse a total amount of GH¢4.94 million to 3,258 farmers for similar activities.

Export Marketing and Quality Awareness Project (EMQAP)

325. Mr. Speaker, MOFA aims to enhance Ghana’s comparative advantage and translate it into competitive advantage in producing the needed volumes and quality of commodities on a timely basis. The capacity of semi-commercial smallholders and commercial farms will be enhanced to produce for the international and expanding domestic markets, including agro-industry.

326. Mr. Speaker, under this Project, the Ministry will develop and validate standards for planting materials certification, carry out certification of nursery sites and distribute high quality seeds and other planting materials. It will further print and distribute certification materials, construct a residue analysis laboratory for GSB, rehabilitate a total of 125 km of Feeder Roads and train 240 farmers on production technology with emphasis on good agriculture practices.

327. Mr. Speaker, in order to meet the challenges posed by the stringent sanitary and phytosanitary standards being imposed by developed economies on our agricultural exports, the Seed Certification and Plant Quarantine Laws will be amended to comply with the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA) and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) 1997 standards, respectively.

328. Mr. Speaker, to ensure that exports of fresh Ghanaian fruits and vegetables comply with Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards, the PPRSD of the Ministry will continue to carry out pesticide monitoring and surveillance of 340 trained pesticide dealers. It will also provide training for additional 200 licensed pesticide dealers and applicators. This will ensure responsible handling and use of pesticides in the country.
329. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will also conduct phytosanitary inspection at all the 42 inspection points to ensure pest free exports while at the same time inspecting agricultural imports to prevent the introduction and establishment of foreign pests. Furthermore, the Ministry will intensify its inspection and certification activities to ensure that quality safe food and planting materials are available.
330. Mr. Speaker, manuals on quality and safety of food and planting materials will also be developed. The provision of prototype seed processing and drying equipment will be facilitated. Field and laboratory diagnosis of diseases and pests will be carried out for farmers and importers.
331. Mr. Speaker, MOFA, through the PPRSD will continue to monitor the outbreak of major pests such as army worms and the spread and host range of the invasive fruit fly (*bactrocera invadens*) which was introduced into Ghana in 2004 and has been found to attack mango, citrus and cashew among other fruits. This will be done by purchasing 2,500 pheromones and their traps for all outbreak zones and affected regions.
332. Mr. Speaker, MOFA staff and farmers will be trained in the management of the fruit fly to reduce the pest population and its resultant yields and quality loss. Strategic pesticides and equipment stocks will be purchased to control any incipient army

worm outbreak. About 15,000 litres of insecticides, 1000 spraying machines and 500 sets of personal protective clothing would be purchased.

Feeder Roads Improvement

333. MOFA through the Cashew Development Project will supervise the completion of contract works under spot improvement of identified feeder roads within target districts in collaboration with the Department of Feeder Roads. Similarly, the Nerica Development Project will initiate spot improvement works on a total of 270km of feeder roads in the project communities.

Sustainable Management of Land and Environment

334. Mr. Speaker, under this objective a framework will be developed for collaboration with appropriate agencies to ensure environmental compliance and capacity building of both farmers and MOFA staff on the maintenance of bio-security of farms. A national agricultural land-use policy will be developed.

335. RTIMP will continue the development and extension of appropriate integrated soil fertility management practices to enhance soil productivity in R&T based cropping systems by conducting on-farm testing of new technologies and integrated nutrient management techniques.

336. Mr. Speaker, GIDA will train about 250 lead irrigation farmers in efficient soil and water management technology and facilitate lake front protection by supplying seedlings of economic trees free of charge to farmers.

Application of Science and Technology

337. Mr. Speaker, MOFA will enhance the application of science and technology by all economic agents, improve technologies to support priority areas and client linkage systems to ensure demand driven research and utilisation of results.
338. Under the Ministry's technology dissemination support program, all Agricultural Extension Agents (AEAs) will be retrained to demonstrate best practices and proven technologies in both crop and livestock production to about 60,000 farmers countrywide. Areas of biotechnology will also be explored. The use of audio visual aids (radio, TV, videos) in agricultural work will be intensified. Application of I C T will be adopted at all levels of agriculture development.

Enhanced Institutional Coordination

339. Mr. Speaker, the public sector has been dominant in the delivery of services in the agricultural sector. However, expansion of the sector and its transformation requires greater involvement of the private sector in service delivery, investment and management of the sector as a whole.
340. In view of this, MOFA will collaborate with development partners through harmonisation of efforts in order to achieve maximum results in growth and development. The capacity of staff will be built for effective coordination as well as promoting Public-Private Partnerships.
341. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢87,102,117 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢31,005,763, IGF is GH¢987,190 and Donor is GH¢55,109,164.00.

Cocoa Industry Policy Measures

342. Mr. Speaker, Cocoa continues to play a lead role in the agricultural sector and the economy in general. Government will continue to support this 'golden pod'. The support includes increased producer prices; sustained bonus payments, effective diseases and pests control programme, improved agronomic practices and promotion of new and innovative methods of cocoa farming, among others. These measures have yielded various dividends including record and sustained increases in output.

Performance in 2007

Production

343. Mr. Speaker, during the 2006/2007 Crop Season, a total quantity of 614,469 metric tonnes of cocoa was declared purchased in September, 2007. This is 21 per cent below the 740,458 metric tonnes record output in the 2005/2006 Crop Season. It is important to note that since the 2003/2004 Crop Season production has not fallen below 600,000 metric tonnes. This implies that such record outputs are sustainable. Cocoa output over the past 7 years has been:

Table 8: Cocoa Output (2000-2006)

Crop Year	Metric Tonnes
2000/2001	389,772
2001/2002	340,562
2002/2003	496,846
2003/2004	736,629
2004/2005	601,922
2005/2006	740,458
2006/2007	614,469

Source: Ghana Cocoa Board, September 2007.

Producer Prices

344. Mr. Speaker, during the 2006/07 season, the producer price paid per tonne of cocoa was GH¢915.00 or GH¢57.19 per bag of 64.0 kgs. The producer price represented 72.19 per cent of the net fob price affirming government's commitment to paying farmers at least 70 per cent of the net fob price. The farmers' producer prices have increased nearly 3 fold since 2001 when farmers were paid GH¢347.50 per metric tonne.

Bonus Payments

345. Mr. Speaker, government will not relent on its promise of ensuring that the living conditions of the ordinary Ghanaian farmer are improved. Government has decided to pay GH¢27.54 per tonne as bonus to cocoa farmers for cocoa purchases for the 2006/07 Main Crop Season. A total amount of GH¢16.02 million will thus be paid as bonuses to cocoa farmers. So far Bonuses to farmers have been paid 6 times since 2001.

346. Since 2001, bonus payments to farmers for Main Crop purchases were as follows: -

Table 9: Cocoa Main Crop Purchases

<u>Period</u>	<u>Amount (GH¢ million)</u>
2000/2001	7.01
2001/2002	4.15
2002/2003	15.79
2003/2004	16.12
2004/2005	Nil
2005/2006	17.82
2006/2007	16.02
Total	76.91

Source: Ghana Cocoa Board, September 2007

Cocoa Roads

347. Mr. Speaker, a programme to tar a number of feeder roads in the cocoa growing regions, namely Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Eastern, Central, Volta and Western has started. A total of 531 km of roads are to be tarred at a total contract sum of GH¢47,240,000.00. Major cocoa roads were also rehabilitated and new roads were constructed to create easy access to the cocoa growing areas of Ghana.

Diseases and Pests Control

348. Mr. Speaker, the Cocoa Diseases and Pests Control Programme continued in 2007 for the seventh year running with a total actual expenditure of GH¢106.8 million against a budget of GH¢46.50 million in the 2006/2007 financial year. The increase was necessitated by an urgent need to supply chemicals for capsid spraying and blackpod designated areas. In all, 627,750 cocoa farms and 607,827 cocoa farmers had their farms sprayed with either fungicides or insecticides against the black pod disease and capsids respectively. The total area covered was 2,282,549 hectares made up of 838,006 hectares under the black pod control and 1,444,543 hectares under the capsid control. The programme also employed 50,575 youths from the remote communities for the spraying exercise.

HI-Tech

349. For the 2006/2007 crop season an amount of GH¢63,782,402.89 spent on fertilizer purchases.

Farmers' Scholarship Trust Fund

350. Mr. Speaker, an amount of GH¢1.50 million was paid into the Cocoa Farmers Scholarship Trust Fund in the 2006/07 Season to finance fresh scholarship awards and existing scholarship holders of about 7,500 wards of cocoa farmers in second cycle institutions.

Domestic Processing

351. Mr. Speaker, Government will continue to give incentives to both foreign and local investors who will go into domestic cocoa processing to enable it achieve its policy of processing about 50 per cent of cocoa produced in Ghana. To this end, COCOBOD has signed cocoa beans supply agreements with a number of foreign and local cocoa processing companies.

Cocoa Day

352. Ghana successfully celebrated for the third time running, the COPAL Cocoa Day at Sefwi Bibiani in the Western Region on 1st October 2007. The day was instituted by Cocoa Producers' Alliance (COPAL) to promote increased local processing and consumption of cocoa and cocoa products. An increase in consumption of cocoa will help in the cocoa sustainability drive and the realization of the enormous nutritional benefits that can be derived from the 'golden pod'.

International Cocoa Conferences

353. Mr. Speaker, Ghana hosted two most important international cocoa events this year – (i) the Africa Cocoa Summit and (ii) COPAL General Assembly and Council of Ministers Meetings. The

Second Africa Cocoa Summit took place in Accra from the 3rd – 5th September, 2007. The summit was organised by MOFEP in conjunction with Ghana Cocoa Board and was to sensitize member states on the need for the highest level of support for the commodity and to discuss critical aspects of the industry with the ultimate goal of ensuring that African Cocoa Producing Countries that collectively account for about 80 per cent of global cocoa bean export, earn remunerative prices.

354. This year's COPAL Annual General Assembly and Council of Ministers Meetings also took place in Accra from 8th -12th October, 2007.

Cocoa Farmers Housing Scheme

355. Mr. Speaker, under the Cocoa Farmers Housing Scheme, 2 houses have been completed, 4 are at the roofing level, 1 at the sub-structure while 3 houses are yet to take off. It is expected that additional 20 housing units will commence in December, 2007. The experience from the pilot phase will enable the Department of Rural Housing (DRH) replicate the project in other cocoa growing regions of Ghana at a much faster pace than before.

Cocoa Certification/Child Labour Issues

356. Mr. Speaker, government has commenced the implementation of the National Cocoa Child Labour Elimination Programme. The collection of quantitative and qualitative information on Child Labour in the cocoa growing areas is nearing completion and is expected to serve as a benchmark for further collaboration in the area.
357. Mr. Speaker, government has created a secretariat within Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment (MMYE) to coordinate all

child labour issues in collaboration with COCOBOD and MOFEP. The National Programme for the Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour in Cocoa (NPECLC) undertook a pilot survey under the auspices of a multi-sector technical team into labour practices in cocoa production. The pilot survey led to the better understanding of the nature and extent of the occurrence of WFCL in the cocoa sector.

358. The pilot survey is being scaled up to cover areas producing 60 per cent or more of Ghana's cocoa. The results of the survey are to be used in preparation of the cocoa certification report, which is a requirement of the Harkin-Engel Protocol, due on July 1st, 2008. Alongside the survey, a system of continuous data collection is being put in place at the district and community levels to enable activities of children to be monitored.
359. Mr. Speaker, a comprehensive child labour framework for Ghana's cocoa sector is being developed as a protocol to the Children's Act 560 (1998). This will define what activities can be undertaken by particular age groups. A draft list has been developed, and community consultations are underway to allow communities to be involved for smooth implementation.
360. Mr. Speaker, the NPECLC undertook sensitization workshops in all the cocoa producing districts to educate stakeholders on the dimensions of child labor in cocoa, including the Children's Act, the Human Trafficking Act and ILO Convention 182. District Assemblies are developing action plans to carry out further sensitization programmes.

Organic Cocoa

361. Mr. Speaker, government was able to attract investment into organic cocoa cultivation. This is a pilot project to define a road-map for the cultivation of organic cocoa in the country.

Sheanut and Coffee Industries

362. An amount of GH¢550, 000.0 (¢5.5 billion) has been released this year by the Ghana Cocoa Board for the purpose of developing the sheanut industry, ¢3.0 billion was released to the Ghana National Procurement Agency (GNPA) Limited and the remaining ¢2.5 billion to the Ghana Cocoa, Coffee and Sheanut Farmers Association (GCCSFA). A workshop to revamp the sheanut industry was also organized during the first quarter of the year by Ghana Cocoa Board to chart the course for the future of the industry.

363. Following this, a Steering Committee has been formed with three subcommittees to oversee the - i) value chain product development and marketing (including the formation of cooperatives – ii) Research, Extension and Development – iii) Monitoring and Evaluation.

364. In pursuit of the Government vision the Department of Cooperatives (DOC) and the Ghana Cocoa, Coffee and Sheanut Farmers Association (GCCSFA) have been engaged in the formation of co-operatives and dissemination of information. This has led to the revival of existing sheanut groups with estimated membership of 11,770 in all the 38 sheanut operational districts in the three northern regions. This has intensified buying operations in the entire sheanut sector of the country.

Outlook for 2008

Production

365. Mr. Speaker, during the 2007/08 Crop Season, COCOBOD will continue the production enhancement initiatives and it is projected that 650,000 mt of cocoa will be produced.

Producer Price

366. Mr. Speaker, government will ensure that cocoa farmers are paid a net FOB of not less than 70 per cent. To this end, government announced a new Producer Price of GH¢950.0 per metric tonne for the 2007/08 Main Crop season which opened on 19th October, 2007. The new price for a bag of 64.0 kg is now GH¢59.38 as against GH¢57.19 previously. For a load of 30kg the price is GH¢28.50 naked ex-scale.

Bonus Payment

367. Bonuses will be paid in July 2008 to ensure that farmers will have money during the off-peak seasons.

Financing Arrangements for Purchases

368. Mr. Speaker, in order to ensure adequate funding during the 2007/08 Crop Season, government has supported Ghana COCOBOD to secure a pre-export trade finance facility of US\$900.0 million from external financial institutions. An additional amount of US\$100.0 million will be made available for the 2008 light crop purchasing operations. Thus there is adequate funding to cover all cocoa purchases estimated to be GH¢617.50 million. Government together with COCOBOD has also secured a US\$190.0 million medium term loan facility for capital projects and other cocoa production enhancement initiatives.

Diseases and Pest Control

369. Mr. Speaker, an amount of GH¢62.05 million has been set aside out of the projected gross FOB to finance the 2007/2008 Cocoa Diseases and Pests Control Programme. The campaign is expected to be expanded this financial year to include other cocoa farmers who could not benefit from the previous campaigns.

Farmers Hi-Tech Programme

370. For the 2007/2008 crop season a provision of GH¢50,000,000.00 has been made. It is anticipated that GH¢5,000,000.00 out of this amount will be used to support Cocoa Swollen Shoot Virus Disease (CSSVD) operational activities.

Interest Charges on Seed Fund

371. Mr. Speaker, in order to provide the Licensed Buying Companies (LBCs) access to a more reliable and cheaper credit and minimize financial charges in their purchasing operations, the interest rate charged by COCOBOD on Seed Fund for cocoa purchases by LBCs has been reduced from 14.0 per cent to 11.0 per cent for the 2007/08 season.

372. Mr. Speaker, government will continue to ensure that all stakeholders in the cocoa industry are paid economic rates and fees. To this end, increases in buyer's margin for LBCs, hauliers rates for evacuation and other charges have also been reviewed upwards. This is to ensure that the cocoa industry is able to sustain the gains made in the past 7 years.

373. COCOBOD has further decided to make a 70 per cent down payment to LBCs upon receipt of good quality cocoa beans while awaiting final documentation on consignments received.

Rehabilitation of Cocoa Roads

374. Mr. Speaker, an amount of GH¢1.50 million has been earmarked out of the cocoa export duty for rehabilitation of cocoa roads.

Commercial Production of Cocoa By-products

375. Mr. Speaker, the Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG) has shown that sub standard cocoa beans, cocoa husk and other cocoa wastes can be used to produce several industrial products such as animal feed, fertilizer and soap. Collaboration with major investors to promote these findings is currently being pursued by CRIG. In view of such recognition CRIG has established the Product Development Unit to vigorously foster such agenda.

Cocoa Certification/Child Labour Issues

376. Mr. Speaker, finalisation of cocoa labour survey and preparation of cocoa certification report will be completed. Other issues such as the sensitisation of occupational health and safety measures in cocoa farms, establishment of community-based child labour monitoring system in all cocoa growing districts and capacity building for Child Protection Committees at district and community levels will be carried out. Alternative income generation skills for farmers and their families to make good use of cocoa husks and other by-products will be vigorously undertaken.

Sheanut and Coffee Industry

377. Ghana Cocoa Board will continue its programme aimed at boosting the sheanut industry of the country. To this end CCOBOD will provide the following - i) support sheanut farmers /pickers in the provision of Wellington boots, hand gloves and anti-snake serum ii) provide equipment for local processors iii.) CMC will help Ghana Coffee, Cocoa and Sheanut Farmers

Association (GCCSFA) and small scale butter processors to sell their products.

MINISTRY OF LANDS, FORESTRY AND MINES

378. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry seeks to ensure sustainable growth, and accelerated wealth creation within an environment consistent with sound land use and administration, sustainable forest and wildlife management.

Performance in 2007

Lands Sub-Sector

379. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Lands Forestry and Mines is implementing the National Land Policy through the Land Administration Programme with the long-term objective of developing a land administration system that is fair, efficient, cost-effective, and transparent which guarantees security of tenure. The following activities have been performed:

- Draft legislation for institutional arrangements for land administration has been submitted to Cabinet awaiting approval. It provides for a new Lands Commission with four functional divisions namely the Surveying and Mapping Division, Land Registration Division, Land Valuation Division, and State and Vested lands Management Division
- An inventory of state acquired and occupied lands has been completed by the private sector in ten pilot districts in Yilo Krobo, Manya Krobo, Suhum Kraboa Coaltar, Birim South, Sunyani Municipality, Techiman Municipality, Wenchi, Atwima Nwabiagya, Amansie East and Sekyere West.
- A computerized database on property and farm ownership were developed for the Kyebi and Wassa Amenfi Customary Land Secretariats. All the records held at the Lands Commission on land transactions on Gbawe lands have been electronically duplicated for the Gbawe

- Customary Lands Secretariat. Studies were also undertaken at Sandema on land rights and how to improve upon security of tenure in the area
- Survey Department re-surveyed sites acquired for the Accra Training College, Madina Social Welfare, West Africa Secondary School, and Irrigation Development Project at Weija to enable government deal with encroachment issues
 - Land registers were established at Wa, Bolga and Ho
 - Construction of new buildings for the establishment of new Land Registries at Cape Coast and Ho
 - In collaboration with the Millennium Development Authority all the consultation processes needed to commence rural land title registration services in the Awutu-Efutu-Senya District were done
 - A contract awarded for the mapping of 15,000 sq. km. of selected areas to produce digital orthophoto maps for good land use planning and development

Forest Sub-Sector

Forest Boundary Protection and Maintenance

- A distance of 11,700 kilometres of both internal and external forest reserve boundaries representing 65 per cent of target performance were maintained during the first half year.
- Routine inspections of both internal and external boundaries covering 13,500 kilometres representing 75 per cent of the target were undertaken. Patrol duties in off reserve timber and other forest reserve areas covered was 174,186.6 kilometres.

Plantation Development

380. The Forest Services Division achieved the following:

- 554,785 seedlings of various species were raised in FSD nurseries. Private and community tree seedling producers also raised 360,819 seedlings of various species to bring the total to 915,604 during the period.
- 42,206 cubic meters of plantation production representing 56 per cent of target.
- 17,211 ha surveyed and demarcated.
- 17,538 ha sites prepared for planting.
- 7,754,242 seedlings of various species delivered for planting.
- 15,919,977 pegs cut and 10,129.4 ha pegged.
- 6,241 ha of degraded forest reserve land representing 70 per cent of target planted by FSD.

Government Plantations Development Programme (HIPC)

- The programme has so far facilitated the establishment of 29,600ha plantation in Forest Reserves.
- In addition, the programme has facilitated the establishment of 15000ha of plantations in off-Reserve Forest under its Community Forest Development Programme and the planting of 3,000ha under its Urban Forestry Component and 4,000 seedlings to the Greening Ghana Programme
- The Programme currently employs 12,100 workers all of whom are engaged in plantation establishment on Forest Reserves and also contributes 7,000 tonnes of foodstuff mostly maize annually.

Relocation of Accra Zoo

381. Mr. Speaker, the Rehabilitation of cages in Kumasi Zoo was completed in February 2007 and the translocation of exhibits from Accra Zoo and Kumasi Zoo completed in March, 2007.

382. The Construction of cages for primates in Achimota Forest was also completed in February and primates were translocated from the Accra Zoo to the Achimota Forest in August.

Training and Education

383. Mr. Speaker, Sixty-seven, field staff of the Wildlife Division trained by the Mobile Training Unit in Law Enforcement, weapon handling and wildlife laws.

Law Enforcement

384. Mr. Speaker, the Division pursued measures to curb illegal harvesting of timber and also intensified day and night patrol duties of 6,750 sq kms forest reserve, leading to the arrest and prosecution of 36 poachers.

Ecotourism

385. Mr. Speaker, an agreement has been signed between the Forestry Commission and Moivaro Ltd. for the commissioning of a 60 bed lodge at Mole National Park in the Northern Region.

Collaborative Issues

386. Mr. Speaker, the trans-boundary collaboration between Kyabobo and adjoining FAZAO National Park in Togo has been established while the socio-economic studies in and around Ankasa to explore

the possibility of establishing more Community Resource Management Areas (CREMAs) around Ankasa Conservation Areas were carried out.

Timber Industry & Development Division (TIDD)

387. Mr. Speaker, the Division undertook the following activities:

- Removal of pungent smell in Dahoma tree undertaken and results disseminated. 750 pieces of 16 different species produced and available at the wood library.
- Production and distribution of 1200 copies of the export statistics report.
- Development of GCNET Proposals to link it to TIDD submitted to management for study and approval.

Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA)

388. Mr. Speaker, Ghana has initiated the process of negotiating a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with the European Union (EU) in line with the EU's forest law enforcement, governance and trade initiative which seeks to deny access of illegal timber into the EU market. The negotiation follows earlier work done under the Validation of Legal Timber Programme (VLTP) which seeks to establish a legality assurance scheme that will better enforce forest laws as well as contribute to securing forest revenues. The negotiations are expected to be concluded before the middle of year 2008. The agreement will maintain Ghana's access to the EU market which remains the major export destination for Ghana timber. The VPA is also providing guidance for future collaboration with our development partners in the forestry sector.

Timber Leases as Timber Utilization Contracts (TUC)

389. The inventory report of the 12 pilot concessions to be converted to Timber Utilization Contracts (TUCs) has been completed by the Forestry Commission (FC) and the Modulation Factor to determine the Timber Rights Fees has been presented to the Concessionaires for validation.

Wildlife Management

390. Mr. Speaker, the Wildlife Division (WD) of the Forestry Commission has started implementing competitive and transparent international tendering for concession management of eco-tourism facilities in wildlife protected areas. Three of such concessions have been signed for Kakum and Mole National Parks.

391. The WD is also piloting Community Resource Management Areas (CREMA) as a sustainable production of wildlife resources in fringed communities of protected areas.

Mines Sub-Sector

392. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry received a review Mission from the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) to review Ghana's adherence to the administrative directives. The directives were to strengthen internal controls within the sector. In compliance with the directives, the Ministry carried out the identification of "galamsey" diamonds mining sites with the view to registering them and capturing their production.

Minerals Development Fund (MDF)

393. Mr. Speaker, as part of the commitment to use the mining industry as a catalyst for development, government has decided

to increase the mineral royalties from 3 to 5 per cent. This is to comply with the minerals law which provides that royalties on minerals should be between 3 to 6 per cent.

Airborne Geophysical Survey

394. Magnetic and Spectrometry maps of Keta and Voltaian Basins have been completed. Also reconnaissance Regional Time Domain ElectroMagnetic (TDEM) Airborne Surveys has been completed. About 90 per cent of programmed work on the Keta Basin and 20 per cent of Voltaian Basin has been done. Six new areas have been selected for TDEM Airborne Surveys.

Geological Mapping

395. The programme continued to gather geological data over 5 Field Sheets (Central Region: 0502 B1; 0502 B2; 0502 B4; Upper West Region: 1002 C4 and Volta Region: 0700B3) under GOG and MDF.

396. The programme is expected to assist in the exploration of traditional and non-traditional minerals in Ghana and forms the basis for the compilation and upgrading the existing geological map of Ghana. About 70 per cent of field work covering the 5 Field Sheets has been carried out.

Geochemical Investigation

397. Mr. Speaker, one thousand two hundred geochemical samples were collected from 3 Field Sheets for analysis. Out of this number, 500 samples were dried and sieved for analysis and one hundred samples were actually analyzed to assist in the exploration of non-traditional minerals in Ghana as well as develop capacity in new geochemical mapping techniques for

geochemical mapping. About 65 per cent of field work has been done.

Clay Investigation

398. Mr. Speaker, the Geological Survey Department analyzed twenty-five clay/kaolin samples to promote investment in the Brick & Tile and Ceramic Industry in Ghana. In addition, 100 clay/kaolin samples were collected from Kibi and 60 have been prepared (press pellets) for analysis by XRF method. This is aimed at improving the quality and the reliability of clay maps in all the regions of the country. Programmed work is 90 per cent completed.

Earthquake Monitoring

399. Mr. Speaker, epicentres and magnitudes of recorded tremors and earthquakes have been completed. Updating of the above data is in progress. About 60 per cent of digitized earthquake map of Central, Eastern, Volta and Greater Accra regions have been carried out. This programme is to improve earthquake monitoring in the five regions of southern part of the country

Integrated Aluminium Industry

400. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry intends to establish an integrated bauxite-aluminium industry to ensure that bauxite mined in the country is refined in-country into alumina to feed the Volta Aluminium Company (VALCO) at Tema. The Ministry in collaboration with the MOTI, PSD & PSI is preparing a Memorandum to Cabinet on a draft Ghana Integrated Aluminium Authority Bill. The bill seeks to establish the Ghana Integrated Aluminium Authority with the power and responsibility for the

establishment, operation and oversight for an integrated aluminium industry in Ghana.

Monitoring Activities

401. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry undertook monitoring visits to operating mines for the purpose of safety, good health and the preservation of the environment. About 75 and 69 visits were undertaken to open pit mines and industrial mineral sites, respectively, for the purpose of compliance enforcement.
402. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry updated the mineral information and upgrading database systems to enhance information provision to investors on a timely basis. There were follow ups on request for detailed information on prospects for gold, diamonds, manganese and iron deposits after the investment promotion conference in Indaba, South Africa and PDAC, Canada.
403. The Ministry visited 3 prospecting companies to validate Terminal Reports submitted. In all, District Officers of the Commission undertook 21 monitoring visits to small scale mining sites for the purposes of sharing knowledge on best mining practices. It also organized 7 training sessions on mercury pollution abatement at the 7 District Mining Centres to increase awareness of dangers of mercury pollution by small scale miners, offered financial assistance to Small Scale Mining Co-operatives and a total amount of ₵2.47 billion was disbursed to Konongo Small Scale Mining Co-operative to revamp their operations. Geological Survey Department also conducted Kaolin investigation at Kibi area.

Outlook for 2008

Lands Sub-Sector

404. Mr. Speaker, the implementation of the National Land Policy through the Land Administration Project will be continued. The new Lands Commission Act will come into effect with a new institutional arrangement for land administration. Staffing and capacities in the new Commission will be right-sized with enhanced working environment and service conditions.
405. Following the completion of regional consultations and the national land forum, the drafting of a new Land Bill for effective land administration and improved security of tenure will be laid before Parliament for consideration.
406. Mr. Speaker, the dispute resolution mechanism that was piloted in 2007 at the Wassa Amenfi Customary Land Secretariat (CLS) will be extended to other CLSs to reduce the number of land cases that eventually end up in the regular courts. An additional 8 new CLSs will be established to bring the total to 20. A computerized database on property and farm ownership will be established in 4 CLSs and studies will be undertaken on land rights to improve security of tenure.
407. The Ministry will also complete the inventory of state acquired and occupied lands in 27 districts in the Greater Accra, Eastern, Ashanti and Brong-Ahafo regions.
408. Mr. Speaker, the civil works of the Head Office building for the new Lands Commission and its Divisions will commence. This will provide a one-stop-shop service centre for land administration. The Head Office of the Town and Country Planning Department and the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands will be co-located in this building.

409. The properties in 9 districts will be re-valued for revenue generation. A computerized mass appraisal system will be developed and a national database for land valuation will be established. The Land Valuation Board (LVB), in collaboration with various district assemblies will continue the revaluation of properties as well as update the valuation list to include new properties. The LVB will improve the cost effectiveness of rating valuation services, through the computerization of the valuation function for 12 district assemblies.
410. The Geodetic Reference Network (GRN) system for land surveying will be re-computed for the northern sector of the country. It will include the setting up of permanent reference stations at Tamale and Bolgatanga and about 20 new geodetic reference points.
411. Mr. Speaker, the Survey Department (SD) will continue with the preparation of parcel and cadastral plans for title registration. The Millennium Development Authority (MiDA) in collaboration with SD will support land surveying and mediation of land disputes in selected areas.
412. Mr. Speaker, the Office of Administrator of Stool Lands will establish new district offices at Amasaman in the Greater Accra Region and Duayaw Nkwanta in the Brong-Ahafo Region. It will also strengthen newly created districts, existing revenue collection points and facilitate the demarcation of farmlands of settler and tenant farmers.

Forest Sub-Sector

413. Mr. Speaker, the Forestry Commission (FC) will continue to implement its Protected Areas Management Plans in order to maintain the integrity of the Protected Areas. The FC will commence the construction of Phase 1 of a new zoo at Achimota

Forest during the year. It will also create an ICT platform to facilitate online transactions with industry. A Central Payroll and Stores system integrated into the Forestry Management Information System (FMIS) will be installed.

414. Other activities to be pursued include the re-enforcement of the Log-Tracking System by integrating it into the Validation of Legal Timber Programme (VLTP) and commencement of the Natural Resource and Environmental Governance (NREG) Programme.
415. Mr. Speaker, the government plantations development programme will establish additional 6,050ha of new plantations and provide seedlings and technical assistance to off-reserve farmers, institutions and the Greening Ghana Programme.

Mines Sub-Sector

416. Mr. Speaker, under the Kimberly Process Certification Scheme (KPCS), limited diamond exploration outside the concession of the Ghana Consolidated Diamonds Limited (GCDL) will be carried out to identify areas for small scale diamond mining. All diamond miners and buyers will be registered and given identity card so as to facilitate monitoring, reduce smuggling and satisfy the principles of KPCS.
417. Mr. Speaker, the Airborne Geophysical Survey on the Keta and Voltaian Basins will be continued and additional 6 new areas will be surveyed. Geological data over 5 Field Sheets in the Central, Upper West and Volta Regions will be continued. A digital earthquake monitoring equipment will be procured and installed to provide more reliable data for effective monitoring.
418. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will promote public awareness and local communities' participation in sustainable management and

utilization of land, forest and mineral resources. This will be done by harmonizing the relationship between the mining companies and mining communities by liaising with other agencies such as EMPRETEC Ghana Foundation and the National Board for Small Scale Industries to implement alternative livelihood programmes in mining communities.

419. Mr. Speaker, the Inspectorate Division (ID) of Minerals Commission will undertake monitoring and analytical services like ambient air analysis, microbiological test, physical and chemical test of water samples as well as mineral assaying. It will continue monitoring of the activities of all reconnaissance, prospecting and mining license holders to protect the health and safety of the workforce and ensure that no nuisance is created in the area of mineral operations.

National Continental Shelf Delineation Project

420. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry obtained the approval of Cabinet for the establishment of the above project. The Ministry will prepare and submit claims to the United Nations Commission on Limits of the Continental Shelf (UNCLCS) for extension of Ghana's continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles.
421. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢66,261,073 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢15,681,315, IGF is GH¢25,172,410, Donor is GH¢17,907,348 and HIPC of GH¢7,500,000.

MINISTRY OF ENERGY

422. Mr. Speaker, the mission of the Ministry is to develop and sustain an efficient and financially viable energy sector that provides secure, safe and reliable supply of energy to meet Ghana's developmental needs in a competitive manner.

Performance in 2007

Power Sub Sector

423. Mr. Speaker, the major challenge of inadequate power supply persisted in 2007. While a comprehensive strategy, including medium- to long-term measures, was developed to ensure that the nation never relapses into this unfortunate situation, the short-term activities undertaken by Government were focused on the acquisition of emergency power generators to end the load shedding.

Short-Term Power Generation Activities

424. Mr. Speaker, Government procured and installed 126 MW emergency power plants to address the power shortages, which came to an end in September 2007. The Ghana Armed Forces also made available 10 MW diesel generators to help address the power shortages. A consortium of mining companies also procured and installed 80 MW thermal plants at Tema to augment the existing power generation capacities. The Wood-Group and Transdanubia Limited of U.K have also installed 50MW power plants at Tema.

425. In addition, a 126MW Gas Turbine Power Plant was delivered and installed by VRA and further works are on-going to complete installation works for commissioning to take place in December 2007.

426. Mr. Speaker, the Government approved the importation and free distribution of 6 million energy saving Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs) to replace Incandescent Filament Lamps (IFLs) throughout the country as part of measures to reduce cost to consumers in the wake of the power shortages. The programme is also aimed at saving the nation about 200MW of electricity during peak periods. All 6 million lamps have been delivered and are being deployed in all the regions under a national rollout strategy.

Medium- to Long- Term Power Generation Activities

427. Mr. Speaker, as part of the medium-term arrangements for power supply security, Government acquired 220MW Gas Turbine Power Plant from Asltom of Switzerland, and has concluded an Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) Contract for the installation of the Plant. This project is expected to be completed by end of 2008. Government has also concluded arrangements for the acquisition of 84 MW Gas Turbine Power Plant from BHEL in India and another 50MW Gas Turbines Power Plant from Siemens in the U.K.

428. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Energy has signed a Power Purchase Agreement with Balkan Energy Company to operationalise the 125 MW Osagyefo Power Barge at Effasu - Mangyea. The refurbishment and ancillary works are far advanced and the plant is expected to be in operation by March 2008.

429. Mr. Speaker, after several decades of search for the development of the Bui Hydropower Dam, work on the project finally commenced following the sod cutting ceremony by H.E the President in August 2007. Parliament approved a loan facility of US\$562.0 million from the Chinese Government for the project, while the Government of Ghana is providing counterpart funding of US\$60.0 million making the total project cost US\$622.0 million.

430. The Bui Power Authority Bill was also passed by Parliament to provide the institutional framework for the development and management of the hydropower plant.

431. Mr. Speaker, in line with Government's policy on attracting private sector participation/investment into the energy sector, over 2,000 MW of power is to be provided by a number of Independent Power Producers (IPPs) as part of the medium- to long-term arrangements for power supply. Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) have been concluded with 4 of the IPPs while negotiations are far advanced with the remaining IPPs.

Ghana Grid Company

432. As part of the on going Power Sector Reform Programme, an Electricity Transmission Utility (ETU), the Ghana Grid Company (GRIDCO) has been established and a Chief Executive Officer duly appointed. Other measures to fully operationalise the company are being carried out.

The High Voltage Transmission & Substations Upgrade Project

433. The upgrading works on the sub-stations at Accra, Tema, Takoradi, Akwatia, Kumasi, Techiman, Winneba, Ho and Asiekpe to improve transmission are ongoing.

West African Power Pool

434. Mr. Speaker, the VRA is also implementing the West Africa Power Pool (WAPP) project which seeks to increase energy trading in the West African sub-region. The packages under this project include:

- 330kV Aboadze - Tema Transmission line

- Upgrade of electromechanical equipment at Akosombo/Tema line
- SCADA and Communication Systems Upgrade
- Accra Third Bulk Supply Point
- Kumasi Second Bulk Supply Point

435. Contracts for the first package have been awarded and engineering activities are in progress.

Rural Electrification

436. Mr. Speaker works on the Government supported electrification of 200 communities under the Self Help Electrification Programme (SHEP) are at various levels of completion. Works for 57 communities have been completed. Another 66 communities are between 95-98 per cent complete while the remaining communities are between 90-95 per cent complete.

437. The US\$90.0 million electrification project under the China EXIM Bank/GoG funding commenced in August 2007. Over 550 communities throughout the country will be connected to the national electricity grid under this project.

438. Works have also commenced on the Japanese Government Grant Aid electrification project for 32 communities in the West Akim and Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar Districts.

Street Lighting for Regional Capitals

439. Mr. Speaker, the Koforidua component of street lighting for regional capitals has commenced and is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2008. In addition, special efforts have been made to undertake street lighting projects at Tamale and Sekondi-

Takoradi in time for the African Cup of Nations to be held in January-February 2008.

Distribution System Improvement Project (DSIP)

440. Mr. Speaker, a number of projects to improve the availability and quality of power supply as well as reduction in system losses have been undertaken by ECG. These include:

- Construction of a number of 33/11 KV Primary Substations in Accra, (Osu and Ofankor), Tema (Lashibi and Ashiaman) and Kumasi (KNUST, Abuakwa, Amanfrom and Kumasi Technical Institute)
- Injection of 11/0.433 KV distribution transformers to reduce length of Low Voltage (LV) lines
- Prepayment metering system aimed at reducing commercial losses and Upgrading of some LV lines.

441. System losses have been reduced from 24.26 per cent at the end of June 2006 to 22.8 per cent in June 2007.

Utility Licensing and Regulatory Framework

442. Mr. Speaker, the Energy Commission has developed a licensing and regulatory framework for the electricity, natural gas and renewable energy sectors. The electricity licensing manual has been completed and is the basis for the development of licenses for generation, transmission and distribution of electricity in Ghana.

Energy Conservation

443. Mr. Speaker, the Energy Foundation with support from the Government undertook a national public education and awareness campaign to educate the public on specific steps they could take

to conserve energy. This took the form of radio and television interviews and discussions, airing of TV and radio commercials, as well as "Save a Watt" campaign to encourage consumers to closely monitor their energy consumption and take steps to reduce their consumption.

Petroleum Sub-Sector

West African Gas Pipeline Project

444. Mr. Speaker, the West African Gas Pipeline Project (WAGPP) is expected to deliver the first free flow natural gas to Ghana by December 2007 and full pipeline compressed gas by the middle of 2008. The entire 570 km 20-inch main high pressure pipeline has been completely installed. Repair works on the main pipeline damaged by an anchor of a vessel is also complete. Shore crossing and termination line at Takoradi have been completed while the Tema shore crossing work is ongoing.
445. Regulating and Metering (R&M) station at Takoradi is 80 per cent complete. The compressor at Lagos beach has been installed but piping work is still on going and is about 50 per cent completed. The final completion and commissioning is expected in the second quarter of 2008.

Liberalization of the Petroleum Downstream sub-sector

446. Mr. Speaker, in line with the deregulation of petroleum downstream sub- sector and for the promotion of private sector in the petroleum industry, the National Petroleum Authority (NPA) has been undertaking monthly review of petroleum pricing to ensure full cost recovery, reasonable return on investment and competitive prices for petroleum products.

447. The NPA has also been conducting competitive tender for the procurement of shortfall of petroleum products for the local market at competitive prices to ensure product availability at all times.

Hydro Carbon Resources

448. Mr. Speaker, the Petroleum Upstream Unit, through the Ghana National Petroleum Corporation (GNPC) continued its activities aimed at facilitating the discovery of oil in commercial quantities.

449. Mr. Speaker, as you are aware Kosmos Energy and Tullow have made 2 significant oil discoveries in the Tano/Off Shore Cape Three Points. New agreements have been signed with 3 other international oil companies to pursue vigorous prospecting for oil. In addition, GNPC has prepared for Cabinet approval, the Petroleum Exploration and Production, and an Income Tax Amendment Bills.

450. In anticipation of the increase in the production of petroleum products in the near future, as well as management ancillary businesses that would emerge from the exploration of the discovered petroleum fields, the Government is collaborating with the Norwegian Government to build capacity and develop policy framework to deal with issues of petroleum revenue and resource management, as well as environmental, security and related issues.

BOST Expansion Projects

451. Mr. Speaker, work on BOST Depot expansion project to hold strategic reserve stock of fuel is at various stages of completion. The construction of 4 No. 20,000 cubic meter storage tanks and ancillary facilities at Accra Plains Depot (APD) is completed. The

Phase II of Kumasi Depot Expansion Project is 26 per cent complete whilst Phase II of Accra Plains Depot Expansion Project is 70 per cent complete.

452. The construction of 5 km of 18 inch diameter petroleum pipeline with ancillary facilities connecting TOR to Accra Plains Depot is 99 per cent complete and the construction of storage tanks, pipeline, barges and a petroleum product landing terminal for lake transportation is 20 per cent complete.

National Energy Policy

453. Mr. Speaker, the final draft of a comprehensive Energy Policy has been completed and is due for consideration by cabinet.

Outlook for 2008

Power Sub-Sector

454. Mr. Speaker, Government will continue to pursue measures that will ensure adequate and reliable generation of power throughout 2008 and beyond. In this regard the power plants acquired to address the power shortages in the short-term which are already in operation, as well as the medium-term plants that will be operational in 2008, will continue to be operated to ensure adequate supply of power. Government will also ensure a prudent management of the Volta lake to avoid over-drafting of the water in the lake.

Power Generation

455. The growth in demand for electricity, coupled with the decision to control the drafting of the lake, has caused a shift of the generation mix towards costly thermal generation. The projected

generation mix depicts that thermal generation will constitute about 67 per cent of generation and hydro about 33 per cent.

456. Mr. Speaker, the 125MW Osagyefo Power Barge will be commissioned in March 2008. The 84 MW Gas Turbine Generators from BHEL of India and the 50MW Gas Turbine Generators from Siemens, U.K., will be installed and commissioned by mid-2008. Furthermore, the 220MW Gas Turbine Generators from Alstom will be installed and commissioned by end of 2008.
457. The Takoradi Thermal Plant will be retrofitted to improve its efficiency and reliability. In respect of the Kpong Generating Station Retrofit works, the re-winding of Unit 4 Generator stator and sole plate modification will be undertaken. In addition, the design, supply and installation of new equipment consisting of generator stator windings, excitation systems, digital governors, digital protective relaying systems, programmable logic controller (PLC) and based unit controls and SCADA systems will be undertaken. At the Akosombo Generating Station, modification of the thrust bearing will be undertaken.

Kpong Dam Downstream Shoreline Protection

458. Mr. Speaker, the discharge of water from the generation plant and the occasional spilling of excess water through the spillways have caused severe erosion of the shoreline downstream. To protect the shoreline from further erosion, VRA will undertake surveys in the areas of land, hydrographics and geotechnical study. The construction of shoreline of about 100 m of protection works will be continued on both banks of the river downstream.

Bui Hydro Power Project

459. Mr. Speaker, on the Bui Hydro Power Project, preparatory works, namely construction of site offices, camps and ancillary works are in progress. Site investigations such as geological, geotechnical and final topographic surveys will continue. The major activities to be undertaken are the construction of access roads, resettlement townships, cofferdams and river closure.

Environmental Issues

460. In order to minimize the siltation of the tributaries of the Volta, measures would be taken and strict standards enforced to prevent farming too close to the waterways. In this regard the VRA would embark on a wide scale tree planting exercise along the banks of the Volta lake.

Power Transmission

461. Mr. Speaker, in respect of the West African Power Pool (WAPP) Transmission Projects 330kV transmission line will be extended from Aboadze to Tema and 161kV/330kV Substations developed at Aboadze and Volta. Other activities include the upgrading of electromechanical equipment at Akosombo/Volta, upgrading of SCADA and Communication Systems, installation of a Third Bulk Supply Point for Accra and a Second Bulk Supply Point for Kumasi, extension of a 330kV line from Volta to Mome-Hagou in Togo and the establishment of a System Control Centre linked with the WAPP Master Control Centre.

Power Evacuation Facilities for Thermal Plants in Tema

462. Mr. Speaker, the works will include the expansion of 161kV Volta and New Tema Substations, construction of a new 161kV "thermal

generation substation” at Kpone and “New Smelter” substation adjacent to the Smelter substation with associated transmission lines.

Extension/Expansion of Transmission Lines

463. Mr. Speaker, VRA will commence the construction of an approximately 55 km of 161kV transmission line from Kumasi to New Obuasi and associated substation works at New Obuasi and the Ahafo Substation at Kenyase to terminate the line. In addition, VRA will construct a 161/34.5kV substation at Kintampo and its environs to provide reliable power supply. This substation will also serve as an injection point of the generation from Bui Hydro Electric Plant and also the proposed 330kV line from Kumasi to Wa/Han.
464. Mr. Speaker, VRA will replace obsolete control, metering and protection equipment, upgrade substations arrangement, replace over-aged HVAC equipment, provide additional capacitor banks, standby diesel generation sets to improve transmission to Kpando and Aflao Substations.
465. Mr. Speaker, VRA will maintain and rehabilitate transmission line facilities. This will involve the procurement of spares and materials for the rehabilitation of deteriorated lines in polluted environments and the replacement of defective tower components and painting of corroded towers. It will further replace rusted line hardware and insulators, repair cracked and defective tower concrete foundation and rusted tower anchor stubs as well as reconstruct access roads and line tracks.
466. Mr. Speaker, to ensure reliable supply of power, VRA will replace the existing UPS systems in Accra, Head Office, Akosombo – Power House Administration Building, Akuse - Engineering

Services Department, Tema - Transmission System Department and Procurement Services, Tamale - Northern Electrification Department (NED) Head Office and Sunyani - NED. VRA will also refurbish the retired UPS retrieved from the system for use in areas where UPS are needed.

Generation Backups and Power Transformers

467. The VRA will provide backups for each of the generation stations at Aboadze and Kpong to reduce failure of the transformers. VRA will also provide adequate replacement capacity for transformers over 30 years old. In addition, 6 power transformers will be procured during the year.

Power Distribution

468. Mr. Speaker, to increase the existing capacity to meet the growing load, remove constraints in the sub-transmission and distribution network, reduce losses, and improve upon voltage quality as well as the availability and reliability of electricity supply, ECG will invest in 2 broad areas – improvements in distribution network and commercial operations.

469. Under the Network Improvement Project, ECG will commence the construction of 6 New 33/11kV Primary Substations, 33/11kV Feeders to link the New Substations and procurement of materials for Distribution (11kV & LV) Network Maintenance and Expansion. The Company will also install HV Distribution using small capacity transformers, construct/upgrade some existing 33kV Overhead Lines and provide Switching Station at Dodowa, Ejisu, Bogosu, Kuntunase and Jasikan. Upgrading of 33kV Boards at Takoradi and Kumasi, conversion of bare 33kV Conductor to insulated conductor, provision of Switchyard and Control Board at Takoradi Station B, construction of Step-Up Station at Winneba and

constructing/upgrading of 11kV Rural Overhead Lines to 33kV will be undertaken.

470. Mr. Speaker, in respect of the improvement in the Commercial and Technical Operations, ECG will construct 15 New Customer Service Centres, 4 district offices and continue the installation of Prepayment Meters in Western, Central and Volta Regions. It will also replace Faulty Meters, and Re-route Concealed Service Tails, install ICT systems and applications.

Power Regulation

471. Mr. Speaker, as part of the reforms in the power sector, the Energy Commission will develop and facilitate the passage of wholesale electricity market regulations, national electricity grid code, standard of performance rules and wiring regulations. It will also strengthen its monitoring activities in the power sector for compliance.
472. Mr. Speaker, the Commission will facilitate the development of the first phase of the Secondary Gas network and develop a Natural Gas Utilization plan for the country. Sensitization programmes aimed at educating the public on safe handling of natural gas products will be undertaken.
473. Mr. Speaker, a National Energy Data Processing and Information Centre will be established to facilitate energy planning and information dissemination. Industrial, residential and commercial energy use patterns will be studied for effective energy planning. A national survey on the use of LPG in vehicles will also be undertaken to assess its impact on the availability of LPG for domestic and commercial use. The update of the Strategic National Energy Plan will be undertaken.

Renewable Energy

474. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Energy, in collaboration with other relevant Ministries and the Ghana Real Estate Developers Association (GREDA), will implement a solar programme to integrate solar fittings into new housing projects.
475. Mr. Speaker, the key areas of concern in respect of renewable energy include: solar, wind, bio-fuel production and supply, and the promotion of renewable energy technologies and their efficient utilization. In this regard, the Commission will fast track the passage of the Renewable Energy Law and enforcement of standards and codes for renewable energy technologies to ensure that renewable energy is integrated into the national energy mix.

Energy Conservation

476. Mr. Speaker, the Energy Foundation will be resourced to intensify the public education on energy conservation using the print and electronic media, billboards, and the distribution of brochures and flyers. The foundation will also continue to assist industries to improve their energy efficiency through energy audits, energy efficiency retrofit, and energy management training programmes and workshops.
477. The Ministry of Energy in collaboration with its sector agencies and the Ministry of Manpower Youth and Employment will establish an Energy Efficiency Enforcement Team to be known as "Energy Police" or "E-3" Squad to check illegal connections, protect energy sector physical assets and ensure adherence to Efficiency Standards.

Increasing Access to Power Supply

Rural Electrification

478. To achieve the targets of Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy of becoming a middle income country by 2015, the Ministry of Energy will commence the implementation of the next stage of the National Electrification Scheme (NES) with the objective of accelerating the extension of electricity to the rural areas.
479. In this regard, the next stage of the NES will be streamlined into a four-phase programme with each phase covering a two year period between 2008 and 2015. It is planned to increase access to electricity from the present level of about 55 per cent to 80 per cent, an increase of 25 per cent over the period. Where feasible, solar systems or other renewable forms of energy will be provided in remote areas to supplement power from the national grid.
480. In order to achieve the above target, the Government intends to support beneficiary communities with the provision of a limited number of low voltage poles, the absence of which currently poses a constraint to the timely and speedy implementation of on-going SHEP projects. Further, a limited number of streetlights will be provided to each community to enhance safety and security.
481. A total of 2,000 new communities will be connected to the national electricity grid between 2008 and 2015. An annual target of 250 communities will be connected to the national grid over the period. For 2008, all outstanding works in 300 communities currently under the SHEP-3 Phase-3 and SHEP-4 Phase-1 projects will be completed in addition to the annual target of 250 communities. This will bring the number of communities to be connected in 2008 to 550.

Ghana Energy Development and Access Project (GEDAP)

482. Mr. Speaker, the implementation of the GEDAP which seeks to improve the operational efficiency of the power distribution system and increase the population's access to electricity has commenced and will span 5 years. The project components are sector and institutional development, distribution system improvement and electricity access expansion and renewable development.

Productive Uses of Electricity (PUE) Programme

483. Mr. Speaker, as part of activities to intensify the Productive Uses of Electricity (PUE) Programme, the Ministry of Energy in partnership with the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) is to rollout the extension of electricity to industrial zones in Berekum, Goaso, Sunyani and Bechem in the Brong Ahafo Region.

484. In addition to the medium voltage networks constructed in 2007 to connect the Pawlugu Tomato Factory in the Upper East Region to the national grid, a 34.5/11.5kV substation will be constructed to complete the project. The project, which is expected to be completed in 2008, is estimated to cost US\$4.0 million.

485. Works have commenced to rehabilitate and upgrade the existing power distribution networks in Suame Magazine, in the Ashanti Region and Kokompe in the Greater Accra Region to ensure stable power supply to support the medium scale industrial activities in these areas.

486. As part of the Productive Uses of Electricity Programme, the Ministry of Energy has also commenced the extension of the national electricity grid to schools to enhance the Presidential Special Initiative on ICT and Distant Learning.

Petroleum Sub-Sector

West African Gas Pipeline Project

487. Mr. Speaker, the delivery of full compressed gas from the West African Gas Pipeline project will be ready by June 2008.

Secondary Gas Market (SGM)

488. Mr. Speaker, the activities of the SGM will be deepened by the selection of a local gas distribution company, construction of a secondary gas network and the commissioning and operation of the secondary gas network.

Petroleum Exploration and Production

489. Mr. Speaker, the GNPC will conduct appraisal and development on the two discovered fields in our Sedimentary Basins. It will intensify its search for a rig to conduct production operations later on the discovered fields. Additionally, GNPC will continue to survey the Voltain Basin to provide data to enhance the attractiveness of the basin to prospective investors. It will acquire 3-D data in the Central and Cape Three Points basins to help re-evaluate the prospects of the Basins. It will also continue with the delimitation of the national boundary and the delineation of the continental shelf.

Capacity Building in Petroleum Issues

490. Mr. Speaker, under a special presidential directive, the Ministry will expand and deepen its collaborative efforts to develop best practice policy guidelines, prepare a comprehensive management strategy as well as build capacity towards a more effective management of the petroleum products that will come out of the recent findings by the exploration companies.

National Petroleum Authority (NPA)

491. Mr. Speaker, NPA will continue to conduct monthly review of petroleum product prices, develop standards of performance/code of practice for the petroleum industry as well as inspect and monitor facilities of petroleum service providers. In addition, NPA will monitor the Unified Petroleum Price Fund (UPPF), implement systems for the bottom loading of petroleum products into Bulk Road Vehicles and also develop the technical/professional capabilities of staff.

BOST Expansion Projects

492. Mr. Speaker, Bulk Oil Storage and Transportation (BOST) Limited will complete the Phase II of Kumasi Depot expansion works. The river barges and Debre Petroleum products terminal will be constructed. The expansion of the storage facilities will further assist in the provision of strategic reserve stock of fuel from 2 weeks to 4 weeks by December 2008.

Rural Kerosene Programme

493. The Ministry will embark on an aggressive programme to deploy kerosene tanks to remote areas, and enter into on-lending credit arrangements with the financial institutions to support the regular supply of kerosene to the rural areas.

494. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢567,975,384 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢365,081,833, Donor is GH¢184,391,315, and HIPC is GH¢15,000,000. Petroleum Related Fund is GH¢3,502,236.

MINISTRY OF TRADE, INDUSTRY, PSD & PSI

495. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry aims at developing a vibrant technology driven, competitive industrial sector that significantly contributes to economic growth and employment creation, particularly involving mass mobilization of rural communities and other vulnerable groups including women.

Performance in 2007

Enterprise Development

496. Mr. Speaker, under the District Industrialization Programme (DIP), GH¢2.0 million was released for the rehabilitation and operation of the defunct Juapong Textiles under a new name Volta Star Textile Company Limited and the Northern Star Tomato Company.

497. The Technology Improvement Programme (TIP) identified strategic investors for the Technology Innovation Centre for Capital Goods. About 5 local Banks namely: GCB Ltd, NIB Ltd, ECOBANK (Gh) Ltd, Prudential Bank Ltd, Cal Bank Ltd and Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) of South Africa have been invited to take equity in the centre.

498. Mr. Speaker, the activities of Export Development Investment Fund (EDIF) was geared towards increasing foreign exchange earnings through enhanced exports of non-traditional products. An amount of GH¢16.5 million has been disbursed to 50 companies operating in various sectors of the economy.

499. Mr. Speaker, the National Board for Small scale Industries (NBSSI) established eight additional Business Advisory Centres (BACs) in the following District capitals, New Abirem, Nsakaw, Dambai, Bole, Goaso, Gwollu, Kedjebi and Saltpond to make business support services easily accessible to rural entrepreneurs. In addition, it

organized 197 Business Improvement Programmes (BIP) for 6,410 entrepreneurs and supported 100 micro and small enterprises (MSEs) to participate in international and national fairs.

500. Mr. Speaker, the Ghana Standards Board (GSB) verified and calibrated 17,701 weights and measures, developed and made available to stakeholders 944 Standards and tested 6,775 products in Food, Agriculture, Drugs, and Cosmetics and also analysed forensic samples.
501. Mr. Speaker, the Ghana Export Promotion Council (GEPC) facilitated the participation of 35 Companies and 4 product associations in the Ghana-South African Investment Forum, Midrand, South Africa, California Gift Show in Los Angeles, USA, Product Launch for Horticultural Products in Dubai (IPM) and Ghana@50 Product Launch in Saudi Arabia.
502. Mr. Speaker, GRATIS Foundation has designed the following products; a Jatrofa processing plant for bio-diesel production, a 4 ton palm oil expeller; a starch processing plant and a 2.5 cubic capacity movable bin for waste collection. It has also trained 60 youth in metal fabrication.
503. Mr. Speaker, the President Special Initiatives (PSI) trained 3,200 Sewing operators at the Clothing Technology Centre in Accra and negotiated with 2 new investors in garment and textiles to operate in Ghana. It also rehabilitated sedimentation ponds, procured 2 bulldozers for farming operations to facilitate land clearing for registered cassava farmers at Ayensu Starch Company Limited at Awutu-Bawjiase. Two new cassava varieties with higher starch yield have been cultivated.

Economic Partnership Agreement

504. Mr. Speaker, Ghana together with other West African countries is negotiating an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union (EU). This is to replace the existing non-reciprocal Cotonou preferential trade regime under which about 97 per cent of the exports of the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, including Ghana entered the EU duty-free. The current regime is being implemented under a waiver which expires on 31st December 2007.
505. Mr. Speaker, under the new regime, the West African countries and the other 5 ACP regions negotiating similar agreements with the EU are expected to also open their markets in an asymmetrical manner to EU exports over time. This will be accompanied by EU-supported measures to accelerate West Africa's integration processes, upgrade industries and build productive capacity and competitiveness to enable West Africa take full advantage of market access opportunities offered by the EU as well as integrate into the global economy.
506. Mr. Speaker, the negotiations are expected to be concluded by 31st December 2007. However, it has been acknowledged by both sides that this is not possible given the outstanding work which remains to be accomplished by West African countries. West Africa and the European Commission which is negotiating on behalf of the EU, are therefore looking for an interim arrangement that could be put in place to ensure that trade is not disrupted when the waiver expires on 31st December 2007. This is to ensure that the negotiations could continue until both sides agree on a true development oriented EPA that will not cause economic dislocation in the sub-region.

Ghana Free Zones Board (GFZB)

507. Mr. Speaker, the GFZB registered 16 companies bringing the number of companies registered so far to 170. It also commenced the installation of an electronic monitoring system in all free zones companies to make monitoring more efficient. The GFZB also started the installation of electronic seals to monitor and track imported consignment in transit. Construct a sewerage pumping station which is being run on trial basis. It also paid compensation to affected farmers in respect of the Ashanti Technology Park.

Outlook for 2008

508. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will continue to pursue programmes that will facilitate the development of commercially viable domestic and export market oriented enterprises, especially in the rural areas and play a critical role in increasing competitiveness of local producers in the domestic and international markets.

509. The Ministry will develop business plans for two salt terminals and provide infrastructure for the bulk transportation of salt produced by entrepreneurs and facilitate the establishment of 3,000 acres of cassava farm for the Ayensu Starch Factory. The Ministry will further collaborate with CSIR, Embrapa and Cassava Research Centre at Ivory Coast to establish a Cassava Starch Research Centre in Ghana.

510. Mr. Speaker, in addition to these, the Ministry will train 4,000 new sewing operators at the Clothing Technology and Training Centre in Accra, secure US\$9.6 million orders for garment manufacturing companies operating under the PSI and cultivate about 16,800 hectares of palm oil using about 2,520,000 seedlings from the existing nurseries to bring the total palm oil planted to 47,437 hectares.

511. Mr. Speaker, the sugar industry has been dormant for the last three decades in spite of the sector's potential. The Asutsuare and Komenda sugar factories that supported local industry in the past have collapsed in spite of previous attempts to revive them. Government is engaged in discussions with major international investors towards a revival of the industry with the appropriate incentives.

Trade Sector Support Programme

512. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will focus on the implementation of the Trade Sector Support Programme (TSSP), and the Industrial Sector Support Programme (ISSP) with the objective of transforming the economy by producing value-added goods in which Ghana has competitive advantage.

District Industrialization Programme (DIP)

513. Mr. Speaker, 20 selected districts will be allocated seed capital to support their industrial projects for which business plans have already been completed. Each district project will be established as a Private Limited Liability Company with a management team comprising of both Local and foreign strategic investors.

514. Mr. Speaker, the Export Development and Investment Fund (EDIF) will support priority sectors such as research and developments, agro processing, rural industrialization, infrastructure for exports and agricultural production.

515. Mr. Speaker, the NBSSI will continue to promote entrepreneurship by ensuring easy entry, survival and growth in the micro and small enterprises sector. The major activities and programmes to be undertaken are to establish 14 additional Business Advisory Centres in Wechiau, Funsu, Tongo, Sawla, Bimbilla, Wulensi,

Komenda, Apam, Winneba, Kade, Kwabeng, Kpeve, Kpetoe, and Akatsi to promote rural entrepreneurship, create employment opportunities, reduce rural-urban migration and increase income levels of the beneficiary communities.

516. NBSSI will also support 200 entrepreneurs with funds to start and expand their businesses and organize 200 business improvement programmes for 6,000 entrepreneurs with a focus on women to achieve gender balance. Furthermore, it will assist 100 entrepreneurs to improve the marketing of their products through the organization of fairs and develop a reliable directory on Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs).
517. Mr. Speaker, Gratis Foundation will introduce screen printing and other methods from the francophone countries in batik, and tie and dye production. About 120 new apprentices will also be recruited to undergo a 3 year programme in metal fabrication.
518. Mr. Speaker, GEPC will continue to facilitate the growth of non-traditional exports. GEPC will vigorously undertake selective interventions in 4 broad project areas namely market access for Non-Traditional Export through trade exhibitions, buyer-seller meetings and market research, development and expansion of the production base.
519. GEPC will also support export related human resource development programmes to provide relevant trade information to Ghanaian exporters to enhance competitiveness. It will develop a coordinated national export agenda through harmonization of export related activities by private and public sector agencies and other development partners.
520. Mr. Speaker, the Ghana Standards Board (GSB) will focus on creating greater awareness of stakeholders on the role of

standards and standardization activities. This is to enhance economic growth and facilitate trade as enshrined in the TSSP. The GSB will ensure the accreditation of 4 of its laboratories to ISO/IEC 17025:2005 status. It will also develop standards relevant to the current industrial needs in the areas of solar and wind energy, wood and wooden products, petroleum products, fish and fishery products, agricultural produce, tourism and other related services.

521. Mr. Speaker, GSB will strengthen the promotion of quality assurance for products. It is expected that 70,000 imported high risk goods will be inspected at the country's entry points and 3,100 health and export certificates will be issued to exporters.

Ghana Free Zones Board (GFZB)

522. Mr. Speaker, GFZB will implement and monitor wide area network (WAN) under the management information system (MIS) to enhance collaboration with Customs, Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS) for auditing of free zones companies. It will also construct a security fence wall and develop the MPIP in order to increase the productivity of companies and also develop the Ashanti Technology Park. It will finally, implement the marketing communications plan (MCP).
523. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢60,015,812 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢13,030,048, IGF is GH¢5,954,880, Donor is GH¢31,030,884, and HIPC is GH¢10,000,000.

MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND DIASPORAN RELATIONS

524. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry seeks to deepen the relations with African and Ghanaian Diaspora, improve the standard of tourism marketing and services in both public and private sectors, upgrade and expand the stock of facilities, and facilitate the development of old Accra to promote tourism and investment.

Performance in 2007

Tourism Marketing

525. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry participated in 3 international fairs and exhibitions namely VAKANTIE in Holland, West Africa Tourism Union fair held in Kumasi and Ghana International Trade Fair, Accra. The exhibitions and fairs offered the Ministry the opportunity to Market Ghana's tourism potentials.

Emancipation/Panafest/Joseph Project

526. Mr. Speaker, the Joseph Project (Akwaaba Anyemi) aimed at making Ghana the gateway to the 'Homeland' for over 40 million African Diasporans was launched this year. It attracted over 2,000 foreign participants, mainly African Americans.

Paragliding

527. The third Hang and Paragliding Festival was organized at Atibie, Kwahu, during the Easter Holidays. The festival has now assumed international dimension. About 26 international gliders participated in the festival.

Regatta

528. To boost domestic tourism, the Tourist Board in July 2007 organized regatta (boat racing) competition for fisher folks in and

around Elmina, Central Region. The event, created an opportunity in the hospitality industry around Cape Coast and Elmina to do brisk business.

Old Accra City Development Projects

529. Mr. Speaker, to facilitate the smooth implementation of activities under the Old Accra 2015 Strategy, the Ministry in partnership with the Accra Metropolitan Assembly, the Municipality of Amsterdam and the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Ghana has constructed and commissioned an office in the Old City Engineers Yard for the Old Accra Development Agency.
530. The contract for the rehabilitation of the Brazil House has been signed between the Tabon Family of Brazilian descent in Ga Mashie, the Brazilian Embassy and the Project Implementation Committee. The Brazil House will be used as a museum to expose Brazilian Heritage in Ghana to enhance tourism in the area.
531. The Ministry has procured a number of artefacts and pictures as part of its efforts to create a museum of modern Ghana. The restoration and listing of historical buildings for conservation and tourist attraction is also being undertaken in collaboration with AMA, GMMB, and the Valuation Board.

Sensitization Programmes

532. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry through the Regional Offices of the Ghana Tourist Board has organized media sensitization programmes to create awareness of domestic tourism, improvement and cleanliness of tour sites and other tourist centres. Through these programmes the Ministry hopes to make

Ghanaians tourist-friendly, with the ultimate aim of making Ghana the preferred tourist destination in West Africa.

Human Resource Development

533. Mr. Speaker, about 1000 personnel from the private sector have been trained in front Desk office duty, food and beverage service and housekeeping through a crash training programme to improve service delivery in the industry. The Ministry, through HOTCATT, has also trained 300 youth for employment in the hospitality industry. The Institute has also trained 40 Tour Guides and Travel and Tour Operators.

Infrastructure Development

534. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry has completed 5 receptive facilities. This brings the number of completed facilities to 19 out of the 21. The construction of the permanent GTB Head Office building is about 90 per cent completed.

535. The Ministry has received 50 set of computers from GHANAGE4Africa Foundation an NGO based in the Netherlands for training purposes and this has improved the capacity of HOTCATT for training in modern methods of running hotels and restaurants.

Outlook for 2008

536. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will participate in international exhibitions and fairs, and continue to market Ghana through the celebration of the Emancipation/Joseph Project/World Tourism Organisation Days.

537. The Ministry will further organize the fourth Paragliding festival at Atibie, Kwahu and promote and manage Ghana's coastal areas for investment purposes. In addition, the Ministry will establish

Tourism Information Centres in 10 regional and 20 district capitals in the country and organize training programmes to ensure that the ECOWAS standards for service delivery are observed.

538. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will also continue to facilitate the development of Old Accra especially the development of Ababio Square and the old Fishing Harbour, facilitate the setting up of Rest Stops along major roads and construct receptive facilities at Akwamufie and Saltpond.
539. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢4,043,663 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢3,739,533 and IGF is GH¢304,130.

MINISTRY OF FISHERIES

540. Mr. Speaker, the objective of the Ministry is to promote sustainable and thriving fisheries enterprises through research, technological development and extension services to fishers, processors and fish mongers.
541. To achieve this, the Ministry pursued policies to reduce poverty among fishermen/mongers and achieve accelerated and sustainable growth in the fisheries sector within the framework of gender equity, social protection and the empowerment of fishing communities in a decentralized environment.

Performance in 2007

542. Mr. Speaker, the draft National Fisheries Policy document has been completed and to be submitted for stakeholders' discussion, subsequent to approval by Parliament.
543. The Ministry has established links with relevant Security Agencies particularly the Navy to provide effective coast guard patrols and surveillance of the country's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and territorial waters to ensure that acceptable fishing methods and gears are used to fish in our waters and also ward off poachers. The Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) have been installed at Tema and the Navy Headquarters at the Burma Camp and are operational to ensure responsible fishing. To facilitate the monitoring of fishing vessels, 50 additional transponders were procured for installation on Ghanaian registered industrial fishing vessels operating in Ghanaian waters.
544. For efficient and effective management of fisheries resources, Community Based Fisheries Management Committees (CBFMC) has been formed throughout the country. About 17 district draft

Fisheries Bye-laws have been submitted to the Attorney General's Office out of which 5 have been gazetted. The Fisheries regulations that give effect to the Fisheries Act 625 of 2002 have been submitted to Parliament for consideration.

545. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry commenced the restocking of the Volta Lake, other reservoirs, dams and other water bodies in the 3 Northern Regions. It has also initiated a restocking programme on the Okyereko Irrigation Project in the Ewutu Efutu Senya District in the Central Region to serve as a pilot project.
546. Mr. Speaker, a total amount of ₵7.4 billion was advanced to 3,500 fish processors throughout the country as micro-credit to increase fish processing and income levels. A further, ₵5.0 billion was advanced as aquaculture credit for some existing and newly trained fish farmers for pond construction, fingerling and feed procurement to increase production of farmed fish.
547. Mr. Speaker, production of fingerlings commenced in earnest in the Ashaiman Aquaculture Demonstration Centre (AADC), after extensive rehabilitation of the centre. It is expected that the AADC will produce one million fingerlings annually to meet the ever increasing demand for fingerlings by fish farmers in the country. The Pilot Aquaculture Centre (PAC) in Kona-Odumase in the Ashanti Region was upgraded to resume production.
548. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry commissioned DHV of Holland to undertake the survey, feasibility studies and design for the construction of ten fish landing sites and two fishing Harbours in selected fishing communities in the country. DHV has submitted its report together with the cost of construction of the sites to enable the work to commence.

549. Mr. Speaker, to be able to deal effectively with post harvest loses, the Ministry commissioned a study aimed at helping to select sites for the construction of ice plants and refrigeration facilities. The sod cutting for the construction of cold stores for 6 coastal towns have been performed. Each of the cold stores will be equipped with other facilities such as a day-care centre, fish market and premix fuel depot.
550. Mr. Speaker, a Fish Health Unit was established within the Fisheries Directorate for disease management and quality control of fish produced in the country to meet international standards on the local and exports markets.
551. The Marine Fisheries Research Division of the Fisheries Directorate has been strengthened to forecast more accurately on the health of the fish stock in the country. The basic scientific information relevant for fisheries management has been collected, analyzed and documented for the development of the marine fisheries sub-sector. The feasibility studies and design for the setting up of a Fish and Shrimp Processing plant has been completed.

Outlook for 2008

552. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Fisheries will continue to promote sustainable and thriving fisheries enterprises through research, technology development, extension and other support services to fishers, processors and traders. The policy thrust will be to enhance growth of the fisheries sector of the economy and improve fisheries services.
553. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will fine tune the Fisheries Policy and prepare a Strategic Implementation Plan. The Fisheries Management Plan will also be completed and gazetted to ensure responsible fishing in the industry.

554. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry in collaboration with district assemblies will reorganize and retool 90 out of the 189 Community Based Fisheries Management Committees (CBFMC) in the country for effective co-management of fisheries resources at the community level. The remaining twelve District Fisheries Bye-laws currently lodged at the Attorney Generals' Department will be gazetted.
555. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will strengthen inter-Ministerial linkages with the ministries of Defence, Interior and Harbours and Railways to ensure the effective monitoring and protection of our marine and inland waters. In this regard, the Ministry will undertake capacity building programmes with its collaborators on the need to monitor, control and maintain surveillance of the country's fishery waters.
556. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will extend its presence in the districts by establishing an Extension Unit under the Fisheries Directorate to deliver appropriate messages and services promptly to fish farmers. In this regard, it is expected that 50 district offices will be established, maintained and manned by fisheries scientists and technicians throughout the country over a three year period.
557. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will continue construction works on a fish hatchery at Dormaa Ahenkro in the Brong Ahafo Region and commence construction works on the 2 fishing harbours and 10 landing sites for which survey, feasibility studies and designs have been completed. All the landing sites and fishing harbours will have ancillary facilities such as cold store and blast freezing, crèches, premix-fuel stations, an administrative block and fish market. The existing landing site for inshore fishermen at Tema will be upgraded to ensure that fish landed at the harbour meet international standards.

558. Mr. Speaker, fish farming (Aquaculture) will be vigorously pursued and intensified to meet the shortfall in fish production in the country. As one of the strategies, the Ministry will continue to train selected farmers in fish farming techniques and help them to establish their own farms to increase the overall fish production in the country.
559. The provision of micro-credit to fishers and fish processors will be intensified to increase fish production and improve the income of fishers in the following cities and towns: James Town, Teshie, Elmina, Moree, Senya Bereku, Keta, Dixcove, Axim, New Takoradi, Gomoa Fetteh, Dzemini, Tapa Abotoase and Ada.
560. Mr. Speaker, work for the construction of 6 ice plant and refrigeration facilities which started in 2007 will be completed and commissioned. The construction of a fish/shrimp processing plant designed to use the state-of-the-art technology will also commence.
561. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢22,813,736 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢1,656,027, IGF is GH¢1,750,000 and Donor is GH¢19,407,708.

MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES, WORKS AND HOUSING

562. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry's responsibility is to ensure the provision of safe water, and the development of infrastructure in the areas of housing, drainage works, coastal protection works, hydrology and water related sanitation facilities throughout the country.

563. The Ministry is committed to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of 73 per cent of water coverage by 2015, and the Ghana Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy objective of 85 per cent coverage by 2015. The target to deliver 100,000 housing units in all the Regional Capitals and some district capitals within a period of 5 years is being pursued.

Performance in 2007

Rural Water

564. Mr. Speaker, the Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) undertook the following rural water projects:

- 283 new boreholes completed;
- 63 hand-dug wells were constructed;
- 111 boreholes rehabilitated;
- 9 hand dug wells rehabilitated;
- 30 small towns piped schemes were executed and 24 others at various stages of completion;
- 1,904 household places of convenience were constructed; and
- 127 institutional latrines completed

Urban Water

565. Mr. Speaker, the following projects have been completed: -

- Water supply Improvement to some Educational Institutions in the Central Region [St Augustine College, Mfantshipim, Adisadel, Aggrey Memorial, Wesley Girls, Ghana National, Edinaman, the University of Cape-Coast and the Ankaful Psychiatric Hospital].
- Cape -Coast dry season emergency measures
- Pankrono -Ahwiaa- Buokrom Water supply Project
- Buokrom Estates Water Supply Improvement,
- Ashalley Botwe Water Project, supply of pipes, valves and fittings -
- Assin Fosu Water Supply Project- Distribution mains extensions-
- Ashanti Mampong Water Supply Project
- Adenta Water Supply Project
- Agona Jamasi Water Supply Project
- Tolon Water Supply Project,

Kwanyaku Water Supply Expansion Project

566. Mr. Speaker, the Kwanyaku water supply system has been completed and commissioned. This has increased the output of water from the present 3 million gallons a day to 6 million gallons. Over 700,000 people at Kwanyaku and its environs are benefiting from the facility.

East - West Water Transfer Interconnection

567. Mr. Speaker, work on the East-West water transfer interconnection which started in March is about 35 per cent completed and is progressing steadily. Site preparation for the treatment plant, excavation work for the construction of filters and clarifiers, pipe laying from the Okponglo Booster Station, pipe laying to Atomic Junction have all been completed. Pipe laying

through the Achimota Forest enroute to the Okponglo Booster Station is ongoing. The project when completed will provide water to the eastern parts of Accra (Achimota, Taifa, Dome, Tantra Hill, Ofankor, Amasaman).

Cape Coast Water Supply Expansion Project

568. Mr. Speaker, the project will draw water from Sekyere Hemang and will supply potable water to all towns enroute to Cape Coast. Construction is at 85 per cent completion as at July 2007. The contractor has completed the construction of pipelines, raw water intake treatment plant, a booster station and reservoir sites. Construction of 33/11kv power supply has also been completed. Installation of Monitoring and Evaluation equipment is ongoing. The rehabilitation of the Brimsu Headworks is also completed.

Tamale Supply Expansion

569. Mr. Speaker, work on the Tamale water expansion project is in progress with the laying of pipelines to the new water treatment plant as well as undertaking water assets management.

Koforidua Water Supply Project

570. Mr. Speaker, works started in May after receipt of advance payment. Final design of the works is completed and actual construction has started. The project is expected to be completed in November 2009.

Baifikrom Water Supply Expansion Project

571. Mr. Speaker, the contractor is currently laying pipelines and constructing intake and reservoirs. Final design has been submitted and successfully reviewed. The project is expected to be completed in October 2008.

Sunyani Water Supply Expansion Project

572. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry completed discussions with Messrs Lemna for the determination of the level of concessionary financing. A Memorandum on the project and the financing terms has been sent to Cabinet for consideration and approval.

Urban Water Project (UWP)

573. Mr. Speaker, the GWCL management contract operator is in its second year of operation. The procurement of works, pipe laying and associated works, vehicles for operations and office equipment have all been completed. Dam safety studies are also completed. International Competitive Bidding (ICB) component of the First Year Investment Programme (FYIP) has been completed and construction has also commenced.

Wa Water Supply Project

574. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry is in consultation with Messrs Coman Engineering and Contracting of the Netherlands for the Wa water supply project at a total amount of € 39 million. The revised technical proposals based on 15,000m³/d have been reviewed and approved. Negotiations have been completed and the Works Contract signed. Discussions with the contractor and ORET on the funding details for the project are on-going.

Adenta Water Supply Improvement Project-Phase II

575. Mr. Speaker, to further improve upon water supply to Adenta and its environs primarily, GWCL is to carry out a second phase of the Adenta Water Supply Improvement Works. Newly developing communities that lie between Dodowa and Adenta are also to benefit from this project. Some of the communities other than

Adenta, to benefit from the proposed project are Ashalley Botwe, Adenta Housing Down, Oyibi, Frafraha.

576. The proposed works to increase the quantity of water presently being supplied under the existing Phase I system include drilling of two No. boreholes at Dodowa, mechanization of the boreholes, extension of power supply to the borehole sites, construction of 1.8 km of 150 mm UPVC Pipelines from the two No. boreholes into ground mounted tank at Dodowa, construction of 20. Km of 250 mm UPVC Pipeline from Dodowa to Adenta.

Kumasi Water Supply Project

577. Mr. Speaker, Messrs Taylor Woodrow has completed all processes in the financing and is undertaking further expansion works to Barekese on a turnkey basis. The design and construction works have commenced and the contractor is mobilizing to site. The consultant for the supervision of the project has also been selected.

Three Towns Water Supply Study

578. Mr. Speaker, the African Development Fund has provided funds through the Swedish Government (Swedish Trust Fund) to undertake studies on Water and Sanitation in Wa, Yendi and Damongo. The objective of the study is to assess water and sanitation requirements of the towns up to the year 2020 in line with the national target in the National Water Sector Policy and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by providing a feasibility study, designing a project and preparing tender documents for immediate implementation. The final feasibility report has been produced and submitted for consideration.

Housing

Housing Policy

579. Mr. Speaker, the final draft of the National Housing Policy has been completed and submitted to Cabinet for consideration and approval. The concerns raised by Cabinet sub-committee on infrastructure are being addressed.

Affordable Housing

580. Mr. Speaker, in line with the policy to provide safe, decent and affordable housing for all people in Ghana, the Ministry continued with the construction of 1,500 flats each at Borteyman and Kpone, 1,192 flats at Asokore-Mampong, 200 flats at Wamale and 400 flats at Koforidua. The Ministry has also commenced the construction of 150 flats each at Wa and Bolgatanga. The housing units are at various stages of completion. Mr. Speaker, the construction of the Affordable Housing Units will commence in Sekondi Takoradi, Sunyani, Cape Coast and Ho projects in early 2008.

Sale of Low Cost Housing

581. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry continued the sale of Government Low Cost Houses throughout the country with the view of using the revenue accrued to increase the stock of decent, safe and affordable houses for workers. So far about 5,000 units have been offered for sale.

Works

Rehabilitation of Peduase Lodge

582. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry continued with restoration of the Peduase Lodge. The main structural, civil, electrical, mechanical, air-condition works are completed. Work on special furnishings, fixtures, fittings and draperies as well as painting are ongoing. External civil works, telephone system, horticultural, lighting and security as well as auxiliary works are also ongoing.

Keta Sea Defence Resettlement Programme

583. Mr. Speaker, the US\$84.0 million sea defence project comprising 6 groynes, a 783 metre revetment, 8.5 kilometre main link and cross roads between Havedzi and Keta, 272 hectares of land reclaimed and a 20 bay flood control structure have been completed and functional. Construction of 836 resettlement houses for displaced inhabitants is ongoing. Since its implementation, 254 houses out of the contracted 444 have been completed and occupied with the remaining 190 houses at various stages of completion.

584. Water supply has been extended to the resettlement sites at Kedzi, Vodza and Adzido. Work on the sewerage system is also progressing steadily and about 50 houses have been connected at Adzido. Transmission of electricity to the site is completed.

Integrated Odaw Basin Development Project

585. Mr. Speaker, stage III works which is estimated at about €18.0 million and involving the removal of the estimated 180,000 m³ accumulated silt and other materials in the approximately 10

kilometre long 3 feeding canals of Kaneshie, Odaw and Agbogbloshie is nearing completion. The waste water treatment plant, a 75 metre long interceptor weir and the 2.3 kilometre long new sea outfall pipe have been completed and functional. A pre-feasibility study for a sewerage treatment plant to an expanded scope of KLERP has been completed. Preparation of feasibility studies, detailed designs and contract document for physical implementation is progressing steadily.

586. Funding in the amount of €10.4 million for the relocation of Sodom and Gomorrah and the bulk market from old Fadama to Adjen Kotoku has been secured and preparatory works including land acquisition have been completed. This particular activity is being undertaken by the MWRWH, MOTDR, Greater Accra RCC and AMA. The amount is to be used to provide physical and social infrastructure including roads, electricity, and water supply at the new site.

Elmina Benya Lagoon Restoration Project

587. Mr. Speaker, work has started on the approx €12.1 million project and progressing steadily. So far about 43 per cent of the works on dredging of the 1200 metre long lagoon and breakwater works have been completed.

Ada Coastal Protection Works

588. Mr. Speaker, an assessment has been completed since February 2007 on approximately 14 kilometres shoreline stretching from Azizanya to Otokpe. About 10 kilometres of the shoreline will be protected by a system of groynes/sand nourishment and 4 kilometres with a revetment structure including a groyne at the estuary of the Volta river to ensure a permanent opening to allow continuous inflow of sea water.

Dredging of the Densu River

589. Mr. Speaker, channel improvement works as a flood control measure estimated at about €1.25 million on the 1000 metre stretch of the Densu River at Nsawam is nearing completion. So far, river flows has been contained in the dredged section of the river following the recent rains while about 85,000 m³ of the expected 100,000 m³ of sand have also been dredged.

Flood Control and Coastal Protection Works

590. Mr. Speaker, the reduction in the incidence of flooding in some parts of the city of Accra has been achieved as a result of channel improvement works undertaken by the Ministry on some primary drains in Accra. The Ministry's interventions at some critical areas undergoing sea erosion along the shoreline at Dixcove, Shama and Axim in the Western Region, are ongoing.

Tamale Storm Water Drainage Project

591. Mr. Speaker, the construction of flood control and sanitation systems in the Tamale metropolis has been completed. This involved the construction of approximately 8.4 kilometres of primary and 4.6 kilometres of secondary as well as road side drains. The positive impact of the project has been witnessed by the performance of the drains, during the recent rains; the absence of which could have resulted in heavier damages to properties and lives in the Central Business District of the Metropolis.

Outlook for 2008

592. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will continue the implementation of its programmes and projects in accordance with the GPRS II

objectives to promote urban infrastructure development and the provision of basic services including increased access to potable water as well as to safe, decent and affordable shelter.

Rural Water

593. Mr. Speaker, to achieve the target of 58.5 per cent access to safe and portable water in 2008, the Ministry will sink 2,399 boreholes, digging 51 hand-dug wells, constructing 84 Small Town pipe Systems, 57 Small Community Pipe System, 3 Rain Catchment Systems and 2 Spring Protection Systems. In addition, it will construct 5,546 household latrines, construct 526 institutional latrines and establish 2 water shed management systems.

Urban Water

594. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will complete the Kumawu, Berekum, Assin Fosu, Sunyani and Techiman water works. The rehabilitation of treatment plants in various parts of the country will continue to ensure the production and delivery of safe water. These include Koforidua, Baifikrom, Kpong, Cape Coast, Adenta, Sunyani, Wa and Kumasi. The Tamale Water Expansion Project and Accra East – West transfer interconnection will also be completed.

595. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will continue discussions with interested investors to raise the needed funds to support the water supply systems in Techiman, Bolgatanga, Konongo, Kwahu Ridge and Kibi. It will continue the rehabilitation and expansion of district water supply and medium capacity treatment plants at Swedru, Ekumfi, Ojobi, Dormaa Ahenkro, Techiman, Mampong, Berekum, Bibiani, Begoro, Sogakofe-Keta, Obuasi, Sunyani, and Juapong.

596. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will continue expansion of distribution systems at Accra Rural, Bortianor, Kokrobite, Amasaman, Santeo, Katamanso, Sekondi, Takoradi, Amanfo-Tunko, Butumajabu, Apowa, Cape Coast, Kumasi Rural Offinso, Tafo, Nkawie, Pankrono, Sunyani Rural, Chiraa, Nsoatre, Koforidua Rural, Suhyen, Ho Rural, Tamale, Wa, Bolgatanga, Dunkwa, Saltpond, Asikuma-Ajumako, Aflao, Peki, Bogoso, Abakrampa, Asankragua and Anfoega.

Housing

Affordable Housing

597. Mr. Speaker, the objective of the housing policy is to support the private sector to increase housing delivery in the country and to improve mortgage affordability. It is expected that the construction of the affordable houses will result in the creation of 60,000 direct jobs annually.

598. In 2007, Government established a housing mortgage programme for public servants designed to provide mortgages of up to GH 25,000.00 at low interest rates and with zero down payment. In 2008, the Trustees of the scheme will complete detailed guidelines for its operationalisation.

Land Banks

599. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry has sourced about 50,000 acres of land in Accra and other regional and district capitals, purposely for the National Housing Programme and associated infrastructure development. The objective is to establish a Land Bank System to facilitate access to land by developers. Currently, surveyors and consultants had prepared site plans and cadastral maps to be

used as the basis for negotiating compensation with the land owners.

Sale of Low Cost Housing

600. Mr. Speaker, Government is committed to the house ownership programme for Public Service employees. Towards this end, the Ministry will conclude the programme for the sale of Low Cost Houses throughout the country by reducing the prices of these houses and use the revenue accrued to increase the stock of decent, safe and affordable houses for its employees.

Works

Hydrological Services Department

601. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will continue the construction of a number of storm water drainage systems in all the regional capitals to improve upon sanitation. The Ministry will also complete the development of Drainage Master Plans for various communities so as to improve upon sanitation.

Coastal Protection

602. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will continue the coastal protection programmes to protect life and property in Ada, Ngyeresia, Dixcove, Prince Akatakyie, Sakumono, Axim, New Amanful Kuma/Funkoe, Osu Castle, Elmina, Anomabu, Nkontompo, Prampram, Ningo and Senya Breku.

Rehabilitation of Government Bungalows

603. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will continue with the present regime of maintenance on sustainable basis to ensure that routine

maintenance will be undertaken while major rehabilitation works are undertaken every four years on the properties.

Rehabilitation of Peduase Lodge

604. Mr. Speaker, work on furnishings, fixtures, fittings and drapery as well as painting, external civil works, telephone system, horticultural, lighting and security works and auxiliary works will be continued.

Keta Sea Defence Resettlement Programme

605. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry ensure the completion of works on the water supply, sewerage and electricity distribution to the resettlement houses at Kedzi, Vodza, Adzido. Two churches, AME Zion at Kedzi and a Catholic at Vodza and a Mosque at Adzido and a school complex are also earmarked for completion. The resettlement houses will be connected to the water distribution system to enable occupants use the installed WCs and the septic tanks.

Korle Lagoon Ecological Restoration Project (KLERP)

606. Mr. Speaker, to make the whole KLERP functional, achieve the desired and maximum benefit, the lower and upper lagoons are to be dredged of about 550,000m³ of materials. The existing informal settlement popularly known as Sodom and Gomorrah together with the bulk market will be relocated to Adjen Kotoku located about 25 kilometres from Accra near Amasaman. Geo-technical investigations, planning, survey, design and preparation of contract documents for the physical infrastructural component of the relocation project are expected to be completed before the end of the year.

Elmina Benya Lagoon Restoration Project

607. Mr. Speaker, the project is expected to be completed by the end of the year to allow safe passage and berthing of about 500 – 700 fishing canoes/vessels which in turn will help improve the socio-economic life of the community.

Ada Coastal Protection Works and Volta River Estuary

608. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry has programmed to complete detailed design, modeling and contract document leading to the start of construction work on the project in early 2009 through to the end of 2010 to protect the 14 kilometre stretch which is seriously threatening the present and future infrastructural development at Ada including salt production.

Dredging of the Densu River

609. Mr. Speaker, the remaining 15,000 cubic metres of sand will be dredged and delivered by the end of December 2008 to support the construction of the affordable housing projects at Kpone and Borteyman.

Tamale Storm Water Drainage Project

610. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry has programmed to improve the earth channels at the outfall sections of the 3 primary drains, all measuring approx 850 metres, to forestall inundation of adjacent lands immediately downstream of the 3 primary drains.

611. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢161,384,653 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢16,665,318, IGF is GH¢709,400, Donor is GH¢110,024,935, and HIPC is GH¢33,985,000.

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION

612. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry is mandated to ensure the provision of affordable, integrated, safe, responsive, and sustainable road transport system comprising road infrastructure and transport services that will meet the economic, social and environmental needs as well as national and international standards.

Performance in 2007

613. Mr. Speaker, in support of GPRS II, the 2007 budget took into consideration the derived objectives of integrating rural and urban economies as well as ensuring lower transport costs through the provision of safe and reliable road infrastructure and services.

614. The Ministry in collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment (MLGRDE), in September, 2007 launched the Urban Transport Project (UTP). The objective of the project is to reduce congestion by modernizing the operation of public transport and traffic managements in some selected major cities. The project will be implemented in the following 6 assemblies; Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA), Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly (KMA), Tema Municipal Assembly (TMA), Ga East District Assembly (GEDA), Ga West District Assembly (GWDA), and Ejisu Juaben District Assembly (EJDA).

615. A Project Advisory Office (PAO) has been set up to coordinate the implementation of this 5-year project. The office will evolve into a Centre for Urban Transportation by 2010. Project designs have begun for the construction of a pilot Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route from the Central Business District (CBD) to Mallam in Accra.

616. Mr. Speaker, the participating assemblies are currently mobilizing to set up Urban Passenger Transport Units (UPTU) to plan, manage and regulate the delivery of urban passenger transport services in their respective administrative areas.
617. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry in collaboration with Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) has completed the development of poverty monitoring indicators for establishing the linkages between poverty reduction and road transport development.
618. Mr. Speaker, a new technical specification for roads and bridge works has been developed and launched. The Ministry and the road agencies have started the application of the new specifications for road and bridge works.
619. Mr. Speaker, in 2007, the Ministry revised the Road Traffic Regulations in order to operationalise the Road Traffic Act 683 of 2004. The regulations have been submitted to Cabinet for approval. A draft Transport Sector Development Programme (TSDP), for all modes of transport based on the National Transport Policy has also been prepared for approval and implementation.

Ghana Highway Authority (GHA)

620. Mr. Speaker, the Authority undertook routine maintenance works of a total of 6,486.08 km and periodic maintenance works of 151.34 km involving re-gravelling/spot improvement and resealing. Partial reconstruction, upgrading and rehabilitation of 253 km of town roads were also executed. Below is a list of some roads which have been maintained;
- Dodowa – Afienya
 - Kpando Town Roads

- Kete-krachi - Buya & Kete-krachi Town Roads
- Dunkwa - Twifo Praso
- Ayanfuri - Diaso
- Achiase - Akenkasu - Brofoyedru
- Mpraeso - Kwahu Tafo - Adawso
- Telekubokazo - Aniben Jn.
- Axim Junction - Mpataba - Elubo
- Awiankwanta-Manso Nkwanta
- Bekwai - Kuntense - Ejisu
- Buoku Junction - Nkonsia
- Sunyani - Ntotroso –Acherensua
- Yendi - Bimbila
- Tamale - Nawuni
- Missiga - Garu
- Wa - Han
- Hamile-Nandom & Nandom, HamileTown roads

621. Mr. Speaker, some of the roads being rehabilitated and reconstructed are as follows;

- Anyinam – Konongo Ph. II
- Konongo – Kumasi
- Berekum – Sampa
- Asankragua - Enchi
- Kumasi – Techiman Ph. 1
- Anwiankwanta – Yamoransa
- Twifo Praso – Dunkwa Phase 2
- Achimota – Ofankor
- Tetteh Quarshie – Madina
- Bamboi – Tinga
- Sogakope – Ho - Fume
- Sefwi Wiaso – Benkyema Junction
- Kumasi- Techiman Phase II

- Pantang – Mamfe
- Tinga – Bole
- Axim Junction – Tarkwa
- Mallam – Kasoa
- Winneba – Yamoransa

622. Mr. Speaker, GHA has developed an Action Plan to operationalise the Axle Load Policy. A pilot project has been prepared for implementation in the 2008 fiscal year. This seeks to regulate overloading of vehicles on our roads. Installations of 5 weigh bridges at Tema port have been completed and 2 weigh bridges at Takoradi port are scheduled for completion by December 2007. Road Safety Audits have been completed on some major roads to identify accident prone areas, and provide remedial measures to mitigate accidents on such roads.

Department of Feeder Roads (DFR)

623. Mr. Speaker, the Department has completed routine maintenance of 10,110 km feeder roads and completed periodic maintenance comprising re-gravelling/spot improvement/resealing rehabilitation works of 1,459 km as at end of September 2007.

624. Out of 189 projects under the IDA Fund awarded, 160 have been completed, 28 on-going and 1 terminated. The completed projects include the following:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| • Aveyime-Attitekpo | Greater Accra |
| • Kwamebronikrom-Domeabra | Brong Ahafo |
| • Wassa Akropong-Dokoto Junction | Western Region |
| • Dadiso-Muramura | Ashanti Region |
| • Dorimon-Wechau | Upper West |
| • Kunkwa-Jedema | Northern |

625. Mr. Speaker, in respect of bridge programmes a total of 70 major/small span bridges were awarded on contract. About 37 bridges and 15 box culverts have been completed. Some of the key ongoing bridge projects are as follows:

- Zokko – Manyo Feeder Road
- Zebilla – Burkina Faso Feeder Road
- Wulugu – Kunkwa Feeder Road
- Salaga – Kpandai Feeder Road
- Gambaga-Tamboko feeder road

Feeder Roads Improvement Project (FRIP)

626. Mr. Speaker, the Feeder Roads Improvement Project (FRIP) covers 8 districts in the Eastern Region. About 97.4 km of feeder roads are being upgraded to bituminous surface. Another 329 km of feeder roads (41 roads) are being rehabilitated while 711 km (91 roads) are also being spot improved and graded. Phase 2 which involves upgrading, minor rehabilitation and spot improvement has been awarded.

Department of Urban Roads (DUR)

627. Mr. Speaker, the major activities carried out by DUR are periodic and routine maintenance of urban roads as well as the rehabilitation and construction of roads. The following are some the major projects undertaken.

- Construction of Nsawam road (Kwame Nkrumah circle – Achimota) – Work is 98 per cent completed and expected to be substantially completed in the 4th quarter of 2007.
- Accra CBD roads work began in October 2006 and is presently recorded at 35 per cent completion.

- Kumasi Road and Urban Development project works comprising those of Oforikrom-Asokwa, Asafo(Cement) Roundabout – Ahensan, Interchange at Timber Garden, and Resettlement of woodworkers at Sokoban which began in March 2007 at the new site for woodworkers are on going. The prequalification of eligible contractors for the main road works is in progress
- Kumasi Outer Ring road – Right of Way acquisition procedures are in progress. Compensation payments are yet to be made as the valuation of properties is still ongoing. This task will be completed in the Fourth quarter of 2007
- Asafo Market Interchange – The main works are 95 per cent complete. The construction of the footbridge is outstanding. The project was commissioned on 10th November 2007.
- Teshie roads – Compensation payments to affected property owners for the Teshie link is ongoing. Other roads in this area have been designed as part of the Accra East Corridor project for which funding for the road works is yet to be secured.
- Awoshie-Pokuase road project –Design review is currently in progress.
- Kejetia Terminal Rehabilitation is 45 per cent complete and scheduled to be completed by First Quarter in 2008.
- Kwame Nkrumah Circle Interchange design is ongoing and expected to be completed by the end of 2007.

Driver Vehicle License Authority (DVLA)

628. Mr. Speaker, the Authority initiated a number of actions towards improving services to the public. DVLA introduced a new driver license to replace the old one to meet international standard and developed a reliable vehicle statistics involving identification of

license plates and setting up a local and wide area networks to improve the monitoring of vehicle registration and driver license as a pilot project in Accra.

629. Mr. Speaker, in addition, DVLA has developed strategies and outlined procedures for the renewal of vehicles registration license throughout the country. These have been used by the Ministry to prepare a memorandum to Cabinet to seek approval. The Authority, as part of its efforts to improve the quality of driving on the road, has introduced written test for driver license upgrade.

National Road Safety Commission (NRSC)

630. Mr. Speaker, the NRSC offered road safety education for school children, teachers and parents to ensure a reduction in pedestrian accidents and casualties particularly among children. A total of 10,000 school children, 500 teachers and 1,000 parents benefited from the programme. A seminar on New Road Traffic Act was organized for DVLA, MTTU, Ghana Bar Association (GBA), Judicial Service and Transport Unions to apprise them on the scale and magnitude of the road safety problem.
631. Mr. Speaker, as part of the information and publicity campaign, over 40,000 copies of road safety education and campaign materials were produced and distributed to schools, libraries, institutions and the general public. Another 5 giant billboards were erected on the Accra-Tema Motorway, Kwame Nkrumah Circle, Accra-Winneba Road, and Ofankor as warning signals to motorists and pedestrians on road traffic accidents on these roads.
632. Mr. Speaker, in addition, 2,000 copies of the Road Safety Newsletter (Dialogue) were produced and distributed to the general public. About 39 episodes of Road Safety features for

airing on TV were produced. Out of these, 4 episodes have been aired. The weekly panel discussions on GTV, TV3, Metro TV and TV Africa as well as local radio stations in 6 Ghanaian languages on over-speeding, wrongful overtaking, unsafe driving, unsafe vehicles, fatigue, driving under the influence of alcohol, non-use of seat belts and crash helmets is ongoing.

633. Mr. Speaker, NRSC and other stakeholders organized the 4th All African Road Safety Congress in Accra, Ghana from 4th-7th February 2007. Over 50 countries from Africa, Europe, North America and Latin America attended the congress. Also in attendance were over 12 International Organizations including, the WHO, World Bank DFID, EU, African Development Bank, GTZ, DANIDA, among others.

Government Technical Training Centre (GTTC)

634. Mr. Speaker, the Centre continued to contribute immensely to the economy of the country by training skilled manpower for the automobile industry. The Centre also continued to offer assistance in part time schooling for wayside mechanics and the under-privileged in society.
635. Mr. Speaker, about 52 second year students wrote the Grade II examinations conducted by the National Vocational Training Institute in the trades of Auto Mechanics, Auto Electrical, Auto Body Repairs and Welders with success. In addition, 61 students comprising 45 Auto Mechanics, 9 Welders, and 7 Body Repairers wrote the Technician I examination conducted by the City & Guilds.

Metro Mass Transit (MMT)

636. Mr. Speaker, MMT now operates in all the regional and some district capitals in the country. As part of its social responsibility, MMT provides free bus ride to all school children up to the JSS level who are in uniform. This programme has proved beneficial to school going children and their parents. MMT has a fleet of 421 buses in operation.

Outlook for 2008

637. Mr. Speaker, the underlying objectives for the preparation and implementation of the 2008 policy of the Ministry, its Agencies and Departments are to ensure effective linkages between the transport sector programmes and promote private sector competitiveness.

638. Mr. Speaker, a draft Transport Sector Development Programme (TSDP), for all modes of transport based on the National Transport Policy, will be finalized for implementation. The main components of this programme on the Road Sector will be infrastructure development, transport services, traffic management and safety.

639. As part of the Urban Transport Project, the 6 participating assemblies will enact urban passenger transport bye-laws, register all passenger transport routes under their jurisdiction and start issuing route operating licenses to public transport vehicle owners. This is aimed at rationalizing the operations of urban passenger transport in their administrative areas. The designs will also start in 2008 as part of the project, to modernize the traffic signal control systems in Accra and Kumasi. This will involve the establishment of central control systems in the two major cities to improve traffic flow. It is expected that tenders for the construction works for the Pilot Bus Rapid Transit route in Accra will be launched in 2008.

640. Mr. Speaker, a revised Road Traffic Regulations to operationalise the Road Traffic Act 683 of 2004 is expected to be approved by Parliament in 2008. The Ministry will ensure the full implementation of the Axle Load Policy and Action Plan in line with the new road traffic regulations on overloading of vehicles.

Ghana Highway Authority (GHA)

641. Mr. Speaker, GHA will continue with the construction of some of the major trunk roads started in 2007. These include the Dualization of Tetteh Quarshie-Madina Road and the Accra – Kumasi and the construction of Nkawkaw bypass.

642. GHA will adopt strategies to mitigate the impact of the road development and maintenance programme on the environment and people by ensuring that burrow pits are properly re-instated after use and also Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Social Impact Assessment (SIA) and Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) are prepared and implemented for road development and maintenance works.

643. Mr. Speaker, the Authority will work with other stakeholders to reduce the excessive damage caused by overloaded vehicles on our roads by the installation of permanent axle load weighing bridges and effective axle load monitoring on the trunk road network.

Major Development Works

644. Mr. Speaker, about 21 civil works contracts for 770 km of road projects will be continued. It is estimated that about 40 – 50 per cent of works will be undertaken on these projects in 2008. Some of these roads are as follows;

- Achimota - Ofankor Road
- Aframso - Sekyedumase - Nkoranza
- Anwiankwanta - Yamoransa Road (Rehabilitation)
- Anyinam - Konongo Road Phase 2
- Asankragwa - Enchi Road
- Axim Junction-Tarkwa Road
- Bamboi - Tinga Road
- Berekum - Sampa Road Phase 2
- Dualisation of Pantang - Peduase
- Reconstruction of Flagstaff House Roads
- Sogakope-Ho - Fume Road
- Kpandu - Worawora - Dambai Road Ph. 3
- Kumasi - Techiman Road Ph. 1 and 2
- Nsawam Town Roads
- Sefwi Wiawso - Benchema Junction Road
- Sogakope - Akatsi Road
- Wenchi - Akrobi

Major Bridge Projects

645. Mr. Speaker, the Authority intends to rehabilitate and reconstruct some major bridges throughout the country under the Bridge Development Programme (Phase 4). The rivers over which bridges will be reconstructed are shown below.

- River Birim Abodom-Kwabeng
- River Nyempene Wenchi-Nsawkaw
- River Ochi Kokoso-Oda
- River Asuboni Abosu-Kwahu Adawso
- River Amenfueso Abosu-Kwahu Adawso
- River Sissilli Chuchiliga-Tumu
- River Kalangmna Chuchiliga-Tumu

Minor Rehabilitation and Upgrading

646. Mr. Speaker, projects earmarked for resealing, minor rehabilitation/upgrading in 2008 are as follows:

- Resealing of Sege - Lolonya Road
- Partial reconstruction of Ayikuma - Doryimu
- Resurfacing of Ningo Town Roads
- Partial Reconstruction Have - Kpando - Tokor
- Upgrading Ho - Nyive Road
- Upgrading Kadjebi - Dzindzinzo Road
- Partial Reconstruction of Kasoa - Nyanyaano
- Upgrading Aboabo - Asikuma - Dunkwa.
- Upgrading of Assin Fosu - Twifo Praso
- Upgrading of New Abirem -Ntronang- Akim Oda.
- Upgrading of Abetifi - Abene - Hweehwee
- Upgrading of Kwabeng - Akropong
- Upgrading of Sefwi Wiawso - Akontombra
- Upgrading of Daboase - Atieku
- Upgrading of Sefwi Bekwai - By-Pass
- Upgrading of Mampong - Nsuta
- Upgrading of Obogu-Ofoase
- Upgrading of Effiduase Agona Road
- Upgrading of Dormaa Ahenkro - Nkrankwanta
- Upgrading Nkoranza - Jema
- Upgrading of Atebubu - Kwame Danso
- Upgrading of Tamale - Salaga
- Upgrading of Yendi - Gushiegu
- Rehabilitation of Yendi -Saboba
- Rehabilitation of Navrongo Town roads
- Upgrading of Missiga - Kulungugu
- Upgrading of Chuchiliga - Sandema
- Upgrading of Nadowli - Lawra

- Upgrading of Tumu - Sissili
- Rehabilitation of Tumu - Gwollu - Hamile

647. A number of Town Roads in the District Capitals will also be rehabilitated. The towns are Funsu, Sandema, Salaga, Juaso, Essam, Apam and Asamankese.

648. Mr. Speaker, GHA plans to complete the upgrading of the existing weigh bridges, and the construction of 6 new permanent weigh stations to monitor axle load on the trunk road network.

Department of Feeder Roads (DFR)

649. Mr. Speaker, DFR will re-shape and undertake routine maintenance on 26,590 km of engineered and 300 km of un-engineered feeder roads and rehabilitate and construct short and medium span steel bridges, box culverts and side drains. In addition, the Department will continue the surfacing of the following roads which started in 2007;

- Abotiase – Atonkor,
- Abrem – Agona – Essiam Effutu Ph.1
- Akropong – Atumfa – Ekosu
- Asankragua Town Roads
- Asokore Mampong – Parkoso – Aperade
- Ayi Mensah– Danfa – Amrahia
- Bortianor- Kokrobitey
- Bunkrugu Town Roads
- Karaga Town roads
- Navrongo – Pungu
- Odumase - Nkwabeng - Abuatem Ph3
- Sombo – Daffiama
- Tanko – Fiema
- Wegbe – Alavanyo – Nkonya

- Winkongo – Tongo Zuarungu

650. Mr. Speaker, works on the upgrading of the following roads will also be continued:

- Konongo – Dwease – Praso Ph.2 and 3
- Afransie – Dawurampong – Enyame Ph 2
- Hohoe – Baika – New Ayoma
- Onyemso – Hweehwee Junction.Ph.1

651. It is estimated that 670 km of roads under the Feeder Roads Improvement Project (FRIP) will be completed.

Department of Urban Roads (DUR)

652. Mr. Speaker, DUR will undertake routine and periodic maintenance works on 7,400 km of roads and rehabilitate and reconstruct the following roads:

- Sunyani road in Kumasi (Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital to Abuakwa)
- Oforikrom- Asokwa bypass in Kumasi
- Accra Central Business District roads (CBD Roads)
- Construction of Sunyani outer Ring Road
- Construction of selected Cape Coast Town roads
- Accra CBD roads Phase II (Asafoastse Nettey and Korle Lagoon roads)
- Nsawam Road Phase II (Alajo by-pass and extension to Achimota terminal)
- Awoshie-Pokuase road

Driver Vehicle and Licensing Authority (DVLA)

653. Mr. Speaker, DVLA will continue to equip some of its major stations with modern vehicle testing equipment. It will also

expand its computerization to include other regional centres to improve data capturing. DVLA will improve its service delivery to the general public. These will be done through ceding vehicle inspection activities to private garages to improve vehicle inspection and testing. It will also expand its offices at Winneba and Tema to promote efficiency. DVLA in collaboration with GTTC and NRSC will set up a model National Driver Training Academy in Accra for all categories of vehicles. It will also improve driver training and testing by revising the syllabi for written driving tests and publicize new regulations for private garages.

National Road Safety Commission (NRSC)

654. NRSC will pursue its core activities of road safety education, training, Information and Publicity. The Commission will campaign on speeding, driving under the influence of alcohol and fatigue and produce road safety teaching materials for basic schools. It will also promote road safety education for children, teachers and parents.

Government Technical Training Centre (GTTC)

655. Mr. Speaker, GTTC'S core activities involve training of students in auto-mechanics, auto-electrical, auto-bodyworks and welders to become artisans to support the Road Transport Safety and Services sub-sector. GTTC will offer vocational training to those already engaged in the informal sector (wayside mechanics) and also offer adequate education, orientation and training to practicing drivers to improve their skills.

Metro Mass Transit Limited (MMTL)

656. Mr. Speaker, MMT will acquire more buses to enable them operate effectively and increase its passenger lift from the current level of

about 60 million to 100 million passengers annually. A Rural-Urban Service Division will be created within MMT to provide service to link selected District Capitals within each region. Under this programme several communities especially in the Northern, Upper East, Upper West, Volta, Eastern and Brong Ahafo regions will be served.

657. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢503,287,051 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢184,139,842, IGF is GH¢987,923 and Donor is GH¢188,999,818. Road Fund is GH¢129,159,467.

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS

658. Mr. Speaker, MOC is facilitating the vision of government to develop policies and programmes to transform Ghana into a country with sufficient, efficient, cost effective and accessible communications infrastructure to propel appropriate technological applications and innovations to enhance socio-economic development

Performance in 2007

659. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry in pursuant of its mandate monitored the increase in telephone penetration from 20 per cent in 2006 to 30 per cent in 2007 as planned. It also pursued the privatisation of Ghana Telecom (GT) which is in progress and that of WESTEL which is completed.

National Fibre Communications Backbone Infrastructure

660. Mr. Speaker, to complement the efforts of the private sector in the extension of affordable and efficient connectivity solutions, the Ministry pursued the development of the National Fibre Communications Backbone Infrastructure network to provide open access broadband connectivity.

661. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry under the Backbone Infrastructure Network undertook survey and design of the various sites, procured and delivered equipment, constructed and commissioned Achimota distribution site, commenced laying of pipes for Buipe-Tamale, Akosombo-Ho and Kumasi-Obuasi and laid over 492 km of fibre cable.

Promotion of Competitive Telecom Market

662. Mr. Speaker, to promote the deployment of affordable wireless broadband access, the National Communications Authority (NCA) commenced the development of modalities for allocation of Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access (WIMAX) service deployment to benefit all the major telecom sector players. This intervention is aimed at encouraging the private telecom service providers to further plan their infrastructure deployment and invest in a strategic manner and also improve access and quality of service. In response to this intervention by the NCA, all the telecom sector players have launched challenging expansion programmes.

The eGhana Project

663. Mr. Speaker, under the eGhana project the Ministry developed certification and standardization procedures related to human resource capacity in Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES). It also developed investment promotion and support mechanisms to attract and retain investors in Information Communication Technology (ICT) and ITES businesses.

IT/IM Career Classification

664. Mr. Speaker, MOC with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has commenced the consultation process for the development of a Scheme of Service to define job content, career paths and appropriate remuneration packages for professional ICT/IM personnel. This is to facilitate their engagement in the civil/public service.

Ghana Investment Fund for Telecommunications (GIFTEL)

665. Mr. Speaker, GIFTEL, set up to facilitate the extension of communications services to underserved and unserved areas through the provision of common facilities has undertaken the common telecom tower service facility at Nandom (U/West) which is now offering transmission coverage to over 10 towns including Lambushie, Boe, Burutu, Piiri, Basabli, Yipele, Naapal, Pofiem, Napaali, and Gengenkpe. A similar facility at Fetentaa is also serving over 12 towns in the locality and another at the towers at Bibiaraneha and Atuna have also been completed.

Community Information Centres (CICs)

666. Mr. Speaker, in furtherance of the commitment of the Ministry to use the medium of ICT to promote an all-inclusive information and knowledge society to benefit under served and rural areas, the CIC concept has been developed. To date 92 CICs out of the projected 230 CICs have been constructed. Ghana Post has upgraded over 50 Postal Agencies to Post Offices and will connect those centres to ICT to make them learning centres in addition to providing universal postal services.

Government Assisted PC Programme (GAPP)

667. Mr. Speaker, GAPP under the iAdvance Computer4All project has sold 10,000 units of computers to the public, private and educational institutions and individuals to increase the availability and usage of computers in the country. It was also intended to encourage local entrepreneurial assembling of personal computers.

Broadband4U

668. Mr. Speaker, GT has extended broadband Internet services using copper to Kumasi and its environs, Obuasi, Cape Coast, Akosombo, Koforidua, Gbawe, Tamale, Bolgatanga, Wa, Ho, Takoradi and Tarkwa. Wireless technology has been used to provide additional broadband internet capacity for Labone, Spintex Area and Weija in the Greater Accra area.
669. Mr. Speaker, under the Postal and Courier Services Regulatory Commission (PCSRC) the policies, guidelines, rules and regulations for carrying out postal and courier business were drafted and reviewed with stakeholder participation. Also 50 firms operating postal/courier services have been registered under the regulatory framework to ensure high-level performance. Ghana Post is also being monitored in its usage of exclusive license for the provision of reserved postal services in Ghana which is aimed at ensuring that basic postal services are provided at prices, which are affordable for all segments of the population.
670. Mr. Speaker, in addition, education exercises to encourage all the identified courier companies to regularise their operations has been undertaken. The provision of inputs to facilitate the clear definition of National Postal Policy, modernize and develop the postal sector, ensure universal access to postal services, promote new service development and strengthen the role of the postal sector as an instrument of economic and social development in the era of ICT has been pursued.

ICT Business Incubator

671. Mr. Speaker, the centre supported the establishment of WiceNet Ghana Limited to provide through the primary medium of

television, data, video and audio/voice services. Currently, the company has deployed to 4 hotels, namely; La Palm Royal Beach, Cocoa Beach Hotel, Shangri La Hotel and the Dutch Hotel. Tripod Global Ventures (Jobweb), Makana Technologies Limited and IDZ Ghana Limited to provide online recruitment, develop a vehicle tracking system and operate an online advertising/events listing media website, respectively has been established.

672. Mr. Speaker, CBB Ghana Limited has developed a product tracking, scanning and identification of objects using Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) with the support of the centre. Real IT Solutions a tenant-company of the GMIC, has also developed science educational software being tested with support from the centre.

Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) Training

673. Mr. Speaker, Ministry in collaboration with the Ghana Telecommunications University College trained 30 Call Centre and Data Entry Clerks. The Ministry also collaborated with the Ministry of Information and National Orientation (MINO) and the Ghana Investment Fund for Telecommunications (GIFTEL) in the provision of training of 22 information officers from various districts under the Community Information Centre initiative. Currently, over 200 Call Centre and Data Entry operators have received training.

Science and Technology Park

674. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry is facilitating the establishment of a Science and Technology Park at the Institute of Industrial Research (IIR) to support emerging technologies. MOC formulated a master Plan for the park, collected and compiled data relevant to science and technology, economics, and

infrastructure in Ghana and submitted the second draft report in June. It is currently, updating the final draft to ensure commencement of actual implementation by the close of 2007.

Outlook for 2008

675. Mr. Speaker, MOC will pursue the policy to develop nationwide communications and technology infrastructure backbone and services to ensure that the first phase of the national fibre optic infrastructure backbone project covering the laying of fibre optic cable to Tamale, which is to be completed by Huawei Technologies by December 2007 will become functional.
676. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will also facilitate the operationalisation and the setting up of the National Fibre Backbone Company Limited to help in the management of the national fibre backbone facility as a commercially viable business. It will further pursue the actualisation of the second phase of the fibre backbone and e-government project which will go beyond Tamale to the northernmost borders.
677. Mr. Speaker, the output from the delivery of this project should see the attainment of the major objective of ensuring the provision of adequate and affordable bandwidth throughout the country under an open access management model to benefit the wider private sector.
678. Mr. Speaker, GIFTEL will construct additional common masts facilities in 29 towns. It is estimated that a total of 44 common telecommunications facilities will be provided across the country. The Ministry in collaboration with the Ministries of Information and National Orientation, Local Government, Rural Development and Environment and the District Assemblies will sustain the CIC

Programme. Under GAPP, it is projected that 40,000 more PCs will be supplied to beneficiaries.

Ghana Meteorological Agency (GMA)

679. Mr. Speaker, SADIS 2nd Generation equipment installed at the Accra Airport office will facilitate the reading of wind speed and direction as well as temperature at different levels in the atmosphere, significant weather charts and aerodrome forecasts and warnings for airports around the world.

Business Process Outsourcing training (BPO training)

680. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry in collaboration with the BPO Training outfit will train additional 300 Centre and Data Entry operators. The outfit will also continue with its collaboration with the Ghana Telecommunications University College.

681. Mr. Speaker, Tripod Global Ventures, IDZ Ghana Limited and CBB Business Limited will start commercialization of their products. These companies would move from staff strength of 3 each to approximately 6 each.

Technology Park

682. Mr. Speaker, the Technology Park Project to be located within the Free Zone enclave is to house ICT/IT enabled companies. The Request For Proposals (RFP) from the short listed companies will be sought to facilitate the commencement of work.

eGhana

683. Mr. Speaker, in the area of e-governance that is aimed at employing e-government applications to contribute to improved efficiency and transparency of Government functions, the Ministry

will procure the services of an international consultant to conclude feasibility studies on the PPP approach for the provision of e-government services in IRS and VAT service, DVLA, RGD and LTR. It is expected that the IRS nationwide digitalisation will enhance the collection of both individual and cooperate taxes.

684. In addition, a government-wide network will be installed to connect about 64 different MDAs to enable better sharing of information as well as improve coordination across government agencies. A data centre and national portal will be established which will facilitate generation of revenue through levy of transaction fees and training in the use of these facilities will be provided to CIOs, Legislators, the Judiciary, civil servants and technical staff who will manage the facilities.
685. Mr. Speaker, the passage of the National Information Technology Agency (NITA) bill in due course will give the needed legal backing to implement a number of revenue generation initiatives contained in the Electronic Transactions Bill. A number of institutions including Domain Name Registry will be set up in this regard.

Government Network (GovNet)

686. Mr. Speaker, GICTeD will design and develop a Government Network called GovNet to connect 22 Ministries and 42 Agencies to support transparent communication. This will improve access to government services by citizens, businesses and other governmental agencies.

Interoperability of Networks

687. Mr. Speaker, GICTeD will ensure that all networks talk to each other and ensure cohesive systems in content management,

electronic messaging and collaboration, documents and record management, correspondence management, and workflow management that will be deployed under the government gateway project with the support of the MINO. This will lead to the systematic development of MDAs information and transaction activities online in a progressive and competitive manner. GICTeD will effect the interoperation of networks under the eGhana.

688. Mr. Speaker, to make improved telecommunication technology available to local users, the National Communication Authority (NCA) will in the course of the year, issue 3G mobile licenses.
689. Mr. Speaker, for the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢18,518,487 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢5,815,274, IGF is GH¢644,000, Donor is GH¢9,059,213 and HIPC is GH¢3,000,000.

MINISTRY OF HARBOURS AND RAILWAYS

Performance in 2007

Maritime Sector

690. Mr. Speaker, for the Ministry to achieve its objectives under this sub-sector, the Tema Port Container Terminal has been completed and commissioned and the Meridian Port Services have been granted concession to operate Quay II container terminal.

691. Mr. Speaker, Ghana Maritime Authority in collaboration with the Ghana Meteorological Agency is providing weather information through district assemblies to boat operators and users of water transport on the Volta Lake to improve safety. In addition, inland water safety code has been developed and disseminated to all users. The draft Legislative Instrument (LI) on the construction and use of boats has been completed.

Rail Sector

692. Mr. Speaker, to provide other cheaper and faster means of transport as well as decongest the roads, the Accra-Asaprochona section of Accra-Tema Rail network has been completed. The contract for the feasibility study on the Multi-Modal Freight Transport between Tema via Akosombo to Buipe has also been awarded.

693. Mr. Speaker, inline with the private sector participation objectives, a design to build, operate and transfer (BOT) agreement has been signed for the construction and extension of the eastern line from Accra through Kumasi to Paga. Another BOT agreement has already been signed with a private sector investor to rehabilitate the Western Corridor and construct a new line to Hamile.

Outlook for 2008

694. Mr. Speaker, in pursuant of its mandate, the Ministry will undertake the following activities outlined below:

Maritime Sector

Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA)

695. GPHA will continue its drive to position the Ports of Tema and Takoradi as the preferred Ports in the sub-region by dredging the berths from 10m to 12m to accommodate bigger bulk and conventional cargo vessels, undertaking feasibility study on the construction of a second Container Terminal at the Tema Port and also develop terminals at Takoradi Port.

Volta Lake Transport Company Limited (VLTCL)

696. Mr. Speaker, VLTCL will construct landing station and passenger facilities at Awudzakope and a 10km road from Awudzakope to Makango to increase accessibility to water infrastructure. In addition, the company will rehabilitate ferries A & B for Kete Krachi and Dambai routes, respectively, and acquire two additional ferries for Afram Plains. The company will also construct container Handling Terminals at Akosombo and Buipe to improve upon trade with Burkina Faso and other landlocked countries.

Ghana Maritime Authority (GMA)

697. Mr. Speaker, the Ghana Maritime Authority (GMA) will embark upon a policy to promote the Ghanaian Ship register through the opening of a registry system in order to increase the country's tonnage and also to create employment avenues.

698. Mr. Speaker, GMA will also implement the policy on Flag State which entails ensuring that the ships flying the Ghanaian flag as sea worthy and comply with all safety regulations to enhance safety of life and property.

Ghana Shippers' Council (GSC)

699. Mr. Speaker, GSC expects to partner Shama Ahanta East Metropolitan Assembly (SAEMA) and Ecobank Ghana Limited under the Public Private Partnership to construct freight terminal at Takoradi to ease congestion at the Takoradi Port to ease the movement of trucks in the port.

Rail Sector

700. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will ensure that the Ghana Railway Development Authority (GRDA) will be operational as a regulatory body for rail transport, the extension of the railway line from Asaprochona to Port of Tema, the rehabilitation of the Accra-Nsawam railway line to improve mass transportation, the rehabilitation of the central line from Huni Valley to Kotoku and also the refurbishment of 10 coaches.

701. Mr. Speaker, for the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢59,682,804 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢59,625,513 and IGF is GH¢57,291.

MINISTRY OF AVIATION

702. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Aviation has the overall responsibility for policy formulation for the aviation sector with emphasis on liberalization, institutional restructuring, private Sector participation, infrastructure and human resource development.

Performance in 2007

Bilateral Air Services Agreement

703. The Ministry negotiated a new bilateral Air Services Agreement with Saudi Arabia. The existing agreement with Germany was also reviewed.

National Transport Policy

704. Mr. Speaker, the National Transport Policy which contains broad policy framework for the Aviation Sector has been completed. A detailed aviation policy guideline for the sector is being developed with the Ghana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA).

Infrastructure Development

705. Mr. Speaker, the contract for the rehabilitation works on the Kotoka International Airport Phase III has been signed. The conditions precedent to the effectiveness of the loan has been cleared and the loan agreement is expected to be signed by the end of the year.

706. Mr. Speaker, in line with the rehabilitation of the regional airports, contracts for Kumasi, Tamale and Takoradi airports have been awarded and contractors have mobilized to site.

Institutional Restructuring

707. Mr. Speaker, the physical separation of the Ghana Civil Aviation Authority into two entities has been completed. The Boards of Directors for the two agencies have been constituted and duly inaugurated.

Safety and Security

708. Mr. Speaker, GCAA has procured 2 fire tenders and screening equipment to deal with emergencies, rescue operations and security at KIA. With the assistance of Her Majesty's Custom "operation West bridge" security alertness has been raised at KIA.

Air Transport Services - GIAL Certification

709. Mr. Speaker, the certification process for the national carrier which is to pave the way for the Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) Category 1 status has commenced. As part of the certification process a number of pilots have been trained for rating on Boeing 767. The Ghana International Airlines Ltd (GIAL) continues to operate the Accra-London route. The Airline has also signed a commercial agreement with South African Airways (SAA) to enable them expand their operations to the USA. The agreement will also assist the GIAL acquire aircraft for the London and sub regional operations.

Ground Handling

710. Mr. Speaker, the license of Aviance has been renewed through a tender process as a second ground handling Company. This brings the number of Ground Handling Operators at KIA to 2 with AHS Menzies as the other operator.

Liquidation of Ghana Airways

711. Mr. Speaker, the Official Liquidator (OL) has since commencement of liquidation received a total of 260 creditor claims amounting to US\$209.0 million excluding employee claims. The total realization since commencement of the liquidation is US\$17.3 million. The OL has concluded negotiations with a section of the ex- Ghana Airways staff and an amount of \$2,000,000.00 is expected to be paid as down payment for their severance payment by the close of the year.

Ultra Light Operations

712. Mr. Speaker, a private company dealing with micro-light aircraft assembly in the Eastern region has embarked on ab initio training for pilots in the country on micro lights aircraft. They have also organized a number of aviation seminars to sensitize the public on the benefits of General aviation.

African Ministerial Conference

713. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry in collaboration with Landover Company Limited, publishers of Allied Business magazine organized in August an African Ministerial Conference in Accra. The Conference brought together experts and aviation practitioners on the continent to chart the way forward for Africa's aviation industry.

Outlook for 2008

Liberalize Regulatory Framework

714. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will hold and review bilateral negotiations with African and non African member States under

the policy of liberalizing the regulatory framework in line with the Yamoussoukro Decision for air liberalization in Africa to attract more airlines to KIA and increase frequencies. The liberalized regime will improve private sector participation to support economic growth.

General Aviation and Support Services

715. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will provide the enabling environment for the private sector to invest and manage activities in the support services especially in the training of pilots. GCAA will come out with the appropriate regulatory framework for the operations of the ultra light aircrafts, which will be used in agriculture, passenger transport and health delivery services.

Infrastructural Development (KIA Phase III)

716. Mr. Speaker, the Ghana Airports Company Ltd. will continue with the infrastructural development of KIA and the regional airports and airstrips to reach acceptable ICAO standards and support the economy. The KIA works include the rehabilitation of Taxiway/Apron, the construction of a new fire station, the rehabilitation of terminal building, the supply and installation of terminal building furniture and electronic equipment, the installation of passenger boarding bridges and the expansion/refurbishment of the domestic terminal.

Human Resource Development

717. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will encourage the private sector to establish training schools to build human resource capacity to meet the needs of the industry. The Ministry will also provide appropriate training to existing and newly recruited staff on issues

of aviation to improve their skills and service delivery. GCAA will be hosting an African Airports Council International Conference.

Aviation Policy and Strategic Plan

718. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry in collaboration with the Ghana Civil Aviation Authority will develop an aviation sector specific policy and strategic plan to guide the direction of the sector. This will include the development of airstrips to cater for emergencies and also support tourism by the use of small aircraft to access remote areas. The Ministry will also continue to review its bilateral agreements with African countries in line with the Yamoussoukro Decision (YD) which aims at liberalizing air traffic services in Africa.

Air Transport

Ghana International Airlines Limited (GIAL)

719. Mr. Speaker, GIAL will continue and complete its certification programme. It will also improve its network within the West Africa Sub-region. The Government has directed the Ministry to ensure the closure of the hanger. The Ministry will also ensure the settlement of the ongoing litigation between Government and its partners. This is to allow the Ministry put in place credible management and invite private equity for a sustainable operation of the Airline.

Liquidation of Ghana Airways

720. Mr. Speaker, the Official Liquidator expects to finalize creditor validations and also resolve matters in litigation to bring the liquidation to closure. The OL will seek government's support to

meet government commitment with regard to specific creditors, especially the staff of Ghana Airways.

Monitoring Air Operations

721. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will continue to monitor the rehabilitation of regional airports and other airfields in the country as well as the operations of domestic airlines with a view to extending services to other destinations within the sub-region and beyond.
722. Mr. Speaker, for the implementation of the above activities, a total amount of GH¢1,478,975 has been allocated to the Ministry.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

723. Mr. Speaker, developing the human resource assets of this country is one of the priority areas of government. The aim is to guarantee a critical mass of skilled labour, knowledgeable, well trained, disciplined and healthy to drive and sustain private sector-led growth. The strategy is to ensure that people have access to crucial basic social services such as quality health care, safe drinking water and sanitation and decent but affordable housing that enhances their wellbeing including rights to protection for the vulnerable.

724. Ministries, Departments and Agencies who contribute to the realization of above objective are:

- Ministry of Education, Science and Sports (MESS)
- Ministry of Manpower Youth and Employment (MMYE)
- Ministry of Health (MOH)
- Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC)

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND SPORTS

Performance in 2007

725. Mr. Speaker, the sector's development in 2007 was geared towards the achievement of targets set under the Education (Sector) Strategic Plan, GPRS II and preparations towards the implementation of the new Education Reforms Programme. The year also witnessed Ghana's participation in international tournaments including All African Games in Algeria, the Africa Under-17 Football Tournament in Togo, FIFA Under-17 World Cup in Korea and the FIFA Women World Cup Tournament in China.

Basic Education

726. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry collaborated with district assemblies, religious bodies and non-governmental organisations to provide 1,349 classrooms for pre-schools as a means of mainstreaming pre-schools into basic education system. Consequently, the number of pre-schools increased from 8,659 to 10,008 within the same period. Enrolment at this level grew from 1,065,963 in 2005/2006 to 1,142,784 in 2006/2007 academic year.

727. Public education on the need to send children to schools was intensified in churches, durbars, fora, market places and communities towards the achievement of Universal Primary Completion and Gender Parity by 2015.

728. Mr. Speaker, Government released a total amount of GH¢14.24 million during the year as payment of Capitation Grant to pupils in all public basic schools. In addition, government subsidised the conduct of Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) to the tune of GH¢3.39 million.

729. The Ministry continued with efforts to improve gender parity in public basic schools, especially in the 15 districts with the lowest Gender Parity Index (GPI). Educational inputs such as stationery, uniforms and protective clothing were provided to needy pupils especially girls and this went a long way to improve gender parity at the basic school level. Most districts encouraged the use of Girls Clubs and Role models within the schools to work towards gender parity.
730. Mr. Speaker, in 2007, In view of the fact that a hungry child can hardly absorb what is being taught Government in 2005 initiated the School Feeding Programme on a pilot basis at some selected basic schools. By 2007, the Programme was expanded to cover 408,989 pupils nationwide.
731. The combined effect of these interventions resulted in significant increases in Gross Enrolment Ratios (GER) and other targets as indicated below:

Level of Education	2005/2006	2006/2007
GER (Pre-School Level)	75.2%	83.6 %
GER (Primary Level)	92.1%	93.7%
GPI (Primary Level)	0.95%	0.96%

732. The resultant expansion of enrolment necessitated the construction of classrooms. In 2007, government spent a total amount of GH¢6.2 million on the construction of new classrooms whilst GH¢5.6 million worth of furniture made up of school desks, teachers' and library tables and chairs were supplied to basic schools to help accommodate the increase enrolment in schools.

Teacher Deployment

733. Mr. Speaker, to correct the existing regional disparities in teacher supply in order to improve the quality of education delivery, postings were made to areas that lacked teachers, especially remote rural areas with emphasis on the 3 regions in the north where pupil/teacher ratio (PTR) is very high. Incentive packages including 8,280 bicycles were distributed to teachers in deprived schools. Consequently, the pupil-teacher ratios for these regions improved as indicated below:

Region	2005/2006 PTR	2006/2007 PTR
Northern	38:1	34:1
Upper East	48:1	42:1
Upper West	40:1	34:1

734. Mr. Speaker, the District Sponsorship Scheme for teachers continued to be used as a reliable means of ensuring and securing services of teachers in basic schools. In all, the District Assemblies sponsored a total of 9,300 out of 9,401 teacher trainees enrolled in various teacher training colleges for 2006/2007 academic year. All the teacher trainees have been bonded and will be posted to teach in the districts that sponsored them.

735. Additionally, to attract teachers to remote rural areas, Government spent a total amount of GH¢4.1 million on teacher accommodation.

National Service Scheme

736. Mr. Speaker, the National Service Scheme remains an important source of teacher supply in the sector. In 2007, out of a total of 21,981 service personnel, 15,386 representing 70 per cent were deployed as teachers to schools in remote rural areas. In addition, 8,350 volunteers were also recruited as teachers under the National Volunteer Programme to make up for the shortfall in teacher supply within the sector.

Upgrading of Teacher Training Colleges

737. In view of the important role teacher education is expected to play under the new education reforms which took off in September 2007, government started a programme of upgrading teacher training colleges throughout the country. Work on the construction of classrooms and libraries continued in all the 38 teacher training colleges. In addition, construction of science laboratories continued in the 15 selected colleges specialising in the teaching of science, mathematics and technology.

738. A total of 3 classroom blocks, 6 library blocks and 5 science laboratories were completed in the course of the year. To enhance management, monitoring and supervision of teacher trainees, thirty-eight (38) vehicles were procured for distribution to all the Principals of Teacher Training Colleges.

Model Senior High Education

739. Mr. Speaker, under the first phase of the Government's programme of upgrading facilities in at least one senior high school in each district of the country, 20 out of the 31 senior high schools being upgraded were completed in 2007. The other 11

schools are almost complete. A total amount of GH¢20.940 million was paid in 2007 in respect of works executed on the projects. Since the inception of the policy in 2003, Government has released an amount of GH¢143.26 million for the programme.

740. Mr. Speaker, work has also commenced on the second phase of upgrading physical facilities in 25 Senior high Schools and the projects are at various levels of completion. Additionally, to reduce the burden on parents, Government provided an amount of GH¢12.10 million to subsidise feeding in these schools.

Computerized School Selection and Placement System (CSSPS)

741. Mr. Speaker, to ensure more objective and efficient placement of pupils in senior high schools, Government continues to improve the Computerized School Selection and Placement System (CSSPS). After thoroughly addressing the problems faced in the first two years of implementation, a total of 166,000 out of 320,000 students were placed in various senior high schools and technical institutes in the country in 2007 by the CSSPS.

Ghana Library Board

742. Mr. Speaker, the Board procured books, periodicals, journals and equipment for distribution to the 62 libraries throughout the country. A total of 10 Mobile Library Vans were also procured to enhance their operations. Work continued on the construction of Ho, Sunyani and Cape Coast Regional Libraries. In addition, the Central Library in Accra was also rehabilitated in the course of the year. A National Youth Essay Competition was also introduced in 2007 by the Board.

Non-Formal Education

743. The Programme continued to support the promotion of non-formal literacy with the recruitment of 1,822 facilitators to help sustain the programme.

Tertiary Education

744. Mr. Speaker, the rapid increase in enrolment at tertiary level continued to engage the attention of Government. In order not to compromise quality of education due to expansion in enrolment, the following measures were introduced:

- Strengthening and developing the capacity of the regulatory bodies through sponsoring of staff from these bodies for further studies;
- Revision in the curricula of the polytechnics to make them competency-based and relevant to the needs of industry and national development;
- A committee was set by the National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations (NABPTEX) to develop and improve the practical attachment policy for lecturers and students of polytechnic institutions. Through the Association of Ghana Industries (AGI), 1,400 industrial establishments have been registered to provide attachment for lecturers and students of the Polytechnics and technical institutes.

745. Additionally, to improve upon the quality of teaching at the tertiary level, the Teaching and Learning Innovation Fund (TALIF) provided GH¢7.48 million to tertiary institutions to promote change and innovation.

Distance Education

746. Mr. Speaker, Government continued to encourage teachers to enroll in the Distance Learning Programmes offered at the University of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, University of Education, Winneba and University of Cape Coast as an alternative way of acquiring tertiary education. This, among other things helped to ease the pressure on the study leave scheme, whilst ensuring the availability of teachers in the classrooms. Total number of learners in these institutions for the 2006/2007 academic year was 20,772 out of which about 90 per cent were teachers.

Promotion of Science, Technology and Research

747. Mr. Speaker, Government's policy of ensuring an enrolment ratio of 60:40 in favour of science and technology guided the admission process in the tertiary educational institutions. In the light of this, funds were made available to expand and equip science laboratories in the tertiary educational institutions to make teaching and learning of science and technology more constructive and attractive.

Infrastructure Development

748. Mr. Speaker, in 2007, government provided GH¢34.0 million for improvement of infrastructural facilities in the tertiary institutions. In the course of the year, a lecture theatre and a classroom block for applied arts, 2 staff accommodation, 2 library blocks, 3 halls of residence, 2 sports stadia, a computer laboratory, an auditorium, agricultural engineering workshop and 2 administration blocks were completed for the Universities and Polytechnics. About 50 other projects are also at various stages of completion.

Polytechnics

749. Mr. Speaker, the Polytechnics have been repositioned to offer bridging programmes to enable students from technical institutes to upgrade themselves in Mathematics, English and Science to enable them pursue higher education. The Ministry continued to equip and strengthen the Polytechnics to enable them efficiently offer technical and practical oriented programmes in order to meet the needs of industry and national economy.
750. Emphasis is now on competency-based training whilst strengthening industrial attachment. As recommended in the White Paper on the Reports of the Education Reform on Review of Education, Takoradi Polytechnic started a degree programme in Building Technology whilst Ho Polytechnic also started degree programmes in Hospitality and Tourism and Automobile Engineering. The Accra Polytechnic, on the other hand, commenced a degree programme in Fashion Technology.

Education Reforms

751. Mr. Speaker, the Education Reforms designed to make education more responsive to the current challenges in the country took off smoothly in September 2007. Curricula and syllabi for all the core subjects from basic to senior high school level have been developed and distributed to all schools in the country. Orientation courses on the use of the syllabi have already started.

Science

752. Mr. Speaker, the following activities were undertaken by the Science Sub-sector:

- Work on harnessing Research, Science and Technology in national development;
- A draft bill on Chemical Weapon Convention was sent to the Ministry of National Security for further work. This would form part of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Bill under the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 of 2000;
- Co-ordination of nuclear safety and waste management by the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission (GAEC);
- Sensitisation programmes on GAEC products and services;
- Establishment of two bio-technology centres at Plant Genetic Resource Institute at Bunso in the Eastern Region and Crop Research Institute at Kumasi in the Ashanti Region. Equipment were purchased and installed at the Kumasi Centre;
- Construction of a Library and a Computer centre;
- Contract for the construction/rehabilitation of the National Accelerator Project was awarded and work is ongoing.

Sports

753. Mr. Speaker, the Government's vision of making sports development and management central in its developmental agenda is being pursued. In line with this, an elaborate plan for the development of sports with special emphasis on the provision of sports infrastructure and the hosting of a number of international sport tournaments have been prepared.

754. Work on the sports stadia for the hosting of the Ghana 2008 (African Cup of Nations (CAN) tournament) is almost complete. Currently, the external works and the construction of 16 training pitches are also nearing completion.

755. Government further provided funds for the various national teams' participation in international tournaments including the All African Games in Algeria where Ghana won 24 medals, the Africa Under-17 Football Tournament in Togo with the team winning bronze medal, FIFA Under-17 World Cup in Korea and the FIFA Women World Cup Tournament in China.
756. Mr. Speaker, the lesser-known sports were also supported to develop. The programme of building the national teams through the organisation of Schools Sports Festivals and Security Services Sports Association (SESSA) Games also received the Government's attention.

Outlook for 2008

757. Mr. Speaker, the main focus of the Ministry in 2008 will be the implementation of the Education Reforms Programme, which took off in September 2007. The reforms, among other things, will address the challenges in management, structure and content of education.

Basic Education

Pre-school

758. Mr. Speaker, Government recognises the vital role pre-school plays in the formative years of the child. Consequently, pre-school has been mainstreamed into the basic education system. The Government's intention is to ensure that by 2015, all children of school-going age will have had access to pre-school education before entering primary one.
759. In line with this vision, public education on the importance of pre-school will be intensified whilst enrolment drives aimed at

increasing access to and participation at this level of education will continue to be pursued. The Ministry will continue to encourage District Assemblies, religious bodies and other non-state actors to provide classroom blocks in locations which lack them. Government will also continue to support the construction of infrastructure for pre-schools.

Primary Education

760. Mr. Speaker, as part of the reform, fewer teaching subjects will be taught at the primary level. Curricula have been developed to ensure that all the required skill areas are attained by learners.

Junior High Education

761. Mr. Speaker, this level will last three years as is currently the case. However, measures, including changes in the curriculum, a well-structured assessment procedure, guidance and counseling will be instituted at this level to ensure that students are well prepared before they enter the senior high school system.

Access to Basic Education

762. Mr. Speaker, strategies including sensitisation programmes, continued implementation of the capitation grants scheme, school feeding among others, that will lead to increased enrolment with the sole aim of attaining Universal Primary Completion by 2012 and Gender Parity at basic school level will be adopted. Programmes on the value of education and the role of parents and the community in assisting government to achieve targets set under the Millennium Development Goals will be intensified.

Capitation Grant and BECE Subsidy

763. Mr. Speaker, Government will provide sufficient funds to sustain the payment of Capitation Grant in 2008. For effective utilization of the funds, Regional Directorates of Education will be required to intensify the monitoring of implementation of the scheme and assist weaker districts in this regard.
764. In addition, Government will continue to reduce some of the burden on parents by subsidising the conduct of the 2008 Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). An amount of GH¢3.80 million has been earmarked as Government subsidy towards the BECE.

Subsidy for Senior High Schools

765. Mr. Speaker, Government will continue to reduce the burden on parents with wards in senior high schools by providing an amount of GH¢11.40 million to subsidise feeding fee in these schools in 2008.
766. Furthermore, District Assemblies and District Directorates of Education will be encouraged to put in measures such as scholarship schemes and provision of educational inputs that will assist in addressing gender imbalance in basic schools. Educational inputs and other rewards will be provided to needy pupils, especially girls.

Infrastructure Facilities for Basic Schools

767. Mr. Speaker, conscious effort will be made to provide more infrastructural facilities for basic schools. The 'Schools Under Trees' Project involving 230 No. 6-Unit Classroom Blocks and 147

No. 3-Unit Classroom Blocks which started last year will be completed in 2008. A total amount of GH¢10.0 million has been earmarked. With these interventions, the enrolment targets set for 2008 are:

Level of Education	2006/2007	2007/2008
GER (Pre-School Level)	83.6%	85.7%
GER (Primary Level)	93.7%	96.4%
GPI (Primary Level)	0.96%	0.97%

Teacher Preparation, Upgrading and Deployment

768. Mr. Speaker, Teacher Education holds the key to the successful implementation of the education reform programme. In tackling the challenges facing teacher training colleges and ensuring that qualified and specialized teachers are produced for our basic schools, facilities in teacher training colleges are being upgraded. Work on 38 libraries, 15 science laboratories and 38 classroom blocks being constructed will be completed and equipped in 2008.
769. Teachers will be prepared and deployed through appraisal and in-service training. Various incentive packages will be introduced into the service to motivate teachers to give off their best. The upgrading of teachers under the Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education (UTDBE) programme, which started in the three regions in the North and Afram Plains District in the Eastern Region in 2004 will produce a total number of 24,000 teachers nation-wide.
770. Mr. Speaker, the phase four of the Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education programme covering the Greater Accra and Volta Regions will begin by December 2007. It is estimated that over 4,000 untrained teachers will avail themselves of this opportunity to enroll for the programme.

771. To correct the existing disparities in teacher supply, targeted supply of teachers to areas with shortfalls will be enforced. It is also expected that the 33,000 youth to be recruited under the Community Teaching Assistance Module of the National Youth Employment Programme will assist in teaching in schools, mostly in deprived rural areas. With the decentralisation of this Programme, it is hoped that the problem of regional disparities in teacher supply will be corrected.

National Service Scheme

772. Mr. Speaker, in 2008, the National Service Scheme is expected to post 22,400 out of 32,000 service personnel representing 70 per cent to various schools to make up for the shortfall in teacher supply. It is also estimated that about a third of volunteers recruited under the National Volunteer Programme will be deployed as teachers to schools in rural areas.

Quality and Assessment

773. The sector's objective is not only to ensure quantitative access to education but also to improve and maintain quality of education standards. Towards this end, Ghana Education Service will continue to monitor the smooth implementation of the textbook policy to ensure that pupils have access to textbooks supplied. The Basic Education Comprehensive Assessment System (BECAS) will continue to be used to strengthen school monitoring, supervision and inspection in order to enhance accountability.

Senior High Education

774. Mr. Speaker, a major change introduced under the education reform programme is the duration of senior high school. The present three-year senior secondary education is being changed

to 4 years with four main specialised programmes namely Grammar, Agriculture, Technical and Vocational. Consequently, government will provide additional classrooms required for the fourth year of the senior high education.

Information, Communication and Technology

775. Mr. Speaker, in line with the reforms programme, Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) has been introduced into the curriculum as a core subject at the pre-tertiary level. In view of this, ICT equipment and furniture will be supplied to 250 senior high schools. The equipment will include desktop computers, laptops, LCD projectors, printers, education software as well as internet connectivity together with 6 months subscription of internet to sustain the programme.

776. Other activities include the hosting in May, 2008 of the 3rd International Conference for Development, Education and Training dubbed *e-Learning Africa Conference*. Training of teachers in ICT and connecting District Directorates of Education to the internet will enable personnel at the District level to access information for management decision making.

Upgrading of Senior High Schools

777. Mr. Speaker, work on the second phase of upgrading of 25 senior high schools will be continued in 2008.

Computerized School Selection and Placement System (CSSPS)

778. The System will continue to be used to place qualified junior high school graduates into the senior high schools. Public education will be intensified to increase public support for the system.

Technical, Vocational and Agricultural Education

779. Mr. Speaker, the Education Reforms Programme envisages a radical transformation of technical, vocational and agricultural education in terms of quality, quantity and financing. To this end, Government will provide funds for the expansion of infrastructure in these institutes.
780. A Council for Technical, Vocational Education and Training (COTVET) is to be established during the year to guide policy makers and sensitise the public on the Government's new focus for education. COTVET would be made up of representatives from industry and MDAs to direct the establishment of a demand-driven Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system. This will include:
- development of a competency-based curriculum in consultation with industry;
 - National Certification Framework for TVET;
 - accreditation of all TVET providers in the country; and
 - establishment of a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit.
781. Government will continue to liaise with industries to provide places for teachers and students of technical institutes for industrial attachment.
782. Mr. Speaker, the modalities for an apprenticeship programme for graduates of junior high schools who would not be able to enter into the senior high school programme will be worked out. The National Apprentice Training Board will be constituted under COTVET to handle issues relating to apprenticeship training for the informal sector.

Education Management at Pre-tertiary Level

783. Mr. Speaker, the Ghana Education Service has lined up measures towards improving resource planning, management, monitoring and evaluation in 2008. These include giving priority to the decentralisation process with the aim of assisting the districts and schools to respond effectively to local conditions and priorities, thereby enhancing education service delivery.
784. Following the distribution of vehicles to district and regional directorates of education, it is expected that monitoring and supervision of schools will be enhanced. It is also envisaged that school governance and community participation will be strengthened through effective functioning of school management committees at the basic level and board of governors at the second cycle level. In addition to these, management skills of Heads of Schools, Inspectors, Circuit Supervisors, Frontline Assistant Directors and Directors will be upgraded.

Financing the reforms programme

785. Mr. Speaker, the biggest challenge for the successful implementation of the reforms is finance. Government will provide funds to facilitate the implementation of the reforms within budgetary constraints, however, other alternatives and options for additional resources such as cost-sharing arrangements, internal efficiency measures and community participation will be explored to implement and sustain the programme.

Distance Education

786. Mr. Speaker, the Distance Learning Programme will continue and teachers will be encouraged to use it as an alternative way of acquiring tertiary education. Financial support will be given to teachers who enroll on the programme.

Ghana Library Board

787. Government will provide funds to equip District and Regional Libraries. Books, journals, periodicals and equipment will be procured by the Board for distribution to libraries. The rehabilitation of the Cape Coast Regional Library will be completed in 2008 whilst constructional works, currently ongoing on the Ho and Sunyani Regional Libraries will continue.

788. The Ghana Library Board will continue the mobile library service, provide service to distant learning students and continue the Ghana Library Board Youth Essay Competition. The computerisation of the Sekondi Regional Library will also begin and the construction works on the suspended regional library block will also be reactivated.

Non-Formal Education

789. Mr. Speaker, the National Functional Literacy Programme will be expanded in 2008. The Non-Formal Division will recruit and train additional 4,000 facilitators and open 4,000 literacy classes. About 1,000 literacy classes will undergo basic management training for income generation.

Tertiary Education

790. Mr. Speaker, the Government will continue to support, strengthen and develop the capacity of regulatory bodies in order to ensure

quality delivery of education at this level. Government through the GETFund will continue to support faculty development.

791. In addition, the polytechnics will be supported to make their courses competency-based and relevant to the needs of industry and national development. The collaboration with the Association of Ghana Industries (AGI) will be sustained to enable more students and lecturers benefit from practical industrial attachment.
792. Resources from the Teaching and Learning Innovation Fund (TALIF) will continue to be made available to tertiary institutions to promote change and innovation and improve upon the quality of teaching and learning.
793. Mr. Speaker, the current pace of infrastructural development will be sustained. Construction works on lecture halls, staff accommodation, science laboratories, workshops and hostels for students will continue.

Promotion of Science, Technology and Research

794. Mr. Speaker, to continue to promote science, technology and research in the country, funds will be provided to expand and equip science laboratories and technical workshops in educational institutions at secondary and tertiary levels.
795. Research institutions will also be resourced to carry out research activities that will enhance productivity and national development. The policy of an enrolment ratio of 60:40 in favour of science and technology will still hold and tertiary institutions will be encouraged to respect this policy.

Science

796. Mr. Speaker, in line with the education reforms programme, the Science sub-sector of the Ministry will be supported to play its mandated role. Specifically, Government will support the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) to commercialise its activities and thereby transfer technology and application of new knowledge. Under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between CSIR and PTPP London, Sumatra, Indonesia TBK (LONSUM), a New Seed Company is to be established that will develop high yielding and disease resistant planting materials for both local market and export. Revenue accruing from local sales will go to Oil Palm Research Institute, Kade whilst those generated from exports will be shared between CSIR and LONSUM based on an agreed term.

Science and Technology Endowment Fund

797. Mr. Speaker, the Science and Technology Endowment Fund, which was established in 2007 will be made operational in 2008. Major activities planned for the year include the following:

- Advanced research into local materials as substitute for Portland cement;
- Bio-fuel research;
- Development of energy efficiency standards for households appliances;
- Bio-fortification of maize, cowpea and sweet potato with micro-nutrients and vitamin A using molecular biology tool;
- Production of activated carbon from agricultural waste for pharmaceutical and water companies;
- Development of Sorghum as an industrial crop;

798. Mr. Speaker, the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission (GAEC) will upgrade the Gamma Irradiation Facility, which is used for the treatment of food and medical items in the country.

799. GAEC will collaborate with the International Atomic Energy Association to implement the National Accelerator Project for efficient application of nuclear technology to improve human health delivery services, assist in material engineering, environmental pollution and agricultural studies.

Sports

800. Mr. Speaker, as part of sports development plan, government intends to acquire a 10 square mile plot of land in each of the 5 regions without a modern stadium, for the construction of regional sports stadia. The construction of the Cape Coast, will commence in 2008 whilst work on the Ho, Bolgatanga, Sunyani, Koforidua and Wa Stadia is scheduled to start in 2009.

801. The new stadia will realise income from the following sources:

802. Shares of gate proceeds from both international and local matches, hiring of the facilities for sporting and other social activities, hire of training grounds for international teams, proceeds from business centres operating in the stadia ground, adverts on bill boards and score board advertisements, and from sports tourism. These revenues will be used to support the development of the regional stadia planned for the remaining five regions.

803. For 2008, the Government's pre-occupation in the sports sub-sector is the hosting of the African Cup of Nations (CAN) Tournament from January to February. Financial and logistical support will therefore be provided to the Local Organising Committee. Similarly, every support will also be given to the national football team in their preparation for and participation to enable them annex the Continental Trophy.

804. The Sports Sub-Sector will again embark on a special programme to identify and develop talents in the various sporting events as a way of building national teams. In this regard, schools and colleges will be provided with sporting facilities and equipment. In addition, funds will be made available for professional training and retraining of personnel to manage sporting activities.
805. Mr. Speaker, finally, Government will continue to provide funds for the development of sports to promote good health, peace and national unity. This, in a large measure will address and prevent some of the causes of conflict, improve health and bridge cultural and ethnic divides.
806. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢1,264,902,043 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢879,935,633, IGF is GH¢122,256,630, Donor is GH¢52,299,268 and HIPC is GH¢16,485,000. MDRI is GH¢30,900,000 and GETFund is GH¢163,025,513

MINISTRY OF MANPOWER, YOUTH & EMPLOYMENT

807. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry's mandate is to develop the nation's human resources through skills training and re-training, ensure youth development and empowerment, create employment opportunities, harmonious labour relations, safe and healthy working environment, social integration of People With Disabilities (PWDs), the vulnerable and the excluded for national development and growth.

Performance in 2007

Manpower Development

Human Resource Development Policy

808. Mr. Speaker, a Human Resource Development (HRD) Policy is in the process of being developed by the Ministry. The main aim of this policy is to ensure the development of a knowledgeable, well-trained and disciplined labour force with the capacity to drive and sustain private sector-led growth. It is also expected to inform and guide policy makers, Human Resource (HR) training institutions and other key stakeholders in HR planning, management and development. As part of activities to complete the development of the National HRD policy, a working group has been formed to develop the policy.

Management, Technical and Vocational Skills Training

809. Mr. Speaker, the Management, Vocational and Technical Training Institutes under the Ministry operated as centres of excellence and provided trades and vocational training for the youth, especially JSS and SSS graduates, school drop-outs, single parent

mothers and illiterate members of society. The institutes undertook the following training;

- Management Development and Productivity Institute (MDPI) conducted 482 courses in management skills for a total of 6,746 participants with 76 per cent of these coming from the private sector;
- National Vocational Training Institutes (NVTI) trained 13,391 youth;
- ICCES trained 1,344 youths in various vocational and handicraft skills mostly in the rural communities and
- The 10 Youth Leadership Training Institutes of the National Youth Council (NYC) also offered training in leadership skills, the trades and vocations to 1,500 unskilled and disadvantaged youth.

Employment

National Employment Policy (NEP)

810. Mr. Speaker, work on the Draft National Employment Policy has been completed. In addition, the Implementation Action Plan is ongoing and will be completed by March 2008.

Labour Market Statistics

811. A draft labour market information system (LMIS) home page has been developed to provide data and information for informed analysis, planning and development of labour interventions

Operationalisation of the Labour Act

812. Legislative Instrument 1833 to operationalise the Labour Act 2003, Act 651 was passed by Parliament.

Labour Administration

813. Mr. Speaker, Government, together with its Tripartite partners participated in the African Regional Labour Administration Centre (ARLAC) and ILO-ECA Regional Conference. His Excellency, the President, J. A. Kufuor addressed the 96th Session of the ILO Conference on June 4, 2007 in Geneva.

The Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC)

814. The Ministry facilitated the enactment of the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission Act 2007 (Act 737). The Board of the Commission has been constituted, and office accommodation has been provided. In addition, the Ministry is working to fill the technical grades of the Commission. The social dialogue between the Board, the Commission and other stakeholders is currently being facilitated by the Ministry. Meetings have been held between the Consultants working on the new pay structure (i.e. the single spine), the technical team on the job evaluation and the task force that worked on the establishment of the Board to bring the Board up-to-date on developments and expectations.

Youth Development

Youth Policy

815. Work on a new Youth Policy that reflects the growing needs of the youth, as well as their contributions to national development and an Implementation Action Plan was completed in September.

National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP)

816. Mr. Speaker, the overall objective of the programme is to empower the Youth to enable them to contribute more productively towards the socio-economic and sustainable development of the nation. This programme attests to government's commitment to provide jobs for the youth in line with the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy II (GPRS II). Seven out of the 10 employment modules have been rolled out and are being implemented nationwide. A total of 107,114 youth have been engaged on the seven modules as at August 2007.

817. The breakdown is as follows:

Modules	No employed
Agri-Bus-Crop	25,383
Community Education Teaching & Volunteer Teachers	32,801
Comm. Protection Unit	2,749
Health Extension Workers	15,000
Waste & Sanitation	9,100
Internship	5,200
Sub-Modules (forestry and revenue mobilization)	16,881
TOTAL	107,114

Social Development

Persons With Disabilities (PWDs)

818. Mr. Speaker, the Disability Council has been formed and is operational as envisaged under the Persons With Disabilities Act 2006 (Act 755).

819. In order to bring PWDs into the mainstream of Socio-economic development, the Ministry through the Department of Social Welfare, disbursed GH¢100,000 to 950 disabled persons in 20 Districts.

820. Mr. Speaker, the National Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour in Cocoa growing areas took off successfully in the course of the year. A Pilot Survey into labour practices in cocoa production, covering 6 districts in 3 cocoa growing regions of the country was completed in April 2007.
821. Work commenced on the Trust and Non-Profit Civil Society Bill. The Draft is expected to be subjected to stakeholder validation before the end of the year.
822. Mr. Speaker, the Department also paid the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) premium amounting to GH¢8,820 on behalf of 2,347 orphans and vulnerable children and 1,225 caregivers.

National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS)

823. Modalities for the implementation of NSPS have been developed and approved. National sensitisation programme on the NSPS and the LEAP has also begun.

Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP)

824. Mr. Speaker, under the LEAP programme the following activities among others were implemented:
- GH¢500,000.00 was released for disbursement to beneficiaries under the LEAP.
 - Institutional assessment of the capacity of Department of Social Welfare to effectively implement the LEAP has also been carried out to enable more strategic strengthening for effective implementation of the programme.
 - About 2,000 households with orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) have benefited from an initial bi-monthly conditional

cash transfer of between GH¢6-GH¢8/month to meet their basic needs and other services in health and education

Institutional Capacity Building

825. Mr. Speaker, to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry to cope with the challenges posed by the labour market, a diagnostic study of the Ministry and its implementing departments and agencies has been completed and subjected to stakeholder validation.

Outlook for 2008

826. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will mobilise both internal and external resources to expand and accelerate its core programmes and activities in human resource development, employment, youth empowerment and social integration and protection.

Manpower Development

Human Resource Policy

827. Mr. Speaker, the Human Resource Policy and its Implementation Action Plan will be completed and subjected to stakeholders' validation and processing for approval.

Employment

Employment Policy

828. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will play a lead role in operationalising the Employment Policy. It will co-ordinate and strategise on sectoral issues that will occur in the course of implementation as well as in monitoring.

Labour Market Component

829. Mr. Speaker, the Tripartite Committee will ensure that the following 5-sub-components of the main programme are effectively implemented. These are:

- Capacity Building and Restructuring of the Ministry;
- Labour Market Information System;
- Strengthening tripartism;
- Occupational health and safety including review of existing laws and
- Development of the informal sector to enhance employment, industrial relations and labour inspection.

Labour Administration

830. Mr. Speaker, social partners in the tripartite and other key stakeholders will explore, adopt and apply international best practices in labour administration in order to attract investment and enhance job creation.

Legislative Instrument (L.I) 1833

831. Mr. Speaker, sensitisation and education programmes on the L.I especially the sections that deal with operations of Private Employment Agencies and Foreign Contracts in order to ensure compliance and generation of revenue for national development will be organised.

Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC)

832. Mr. Speaker, the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission will be supported to perform its role as a credible institution

implementing fair, transparent and systematic Public Sector Conditions of Service, including pay policy.

833. The obvious challenge will be to manage labour expectations in an election year. The Commission will hold consultations with key stakeholders with a view to comprehensively and successfully deal with the issue of wage reform. The Commission will also educate public sector workers, management and organised labour on recommendations, in order to facilitate the task and implementation of the new pay policy.

Youth Development

Youth Policy

834. To empower the youth to contribute their quota towards nation building, all youth programmes and activities will be guided by the new Youth Policy to be completed by March 2008.

The National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP)

835. Mr. Speaker, the Programme is being evaluated to ensure sustainability with regard to current employment levels. The evaluation exercise when completed may result in some savings to permit additional employment of the youth under the programme.

Social Development

Skill Training for People With Disabilities (PWDs)

836. Skills training and the provision of alternative means of livelihood for beggars on the street to demonstrate our care and concern for these unfortunate groups will be pursued.

National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS)

837. Mr. Speaker, the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme, a key component of the National Social Protection Strategy which commenced in 2007 in 21 districts will be scaled up to cover additional districts in all the 10 regions for the benefit of Orphans, Vulnerable Children and the aged above 65.
838. The capacity of both the Ministry and the Department of Social Welfare will be strengthened to support the scaling up of the LEAP. Full-scale communication strategy will be implemented under NSPS for long-term awareness creation and sensitisation of LEAP programme interventions.

Micro-credit for PWDs

839. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Social Welfare will continue with its programme of micro-credit facility for People With Disability to engage in viable small-scale business ventures. The Department expects to cover a total of 1,900 PWDs with an amount of GH¢210,000.00 with funds from the Micro Credit and Small Loans Scheme. In addition, work will be completed on the policy on the aged, Trust and Non-Profit Civil Society and the Co-operative Bills.

Foreign Contracts

840. Finally, Mr. Speaker, the Government will streamline migration of skilled and unskilled workers by initiating a programme to sign Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with countries such as South Korea, Spain, USA, Canada and Qatar to protect immigrant workers rights.
841. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢21,310,291 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is

GH¢11,923,161, IGF is GH¢2,187,130, HIPC is GH¢5,200,000 and MDRI is GH¢2,000,000.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

842. Mr. Speaker, the objectives of the Ministry of Health under the GPRS II focus on the bridging of equity gaps in access to quality health care and nutrition services, ensuring sustainable financing arrangements that protect the poor and enhancing efficiency in service delivery.

Performance in 2007

843. The main achievements in the health sector programmes were:

Promoting Healthy Lifestyle and Healthy Environment

Regenerative Health and Nutrition Programme

844. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry has introduced the Regenerative Health & Nutrition Programme (RHNP) to address the health risks arising from the changing life-style of Ghanaians involving unhealthy eating, lack of physical activity and neglect of basic environmental practices. RHNP involves:

- Sensitization of individuals and communities on healthy lifestyles. The programme reached 24 targeted districts with the RHNP message through sensitization of community stakeholders, local leadership, media, schools, caterers, midwives, Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs),
- Establishment of agents of change within communities, schools and workplaces; and
- Training of a cohort of health promotion experts. In all 1,500 advocates were trained as against a targeted 1,000 and 600 change agents as against a targeted 400

845. Mr. Speaker, an aggressive media campaign aimed at encouraging the increased consumption of fruits, vegetables and other healthy products as well as exercises for healthy living was launched in 2007. The Ministry in collaboration with Ghana Telecom via "One-Touch" sent health messages through SMS. In addition, a health fair dubbed "Fit for Life" was organised in August under the theme "Health, Productivity and Development".
846. Currently, the RHNP is being piloted in 10 Districts. A training manual has also been developed and already over 2,100 personnel drawn from Gushiegu, Karaga, Wa, Tamale, Bolgatanga and Ada districts have undergone training as change agents and advocates for the programme.

Improving Access to Quality Health, Reproduction and Nutrition Services

847. Mr. Speaker, towards meeting the targets of the Millennium Development Goals, the Ministry initiated a programme for modernizing health care designed to improve access, quality, safety, treatment outcomes and patient experiences. As part of this program, in the last 5 years:
- Over 176 health infrastructure projects including 50 health centres, 22 district hospitals and 26 CHPS compounds spread all over the country were completed. Currently, over 138 projects are being implemented. For example:
 - The National Accident and Emergency Centre at Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital is 68 per cent complete while the Mortuary is 98 per cent.
 - Twenty-one new health centres and upgrading of 3 existing health centres to district hospitals also begun under the 2nd Rural Health Services Project funded by OPEC.

- Gushiegu District Hospital which begun in the 2006 is due for completion in December 2007.
- A programme to replace and re-equip health institutions was also implemented. Under this program, over 90 health centres and 6 district hospitals were equipped. A program to provide 20 hospitals with automated laboratories, 30 hospitals with anaesthetic equipment and medical gas systems is ongoing.

National Ambulance Service

848. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry has also established the National Ambulance Service. After piloting the program in 7 districts in 2004 and 2005, the National Ambulance Service has been scaled up to 19 Ambulance Stations and 2 Control Rooms are fully operational in Ashanti, Greater Accra, Eastern, Central and Volta Regions. About 91 ambulances were procured and distributed and over 4,442 emergency cases were responded to.

National Health Insurance Scheme

849. Mr. Speaker, Government has successfully established the National Health Insurance Scheme. Currently, 143 schemes are in operation, however, it is expected that the number will increase to 148 by the end of the year. Regional Managers have been hired and efforts are underway to engage other supporting staff. So far this year an amount GH¢140.33 million has been released by Government to support the programme.

850. Mr. Speaker, in 2007, between January and June, total registration grew nationally from 8,633,736 to 9,593,040 representing 47 per cent of the population.

851. The regional breakdown of the coverage is as follows:

852. Brong Ahafo Region continues to lead with 72 per cent coverage; Northern Region 58 per cent; Central Region 55 per cent; Ashanti Region 51 per cent; Eastern Region 51 per cent; Upper West Region 47 per cent, and Greater Accra Region records the least coverage of 24 per cent.

853. Mr. Speaker, a US\$15 million loan has been secured from the World Bank to procure ICT for service providers under the NHIS.

Achieving the Health Related Millennium Development Goals

854. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry has introduced the High Impact Rapid Delivery programme for scaling up interventions for achieving the health related Millennium Development Goals. This program was piloted in the 4 regions Northern, Upper East, Upper West and Central in 2007 and is being extended to the entire country by the end of 2007.

855. Currently, a US\$25 million loan has been secured from the World Bank and disbursements have started. Negotiations are underway for additional funds of US\$2 million from the Korean Government to support the programme.

856. In 2007 the focus was on:

- Sustaining the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) and reaching every district
- Improving malaria case management among others;
- Extending care and support services for People Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) and
- Strengthening programme management for Guinea worm.

Immunisation

857. Mr. Speaker, Ghana is on course to eradicate polio and eliminate measles as public health problem. Documentation for certification of Ghana as a polio-free country has been accepted by the Africa Regional Commission on Polio certification. For the past three years measles cases have fallen below 500 and no deaths have been reported for the past four years.

858. There was relative increase in Expanded Programme on Immunisation performance in the first quarter of 2007. Generally, there was absolute increase in the coverage as compared to 2006.

Malaria

859. In the case of malaria, the Ministry:

- improved case management in all health facilities;
- promoted home-based care with emphasis on symptoms detection and early treatment; and
- intensified the use of insecticide-treated nets among pregnant women and children below 5 years.

860. Mr. Speaker, as a result of the above interventions, the number of patients reporting at health facilities with uncomplicated malaria cases who received Artemisinin Combination Therapy treatment promptly was 486,783 for the first quarter of 2007. The corresponding figure for pregnant women receiving Intermittent Preventive Treatment 3 as prophylaxis for malaria was 25,338.

HIV/Aids

861. Interventions were in the areas of:

- Reduction of HIV transmissions,
- Providing extended care and support services to PLWHA and making available essential technical assistance and support,
- Establishing 417 Voluntary Counselling and Testing/Prevention of Mother To Child Transmission (VCT/PMTCT) sites in 138 districts, and
- 48 Ante Retroviral Treatment sites are now operational and providing services.

Guinea Worm

862. In this area, 3,219 cases have been reported and managed from January–May 2007 with Northern Region alone reporting 2,707. This represented 17 per cent increase over the 2,400 cases reported for the same period in 2006. Savelugu/Nanton District has the highest incidence.

Reproductive & Sexual Health

863. Mr. Speaker, during the year, improvements were made in 177 facilities offering comprehensive Emergency Obstetric Care. Coverage of supervised deliveries increased from 40.3 per cent to 44.5 per cent, and the Ante-natal coverage of 4 or more visits also achieved a target of 90 per cent.

Integrating Traditional and Alternative Medicine into Health Service Delivery

864. Mr. Speaker, the capacities of the Centre for Scientific Research into Plant Medicine and the Directorate for Traditional Medicine of the Ministry were strengthened to support herbal practitioners and to sensitise the allopathic health providers on the integration of services. So far, administrative guidelines for regulation of Alternative Medicine Practice have been completed and a list of

250 herbal medicine products and their efficacy including indications for use and dosage frequency developed.

Human Resource for Health Development

865. Mr. Speaker, Ghana is on course to address the human resource crisis from the brain drain. In the past five years, we have been implementing multiple strategies including expanding training institutions, enhancing salaries of health professionals and advocating for an ethical approach to international recruitment of health staff.
866. Mr. Speaker, 7 new Health Assistant Training Schools (HATS) were added to the existing number to bring overall intake from 444 to 1,020. These schools are located in the following areas: Yendi-Northern, Teshie-Nungua and Pantang-Greater Accra, Kokofu- Ashanti, Asonta-Western, Sunyani-Brong Ahafo and Twifo Praso-Central.
867. Other initiatives involved providing support for the Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons (GCPS) by paying the fees of medical officers pursuing programmes at the college. The expenditure on the programme in 2007 cost US\$262,500 as against US\$151,500 in 2006.
868. Mr. Speaker, 2,316 health personnel produced in 2006 have been deployed throughout the country. Table 2 shows the comparative increase in human resource output between 2005 and 2006.

Table 10: Human Resource Output 2005 & 2006

Category	2005	2006	% increase
Doctors	224	236	5.4
Pharmacists	102	140	37.3
Nurses	850	1,180	38.8
Midwives	96	130	35.4
Community Health Nurses	550	630	14.5
TOTAL	1,822	2,316	27.1

Source: HRHD-MOH

Outlook for 2008

869. Mr. Speaker, the health sector will continue to consolidate the mutually reinforcing policies and priorities initiated in 2007. It will also continue with the unfinished agenda of high impact and rapid service delivery and in addition consolidate and strengthen the weak and fragmented health system. It will also enhance governance through sustainable financing. These will be done by:

- scaling up both programmes of regenerative health & nutrition and high impact rapid delivery to all regions;
- initiating policies that promote and augment workforce productivity; and
- expanding the coverage of the National Health Insurance Scheme while taking cognizance of issues of equity, efficiency and financial sustainability.

870. Mr. Speaker, the foregoing priorities will be complemented by additional initiatives that will be launched and vigorously pursued through:

- promotion of healthy eating and use of safe water with the object of reducing food-related and water borne diseases;

- enhancement of the quality and coverage of clinical care including referrals, revamping of hospitals and mortuaries, development of clinical protocols, provision of infrastructure and equipping laboratories, pharmacies and theatres;
- expansion of middle level training programmes targeted at the training of medical assistants, midwives and health assistants for the sub-districts while enhancing workforce productivity with improved Health Management Information System (HMIS); and
- Strengthening the inter-sectoral collaboration.

Regenerative Health & Nutrition

871. Mr. Speaker, in 2008, surveys will be conducted to establish baseline information on lifestyles and behaviours. Other priority activities will include:

- developing and implementing a National Behaviour Change Communication Strategy;
- collaborating with Ministry of Education, Science & Sports to implement healthy schools programme with emphasis on hygiene, physical exercise and school feeding

Inter-sector Advocacy and Action

872. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will initiate inter-sector action for health in an effort to improve occupational and environmental health and safety. Its programme priorities for the year will focus on:

- working closely with MDAs to conduct health impact analysis of their policies and major projects, and
- advocate for safe water provision.

873. Urbanisation has made restaurants and street food vending important sources of food with their attendant health risks. Food

safety laws will therefore be reviewed and disseminated. The legislation will be strengthened and, more importantly, enforced by better licensing and inspection.

874. Furthermore, the Ministry will ensure food safety by promoting collaboration between Food & Drugs Board (FDB), Ghana Standards Board, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment and the Ghana Police Service to develop and enforce standards for the production, storage, sale and handling of food and drinks in markets, restaurants, etc.

875. Additionally,

- the Ministry will collaborate with Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development to strengthen the Environmental Health Departments of District Assemblies to take effective control of food safety issues including improving food safety in the catering and hospitality industry.
- food fortification programmes especially of wheat flour and vegetable oil and salt iodisation will be intensified
- efforts will also be directed towards developing a national bio-safety policy

Communicable Disease Control

876. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry's priority focus under this programme will be to strengthen the prevention, control and management of communicable diseases such as cholera, meningitis, yellow fever as well as threats of new epidemics such as Avian Flu and diseases as Buruli ulcer, Filariasis, Leishmaniasis, Onchocerciasis, Schistosomiasis, Trachoma, and Yaws by extending the High Impact Rapid Delivery Programme to all regions.

Guinea worm

877. Mr. Speaker, Government is determined to effectively deal with the Guinea Worm phenomenon. The guinea worm eradication programme is therefore being re-designed so as to achieve maximum impact in endemic communities. Key among the strategies are:

- Collaboration with GWCL and CWSA to provide potable water to the 10 endemic districts.
- Water abating will be carried out on monthly basis before onset of rains to control the vector.
- 11 case containment centres will be constructed and existing ones in endemic communities will be strengthened
- District assemblies will continue to support water guards to police ponds and other water sources.

Malaria

878. Mr. Speaker, Government will develop a medium term plan aimed at eliminating malaria from this country.

Non-communicable Diseases

879. Attention will be on prevention, early detection and treatment of common chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardio-vascular conditions, cancers and mental disorders. During the year, trauma centres will be established in major cities and industrial regions and at key points on the highway network.

Breast and Prostrate Cancer

880. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will promote greater awareness of early detection of breast and prostrate cancer. In line with this, Government will introduce a program for breast and prostate

cancer screening including the provision of subsidy for mammogram done in private and public hospitals for all Ghanaian women from the age of 40 years and above and for prostate cancer screening for men of 50 years and above that are registered under the NHIS.

Reproductive and Sexual Health

881. The Ministry plans to increase the present coverage of antenatal care in all public health facilities. Maternal deliveries will also be scaled up by improving access to obstetric care in all health facilities. In addition, there will also be programmes directed towards involving family and community members in home based life saving skills.

Child Health

882. Mr. Speaker, child health programmes will focus on increasing coverage of community based services in the management of childhood diseases. The Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) in all health facilities, including CHPS zones and consolidation of referral services will be pursued.

Mental Health

883. Activities to be implemented under this programme will generally continue to promote healthy lifestyle and behaviours that reduce the risk of development of mental disorders while increasing access to quality community based mental health services.

884. In collaboration with stakeholders, namely traditional and faith based healers, the Ministry will:

- ensure the passage and implementation of the bill on mental health.

- promote community based rehabilitation services and establish services for management of alcohol and drug use, and
 - conduct baseline surveys on epilepsy, depression and substance abuse.

Emergency Preparedness and Response

885. Mr. Speaker, to improve the outcomes of medical, surgical and obstetric emergencies:

- ambulance services will be scaled up to all regional and districts capitals
- the passage and implementation of the National Ambulance Service Bill into law will be advocated.
- Emergency Response Centres in all regional and district hospitals will be established, and
- Epidemic disease management preparedness will be initiated by expanding existing facilities in Teaching and Regional Hospitals with negative pressure isolation units.

Enhancement of the Quality and Coverage of Clinical Care

886. Mr. Speaker, in 2008, emphasis will be placed on funding for operational cost and infrastructure facilities such as laboratories, pharmacies, dispensaries, theatres and mortuaries for sub-districts and district health administrations.

887. Finally, the policy for free treatment for people who cannot pay for health services will be reviewed and made more effective.

National Health Insurance Scheme

888. Mr. Speaker, the National Health Insurance Scheme will be streamlined. Among others the scheme will introduce new universal health insurance card, revise the tariff medicine list,

increase coverage to 65 per cent and operationalise M&E systems in all regions.

Traditional and Alternative Health Services

889. Priority programmes will focus on:

- building the capacity of research institutions and Universities to conduct training and research into herbal products
- developing essential drug list for traditional practitioners.
- establishing Desks in all District Assemblies to regularise traditional medicine practice in the country.

Human Resource Development and Management

890. Mr. Speaker, emphasis will be on the training of middle level manpower particularly medical assistants and midwives. An ICT-based Human Resource Management Information Systems will also be introduced for the monitoring and evaluation of workforce productivity.

Health Industry

891. Finally, Mr. Speaker, MOH will work towards promoting the health industry and advocate for private investments in medical and nurse's training schools towards export markets.

892. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢752,233,368 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢268,517,036, IGF is GH¢115,070,600, Donor is GH¢126,731,219, HIPC is GH¢6,485,000 and NHIS is GH¢235,429,513.

MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILDRENS AFFAIRS

893. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC) is charged with the overall responsibility of formulating and co-ordinating policies to promote Gender equality and equity, facilitating the empowerment of women, particularly the vulnerable, rural and urban poor; facilitating the survival, protection and development of the Ghanaian child.

Performance in 2007

894. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry focused on 7 core programme areas in support of on-going Government development efforts as outlined in the GPRS II:

Gender Mainstreaming

895. The main achievements are as follows:

- Established a core expert group of 18 persons on gender, from Ministries of Manpower, Youth and Employment; Health, Education, Science and Sports, Food and Agriculture and Justice to facilitate the conduct of gender training in MDAs to enhance gender mainstreaming.
- Sensitised Chief Directors and their representatives – the principal stakeholders - in June on gender issues.
- Undertook cross-sector gender policy co-ordination and implementation discussions with MDAs to enhance collaboration and effective gender policy implementation partnership.
- Developing, in collaboration with the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), sex- disaggregated data collection

instruments to be used by MDAs and MMDAs for gender data collection

Women's Socio-Economic Empowerment

896. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry undertook programmes in support of Women's Economic Empowerment through Equipment support and Skills training

- Under equipment support, 45 women's groups in the Northern, Brong Ahafo, Ashanti, Western, Upper West, Eastern, Upper East and Volta Regions were supplied with 45 different sets of agro-processing equipment (Shea-butter, groundnut oil, cassava and palm oil) for their respective income generating businesses which improved income levels and provided job opportunities for many more women and families. A total of 860 women benefited directly under the scheme in the informal sector of the economy.
- A total of 186 functional women's groups from 6 regions comprising of 12,255 women were trained in basic book keeping, credit repayment, savings, entrepreneurial skills, and micro-finance to equip them with basic skills that will enhance their output, and reduce poverty in the long run.
- Other achievements included women durbars in the 10 regions on major government policies (NHIS, Currency re-denomination, National ID etc). In all, 5,000 women benefited.
- As part of Ghana at 50 celebrations, MOWAC organized a two-leg international conference in June and July which produced a strategy document in a communiqué presented to the AU Heads of government and Heads of state summit

in Accra urging implementation of AU conventions and protocols which promote women's empowerment.

897. Mr. Speaker, in addition,

- MOWAC collaborated with the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development under the District Capacity Development Project (DISCAP) to develop a gender training tool kit for use by MDAs.
- Similarly, 34 Gender Desk Officers (GDOs) in the three Northern Regions were trained to work at the decentralised structures within the District Planning and Coordinating Units of the Assemblies.
- The Ministry facilitated the passage of the Domestic Violence Act (DVA) (Act 732), through extensive sensitization, advocacy and consultation across all segments of the Ghanaian society through a synergy of stakeholders, particularly, the Coalition on Domestic Violence (CDV), the UNDP/UNFPA, NGOs, etc using a bi-partisan approach.
- A Draft Plan of Action (PoA) for implementation of the DVA has been prepared and Human Trafficking Secretariat also established as required by the Human Trafficking Act (Act 694).
- To combat female rural-urban migration, MOWAC established a database on the "Kayayei" phenomenon. A total of 2,432 children have been registered. The intention is to return them to their Districts of origin to enrol in schools.

Outlook for 2008

898. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry's outlook is driven by the policy direction and strategies of GPRS II and Government's commitment to

achieve the key components of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

899. Specific activities to be undertaken include:

- Enhancing its gender programmes by spelling out a “step by step” approach to Gender Budgeting and piloting it in 3 key MDAs (Ministries of Food and Agriculture, Health, and Local Government, Rural Development and Environment)
- The implementation of a National Plan of Action on the Domestic Violence Act and the Human Trafficking Act in collaboration with MDAs, MMDAs, NGOs, CBOs and other Development partners
- Developing a national gender profile in collaboration with the Ghana Statistical Service and other stakeholders to enhance evidence-based decision making on gender equality and women’s empowerment
- Withdrawal of 1,000 female porters (Kayayei’s) from Accra and Tema back to the Northern Regions for rehabilitation and school enrolment
- The development of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials especially bill boards, leaflets etc on gender issues at entry and other vantage points in the country
- The development of a database on convicted child abuse offenders and domestic violence perpetrators
- Monitoring and evaluation to track progress made on gender equality and women's empowerment
- Assisting rural poor and vulnerable women through access to micro credit, skills training and with agro-processing equipment to promote value addition and increased incomes. An increase from 860 to 1,000 women is targeted.

- Capacity building programmes for potential women aspirants in local and national elections (2008 Parliamentary and Presidential elections and future District Assemblies elections)
- Deepening of activities and structures of Regional and District Child Development Committees to enhance the development and protection of young children. An intensified sensitization to raise public awareness of good parental care and the need for early schooling for all children
- Intensify and strengthen advocacy and sensitisation on policies and laws on children's matters (Children's Act, Early Childhood Care and Development, Human Trafficking Act, the Domestic Violence Act, Criminal Code Amendment Act) to facilitate child survival, protection and development
- National consultations and sensitisation on the Property Rights and Spouses Bill
- Renovation and upgrading of five viable but financially distressed Children's Parks will be effected in Accra, Kumasi, Koforidua, Tamale and Cape Coast. This will lead to an increase in IGF of about 75 per cent of the current level.

900. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢4,981,677 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢2,406,841, IGF is GH¢4,357, Donor is GH¢570,479 and MDRI is GH¢2,000,000.

GOOD GOVERNANCE AND CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

901. Mr. Speaker, the promotion of Good Governance and Civic Responsibility remains a key area of focus for government. In line with the GPRS II objectives, the government will continue to implement activities aimed at making government more open, transparent and accountable to the citizens. This is to ensure that the citizens in particular have increased confidence in the institutions of government to continuously deliver improved services for their sustenance and general well being.

902. Mr. Speaker, the key MDAs whose activities will promote the achievement of Good Governance are the following:

- Ministry of Local Government Rural Development and Environment (MLGRDE)
- District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF)
- Office of Government Machinery (OGM)
- Ministry of Finance And Economic Planning (MOFEP)
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Cooperation and Nepal (MFARCN)
- Ministry of Defence (MoD)
- Ministry of Interior (MOI)
- Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs (MPA)
- Office of Parliament(OOP)
- Ministry of Justice and Attorney General's Department (MOJAGD)
- Judicial Service
- Ministry of Public Sector Reform (MPSR)
- Public Services Commission (PSC)
- Ghana Audit Service
- Electoral Commission (EC)
- Ministry of Information and National Orientation (MINO)
- National Media Commission (NMC)

- Ministry of Chieftaincy And Culture (MCC)
- National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE)
- Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ)
- National Labour Commission (NLC)
- National Development Planning Commission (NDPC)

**MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, RURAL DEVELOPMENT
AND ENVIRONMENT**

903. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment has as its primary mandate the development of local communities. The Ministry therefore continues to focus on improving governance at local level, rural and urban development, environmental sanitation as well as provision of green environment.

Performance in 2007

904. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry adopted four main areas of focus to achieve sustainable development. These are deepening the decentralization process, enhancing revenue generation and resource mobilization, rapid response to environmental sanitation and rural development.

905. A number of programs and projects were implemented by the Ministry that sought among others to strengthen and build the capacity of the decentralized local government units. The programs include:

Municipal Finance and Management Initiative (MFMI)

906. Mr. Speaker, the Initiative has been developed within the framework of providing a Comprehensive Urban Development Programme to mobilise revenue for much needed infrastructure at the sub-national level. The Initiative further aims at building the capacities and strengthening the financial base of Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) by developing and building a formidable Local Government Credit Market.

907. The Local Government Finance and Municipal Finance Authority Bills have been developed. The Ministry has inaugurated a Steering Committee to oversee the implementation of the Initiative. Sensitization workshops for Members for Parliament, Development Partners, Presiding Members and Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) have also been completed.

Revenue Enhancement Measures

908. Mr. Speaker, as part of its revenue enhancement measures, the Ministry initiated the Street Naming and House Numbering exercise to assist in property identification. Currently, a draft Street Naming and House Numbering Operational Manual has been prepared to guide MMDAs in the exercise. The manual is, however, yet to be subjected to wider stakeholders' consultations.

909. The Ministry also collaborated with the private sector to introduce on a pilot basis, hand held ticketing machines in selected Metropolitan Assemblies for the collection of market tolls instead of manual efforts.

National Decentralization Action Plan (NDAP)

910. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning prepared Guidelines that will aid in the preparation of District Composite Budget.

911. The Ministry has trained all 138 District Planning Coordinating Units (DPCUs) in District Composite Budgeting to equip them with the ability to prepare their budgets using the MTEF format for the 2008 fiscal year.

912. Mr. Speaker, the District Development Fund (DDF) and the Functional and Organizational Assessment Tool (FOAT) have been endorsed by Cabinet and the Operational Manual that will guide the implementation of the DDF-FOAT system has been completed.
913. A Draft Comprehensive Decentralisation Policy has been prepared for wider stakeholder consultation. The policy framework intends to deepen political, administrative and fiscal decentralisation in Ghana and to reaffirm the Government's commitment to the policy of decentralisation that takes into account people's participation.
914. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry in Collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning has drafted an Intergovernmental Fiscal Framework which basically seeks to address the issue of revenue and expenditure assignment between the national and the sub-national levels.

Creation of New Districts

915. Mr. Speaker, in pursuing the Government's decentralization programme which requires, among others, the creation of smaller, manageable units of local government administrations, two Municipal Assemblies were upgraded to Metropolitan Assemblies, twenty-six District Assemblies upgraded to Municipal Assemblies, while twenty-five District Assemblies and three Municipal Assemblies were created.

Local Government Service

916. Mr Speaker, the Local Government Service Secretariat is now operational. A Committee and a Task Force have been put in place to plan for the launch of the Local Government Service as well as draft the Legislative Instrument to transfer functions,

resources and staff to the District Assemblies and Regional Coordinating Councils.

917. The Draft Report to establish the Departments of the Assemblies, including how to integrate Departments, is ready to be fed into the L.I. to transfer functions to the Local Government bodies.

Local Governance Poverty Reduction Support Project (LGPRSP)

918. Mr. Speaker, under the Local Governance Poverty Reduction Support Programme, improved management system for urban infrastructure was introduced for Market Management Committees in 19 towns viz. Kintampo, Babatokuma, Subinso No. 2, Seikwa, Badu, Tuobodom, Offuman, Donkro-Nkwanta, Nkwabeng, Dromankese, Kwame Danso, Sekyedumase, Anyinasu, Bodomase, Effiduase, Banko, Kwamang, Nsuta-Ashanti, Kofiase in Brong Ahafo and Ashanti Regions.
919. The programme also facilitated dialogue between District Assemblies, Local Associations of Entrepreneurs and the Volta River Authority in the planning, design, implementation, operation and maintenance of industrial zones under the Local and Regional Economic Development Project (LRED). Capacity building for planning, design, implementation and management of industrial zones was also provided in the Brong Ahafo Region.

Second Urban Environmental Sanitation Project (UESP II)

920. Mr. Speaker, the reconstruction of the Apenkwa box culvert has been completed whilst 550 metres out of the total length of 700 metres of the Odaw drainage works upstream of the Apenkwa box culvert has also been completed.

921. With the exception of the Tema sanitation project, the tendering procedures for the community infrastructure works and the schools and public sanitation facilities in Accra, Kumasi, Tamale and Sekondi-Takoradi have been completed.
922. Construction works have commenced in Tamale and Sekondi/Takoradi. It is expected that those in the remaining project cities will commence before the end of the year.
923. Construction of storm drainage works in Accra, Kumasi and Sekondi/Takoradi are expected to commence before the end of the year.
924. Mr. Speaker, a total of 4,145 out of the budgeted 8,200 household toilets have been delivered as at August 2007. This is in excess of the 2,000 that was envisaged to be delivered within the year 2007. It is further anticipated that an additional 1,500 will be delivered by the end of 2007.
925. Mr. Speaker, the land for the Kwabenya Landfill has been acquired and an Executive Instrument (EI 1) to this effect was published in the dailies in February 2007. Arrangement for compensation payment to property owners is far advanced. A consultant has also been selected to undertake a design review of the Landfill.
926. Mr. Speaker, Consultancy work on the Private Sector solid waste collection component of the project has commenced and the tendering processes are expected to take off before the end of the year. The consultants have submitted an inception report after the identification of issues at the five Metropolitan and Municipal Assemblies in the following subject areas: i) Institutional and Project Management, ii) Policy and Organizational Development, iii) Legal and Regulatory Framework, iv)

Communication, v) Financial Analysis and Planning, vi) Accounting and Financial Management, vii) Billing and Collection, viii) Information Technology and Management Information Systems, ix) Drainage Management, and x) Solid Waste Management.

927. The design and implementation of the systems to address the issues identified is ongoing and will continue beyond 2007.

District Towns Projects

928. Mr. Speaker, under the District Towns III Project, construction works on 67 facilities (56 educational facilities, 7 health facilities, 1 market and lorry park, 3 water supply schemes) in 27 towns in Ashanti and Brong Ahafo regions have been completed and handed over to the respective districts. Names of beneficiaries are as follows: Kintampo North (Kintampo, Babatukuma); Kintampo South (Jema); Techiman, (Offuman, Aworowa, Tuobodom, Tanoso); Tain, (Badu, Seikwa); Pru (Yeji, Parembosawaba, Prang); Atebubu-Amanten (Atebubu, Amanten); Sene (Kwame Danso); Nkoranza (Dromankese, Busunya); Ejura-Sekyedumase (Sekyedumase); Sekyere East (Effiduase); Sekyere West (Kwamang, Nsuta, Beposo), Offinso (Offinso Old Town, Abofour, Nkenkaasu, Afrancho, Akomadan). All the structures are in defects liability period.

929. Construction works on the improvement of markets, lorry parks, schools and clinics in 30 selected towns in Brong Ahafo and Ashanti regions, under District Towns IV project, have also been completed.

930. Mr. Speaker, under the District Towns V project, consultants have been selected to assist beneficiary Districts to select from the list of projects, namely markets, lorry parks and schools, to be

constructed in Amansie East, Berekum, Atiwa, Akwapem North, Birim South and Manya Krobo Districts.

Births and Deaths Registry

- **Normal Registration of Births and Deaths:-** The Births and Deaths Registry performed its core function of registering births and deaths occurring in the country. As at June, the Registry had covered 60 per cent of infant births and 24 per cent of deaths as against the target of 80 per cent births and 30 per cent of deaths.
- **Computerization Programme:-** Automation of the Head Office is 95 per cent complete. Requisite hardware and software have been installed and being test run.
- **Awareness Creation:** - Public Education and Sensitisation Programmes are in progress under the Universal Birth Registration Campaign sponsored by Plan Ghana. This year's "***Births and Deaths Registration Day***" was marked on the 1st of September 2007 with a durbar of Chiefs and People of Kpetoe, in the Adaklu-Anyigbe District of the Volta region.
- **Community Population Register Programme:** - The Registry's Community Population Register Programme was extended to the Eastern and Upper West Regions after initial trials had run successfully in the Central region. Currently 21 communities in the country have a functioning population register in place. This has enhanced the capture and prompt registration of vital events as and when they occur at the community level.
- **Redesign of Forms:** - The birth and deaths registration report forms have been redesigned to make them scannable. This is to facilitate the processing and transfer of information into the database.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND GARDENS

931. Mr. Speaker, the Department in collaboration with the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment under the National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP), is beautifying Accra, Kumasi, Tema, Tamale and Sekondi/Takoradi.
932. Mr. Speaker, there is an on-going programme to assist traditional medicine practitioners and emerging young industries using herbs for alcohol-based medicine to set up first aid gardens and medicinal farms to reduce pressure on the forest. Using the slogan "The forest is your pharmacy, use it wisely" in outreach programmes, some communities and individuals now realise the need for conservation and also to protect the forest. The Department continues to raise seedlings on its 50 acre medicinal farm at Aburi and distribute them freely to practitioners.
933. Herbalists at Konkonuru are being assisted to plant 2,000 seedlings of the three threatened species as part of the Department's restoration programme by the end of the year.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

934. Mr. Speaker, as part of its Skills and Entrepreneurial Development/Income Generating programme, 250 existing women's group leaders received training in Batik and Tie and Dye, Pomade, Powder and Beads making.
935. A total of 3,435 youth are currently receiving training in twenty-five Community Development Vocational/Technical Institutions as part of its Youth Vocational/Technical and Employable Skills transfer programme.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

936. Mr. Speaker, the Agency undertook the following activities:

- Completed air and noise quality monitoring, reconnaissance survey and determination of 50 per cent of sampling sites.
- Environmental compliance and enforcement, as well as environmental permits and certificates have been issued to about 800 undertakings throughout the country in the areas of tourism, manufacturing industries, mining, transportation, health, general construction and agriculture;
- Under natural resource management, the National Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Committee has been meeting regularly to deliberate on issues involving the biosphere.
- On the aquatic weeds control programme, a research plan has been completed, a National Coordinating Unit has been constituted and sensitization workshops have been held in Jomoro, Sogakope and North Tongu districts;
- On environmental education, the final draft of the manual for school-based environmental clubs has been completed;
- Activities towards the Cleaner Production Programme (CPP) have commenced with the registration of the Cleaner Production Centre (CPC). A consultant has been selected for the preparation of a Business Plan for the Centre;
- In respect of environmental sanitation, twelve Metropolitan/Municipal Assemblies have been trained in the preparation of waste management plans.

Environmental Health and Sanitation Unit

937. Mr. Speaker, a final Draft of National Sanitation Policy has been completed and forwarded to Cabinet for approval.

938. A total of 1,780 youth were recruited under the National Youth Employment Programme in all the 138 MMDAs and trained in basic skills in Public Health Education, Premises Inspections and Sanitary Law Enforcement. The objective of the Programme is to strengthen the Environmental Health and Sanitation Units of MMDAs to perform their routine duties of Sanitation Education and Law Enforcement.
939. Mr. Speaker, twenty District Environmental Health officers from selected MMDAs were trained in Supervisory Management to improve on their supervisory skills to better manage Environmental Health and Sanitation Services while ninety Environmental Health Officers from thirty selected MMDAs have been trained in Environmental Health Inspections and Compliance Enforcement Skills.
940. A total of thirty officers of five waste management departments (AMA, SAEMA, KMA, TAMALE and TEMA) and selected private service providers have been trained on the use of monitoring tools for effective monitoring of waste management services at the Metropolitan/Municipal Assembly level.

Urban Poverty Reduction Project (UPRP)

941. Mr. Speaker, in line with the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Ministry and the Social Investment Fund are implementing a five-year Urban Poverty Reduction Project, which aims at contributing to Ghana's efforts at achieving the MDG that calls for a reduction by half the proportion of the poor living on less than a dollar a day.
942. The focus of the project is sustained poverty alleviation within the framework of the national urban poverty reduction programme through, Capacity Building for Pro-poor Urban Development and

Management, Social Capital and Investment Support, Urban Small-Scale Enterprise Development, and Project Management and Coordination.

943. Mr. Speaker, the project covers twelve Metropolitan, Municipal and Secondary Towns namely, Accra, Kumasi, Sekondi/Takoradi, Koforidua, Ho, Tema, Agogo, Akim Oda, Swedru, Apam, Kasoa and Wenchi.
944. The following activities have been accomplished since the inception of the project:
- Official launch and inauguration of the Project Steering Committee.
 - Establishment and training of Local Project Implementing Agencies (LPIAs) of the 12 participating MMDAs.
 - Preparation of the UPRP Operations Manual.
 - General sensitization of relevant key stakeholders at the National, Regional, District, Sub-MMDA and Community levels.
 - Assessment and documentation of strategies to enhance resource mobilization initiatives at the 12 MMDAs completed by a joint Ministerial Team from MLGRDE, SIF and GTZ International.
 - Establishment of Community Coordinating Committees (CCCs) by all participating MMDAs in their respective Area/Urban/Town Councils for the implementation of the Social Inclusion Transfer.
 - Selection of Private Sector Desk Officers by the twelve MMDAs to strengthen dialogue between MMDAs and Business Associations.

Ghana School Feeding Programme

945. Mr. Speaker, the Ghana School Feeding Programme (GSFP) seeks to improve school enrolment and ensure attendance and retention among school children, especially those in deprived schools as a strategy to promote increase in domestic food production, increase the income of poor rural households and improve their health and nutritional status, thus contributing to poverty reduction. The programme has 467,863 pupils benefiting in 975 schools nationwide.

Outlook for 2008

946. Mr. Speaker, in 2008 the Ministry will continue to deepen policies through the implementation of the following activities:

New Districts

947. Mr. Speaker, to enable the newly created Districts function effectively, the Ministry will resource them with Office and residential accommodation, full complement of key personnel, vehicles and other logistics support.

Local Government Service

948. Mr. Speaker, the Local Government Service will seek to achieve the following:

- Establish the Departments of the Assemblies through the integration of the central government line Departments into the fold of the Assemblies.
- Enact Legislative Instrument to transfer functions, resources and personnel formally from central government

- Ministries, Departments and Agencies to the MMDAs and RCCs.
- Recruit and appoint District Coordinating Directors and other District Directors of Departments.
- Undertake sensitization of all stakeholders at the national, regional and district levels.
- Pursue capacity building of staff of the Service.

Municipal Finance and Revenue Initiative

949. Mr. Speaker, the initiative has been within the framework of a Comprehensive Urban Development Programme and an instrument for revenue mobilization for the much needed Metropolitan and Municipal infrastructure and services.

950. Mr. Speaker, in the 2008 fiscal year the main activities will include the following:

- Establishing and operationalizing the proposed Municipal Finance Authority
- Providing Sustainable financing mechanism (medium to long-term) model for the development and management of urban infrastructural projects including Private Loans, Private Public Partnerships and Issue of Municipal Bonds
- Facilitating the availability of Improved Accounting Standards and the financial coordination of Local Authorities
- Putting in place an Improved Governance at the local level
- Reviewing and Developing a Comprehensive Information Technology Management System.

Second Urban Environmental Sanitation Project (UESP II)

Odaw Drainage Improvement Works (Urban IV)

951. Mr. Speaker, the following construction works will continue in 2008.

- Community infrastructure upgrading in Accra, Kumasi, Tamale, Sekondi/Takoradi and Tema.
- Storm drainage works in Accra, Kumasi, Sekondi/Takoradi and Tema.
- Schools and public sanitation facilities in Accra, Kumasi, Tamale, Sekondi/Takoradi and Tema.
- Provision of household toilets under a subsidy scheme will continue in Accra, Kumasi, Sekondi/Takoradi, Tamale and Tema. About 3,000 out of the total budgeted number of 8,200 facilities are expected to be delivered in 2008 bringing the total delivery to 7,000 by December 2008.

952. Mr. Speaker, the construction of the Tema Landfill is expected to commence in 2008, after completion of tendering procedures during the first and second quarter.

953. The review of the design of the Kwabenya landfill is also expected to be completed in 2008. The tendering process for construction works will commence and will be completed within the year whilst the private sector solid waste collection component of the project will be continued.

DEPARTMENT OF TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING

954. Mr. Speaker, to promote sustainable human settlements that ensure efficient, orderly and healthy growth of communities, the

department will continue to pursue the under mentioned prioritized activities aimed at ensuring the attainment of relevant targets set under both GPRS II and MDG:

- Prepare and guide implementation of planning schemes
- Establish Mobile Planning Teams
- Build capacity for human settlement development
- Conduct public education and create awareness on land use
- Undertake legal and institutional reforms and commercialize Town and Country Planning services.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

955. Mr. Speaker, the Environmental Protection Agency will continue implementing programmes which are being pursued in 2007. Critical programme areas will include the following:

Air and Vehicular Emissions including Noise

956. The monitoring of Air and Vehicular emissions which started in 2006 with reconnaissance and determination of sampling sites, are expected to continue in 2008 with the setting up of monitoring equipment.

957. It is also envisaged that the public and the various stakeholders will be sufficiently sensitised on the impacts associated with air and noise pollution.

Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Training

958. The Agency will continue to train its staff in compliance and enforcement so that capacity is built in handling the numerous complaints which are brought before it by the public and other stakeholders for appropriate action and resolution. The legal

department of the Agency will take officers through the legal requirements involved in compliance and enforcement actions.

Chemical Control and Management

959. Mr. Speaker, the proper and safe handling and management of chemicals and pesticides is of utmost importance to the Agency and efforts will be made to address these issues.

960. As part of the programme, the Agency will develop and create awareness on safe methods of handling chemicals by the population. This will be done through the printing of flyers on the subject as well as the organisation of workshops and other education programmes through the media.

961. The issue of chemical spillage on our roads by local and foreign vehicles through accidents and the associated risks to the environment as well as to public health will also be addressed. Draft guidelines on the transportation of hazardous materials will be prepared including the holding of a stakeholder meeting on chemical spillage with transport organisations, drivers and other interested parties.

Environmental Assessment and Management

962. Mr. Speaker, in order to ensure an environmentally sound and sustainable implementation of development projects, it is important that new proposals in the above-named sectors are properly assessed to predict the various environmental impacts and how the negatives will be mitigated to avoid any adverse consequences on the environment. This will involve the intensification and education of the populace and more importantly the private sector on the Environmental Impact Assessment procedures.

963. Secondly, existing industries and undertakings will be adequately informed of the need to present their Environmental Management Plans for certification by the Agency. This will ensure that industries operate within the permissible limits.
964. In executing these activities, the Agency will intensify its monitoring mechanisms by conducting field inspections and verification visits to proposed project sites as well as industries.

Natural Resource Management

965. Mr. Speaker, the Agency will continue with programmes on natural resource conservation and management in various parts of the country. Activities of the National Man and the Biosphere Committee will be intensified with stakeholder consultations aimed at enhancing environmental quality.
966. Mr. Speaker, another area for which action will be taken in 2008 is on the reduction of waterweed infestation in the Volta and Tano Rivers. This is having a devastating effect on communities around the two rivers. This will be undertaken under the Invasive Aquatic Weeds Project in which the communities in the catchments of the two rivers will be mobilised and resourced to undertake manual weed removal using implements and tools to be provided by the project.

Environmental Performance Rating

967. Mr. Speaker, in order to make public the environmental conditions under which various industries in the manufacturing and mining sectors operate and how efficient they undertake their production processes, the environmental performance rating and public disclosure mechanism will be explored to the fullest. This will involve the completion of industry visits and data collection. An

internal disclosure workshop for stakeholders as well as public disclosure press workshop will also be held as part of the programme.

Environmental Education

968. Environmental education will be intensified. A manual for school-based environmental clubs will be developed and published for use by basic and second cycle schools. In addition, the Agency will maintain the cordial working relationship it has with the various Environmental NGOs and offer expert advice on their activities and programmes.

Environmental Statistics

969. Mr. Speaker, statistics is a crucial aspect of any credible environmental policy and therefore needs to be seriously considered. A stakeholder workshop on Environmental Statistics will be organised during the year to work out modalities for the development of an environmental statistics database and a compendium of environmental statistics, which will be of importance to the private sector, academia and the general public at large.

Environment Sector

970. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will continue to take Environmental Education issues up through the celebration of International Environmental Day as part of the comprehensive long term awareness creation strategy for environmental assessment and reporting to support national, regional and global environmental decision making.

Environmental Health and Sanitation Unit

971. Mr. Speaker, the focus of the unit for 2008 will be the strengthening of selected MMDAs to improve on sanitation in the cities and towns, especially the low income communities. This is expected to be achieved through the following:-

- Strengthening all MMDAs to effectively carry out their responsibilities in the provision of sanitation services.
- Provision of logistics to the unit to effectively supervise and monitor sanitation services.
- Intensification of monitoring of services and performance of staff at the MMDA level to ensure value for money in sanitation service delivery.

BIRTHS AND DEATHS REGISTRY

972. Mr. Speaker, the Births and Deaths Registry will seek to deliver on its mandate “ to provide accurate and reliable information on all births and deaths occurring in Ghana through their registration and certification” by engaging in the following:

973. **Normal Registration of Births and Deaths:** This will be scaled up country wide in a bid to move the registration coverage to 70 per cent for births and 35 per cent for deaths at the end of 2008.

974. **Certificates with Enhanced Security Features:** To counter the use of fraudulent certificates, the Registry will commence the issue of computer generated certificates with enhanced security features.

975. **Awareness Creation-** Public education and sensitization programmes will continue with media encounters, community

durbars with mobile registration, and dissemination of packaged messages using information service vans around the country.

976. **Scaling up of Community Population Register Programme-**
In view of the successes achieved under the Community Population Register Programme, the Registry will seek to introduce the programme in 20 communities in 2 new regions.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

977. Mr. Speaker, in pursuance of its mandate to facilitate the mobilization and use of locally and externally available resources for improved living standards among rural residents and vulnerable communities in urban centres, the Department will continue to undertake growth-led and poverty reduction related activities including:-

- The provision of entrepreneurial development and income generating skills training for 900 existing Women's Group leaders and enhance technical skills of 800 rural artisans through demonstration workshops on the construction and use of domestic latrines.
- Training of 4,000 youth as part of the Youth Vocational/Technical and Employable Skills Transfer programme.

Support for Decentralization Programme (SFDP)

978. Mr. Speaker, a new programme named Support for Decentralization Programme has replaced Local Governance-Poverty Reduction Support Programme (LGPRSP) to assist the Ministry to contribute to the improvement of the decentralization process at the national level. Minimal interventions will however be made at the district level.

- SFDP will assist in the formulation of a Comprehensive National Decentralization Policy and Urban Development Policy.
- Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS) will also be supported in their capacity building efforts for local governance practitioners.
- There will be collaboration with NDPC to standardize Monitoring and Evaluation Systems and to promote Pro-poor planning/programming tools countrywide.
- The Municipal Finance and Rapid Revenue Mobilization Programmes will also be supported.

979. Mr. Speaker, to consolidate the success gained at the district level, the programme will continue to:

- Provide backstopping for the 7 existing districts on the District Database System (DDS) and support the establishment of DDS in 16 other districts using the Public Private Partnership approach.
- It will further provide backstopping to the Brong Ahafo Regional Coordinating Council to test the M&E system provided by LGPRSP.
- In addition, the project will package and disseminate Integrated Development Plan (IDP) manuals.
- To consolidate the achievements of the poverty mapping, CD ROMs will be produced and disseminated on the methodology of poverty mapping.
- The project will also continue to support the establishment of Operation and Maintenance Systems for markets and lorry parks.

Promotion of District Capitals/District Towns Project (PRODICAP)

980. Mr. Speaker, under District Towns V, there will be improvements in infrastructure such as schools, clinics, artisan areas, lorry parks and water schemes in Berekum, Manya Krobo, Birim South, Akwapem North, Atiwa and Amansie East.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND GARDENS

981. Mr. Speaker, the Department will continue to deliver on its mandate in respect of the following:

- Landscape beautification of the built and natural environment, developing horticulture into commercial activity, establishment and management of botanical gardens, parks, arboreta for promotion of scientific research, recreation, tourism and conservation of economic and medicinal plants.
- Public education and awareness creation to implement Target 8 that is; the importance of plant diversity and the need for its conservation incorporated into communication, educational and public awareness programmes of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC).
- As part of its drive to promote tourism, the Department will assist all MMDAs to develop and landscape tourist sites and establish eco-tourism parks to create employment for the youth and generate revenue.

Urban Poverty Reduction Project (UPRP)

982. Mr. Speaker, the year 2008 will, among others, focus mainly on the following key activities:

- Provide urban planning equipment for the participating MMDAs and provide support to cover their operating and maintenance costs for the first two and half years.
- Provide Consultancy Services, logistical support, specific sensitization/Information Education and Communication, coaching and training activities necessary for the development and implementation of about 60 Community Business and Development Plans (CB&DP).
- Engage the services of a consultant to develop and install for each MMDA an adapted urban development planning and monitoring software to improve the collection, processing and analysis of data for the formulation of new pro-poor Community-based Town Planning and Development Strategies and Action Plans that will integrate the CB&DP.
- Engage the services of a valuation firm to revalue for rating purposes all rateable properties of the MMDAs under the supervision of the Land Valuation Board (LVB) as well as a consultant to design and implement a simple computerized valuation roll-based revenue management system.
- Provide logistics support to revenue collection units of MMDAs to enhance revenue mobilisation.
- Engage the services of a consultant to develop training modules and train NGOs to assist the Community Coordinating Committees (CCCs) in the implementation of the Social Inclusion Transfer scheme.
- Design and approve for implementation of at least 50 socio-economic infrastructure sub-projects including integrated educational and health infrastructure, water and sanitation, waste collection and management, etc
- Establish and train Community Maintenance Management Committees (CMMCs) to carry out basic maintenance on

the socio-economic infrastructure to be provided under the project.

- Selection and recapitalization of Partner Financial Institutions (Rural Banks, Commercial Banks, Loans and Savings Companies, etc) to provide medium term credit to SSEs and provide training programmes to beneficiary SSEs in market research, product quality and packaging with the view to providing them access to local and national markets.

Ghana School Feeding Programme

983. Mr. Speaker, by the end of 2008, the Ghana School Feeding Programme will be expanded to cover more pupils and schools nationwide. It is expected that the programme will impact on enrolment, attendance and retention in our schools.

984. Mr. Speaker, a strategy will be developed to improve the link between the GSFP and the smallholder farmers to boost local agricultural production.

985. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢133,240,720 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢43,385,308, IGF is GH¢1,314,690, Donor is GH¢60,955,722, HIPC is GH¢10,485,000, and MDRI is GH¢17,100,000.

MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

986. Mr. Speaker, the major policy trust of the Ministry is to serve as an effective link between the Legislature and the Executive to enhance good governance and democracy.

Performance in 2007

987. Mr. Speaker, during the year, 2007, the Ministry undertook a number of activities in furtherance of its policy objectives. These included the:

- Organization of workshops for Districts Chief Executives (DCEs) and MPs in the Upper East Region aimed at promoting effective cooperation between the Members of Parliament (MPs) and District Chief Executives (DCEs).
- Engagement of Professional Bodies and Civil Society Groups in discussions aimed at ensuring their involvement in policy formulation. This is a strategy for strengthening democratic governance through effective participation.
- Organization of interactive meetings for the leadership in Parliament and Leaders of Political parties in Parliament to foster greater co-operation and consensus building.
- Completion and commissioning of the first two floors of new building.
- Organization of a sensitization workshop for the Leadership of Parliament, on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Outlook for 2008

988. Mr. Speaker, in 2008 the main focus of the Ministry's activities in furtherance of its objectives will be to:

- Facilitate greater collaboration between the Executive and the Legislature through frequent interactive meetings.
- Facilitate frequent interactive meetings between the Legislature and Civil Society, especially professional bodies in policy formulation.
- Continue to work towards greater co-operation between the representatives of various political parties in Parliament, as a way of building consensus in the House.
- Seek the participation of all segments of society in the democratization process by organizing workshops on good governance at the Unit Committee Level as well as for students of Tertiary Institutions, Traditional Rulers and Women's groups.
- Strengthen its policy and research capacity to ensure effective service delivery.
- Lead advocacy in good governance and democracy.

989. Mr. Speaker, a total amount of GH¢2,703,549 has been allocated for the implementation by the Ministry of the above projects and programmes. Out of this, GOG is GH¢878,015 and Donor is GH¢1,825,534.

OFFICE OF PARLIAMENT

990. Mr. Speaker, the Office of Parliament is responsible for the day-to-day management of Parliament which is the legislative arm of Government. The Office, as part of its strategy to ensure good governance in the country, will promote effective, responsible, and accountable state machinery with improved capacity to engage the productive private sector and civil society in formulating policies and strategies for accelerated growth and poverty reduction.

Performance in 2007

991. Mr. Speaker, the major achievements recorded during the year under review included the following:

Sittings of Parliament and Parliamentary Committees

992. Parliament had a total number of 110 sittings and 295 committee sittings as at September 2007 including sittings of the Appointments Committee to consider Government nominees for Ministerial Appointments. There were also a number of Town Hall meetings within Ghana and outside the country, as well as working visits and study tours by some committees to project sites across the country to monitor and evaluate performance of MDAs and to ensure that funds voted for those projects are being judiciously applied for the intended purposes.

Legislations Passed

993. Bills passed during the year included the following:

- Bui Power Authority Act, 2007 (Act 740)

- Fair Wages and Salaries Commission Act, 2007 (Act 737)
- Credit Securities Depository Act, 2007 (Act 733)
 - National Accreditation board Act 200 (Act 732)
 - Domestic Violence Act, 2007 (Act 732)
 - Transfer of convicted Persons Act, 2007 (Act 743)

Infrastructural Development

994. Mr. Speaker, as part of its efforts to provide adequate space for the work of Parliament, a number of infrastructural projects were undertaken. These included the work on the first phase of the conversion of the GNTC Block of Flats into Committee Rooms.
995. The official residence for the Speaker of Parliament has been completed and furnished, and the Speaker has moved into occupation.
996. Work on the construction of the 3-storey office complex is ongoing and expected to be completed in 2008. The facility when completed will provide the much needed office space for the Leadership of the House, key members of staff, and 8 Committee Rooms. This will go a long way to ease the current office accommodation problems and lack of meeting rooms confronting Parliament.
997. Mr. Speaker, the renovation works on the Chamber Block is also ongoing. The Office has so far succeeded in rewiring the entire block which is fully air-conditioned. Currently, work on the electronic systems including close circuit cameras, video conferencing facility, a new digital system and equipment for simultaneous interpretation as well as access control electronic voting systems and plasma screens are being installed.

Training and Development

998. Functional training was provided to upgrade the knowledge and skills of Parliamentary Service Staff in a number of key areas including Good Governance and Development, Information, Communication Technology, Understanding the Labour Act, Modernizing the Human Resource Function, Financial Management and Budgeting. A number of MPs also undertook internship and benchmarking programmes outside the country.

Outlook for 2008

999. Mr. Speaker, the Institution of Parliament will continue to make steady strides in the discharge of its mandate. A number of activities will be implemented in that regard. These include the following:

- Continue to deliver its legislative function by holding Plenary and Committee Sittings
- Provide Local and Overseas Training and Internship programmes for MPs and Staff
- Participate in Overseas Conferences and Seminars (i.e. CPA Inter, CPA Africa, ACPEU, NSCL, IPU, AU, ECOWAS)
- Procure Vehicles and office equipment for Committee activities and for the Parliamentary Service.
- Rehabilitate Parliament House
- Complete the construction and furnishing of the three-storey Office complex.
- Continue rehabilitation work on the Tower Block (Job 600).
- Commence the second phase of the renovation works on the GNTC Block of Flats.

1000. For the implementation of the above projects and programmes an amount of GH¢20,703,627 has been allocated.

MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR

1001. Mr. Speaker, internal security is deemed to be critical for the attainment of sustainable development. Accelerated socio-economic development is also contingent on the maintenance of peace, security and stability.

Performance in 2007

1002. Mr. Speaker, within the year under review, the Ministry undertook the following activities:

Interior Headquarters

- Increased monitoring of the activities of the Private Security Organizations (PSOs) by consolidating the Supervisory Board and developed draft Strategic Plan (2007-2009) and Scheme of Service for staff.
- Established the Gaming Board, Migration Unit, and consolidated the Peace Building Support Unit and the National Peace Council.
- Sensitized the public on the negative impact of mob justice on society.
- Formulated the draft policies on migration and work permits and strengthened the Ghana-EU Cooperation on migration.

National Peace Council

- Organised sensitisation workshops for stakeholders on peaceful resolution of conflicts including Conflict Transformation for Political Parties.

- The Council undertook various mediation activities including reviving the stalled negotiation between NAGRAT and GNAT, students of the Tertiary Institutions and the Police as well as court case involving some members of a Political Party.

Migration Unit

- Conducted educational campaign in collaboration with Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) and International Organization on Migration (IOM).
- Carried out preparatory work on the establishment of Migration Unit Advisory Board.
- Capacity Building to broaden knowledge on Migration and Development

The Ghana Refugee Board

- Provided legal protection to Refugees and Asylum seekers.
- Conducted a Verification Exercise in collaboration with UNHCR and the Ghana Immigration Service to determine the number of Liberian Refugees at the Buduburam Refugee Camp.
- Signed Tripartite Agreement for the Voluntary Repatriation of Togolese Refugees in Ghana.
- Promoted voluntary return of Liberian Refugees in Ghana.

Ghana National Commission on Small Arms (GNACSA)

- Facilitated the passage of the Legislative Instrument establishing GNACSA.

- Hosted the 1st Consultative Conference on the Implementation of the ECOWAS Small Arms Control Programme (ECOSAP) in February 2007.
- Participated in the ECOSAP training programme on ECOWAS Sub-Regional Small Arms and Light Weapons Survey Methodology Harmonisation in Mali in 2007.
- Participated in the UN Conference on the Ban of Cluster Munitions in Peru in May 2007.

Ghana Police Service

1003. Mr. Speaker, the Service undertook the following activities during the year:

- Increased recruitment of university graduates and enlistment of senior secondary school graduates
- Trained 980 Ghanaian Youth and equipped them with skills under the community protection module of the NYEP.
- Refreshed and upgraded skills of personnel in contemporary policing
- Provided adequate logistics to aid the police to effectively patrol most of the crime prone areas within the country.
- Procured and supplied personnel with new set of uniforms and boots.

Ghana Prisons Service

1004. Mr. Speaker, the Service continued work on the phase 4 of the Ankaful Maximum Security Prison Project with 30 per cent of work completed. Work has also been done on the rehabilitation of a number of prison buildings and officers' bungalows. In addition, funds have also been committed for works on the Wa

Central Prison perimeter wall, and the continuation of extension to Prison Headquarters building.

1005. To improve the personnel situation 1000 personnel were recruited into the Service while contract has been awarded for the supply of uniforms and boots to officers.

Ghana National Fire Service

1006. Mr Speaker the Service undertook the following activities:

- Organised capacity building programmes for staff.
- Organised fifty-one Radio and Television programmes on Fire Safety Education in different local languages.
- Issued 437 and 152 Fire Safety Certificates and Renewals, respectively.
- Attended to a total of 1341 fires in the first half of the year.
- Acquired 773 pieces hoses, 2695 pairs of boots for personnel and 185 pieces of Tyres for fire fighting vehicles. Air conditioners and other office equipment have also been acquired and distributed to the Regional capitals.

Ghana Immigration Service

1007. Mr. Speaker, the Service improved its human capacity in accordance with its mandate concerning the enhancement of the country's border control and security system by employing a total of 592 personnel. In addition, the Service worked on amendment of the Immigration Law to empower the Service to patrol and manage Ghana's borders and for officers to bear arms.

1008. In addition, the following were undertaken:

- Trained thirty- eight Officers of various ranks to enhance their skills.
- Stepped up enforcement activities resulting in breaking a "419 Scam" ring leading to the arrest of the scammers.
- Intensified monitoring and investigation activities to wipe out illegal immigrants from hotels, workplaces, markets, and educational institutions.
- Intensified efforts to check the increasing passport, visa and travel document fraud under a project named AENEAS COUNTERING DOCUMENT FRAUD.
- Acquired parcels of land at Gonokrom, Elubo, Sampa, Missiga and Namoo for which at least commitment fees have been paid.
- Continued rehabilitation work on existing structures at Atuna, Bole Chache, Paga and Wanjuga
- Acquired nineteen vehicles during the year.

Narcotics Control Board

1009. Mr. Speaker, the Narcotics Control Board undertook the following activities during the year under review:

- Installed gari processing machines for farmers in Cannabis cultivation under the Alternative Development Programme.
- Registered and counselled six hundred and eighty drug addicts some of whom were referred to the psychiatric hospitals. Others are also undergoing skills training programme at the REMAR CENTRE at Pakro.
- Participated in UN Conference on Drugs in Vienna, Austria.

- Organized the International Day against Drug Trafficking in Takoradi.
- Recruited and trained forty new employees for the Board.
- Collaborated with the Police to arrest over two hundred suspects all over the country.
- Organized Educational programmes against drug trafficking at Cape Coast, Techiman, Kumasi and Accra.
- Arrested thirty foreign nationals at KIA for drug trafficking.

National Disaster Management Organisation [NADMO]

1010. Mr. Speaker, NADMO undertook the following activities during the year under review.

- Built capacity of two hundred and thirty-three personnel as well as sixty-two District Co-ordinators in disaster management and conflict resolution.
- Undertook country-wide public education on flooding and wind storm via radio and TV.
- Organized Press conferences, floats and durbars to commemorate the International Civil Day on the theme "Safety at Workplace".
- Collaborated with MOFA and other stakeholders to educate the public on the Avian Influenza outbreak in parts of the country and corresponding measures to curb its spread.
- Conducted surveillance on conflict situations, floods and landslides, mining hazards and slums
- Rescued and provided relief items to mitigate suffering of flood victims in the Northern, Ashanti and Greater Accra Regions.

- Identified areas and houses that cause floods in the city in collaboration with the Ministries of Water resources, Works and Housing and Local Government and earmarked them for demolition.
- Implemented activities aimed at strengthening disaster risk management and promoted the establishment of woodlots in ten communities in the Northern regions
- Received and dispatched 1,177 Ghanaians deported from Libya, Spain, U.S.A and Nigeria to their homes. Also in collaboration with UNHCR 1,810 Liberian Refugees have been voluntarily repatriated by air and sea.

Outlook for 2008

1011. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will continue to undertake measures aimed at ensuring peace and stability within the country especially before, during and after the CAN 2008 Football Tournament (Ghana 2008) and the 2008 Presidential and Parliamentary elections. In this regard, the following activities will be undertaken:

Interior (Headquarters)

- The Migration Unit of the Ministry will assist in the formulation of policies on migration issues through the collection and analysis of data on skills audit and remittances of Ghanaian migrants.
- Sensitize the youth and provide relevant information on legal/illegal migration.
- Scale up monitoring of Private Security Organisations (PSOs)
- Build capacity of staff

- Establish Desks at the Headquarters to be manned by representatives from the Agencies of the Ministry to help in the formulation of policies and programmes.
- Mainstream issues of gender, HIV/AIDS, fire safety, road safety, crime and drug menace
- Sensitize officers of Security Agencies on HIV/ AIDS

National Peace Council

- Sensitize and educate the public on the need for peaceful co-existence through drama, advertisement on television and radio, banners, posters and leaflets
- Organize capacity building programmes on conflict management, resolution, prevention and transformation through seminars, workshops, conferences and forums
- Organize training in basic methods of conflict analysis, early warning signs in the tertiary institutions through seminars, workshops, conferences and forums
- Organize Peace Festivals, lectures on peace building activities and launch Peace Fund through floats, TV & radio advertisements, banners and posters
- Organize training programmes for the Regional Peace Council Members and Regional Conflict Resolution Officers: and
- Organize Conflict Sensitive Journalism Workshops for Journalists.

The Ghana Refugee Board

- Continue with the provision of legal protection and other services for refugees.
- Facilitate and promote voluntary return of refugees.

- Formulate a contingency plan for possible influx of refugees into the country
- Conduct protection assessment exercises for the remaining Liberian refugees.

Ghana National Commission on Small Arms

1012. Mr. Speaker, the Commission will pursue the implementation of the following activities:

- Improve and expand technological communications and organisational infrastructure of the collaborating agencies especially the police.
- Update the baseline survey on Small Arms and evaluate the National Programme of Action on Small Arms
- Continue Regional sensitisation and awareness creation campaigns against Small Arms Proliferation
- Establish a national computerised database.
- Provide Alternative Livelihood for local arms manufacturers
- Prepare comprehensive programme for the destruction of illegal arms
- Collaborate with ECOWAS countries in addressing proliferation of small arms in West Africa.
- Train and build capacity of personnel of the Commission.

Gaming Board

- Sensitize the public on gaming activities and set operational standards.
- Educate the public on Promotional Lotteries as stated in section 28 & 29 of Act 721.
- Ensure timely prosecutions and penalization of offenders of Act 721.

- Ensure sustainable development of the Gaming Sector to attract domestic and foreign investors.

Ghana Police Service

1013. Mr. Speaker, the Service will undertake the following:

- Recruit and train 2000 young Ghanaians as police officers to ensure improvement in the police/citizen ratio.
- Organize refresher courses for serving personnel especially in the use of firearms and other topical issues for enhancement of quality service delivery
- Improve upon physical infrastructure by way of renovating and building more bungalows and offices.
- Procure additional vehicles and communication equipment to enable personnel respond swiftly to distress calls.
- Continue to increase the level of maintenance of peace and security, protection of lives and property throughout the country.
- Maintain cordial relationship with the public to enable the civilian populace volunteer information to the service.

Ghana Prisons Service

1014. Mr. Speaker, the Ghana Prisons Service will continue to reform and rehabilitate prison inmates.

1015. In addition, the following will be pursued:

- Continue work on the Ankaful Maximum Security Prison to ease congestion in walled Prisons.
- Rehabilitate prisons and officers' accommodations.

Ghana National Fire Service

1016. Mr. Speaker, the Service will undertake the following activities:

- Improve fire fighting capabilities through constant in-service training, simulation exercises, and replenishing fire combat stocks.
- Strengthen and expand the Safety Inspectorate Unit of the Service.
- Facilitate community fire emergency preparedness through massive community and market education programmes.
- Intensify efforts to prevent fires in Strategic National Installations such as Harbours, VRA, TOR, the Airport, Osu Castle and other buildings used for public gathering and businesses.
- Review Bush Fire Law 229 to capture current environmental needs and land use management.
- Introduce burning permits in forest reserves to address the menace of the practice of slash and burn and group hunting.
- Intensify Bush Fire campaigns and train more fire volunteers in the rural communities to ensure compliance with Bush Fire Law 229.

Ghana Immigration Service

1017. Mr. Speaker, the Service will undertake the following activities:

- Increase and expand intelligence operations with improved fraud detection facilities.
- Strengthen and modernise infrastructural and technological capacities at regional and district commands.
- Strengthen the country's border management system and modernise infrastructural and technological capacities at the country's borders.

- Demarcate 15 new entry points.
- Computerize the data management of Embarkation/ Disembarkation cards-phase 1
- Strengthen and expand enforcement Unit of the Service on regional basis.
- Send officers to four foreign missions to take over the visa and consular duties in New York / Washington, London, Berlin and Amsterdam.
- Institute measures to increase revenue generation capacity.
- Collect, collate and disseminate appropriate migration data for the Migration Information Bureau (MIB)
- Conduct performance evaluation of the enhanced border security system.
- Create awareness and curb the menace of human trafficking.
- Embark on HIV/AIDS sensitization programmes

Narcotics Control Board

1018. Mr. Speaker, the activities of the Board will include the following:

- Foster greater Inter-Agency collaboration and co-operation at the Airports, Harbours and borders.
- Form drug free clubs in schools and colleges.
- Continue Alternative Development Programme and destruction of cannabis farms nationwide.
- Organize sensitization programmes, radio and television talk shows in schools, churches, District Assemblies, NGO's, Clubs, Associations, etc.
- Complete work on the office complex
- Establish a website for the Board.
- Organize World Drug Day country-wide.

National Disaster Management Organisation [NADMO]

1019. Mr. Speaker, NADMO will undertake the following activities:

- Train and develop 100 personnel for the Rapid Response team and staff in disaster management as well as in administration and managerial skills.
- Highlight public awareness in about 15 per cent of the population and to increase their participation in disaster risk reduction/disaster management.
- Launch vulnerability and Risk Assessment for the country. This is expected to lead to effective monitoring of both natural and human-induced hazards to avert disasters
- Review, publish and launch the draft National Disaster Management Plan and prepare composite Standard Operations Procedures for all types of disasters.
- Train and equip Disaster Volunteer Groups (DVGs) in forest protection management and plant 5,000,000 seedlings of various species to ensure the restoration of degraded natural resources.
- Expand the MSHAP program to cover 200 NADMO staff and 5,000 DVG members and their dependents in the rest of southern regions of Ghana.

1020. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢172,141,176 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢155,831,967, IGF is GH¢2,267,110, Donor is GH¢9,042,098 and HIPC is GH¢5,000,000.

JUDICIAL SERVICE

1021. Mr. Speaker, the Judicial Service seeks to promote the smooth and efficient administration of Justice to all manner of persons without discrimination, with the ultimate aim of creating an enabling environment for good governance.

Performance in 2007

1022. During the year under review, the Judicial Service undertook the following activities.

- Trained 31 Career magistrates at the Ghana Law School.
- Organized seminars on financial reporting and redenomination of the cedi.
- Continued the construction of the New Administration Block.
- Completed the construction of Phase 1 of the Kumasi Court of Appeal complex and Jasikan Circuit Court Building.
- Continued the rehabilitation of the Nsawam Circuit Court and fence wall.
- Continued the construction of the Financial Tribunal Building.

Outlook for 2008

1023. Mr. Speaker, the Service will embark upon the following activities:

- Undertake human resource development programmes to increase capacity in Alternate Dispute Resolutions, Case Management for Judges, Court Management for

Registrars, Communication Skills for Administrators and Registrars.

- Commence weekend Magistrate Court in Accra on experimental basis.
- Continue to supply Magistrates to administer Justice in Magistrate Courts in the remote and rural areas of the country under the Career Magistrates programme.
- Replace obsolete equipment, furniture and vehicles, and, develop a maintenance culture for all properties.
- Continue with the construction and rehabilitation of the under listed infrastructural projects;
 - Judicial Training Institute Building in Accra.
 - Financial Tribunal Building in Accra.
 - Kumasi Court of Appeal Complex.
 - Wa Court Complex Building.

1024. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢28,374,292 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢26,339,172, IGF is GH¢895,120 and HIPC is GH¢1,140,000.

PUBLIC SERVICES COMMISSION

1025. Mr. Speaker, the Public Services Commission (PSC) is mandated to safeguard and promote integrity, accountability and competence in Public Service organisations in Ghana through advisory, consultative, regulatory and supervisory services.

Performance in 2007

1026. Mr. Speaker, the Public Services Commission (PSC) undertook a number of activities meant to contribute towards the attainment of specific goals, in the areas of good corporate governance and human resource development.

1027. Activities of the Service included the following:

- Establishment of a functional human resource database on the public services to ensure the availability of, and easy access to, reliable, accurate and relevant information on all public servants, for effective public sector manpower planning and utilisation.
- Gathering of accurate data on institutional performance in the public services with a view to prescribing appropriate systems and procedures in support of current government policy on human resource management and development, in consonance with the on-going public sector reform.
- Development of a five-year strategic plan and the establishment of a website, as well as the computerisation of the work of the PSC aimed at promoting efficiency, economy and good corporate governance. When operational, the website will give all stakeholders of the PSC, including Ghanaians in the Diaspora, access to up-to-

date information on employment opportunities in Ghana and within international organisations and agencies, critical reports, circular letters, policy guidelines and procedures and other relevant human resources matters.

1028. Mr. Speaker, the PSC's Annual Lecture series and its follow-up workshop provided another opportunity to heed the President's call for a national debate on public sector pay policy and administration. It is expected that the views collated from the lecture and workshop will benefit the newly-established Fair Wages and Salaries Commission as it takes over pay-related matters within the public sector.

Outlook for 2008

1029. Mr. Speaker, the Commission will continue to play its role as a Central Management Agency whose advice and opinions are respected and recognised as indicative of best practices in human resource management development in the public services.
1030. These include providing guidelines for appointment, promotion, transfer and discipline within the Public Services, collaborating with governing bodies, educational institutions and other relevant public and private agencies to ensure excellence in performance in the public services.
1031. Mr. Speaker, the PSC will also focus on the development of a human resource management framework that will capture current human resource practices and develop an institutional management system that will enhance productivity in the public services.

1032. Mr. Speaker, a well-equipped national human resource centre will accordingly be established within the PSC to set standards, and to monitor performance in public service institutions with a view to strengthening their human resource capacities and quality assurance.
1033. In this regard, the PSC will be working in close collaboration with other Central Management Agencies in the public services, such as the Office of the Head of the Civil Service, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Ministry of Public Sector Reform and the Controller and Accountant-General's Department.
1034. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢629,893 has been allocated.

THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, REGIONAL COOPERATION AND NEPAD

1035. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry is the principal organ of state responsible for the management of Ghana's foreign policy.

Performance in 2007

1036. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry contributed significantly to the successful commemoration of Ghana's Golden Jubilee anniversary. Various activities were undertaken at all the Diplomatic Missions of Ghana, not only to commemorate the Jubilee, but more importantly, to showcase the huge strides that Ghana has made and continues to make in all spheres of her development, especially the immense economic potential that exists for value-addition in terms of investments and productivity.

1037. Mr. Speaker, the events that were celebrated in Ghana in March, 2007 for the Jubilee Anniversary must have awakened in Ghana's foreign partners, a keen desire to intensify and further deepen their cooperation and collaboration with the country. Against this background, the Ministry coordinated efforts by Ghana to successfully host the 9th AU Summit in July, 2007, which registered the highest turnout of Heads of State that the Union has ever witnessed. Following that landmark performance, the Ministry assisted with the arrangements towards the holding of the 6th AGOA Conference in Ghana.

1038. Mr. Speaker, at the UN, Ghana completed her 2-year mandate at the Security Council as a non-permanent member, and successfully chaired the Council's proceedings in August, 2006

and in October, 2007, in accordance with the principle of rotating Presidency of the Security Council.

1039. Within the International Community at large, Ghana maintained a high-profile diplomatic presence which yielded an appreciable level of interest in the country in the form of foreign direct investments, political goodwill, international solidarity and an enhanced national image, leading among other things, to Ghana's election to the newly created United Nations Human Rights Council, with the highest number of votes. Ghana was also unanimously elected to the Chair of the African Union.
1040. Mr. Speaker, with regard to infrastructural development, the Ministry pursued the on-going construction of the Legon Centre for International Affairs (LECIA) building at Legon for the training of diplomats whilst facilities managed by the Ministry such as the Accra International Conference Centre (AICC) and the State Lodge at Ellis Avenue in Kumasi, were also rehabilitated.
1041. Mr. Speaker, In pursuit of government policy to enhance the image of Ghana, reduce or eliminate the payment of exorbitant rent charges for our Missions abroad, the Ministry undertook the renovation of Residencies/Chanceries in Brussels, Copenhagen, London, Ottawa, New York, Rome and Washington. Chancery buildings and residential accommodation were also purchased for staff in Tel Aviv, Abidjan and New Delhi.

Outlook for 2008

1042. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will continue to pursue government policies and programmes aimed at optimizing the benefits that will accrue to the country as we engage with the international

community, while promoting and protecting the interests of Ghana.

1043. To this end, the Ministry will seek the establishment of a just and equitable international economic and social order through a robust pursuit of economic diplomacy to promote non-traditional Ghanaian products, negotiate agreements with host authorities for market access for Ghanaian goods whilst promoting respect for International Law and treaty obligations and the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means in collaboration with the appropriate international organizations.
1044. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will also work towards enhancing the image of Ghana at home and abroad, including sponsoring Ghana/Ghanaians as candidate(s) in international organizations. In pursuit of this objective, the Ministry has initiated programmes to make ICT a functional tool with the relevant training for the staff to make them more efficient and effective in delivering world class diplomacy and services for the benefit of the country.

Ambassadors' conference

1045. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will hold the fourth in the series of the Ambassadors' Conference, after successfully organizing the second in December, 2006. The Ambassadors' Conference is in furtherance of the Ministry's policy of promoting human capacity building and enhancing the effectiveness of the Ambassadors for efficient service delivery.

Biometric Passports

1046. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will continue to take the appropriate steps to introduce biometric passports, in line with the

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) advice to all states to promote international security. Visas will also be provided on-line.

Missions Abroad

1047. Mr. Speaker, to strengthen and enhance Ghana's presence in, and promote stronger economic cooperation with East Africa and the Gulf Region, the Ministry intends to re-open or establish diplomatic missions in Nairobi (Kenya), Lusaka (Zambia), Tehran (Iran), Doha (Qatar), and Dubai (United Arab Emirates).

1048. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will also collaborate closely with other relevant institutions to enable Ghana showcase herself yet another time through the successful organization and holding of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Africa Cup of Nations (Ghana 2008) in the coming year.

African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)

Performance in 2007

1049. Mr. Speaker, the National APRM Governing Council engaged in the capacity building of NCCE and Civic Leaders in all the ten regions to undertake education and sensitization of the populace in the APRM.

1050. The NAPRM-GC submitted the 3rd Progress Report of Ghana to the APRM Panel during the 9th Ordinary Session of the AU Summit in Accra in July 2007.

1051. During the year, there was an official inauguration of 8 District APRM Oversight Committees to assist in the monitoring and

evaluation of the implementation of the Programme of Action (PoA).

1052. Mr. Speaker, the APRM Continental Conference was held in Accra Ghana from May 8-10, 2007 under the theme "Africa's Bold March to Capture the 21st Century- the Role of the APRM" with participants from 23 African Countries that have acceded to the APRM and their strategic partners.
1053. The NAPRM-GC organized the coordination meeting between governance institutions to improve the management of governance issues in Ghana.
1054. Mr. Speaker, the NAPRM-GC also translated the Ghana Country Review Report into everyday English version and six major Ghanaian languages namely, Akan, Ewe, Ga, Hausa, Dagbani and Dagari.

Outlook for 2008

1055. Mr. Speaker, to increase broad-based participation of civil society in the APRM, the Governing Council will inaugurate and build the capacity of the established District APRM Oversight Committees in 130 districts nationwide to assist in:
- Education and sensitization in the APRM and
 - Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the National Programme of Action (NPoA) to foster good governance in Ghana.
1056. Mr. Speaker, the NAPRM-GC will enhance independent monitoring of the implementation of the NPoA by the four Technical institutions namely Private Enterprise Foundation (PEF), Centre for Policy Analysis (CEPA), Centre for Democratic

Development (CDD) and Institute for Social, Statistical and Economic Research (ISSER).

1057. The NAPRM-GC will also share Ghana's best practices and experience in the APRM with other African countries.

1058. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢71,997,957 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢68,961,957, IGF is GH¢3,036,000.

GHANA AUDIT SERVICE

1059. Mr. Speaker, the Ghana Audit Service is constitutionally mandated to promote good governance through its audits to ensure accountability, probity and transparency in the utilization of public resources.

Performance in 2007

1060. Mr. Speaker, the Audit Service completed 3,300 audits out of a total of 6,776 by the end of June. These comprised of accounts of Central Government, District Assemblies, Pre-University Educational Institutions, Public Boards and Corporations. The audits of the remaining 3,476 are on going. Five Auditor-General's Annual Reports have been submitted to Parliament in relation to these accounts.

1061. In addition, the Service also undertook the following

- Completed five performance audit reports and submitted to Parliament.
- Reviewed the Payroll exercise and vetted the salary arrears of subvented organisations.
- Reviewed the implementation of the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament on previous Auditor-General's Reports.
- Carried out parallel performance audits with five other AFROSAI countries on the Management of Human Resources for Effective Primary Health Care Delivery in each member country. The report has been submitted to Parliament.

- Completed Annual Financial Statements for 2005 and 2006. These have been audited by an external auditor appointed by Parliament and reports submitted to Parliament.
- Commenced the implementation of the Phase II Audit Service reform programme.
- Finalised the Annual Report on the audit of District Wide Assistance Project (DWAP) in the Northern Regions of Ghana.
- Carried out Information Technology (IT) Census on MDAs.
- Completed audit of 16 Ghana Missions abroad.
- Organised Training Workshop for staff of selected MDAs throughout the country in respect of the Multi-Donor Budgetary Support (MDBS).
- Organised Mobile Training Workshops on Basic Financial Auditing and Administration for all field staff in the Upper East and Upper West Regions.

1062. Mr. Speaker, on the international front, the Audit Service met its obligation to the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI), the AFROSAI and AFROSAI-E and benefited from the Organisations training programmes. Two Performance Auditors are on nine-month training in Performance Auditing in Canada.

Outlook for 2008

1063. Mr. Speaker, the Ghana Audit Service will undertake the following activities:

- Conduct procurement audit in accordance with the Public Procurement Act, 2003, Act 664

- Review Contracts as stipulated in the FAA, 2003, Act 654, section 17(4)
- Establish a surcharge and disallowance desk
- Extend the audit of Revenue Agencies to cover the Budgeting targets
- Audit the National Health Insurance Scheme Fund, District Assemblies Common Fund and Ghana School Feeding Programme
- Audit the Millennium Development Authority (MiDA)
- Conduct new studies in areas selected for Performance Audit review and carry out six new performance audits.
- Carry out Computerized and Electronic Systems certification audits.
- Continue with the audit of the Payroll and Internally Generated Funds, certification of CAP 30 beneficiaries and vetting of salary arrears prior to release of funds by MOFEP.
- Continue with the clearance of the last batch of arrears of the Auditor-General's Report to Parliament.
- Audit Ghana's Missions abroad
- Continue with the implementation of Phase II of the Audit Service Reform Programme.
- Intensify IT training in Computer Assisted Auditing Techniques (CAATS); the Interactive Data Extraction and Analysis (IDEA) software and the Audit Command Language (ACL) software in collaboration with AFROSAI-E; and
- Organise a workshop that will design small e-learning modules on audit and IT related topics with the support of INTOSAI and International Development Initiative (IDI).

1064. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢14,049,117 has been allocated.

**MINISTRY OF JUSTICE AND ATTORNEY GENERAL'S
DEPARTMENT**

1065. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry's role is to ensure the effective application of legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks to facilitate the discharge of justice, transparency and accountability of state institutions, the private sector and civil society.

Performance in 2007

1066. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry embarked on a programme of transformation and Institutional change to improve access to justice and entrenchment of the rule of law in the country. The programme dubbed "Agenda for Change" covered areas relating to Attitude, Infrastructure, Personnel and Technology.

1067. Mr. Speaker, in furtherance of this programme the Ministry acquired 20 lap-top and 30 desk-top computers, installed Local and Wide Area Network and developed database to electronically capture all cases handled by Attorney-General's office. It also supported the operations of the Standing Committee for Remand Prisoners.

1068. The Attorney General's Department organised specified courses and conferences on combating crime relating to Drug Trafficking, Anti Money Laundering and Anti Corruption to enable them have the expertise to effectively prosecute offenders.

1069. The Registrar-General's Department has acquired for use computers and network infrastructure aimed at reducing the Business Registration application processes to 24 hours. Additionally, Regional offices have been opened in the Western

and Ashanti Regions to make business registration more accessible.

1070. The Legal Aid Scheme successfully disposed of 4010 cases out of 4342 received nation wide, created awareness, organised seminars for the public on the availability of Legal Aid and educated citizens on the law and their rights. It also implemented activities aimed at reducing fraud and combating corruption in both the electronic and print media and launched Community Mediation Centres which successfully resolved 310 out of the 400 cases received nation wide.
1071. The Serious Fraud Office investigated reported fraud cases brought before it with the view of reducing fraud and combating corruption.
1072. The Law Reform Commission is fulfilling the Ministries goal of promoting good governance through the reform of laws. The Commission has finished its research into Restorative Justice. To ensure efficiency, the Commission initiated the design of a website and a Broad Band Interconnectivity project.
1073. The Council for Law Reporting in its role as provider of law reports, which enables access to Justice, completed manuscript for the Ghana Law Reports volume two of the 1997-1998; 1999-2000; 2001-2002 law reports and volume one of 2001 – 2002 law reports.
1074. The Ghana Law School trained 210 lawyers, out of which, 156 have been enrolled and called to the Bar. The Disciplinary Committee of the Council received 34 complaints of Professional Misconduct against lawyers in the first six months of the year and disposed of 20 of these complaints.

1075. The Copyright Office carried out educational seminars and produced easy to read brochures aimed at educating right holders, users of copyright materials, law enforcement agencies and the general public on the provision of the Copyright Act of 2005. The Office in collaboration with rights holders and law enforcement agencies undertook a number of anti-piracy exercises, which resulted in the arrest and prosecution of offenders and the retrieval of pirated audio and audio visual works. The Office also settled 20 copyright disputes.

Outlook for 2008

1076. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will continue its role of ensuring that the rule of law is entrenched in the Ghanaian society and there is access to justice for all citizens. The Ministry will continue with its programme of transformation to improve access to justice in the Country. This will entail moving forward with the "Agenda for Change" programme.

1077. Mr. Speaker, the Legal Aid Scheme will continue awareness creation and public education on legal aid nationwide and further establish more Community Mediation Centres in selected districts in the country. The scheme will also train Legal and non Legal staff as well as legal Practitioners in Alternative Dispute Resolution processes, organize capacity building workshops and consultative workshops for Regional Directors. It will also monitor and evaluate all legal aid programmes.

1078. Mr. Speaker, the Serious Fraud Office will ensure the expansion of its mandate to include the prevention and investigation of money laundering, drug trafficking and cyber crimes. These new activities and enhancement of the powers of the Office are being introduced in a new serious fraud and organized crime bill.

1079. Mr. Speaker, the Law Reform Commission will pursue the transformation of its offices to ensure efficiency through the use of ICT, network installation and website construction and broad band internet connectivity.
1080. Mr. Speaker, the General Legal Council will train 200 lawyers and endeavour to investigate 60 per cent of professional misconduct complaints made against lawyers.
1081. Mr. Speaker, the Copyright Office will organize regional workshops for public education, and intensify the publication of the magazines and brochures. The Copyright Tribunal will be established. Existing application forms will also be transformed into electronic format and business processes computerized. The Office will put in place a Copyright monitoring team to sustain the fight against piracy. The Office will also establish a National Folklore Board to ensure the effective protection and administration of folklore including Kente designs and Adinkra symbols.
1082. Mr. Speaker, the Council for Law Reporting will focus on publishing current judgments and rulings passed by the Supreme Court including the publication of the 2003 – 2005 and 2006 - 2007 Ghana Law Reports. The Council will also seek to reprint some volumes of the law reports that are out of stock.
1083. Mr. Speaker, the Registrar General's Department will complete the review and redesign of its Registration, Renewal and Amendment forms to make them computer friendly and will continue to work on bringing down the time frame of registration of business to 24 hours. The Department will also upgrade its ICT Infrastructure and in line with its ICT strategy, decentralize the Departments processes and produce registration forms for Micro and Small Enterprises on-line. The Department will also

improve the quality of its Business Registration Data Base and also collaborate with all the Revenue Agencies to improve the business environment and business legal regime generally.

1084. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢15,634,095 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢14,576,595 and IGF is GH¢1,057,500.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

1085. Mr. Speaker, the Ghana Armed Forces will continue to maintain internal and external security as well as actively participate in peacekeeping operations.

Performance in 2007

1086. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry pursued objectives and programmes geared towards the improvement of the combat readiness of the Ghana Armed Forces. Some of the major activities undertaken are as follows:

National Defence

1087. The Ministry conducted land, sea and air exercises aimed at deterring potential aggressors thus safeguarding the territorial integrity of the country. The GAF made frantic efforts to search, locate and arrest two ships suspected of transporting narcotic drugs.

Combating Crime and Promotion of Peace

1088. Mr. Speaker, the GAF continued to support the civil authorities in combating crime and promoting peace, especially during the energy crisis. This resulted in the reduction in the spate of armed robbery and other violent crime in the country. Some personnel were also deployed at Yeji to monitor activities on the Volta Lake and at Jehwi Wharf on the Western border. The latter deployment was aimed at preventing the trafficking and smuggling of small arms and ammunitions across the Western border.

Assistance to Flood Victims

1089. The military in collaboration with NADMO responded rapidly by deploying personnel, equipment and logistics to assist flood victims in the northern parts of the country.

Rehabilitation of Naval Slipway and Test Bench Project

1090. Mr. Speaker, rehabilitation of the Naval Slipway Project (NSP) is on-going and when completed the Navy will be able to handle docking of its ships at the facility thus reducing the large sums of money paid annually to the PSC Tema Shipyard. Firm orders have been placed for the equipment required for the project. As regards to the installation of the Test Bench, 95 per cent of the work has been completed.

Air Force

1091. Mr. Speaker, Government concluded an agreement for the supply of four K 8 training aircrafts and one simulator to the Ghana Air Force, two of which have already been delivered. The remaining aircrafts and simulator will be delivered by December 2007. In addition, funds have been provided for the refurbishment of two aircraft of the Ghana Air Force (F.27 & F.28) in South Africa.

Human Resource Development

1092. Mr. Speaker, priority attention was given to the human resource development of the Ghana Armed Forces. A number of Officers and Other Ranks were trained in both local and foreign military institutions of higher learning. Facilities of the Ghana Armed Forces High Command and Staff College were also upgraded.

Funds were also made available for the payment of retirement benefits to 555 overage soldiers who had served more than the maximum mandatory 25years.

Ghana Armed Forces Housing Projects

1093. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry continues to give priority attention to the improvement of residential accommodation for the military personnel. The implementation of housing projects in all the garrisons across the country is in progress. Construction of eighteen four storey blocks of sixteen flats each for 288 families also commenced in March 2007.

International Peacekeeping Operations

1094. Mr. Speaker, the GAF provided about 5,000 troops for ongoing United Nations (UN) and African Union (AU) Peacekeeping Missions. To enable the Government derive maximum benefit from the UN reimbursement system, a comprehensive Business Plan has been prepared to facilitate securing funding under the Private Public Partnership. This is to fully equip our soldiers for all the UN peacekeeping operations.

Ministry of Defence Office Complex

1095. Mr. Speaker, a sod-cutting ceremony has been performed for the construction of a new ultra-modern office complex for the Ministry of Defence.

Outlook for 2008

1096. Mr. Speaker, to build a strong Armed Forces capable of defending the interests of the country particularly at this time of improved economy and significant crude oil discoveries, the GAF

will continue to develop its human resource, re-equip the three Services and improve upon welfare programmes

1097. Major activities to be undertaken will include:

Internal Security

1098. Mr. Speaker, the GAF in collaboration with other civil authorities will provide extra security during the Ghana 2008 football tournament and the 2008 Presidential and Parliamentary elections.

International Image

1099. The Ghana Armed Forces will continue to assist in combating crime and other security concerns relating to development of tourism in the country.

Infrastructure

1100. Construction and rehabilitation of residential accommodation for staff and families of the GAF will continue whilst the construction of an ultra-modern office complex for the Ministry will be completed.

Releases

1101. The programme to release 877 over-aged soldiers in the Ghana Armed Forces will continue.

Naval Slipway and Test Bench

1102. Mr. Speaker, the rehabilitation of the Naval Slipway and Test Bench which is aimed at drastically reducing the amount of time spent on the docking of Ship will be continued and completed in the year 2008.

Re-equipping the Military

1103. Mr. Speaker, the need to provide more resources for re-equipping the three Services of the Ghana Armed Forces will be given the needed consideration in 2008.

Peacekeeping Operations

1104. Mr. Speaker, Government's efforts aimed at improving the operational readiness of the Ghana Armed Forces will be intensified. A comprehensive Business Plan will be prepared to facilitate securing the requisite funds to enhance peacekeeping operations. Ghana's acceptance to deploy troops for United Nation's Peacekeeping Hybrid Force in Darfur and AU operations in Somalia will be pursued.

1105. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢120,245,064 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢117,245,064 and IGF is GH¢3,000,000.

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

1106. Mr. Speaker, the goal of the Ministry is to build capacity in the Public Sector to provide prompt, efficient and cost-effective services that are responsive to the needs of the public in general and the private sector, in particular; and to provide improved, timely, transparent and productive service to the executive branch of government particularly advisory support to Ministers of State and the Presidency.

Performance in 2007

1107. Mr. Speaker, in pursuit of the core mandate of the Ministry, the following activities were implemented:

1108. Under the Organizational Restructuring of the Civil Service and Development of Training Programme, 200 out of the total of 600 identified Chief Directors, Directors and Heads of Agencies have been given training in Leadership Skills, Problem Solving, Policy Formulation and Analysis at GIMPA.

1109. Mr. Speaker, activities undertaken in Service Delivery Improvement in identified Public Sector Agencies, including Business Process Reviews included the following:

1110. Client Service Units were established in Districts and Customer Service Charters were updated, printed and distributed to the new locations, as follows:

- 10 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies, including Dangme West, Ga East, Ga West, Yilo Krobo, Mfantseman, Awutu-Efutu-Senya, KEEA.
- 13 Sub-metros of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly

- 5 sub units of the Survey Department
- 3 Revenue Agencies namely VAT, IRS, CEPS
- The Ministry of Trade, Industry, PSD and PSI; Ghana Standards Board, PRAAD, Town and Country Planning Department.

1111. Mr. Speaker, the Government has identified the need to transform and expand the existing Service Charters into Citizens Charters for every organization in order to highlight the obligation to provide citizens with quality, timely and cost effective services that they deserve. The Land and Revenue Agencies are part of the first phase of the President's Citizens Charter initiative.

1112. The Ministry celebrated the President's Excellence Awards for the Public Service with the 2006 award winners presented with plaques by His Excellency, the President. The Ministry also established a framework for Voluntary Retirement Schemes, and Reviewed HR practices for participating agencies, as well as the relevant labour legislation.

Public Sector Pay Policy and Pension Reform:

1113. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry, with its stakeholders concluded the phase one of the pay reform programme by:

- Correcting the distortions in the Public Sector salaries,
- Ensuring the correct placement of public sector workers on their correct grades and positions as well as establishing a salary structure that will put all public sector workers on a single pay spine structure.
- Facilitating the promulgation of the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission Act.

1114. Other activities undertaken on the Pay Reform included:

- Job evaluation of 5,100 job holders for about 2,500 jobs, this represented jobs done by more than 250,000 public servants
- Design and preparation of Job specifications, from job content data, for all categories of jobs in the public sector, including the Police, Prisons, Customs, Excise and Preventive Service and the Armed Forces.
- Comparison of job values from evaluations with pay for positions of similar value
- Identification of disparities in value and pay and providing Government with recommendations on approaches to resolving the disparities and establishing equity

Outlook for 2008

1115. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will facilitate, coordinate, and monitor the reform activities in the public Service including the Civil Service, selected Subvented Agencies, Central and Strategic Management Agencies. Consequently activities will be performed to:

- Assist in the implementation of reform initiatives identified in the Comprehensive Work Programme
- Support Institutions implementing Pay Reform initiatives
- Support the Professionalization of the Human Resource Function in the Public Service
- Facilitate and monitor service delivery improvement in the public sector agencies
- Organize and publicize more outreach/consultative programmes for deepening national partnership in the implementation of reform initiatives.

1116. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢8,885,272 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢1,160,981 and Donor is GH¢7,724,291.

THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION

1117. Mr. Speaker, the Electoral Commission has a mission of advancing the course of Democracy and Good Governance for growth and poverty reduction in Ghana by institutionalizing free fair and transparent elections to the acceptance of all stakeholders.

Performance in 2007

1118. The Commission continued its study on the Representation of the Peoples Amendment Act (ROPAA) and started a consultation process that will take it to some parts of the World where External Voting is practiced

Human Resource Capacity Building

1119. Mr. Speaker, in fulfilments of its ten years strategic plan, and in pursuit of its mission, the EC continued to develop key competences of its key staff to enable them perform current and future jobs through planned learning activities to churn out professionals who are highly motivated, independent and dedicated to the Commission.

1120. Mr. Speaker, the Commission successfully conducted two by-elections at Nkoranza and Fomena in the Brong Ahafo and Ashanti Regions respectively.

1121. Specific areas covered were as follows:

- Training of Managerial Staff in Post Graduate Diploma in Administration at GIMPA

- ICT training for all professional staff in the Electoral grade.
- Training in basics of electoral administration for two hundred Electoral Staff
- Upgrading of Twenty-two Typists to Stenographer grade.
- Training of Twenty-two Auto mechanics in basics of vehicle maintenance

Infrastructural Capacity Building

1122. Mr. Speaker, in an effort to fulfil its constitutional obligation of ensuring its presence in all Districts, and ensuring proper storage of election materials the Commission completed twelve new Districts Offices and continued with the construction of a Regional Office at Wa. In addition, work on the Greater Accra Regional Offices and National Warehouse is ongoing.

Outlook for 2008

1123. Mr. Speaker, the year 2008 would be a very busy year for the Commission. It is the year in which all programmes towards the conduct of Presidential and Parliamentary Elections will be executed. In this regard, the Commission will undertake the following:

Review of Polling Stations

1124. Mr. Speaker, the Commission will undertake the review of polling stations in the Country to respond to the effect of population dynamics on polling stations.

Revision of Voters Registers

1125. Mr. Speaker, the existing voters registers will be reviewed to include those who have attained the age of eighteen years. This

is a limited exercise that will be conducted at the Electoral area level.

Exhibition of Voters Register

1126. Mr. Speaker, the Voters Registers will be exhibited throughout the country at the polling station level to enable all registered Ghanaians to check for their names in the Register. This will also help the Commission to delete names of the dead from the Register to make the Register more credible.

Conduct of Presidential and Parliamentary Elections/Bye Elections

1127. Mr. Speaker, Presidential and Parliamentary Elections will be conducted in December 2008. The Commission has also programmed for any possible bye-election.

Representation of the Peoples Amendment Act (ROPAA)

1128. Mr. Speaker, the Commission will continue to consult with some identifiable bodies locally on the ROPAA. The objective is to enable the Commission to identify key issues in the implementation of the law with the view to instituting measures that will address them.

Infrastructural Development

1129. Mr. Speaker, the Commission will complete the construction of Regional Office at Wa as well as the Complex to house the national stores and the Greater Accra Regional Office.

1130. Mr. Speaker, the Commission intends to expand its ICT Infrastructure and procure vehicles and new Communication equipment made up of Radios and VPN Infrastructure for

installation in all Regional and District Offices. The objective is to support the Commission's efforts at improving its efficiency in election delivery.

1131. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of is GH¢36,803,056 has been allocated.

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND ADMINISTRATIVE JUSTICE

1132. Mr. Speaker, the Commission will continue with the promotion and protection of human rights and administrative justice and anticorruption in pursuit of the country's agenda of Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II) and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Performance in 2007

1133. Mr. Speaker, the Commission researched into the state of human rights activities in Ghana, organized a symposium on International Women's Day in collaboration with other NGOs as well as a round-table conference on International Day for Victims of Torture in collaboration with NGOs for the ratification of OPCAT and 2nd Optional protocol to the ICCPR.

Legal and Investigation

1134. Mr. Speaker, the Commission developed guidelines for case handling and dispute resolution and trained 225 Legal Officers and Investigators of the Commission on case handling policy and guidelines on dispute resolution.

Anti-Corruption

1135. Mr. Speaker, the Commission organised workshop on anticorruption and conflict of interest guidelines for 50 Members of Parliament, 500 Senior Public Servants, 100 Civil Society, Religious Groups and 200 CHRAJ staff. In addition, 220 Assistant Registrars and Investigators were also trained in customer care and basic management skills

Outlook for 2008

1136. Mr. Speaker, the following activities have been planned for the year.

Anti-Corruption

1137. Mr. Speaker, the Commission will organize educational programmes to create awareness on conflict of interest and evils of corruption for religious and faith-based organizations and continue training programmes on corruption investigation and prevention for 60 CHRAJ anti-corruption officers.

1138. The Commission will also publish a digest on corruption cases investigated to sustain the exposure of corrupt activities and ensure compliance with the code of conduct for public officers, as enshrined in chapter 24 of the 1992 Constitution.

Public Education

1139. Mr. Speaker, the Commission will educate the public nationwide on human rights concepts, values and responsibilities with emphasis on social and economic rights of vulnerable persons and conduct outreach programmes for the rights of persons with disability on the 2008 general elections.

Legal and Investigation

1140. CHRAJ will organize workshops on Court Judgments on its decisions to ensure consistency in case handling procedures for key stakeholders and continue the training programme for Legal officers and Investigators in case handling policy and guidelines

on dispute resolution to reduce the duration for handling complaints.

1141. Mr. Speaker, to enable the Ministry achieve its objectives an amount of has been provided.

1142. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢4,126,717 has been allocated.

MINISTRY OF CHIEFTAINCY AND CULTURE

1143. The Ministry of Chieftaincy and Culture is charged with the responsibility to preserve, sustain and integrate the legal, traditional and cultural values and practices to accelerate wealth creation and harmony towards overall national development objectives.

Performance in 2007

1144. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry organised a National Conference on Culture and Education with the principal actors and stakeholders to integrate culture into education curriculum to make education more relevant to the demands of society.

1145. Cultural Policy document has been reviewed to reflect contemporary challenges in cultural administration and development vis-à-vis global cultural diversity impacts in the midst of globalisation.

1146. Mr. Speaker, in the Ministry collaborated with the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation to feature a Weekly Cultural Magazine Programme on GTV to educate Ghanaians on their cultural frontiers to position the youth on a sound cultural footing.

1147. Mr. Speaker, brainstorming sessions were organised to derive appropriate cultural strategies and linkages that could lead to the eventual attainment of the MDGs within the communities. In addition, NAFAC 2007 was organised in Kumasi as part of the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of Ghana's Independence as a means to achieve national unity through cultural diversity.

1148. The National House of Chiefs in conjunction with the Law Reform Commission launched a project to ascertain and codify customary laws relating to land inheritance.

Outlook for 2008

1149. Mr. Speaker, in 2008 the Ministry will

1150. Undertake Public Education on the Economic, Social, Cultural, Political and Civil Rights of the citizenry through inter-cultural dialogue, Participate in cultural exchange programmes and international experience sharing.

1151. Further, the Ministry will conduct research into archaeological and historic sites to determine their viability for wealth creation and in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism and Diasporan Relations explore the tourism potentials of these sites.

1152. The Ministry will continue with the review of syllabi and production of books for the teaching of national traditions and culture, embark on national publicity exercise on traditional laws and practices and empower traditional authorities to enforce responsible cultural and civic behaviour in their respective traditional areas.

1153. Continue with the project to ascertain and codify customary laws relating to land inheritance and ascension to stools and skins.

1154. For the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢9,836,133 has been allocated. Out of this, GOG is GH¢7,803,313, IGF is GH¢1,268,377 and Donor is GH¢764,442.

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND NATIONAL ORIENTATION

1155. Mr Speaker, the Ministry of Information and National Orientation is charged to ensure a free, united, knowledge-based, prosperous society and good governance through strategic communication.

Performance in 2007

- Mr. Speaker, the Ministry in collaboration with other MDAs established a joint committee to facilitate the mainstreaming of Strategic Communication (Development Communication) in all their activities.
- Mr. Speaker, the Peoples' Assembly was organized at Sunyani during which a cross section of Ghanaians interacted with His Excellency, the President and his Ministers. This demonstrated the tenets of good governance through accountability, transparency and participatory democracy. Regional and District Peoples' Assembly were also organised throughout the country.
- Publicity and Education campaigns were undertaken on the re-denomination of the cedi, the Avian Flu, the Domestic Violence Law, the National Health Insurance Scheme, the New Education Reform programme, the Capitation Grant Scheme and the celebration of Ghana @50 to ensure a well informed society.
- Periodic Media interactions were held with major media houses known as "Media Walk" to discuss government policies and programme to enhance information dissemination, and strengthen collaboration between government and the media.

- The National Orientation concept was launched by the Ministry to bring about attitudinal change in Ghanaians by inculcating a sense of nationalism, unity, increased productivity and respect for national assets.

1156. Mr. Speaker, 5 pillars around which the National Orientation revolves are:

- Proud to be Ghanaian.
- Patriotism and Spirit of "Ghana first".
- Positive and a "Can-do-it" Attitude.
- Productivity and Accountability.
- Dedication and Discipline.

1157. Mr Speaker, in collaboration with the Ministry of Communication, 42 Community Information Centres (CICs) were established. Two of these centres at Dodowa and Saltpond in the Dangbe West and Mfantseman West Districts respectively were inaugurated to promote information flow.

Out look for 2008

1158. Mr Speaker, the Ministry will establish a new Public Relations Unit to take care of all Government Spokespersons who will embark on vigorous regional tours, media interaction, radio and television talk shows and intensify outreach programmes on the five National Orientation pillars through the electronic and print media.

1159. Mr. Speaker, the annual Peoples' Assembly will be organised while the weekly meet - the - press will be continued. In addition, the Ministry refurbish film, photo and the exhibition units as well as the CICs and the District Information Offices.

1160. Furthermore three foreign Information Desks will be opened in three strategic regions to promote Ghana and attract Foreign Investment into Ghana.
1161. Mr. Speaker, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) will install a 50 kw transmitter to improve upon its shortwave service and introduce a second channel to be situated in Kumasi for commercialization and public education on government policies and programmes. The Corporation will rehabilitate Radio and TV Studios in Accra and all the Regional stations as part of the retooling project.
1162. Mr. Speaker, to enable the Ministry achieve its objectives an amount of is GH¢47,941,603 has been provided. Out of which GOG is GH¢13,070,454, Donor is GH¢26,036,679, and IGF is GH¢8,834,470.

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CIVIC EDUCATION

1163. Mr Speaker, the main responsibility of the Commission is to educate the populace on their civic rights and responsibilities in order to empower them to participate meaningfully in the development process.

Performance in 2007

1164. Mr Speaker, the Commission produced of animation programmes on civic responsibility on GTV and "START" programme on TV3, organised Constitution Week to remind Ghanaians of their rights and responsibilities and also intensify of the "Project Citizen" in selected schools in Greater Accra Region.

1165. In addition, it developed composite guide for Civic Education in Ghana, established functional Civic Education Clubs in Senior Secondary Schools, educated the public on the harmful effect of using narcotic substances and collaborated with Bank of Ghana to sensitize and educate public on the redenomination of the cedi.

1166. Mr. Speaker, the Commission also organised programmes to increase participation in governance at the local level (Social Auditing), organised peace building and conflict management programmes in conflict prone areas and also acquired commencement for the construction of head office building complex

Outlook for 2008

1167. Mr Speaker, the Commission as part of its mandate, will create constitutional awareness through annual Constitution Week

Celebration, support programmes aimed at promoting civic participation especially the lower structures of governance and collaborate with Ministry of Education/Ghana Education Service to introduce Civic Education in the school curriculum

1168. In addition, the Commission will educate the citizens on the need to actively participate in the 2008 general elections, sensitize the public against the growing practice of instant mob justice and continue the education on HIV/AIDS and Drug Abuse.
1169. Mr. Speaker, to enable the Ministry achieve its objectives an amount of GH¢4,296,526 has been provided.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING COMMISSION

1170. Mr Speaker, the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) was created to advise the President on national development planning policy and strategy; to formulate comprehensive national development planning strategies and ensure that consequential policies and strategies are effectively carried out. The Commission is also responsible for co-ordinating the decentralized national development planning system.

Performance in 2007

1171. Mr Speaker, for the year 2007, the NDPC achieved the following:

Long-Term National Development Plan

- Prepared eight technical reports to provide the background for public consultation processes towards building national consensus on the formulation of a long-term national development plan.
- Engaged Leadership of Parliament and members of the Parliamentary Committees on Finance and Poverty Reduction in a 2-day dialogue on a national long term development vision and emerging strategies for the realisation of the goal of middle-income status.
- Held a series of national consultative dialogues with a cross section of civil society groups and policy makers on the proposed Long-Term National Development Plan to further strategise on the following key components:
 - Modernising agriculture
 - Industrial development towards a middle income status

- Planning and developing Ghana's human settlements towards middle income status
- Promoting appropriate levels and quality of human capital towards middle-income status.

Mainstreaming Gender, Vulnerability and Sustainable Development Principles into Planning

1172. Mr. Speaker, the Commission assisted 138 MMDAs to mainstream the dimensions of gender, vulnerability and sustainable development into their Medium-Term Development Plans and organised a two-day workshop for 94 participants from 24 MDAs to provide additional support for mainstreaming cross-cutting issues including environment and worst forms of child labour.

Evaluation of the GPRS I

1173. Mr. Speaker, to assess the impact of the GPRS I, NDPC initiated a comprehensive evaluation of this Strategy during the year.

Implementation of the GPRS II Development Communication Strategy

1174. Mr. Speaker, a media campaign to promote development dialogue on the GPRS-II was initiated. This included participation in the World Bank funded Development Dialogue Radio Series organised by selected radio stations including Radio Universe and Unique FM.

1175. A simplified version of the GPRS II was also produced and distributed to enhance public understanding of the national development policy framework in order to deepen public participation in its implementation.

Poverty and Social Impact Assessments (PSIAs)

1176. Mr. Speaker, a draft report was prepared on the poverty diagnosis and assessment on the GPRS I (2003-2005).

MDAs Development Programmes

1177. Mr. Speaker, the Commission collaborated with MOFEP to ensure that the financing of development programmes implemented by MDAs are consistent with the national priorities outlined in GPRS-II

Monitoring the Implementation of GPRS II

1178. The 2006 Annual Progress Report (APR) on the implementation of GPRS II was prepared and distributed to stakeholders and the general public at the national, regional and district levels.

1179. District Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines were prepared and 1,780 members of the District and Regional Planning Coordinating Units were trained in the use of the Guidelines to prepare their own District Annual Progress Reports on the implementation of the GPRS II.

1180. Guidelines for the preparation of Sector Monitoring and Evaluation plans were also prepared and disseminated to all MDAs.

Outlook for 2008

1181. Mr. Speaker, the NDPC will continue to perform its central role in coordinating the preparation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, plans and programmes at all levels of governance for

the realization of the goal of accelerated growth and poverty reduction.

1182. Mr. Speaker, key policies to be pursued by the NDPC emanating from the GPRS II include the following:

- Effectively coordinating and promoting ownership of the development process
- Institutionalizing and internalizing policy formulation, plan preparation and M&E at all levels
- Deepening the participatory process in promoting growth and poverty reduction
- Developing and retaining human resource capacity
- Strengthening the research and data base for policy formulation and decision making

1183. Mr. Speaker, priority activities for the implementation of these policies include the following:

- Completing the preparation of a Long Term National Development Plan
- Preparing the 2007 Annual Progress Report on the implementation of GPRS II
- Completing the preparation of a National Spatial Development Policy Framework
- Initiating the preparation of a medium term national development policy framework as a successor to GPRS II
- Implementing the GPRS II Development Communication Strategy
- Preparing policy briefs and reports on emerging national development issues
- Developing and strengthening the human resource capacity of NDPC

- Conducting poverty and social impact assessment (PSIA)
- Conducting GPRS II Citizens Assessment of Public service delivery and
- Supporting the operationalization of GhanaInfo database

1184. Mr. Speaker, to enable the Ministry achieve its objectives an amount of GH¢1,990,551 has been provided.

NATIONAL LABOUR COMMISSION

1185. Mr Speaker, the Commission was established to facilitate settlement of industrial disputes, settle labour disputes, investigate labour related complaints, in particular unfair labour practices and to promote effective labour cooperation between labour and management, among others.

Performance in 2007

1186. Mr Speaker, in 2007, the industrial relations scene was relatively calm as compared to the previous year. There were however a few agitations from some public and private sectors employees. The institutions involved were

- Civil Servants' Association.
- Health Workers' Group
- Customs, Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS)
- Ghana National Association of Teachers.
- Polytechnic Teachers' Association of Ghana (POTAG).
- Management of Red Sea Housing Limited
- Ghana Mineworkers Union

1187. Mr Speaker, the Commission's interventions averted the loss of man-hours, revenue and jobs except in one instance where the appointments of the workers were terminated before the matter was brought to the Commission. This notwithstanding, the Commission is facilitating settlement to ensure that the workers are paid their due compensation.

1188. Mr. Speaker, the Commission recorded 100 per cent settlement of all the cases which were handled through the dispute

settlement mechanism such as mediation, arbitration and voluntary arbitration.

1189. It is significant to note that parties in dispute are now beginning to appreciate the need to dialogue rather than to resort to industrial action.

Outlook for 2008

1190. Mr Speaker, in 2008, the Commission will embark on programmes to promote effective co-operation between labour and management. This will be done through:

- Encouraging "good faith" negotiations to ensure the trust and confidence of the partners in the working relationship.
- Promoting negotiations and mediation as the best tools to resolve industrial misunderstanding.
- Training on negotiation skills for both the public and private sector negotiators, workers union and management
- Sensitizing the social partners to use the collective bargaining process to ensure good governance.
- Educating the partners in the working relationship to respect the rights of both the employer and the employee.
- Organising programmes to educate stakeholders on labour laws.
- Promoting peaceful and harmonious industrial relations environment for national and industrial security.

1191. Mr. Speaker, to enable the Ministry achieve its objectives an amount of GH¢674,582 has been provided.

NATIONAL MEDIA COMMISSION

1192. Mr Speaker, the National Media Commission is a governance institution established by the constitution and charged with the responsibility for creating a balance between free expression and the need for a democratic regulation of the media vis-à-vis the public's right to know; while maintaining national security, public order and the reputations of individual members of society.

Performance for 2007

1193. Mr Speaker, in 2007, the Commission's regulatory role was strengthened to ensure that the media performed in a manner conducive to peace building and national development

1194. In addition, the Commission organised a capacity enhancing programmes to equip the Commissioners with skills to be able to plan its monitoring activities towards the 2008 general election and to update the capacity of the Commission for efficient broadcasting monitoring.

1195. The Commission also instituted measures to clamp down on pornography in the media using its complaints settlement mechanism.

Outlook for 2008

1196. Mr Speaker, the Commission will pursue the following activities:

- Mobilize the media to provide fair and objective political education to the public to enable them make informed choices and also help the electorate to be conversant with

the procedures of voting to ensure free and credible elections.

- Strengthen and expand the monitoring function of the Commission to the regions to continually track the performance of both the electronic and print media in providing political information to the electorate.
- Adopt strategies to re-orient the media to focus on issues that bring Ghanaians together for cohesion and national development.
- Provide a forum for the mediation of election related media disputes and
- Introduce effective sanctions regime against unprofessional media practice.

1197. Mr. Speaker, to enable the Ministry achieve its objectives an amount of GH¢236,091 has been provided.

Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning

1198. Mr. Speaker, in 2007 the Ministry focused on its mandate of ensuring macroeconomic stability and prudent fiscal policy management through the implementation of its Medium Term Strategic Plan. The focal areas were;

- Resource Mobilisation
- Public Expenditure Management
- Aid and Debt Management
- Fiscal Policy Management
- Financial Sector Development

Performance in 2007

Budget Formulation and Implementation

1199. Mr. Speaker, to improve the budget development process, the Ministry commenced the review of the MTEF Handbook and Technical Guide. The preparation of a manual to guide the MDAs and MMDAs to access funds from the budget also commenced. Furthermore, training program on MTEF and commitment control and cash management was organised for some staff of MDAs.

1200. Additionally, to ensure that budget objectives were achieved, the Ministry instituted an internal quarterly review meeting on the national budget implementation.

1201. Mr. Speaker, to ensure that budget of MDAs are guided by the GPRS II policy framework, the Ministry collaborated with NDPC to assist MDAs to formulate comprehensive sector policies and also re-introduced policy hearing meetings as part of the budget process.

1202. Mr. Speaker, as part of Government efforts at speeding up the implementation of the fiscal decentralisation policy to ensure that resources are made available to the local level for development, the ministry in collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government Rural development and Environment issued guidelines for the preparation of the composite budget to MMDAs, trained budget committees of RCCs and District Assemblies in Composite budgeting as well as organised a budget disaggregation workshop for all MDAs to facilitate the process.
1203. To further improve transparency of the budget preparation process, budget information dissemination meetings with staff of RCCs, MMDAs and revenue agencies were organised in all the regional capitals. Also an advert calling for inputs into the 2008 budget was placed in the national dailies early this year. There after a stakeholder's fora for individuals and organisations were organised on their input submissions.

Budget and Public Expenditure Management System

1204. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry continued the implementation of BPEMS by deploying two additional modules (Cash Management and Accounts Receivable) bringing the total modules deployed to 5. This has enhanced financial reporting, budgetary control and reduced transaction processing time.
1205. The award of contract to lay Fibre Optic to connect the remaining Ministries as well as the procurement process for the acquisition and installation of VSAT was completed.

Computerization of Value Books Store

1206. Mr. Speaker, the contract for the implementation of an Inventory Management System for Value Books procurement and stocking has been awarded. It is expected that the full complement of the system will be rolled out effective January 2008.

Capacity Building

1207. Mr. Speaker, as part of the implementation of the recommendations of the Skills and Training Needs Assessment, National Accounting Workshops were organized throughout the country for all MDAs and MMDAs. Manuals to guide the operations of the Financial Monitoring Units of the Controller and Accountant-General's Department have also been developed and are currently in use. Officers in the Monitoring Units have been given the necessary training to enable them perform their functions effectively.

Treasury Re-alignment

1208. The Controller and Accountant General's Department has completed the first phase of the Treasury Reforms. The modalities for the consolidation and expansion of the gains made from the treasury re-alignment and the Sub-Consolidated Funds Bank Account to cover the management of other public funds including Internally Generated Funds (IGF) and Donor Funds have been agreed on and six MDAs have been selected for the pilot programme. The pilot MDAs are Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Sports and Science, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Ministry of Lands, Forestry and Mines, and Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment.

Public Procurement

1209. Mr. Speaker, the Public Procurement Board undertook the retooling of the Public Procurement Model of Excellence (PPME) software to take account of concerns raised during the External Review of Public Financial Management (ERPFM) exercise in May this year. The Board has also undertaken preparatory work for the assessment of 500 Procurement Entities.
1210. Mr. Speaker, the Board organized training programmes for 500 Procurement Entities in the posting of Tender and Contract award notices on the Public Procurement Board Website. The Web-based procurement planning system was also developed and the high spending procurement entities were trained to use the software for their procurement planning.
1211. Mr. Speaker, the Board initiated consultations with the Association of Ghana Industries on the Domestic Content Bill. Thereafter, the Association contracted a consultant to undertake some more research on the GATT/WTO complications. On completion of the exercise, a draft bill will be prepared and submitted to cabinet for consideration.

Non-Tax Revenue Mobilization

1212. Mr. Speaker, to improve Non-Tax Revenue Collection, MDAs Retention of Funds Act 2007, (Act 735) was passed by Parliament in May, 2007. The law granted 12 MDAs legislative approval to retain portions of their IGFs and 20 MDAs approval to generate IGFs.
1213. In addition, the ministry
- Collaborated with the Ministry of National Security to continue operations aimed at curtailing revenue leakages

in a number of MDAs including DVLA, Registrar-General's Department, Births & Deaths Registry, Department of Parks & Gardens, Lands Commission, Forestry Commission and Fisheries. Illegal operators and defaulters arrested are currently being prosecuted.

- Organised revenue projection workshop for 150 participants from seventy-five MDAs to fully institutionalize the preparation of revenue estimates and finalize their 2008 NTR/IGF budget;
- Started the implementation of the National Lotto Act, 2006, (Act 722) with the establishment of the National Lottery Authority and the formation of the Governing Board;
- Concluded the procurement process for the services of some local banks to provide on-site banking services for 14 MDAs in Accra, the regional capitals and selected district capitals.

1214. Mr. Speaker, during the year, the Ministry and the Internal Audit Agency started investigation of the IGFs of 18 MDAs, 4 Metropolitan, 4 Municipal and 2 District Assemblies to engender full disclosure of IGF sources and collections.

Review of Rents for Government Bungalows/Flats

1215. Mr. Speaker, the committee charged with bringing proposals for the review of rents has been set up under the chairmanship of the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing with representation from all major stakeholders.

1216. The committee has requested the Land Valuation Board and Public Works Department (PWD) to provide guidelines on current rental charges of properties in various parts of the country. This

is to enable the committee advice government on the way forward.

External Resource Mobilization

1217. Mr. Speaker, out of a total expected portfolio of US\$1.31 billion for 2007, the Ministry facilitated the mobilization of US\$702.66million comprising both loan and grant funds, as at the end of the third quarter of 2007, to support the implementation of development programmes in the country.
1218. The Ministry deepened its interactions with Development Partners with a view to obtaining incentive tranches of funds contingent upon specified performance benchmarks. Consequently, resources additional to already programmed funds have been secured to increase the total portfolio earmarked for Ghana by some DPs.
1219. Focusing on the aid effectiveness principles outlined in the Paris Declaration, the Ministry facilitated the alignment of aid pledges and commitments to the national priorities through implementation of the actions delineated within the framework of the Ghana Harmonization and Action Plan, with the support of Development Partners.
1220. Action towards the formulation of an External Resource Mobilization Policy continued. The Ministry initiated consultations both at home and abroad, to study best practices and fashion out a preliminary concept note as a basis for further deepening of the process.

Aid and Debt Management

External Debt

1221. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry in collaboration with stakeholders undertook a tripartite Debt Sustainability Analysis (DSA) with the IMF and the World Bank to assess the country's level of debt sustainability including taking on additional debt of US\$750million from the capital market. The findings showed indicators which were within sustainable thresholds.
1222. A workshop was held for stakeholders to review the Loans Act of 1970 to reflect current financial trends. A draft proposal to this effect would be submitted to Parliament for the required regulatory approval.
1223. The Ministry played a significant role in raising the country's debut bond of US\$750 million on the International Capital Market to diversify our sources of funding while raising additional funds to support growth inducing sectors which require huge capital outlays.

Domestic Debt

1224. Mr. Speaker, to ensure integration and comprehensiveness of the public debt information, the Ministry initiated the computerization of domestic debt data into the Commonwealth-Secretariat Debt Recording and Management System (CS-DRMS) 2000+ with support from the Central Securities Depository (CSD) of the Bank of Ghana. Data validation is currently ongoing and it is hoped that full computerisation would be completed by June 2008.

1225. Government issued the 5 year bond as part of its strategy to further lengthen domestic debt profile. This resulted in considerable reduction in interest rates on all securities and for the first time in several years, the 91-Day Treasury bill registered a single digit interest rate. In order to ensure that all Ghanaians are given an opportunity to participate in the development of our country, Government proposed to issue the Golden Jubilee Bond. The Bond is targeted to raise the cedi equivalent of US\$25 million for landmark infrastructure projects. A committee formed to work out modalities for the issuance of the bonds has submitted its report to Government. It is expected that the bond will be issued by the end of 2007.

Fiscal Policy Management

1226. Mr. Speaker, the Tax Policy Unit (TPU) of the Ministry completed work on the shift from ad valorem excise duty rates to specific excise duty rates as contained in the 2007 Budget and Economic Policy Statement of Government. A Bill to effect the change was passed by Parliament at its second sitting and the new Act became operational from September, 2007.

1227. The TPU is currently undertaking a review of the existing exemptions regimes under the various enactments with the view of scaling down the exemption drain on national revenue. The work will also assist in increasing the number of income tax payers in the informal sector and also improve on tax compliance.

1228. Mr. Speaker, during the year, the Economic Policy Coordinating Committee which is co-chaired by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and the Bank of Ghana met regularly to reconcile and evaluate revenue and expenditure performances discussed policy issues implementation strategies for the 2007

budget. Their activities helped to ensure effective cash management and successful implementation of the 2007 budget.

1229. As part of its responsibility to ensure that government's payment obligations to contractors and others who deliver services are promptly effected, the Payment tracking Committee consisting of officers from the Ministry of Finance, the Controller and Accountant-General's Department and the Bank of Ghana held weekly meetings to identify bottlenecks in the government payment cycle and also proposed solutions to them. The Committee also instituted an early warning system to prompt government of her daily financial position and to serve as a guide to the available fiscal space at each moment.
1230. Mr. Speaker, the Ghana Statistical Service continued with its special projects in addition to further strengthening its leadership and coordinating roles in the production and dissemination of relevant and timely statistics for planning, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects.
1231. Mr. Speaker, Project Documents for the 2010 Population and Housing Census have been prepared, whilst other allied activities are ongoing. The Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS-5) main report is to be launched by the end of the year. The Ghana Job Tracking Survey has also been completed and the report launched, whilst data collection for the Ghana Maternal Mortality Survey is ongoing.

Financial Sector Development

1232. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry is in the process of commissioning a survey on the use and demand for financial services in Ghana and to investigate how access to financial services can be extended to the 90 per cent of Ghanaians estimated to be

unbanked. A local research firm has been selected to carry out a nationwide survey with technical assistance from the Ghana Statistical Service and Finmark Trust of South Africa. The headline findings of the survey are expected to be submitted to the Ministry by April 2008.

1233. Mr. Speaker, the Banking Amendment Act 2004 (Act 673) was passed by Parliament in March to include provisions to allow for the operation and regulation of the offshore banking services portion of the International Financial Services Centre. Barclays Bank of Ghana has since been the first to be issued with a license to operate offshore banking services.
1234. Mr. Speaker, on the Remittances Country Partnership Programme a draft document outlining the programme challenges and initial design features will be finalized by the end of December, 2007 paving the way for the detailed design and implementation in 2008.
1235. Procurement processes are also advanced for the selection of a consultancy firm to carry out a feasibility study for the establishment of a commodities exchange.
1236. Mr. Speaker, to address the issue of unclaimed assets, an expert has been recruited to advice on the appropriate legislative and administrative arrangements. The consultant presented his initial report at a stakeholder's forum on 14th September 2007 and is expected to submit a final report by end November 2007.
1237. Mr. Speaker, government identified the use of Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) as a cost effective method for the public sector to collaborate with the private sector to design, finance, build and operate public facilities. Having been charged with the responsibility to develop the framework for the utilization of

PFI, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning has established the Project and Financial Analysis Unit.

1238. Mr. Speaker, Government proposed to establish an Independent Investment Authority to be known as the Ghana Investment Corporation (GIC) to encourage the private sector to participate in the financing of Infrastructure in energy, roads and railway and water sectors.
1239. GIC was also to be tasked to explore the possibility of investing and acquiring shares in international and multinational companies that purchase and process our raw materials such as cocoa and gold and process to enable us hedge against falling commodity prices, though receipts of dividends and capital appreciation of these multinationals.
1240. Mr. Speaker, a Bill providing legal backing for the establishment of the GIC has been drafted and a panel with representatives from public and private institutions has been constituted to review the Bill. The panel includes members of the Capital Markets Committee, representatives of some financial, legal and Governmental institutions. It is expected that the review will be completed and submitted for Cabinet approval and Parliamentary passage by the end of 2007.

Revenue Agencies

Revenue Agencies Governing Board

1241. Mr. Speaker, the Crown Agents completed a diagnostic study for the Revenue Agencies Governing Board with the view of meeting its mandate. A Strategic Planning Committee has been inaugurated and has commenced work to formulate a Strategic

Plan for RAGB. The plan is expected to be completed in 2008 for implementation in 2009.

Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

1242. Mr. Speaker, Officers of the Internal Revenue Service are being trained in computer skills as part of the business process re engineering. The Quality Assurance and Compliance Unit has been assigned the responsibility of monitoring the 5 per cent withholding tax to draw in non compliance tax payers to maximize collection.
1243. Mr. Speaker, several workshops were held countrywide for the general public and identifiable groups on the rights and responsibilities of taxpayers. A taskforce was set up to bring to book tax avoiders. The GCNet Unit in the Research Division was made operational in the year under review and is providing information to district offices and tax audit unit for follow-up actions.
1244. Mr. Speaker, Interns have been engaged under the National Youth Employment Scheme and the National Service Scheme to monitor the process of administering the Rent Tax and Tax Stamp in all districts. A Transaction Advisor has also been appointed to commence full computerisation of IRS operations and has indeed commenced work. The consultant's inception report has been submitted to the Ministry. A needs analysis is currently underway to facilitate the completion of the programme and subsequent roll out to other offices.

Customs Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS)

1245. Mr. Speaker, as part of the measures to introduce an Electronic Transactions Price Database for easy reference to ensure that

correct values are assigned to commodities, a CEPS Valuation office has been created at the Head Office.

1246. Verification of customs clearance status of vehicles is in operation at DVLA offices in Accra, Tema, Koforidua, Cape-Coast, Kumasi and Takoradi. Offices without Ghana Customs Management System (GCMS) connectivity obtain confirmation from the nearest office with access. Tamale and Bolgatanga are to be connected to GCMS by December 2007.
1247. A vehicle valuation database in GCMS has been created and tested by GCNet to facilitate the verification for duty and tax purposes. Training of staff on the module is ongoing. Capacity building programmes in all areas of CEPS operation (e.g. risk management, post clearance, valuation, procurement etc) have been initiated and are ongoing.
1248. Mr Speaker, the GFZB, GIPC, MINCOM, GSB, FDB, EPA, IRS, TOR, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and VAT have been connected to CEPS (GCMS) via GCNet as part CEPS's programmes to deepen automation of the processing procedures. The Registrar General's Department, Accountant-General's Department, Statistical Service and National Security have also been connected for information purposes only.

Value Added Tax (VAT)

1249. Mr. Speaker, the test purchases and physical surveillance of VAT businesses have been stepped up to complement the invoice invigilation and to improve compliance. The exercise is ongoing and has been extended to all the regions. Non-compliant businesses have been assessed and penalties have been imposed where necessary. Relevant VAT liabilities have been

collected or the necessary arrangements have been made for full compliance with liquidating liabilities.

1250. Mr. Speaker, the concept of enhancing existing retail schemes and own-invoice dispensations through the use of electronic cash register has been accepted by RAGB. This is to ensure that full advantage is taken of the control mechanisms inherent in these technologies to boost SMEs compliance with the VAT law and thereby enhance revenue. Arrangements are being made to pilot the project at the Local VAT Offices, the success of which would determine commitment to full deployment.

Outlook for 2008

1251. Mr Speaker, the Ministry will continue to pursue policies and programmes that will foster economic growth with stability for the promotion of sustainable development of Ghana and her people. In this regard, the Ministry will focus on the following;

Formulate and Implement Sound Macroeconomic Policies

1252. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will develop a Macroeconomic Model on Revenue Forecasting. It will also undertake Policy Based Research by conducting Impact Analysis of Government Policies and Public Expenditure Surveys to ensure the realisation of government's policy objectives. In addition the Ministry will continue to monitor and evaluate the impact of fiscal policy on sectoral performance of MDAs and MMDAs to ensure that the budgetary allocations are utilized to fund activities that lead to the achievement of sectoral objectives.
1253. Mr. Speaker, the Ghana Statistical Service will also continue with its special projects in addition to further strengthening its leadership and coordinating roles in the production and

dissemination of relevant and timely statistics for planning, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects.

1254. Mr. Speaker, the Service will further strengthen its capacity to produce policy oriented statistics and indicators by recruiting economic statistics advisors and experts and organizing training programmes for stakeholders. These measures will enable the Service conduct a census of Wholesale and Retail Trade, Develop Quarterly National Accounts, reintroduce the Quarterly Survey on Employment and Earnings and implement a Labour Force Survey. Enumeration Area Delineation for the 2010 Population and Housing Census will also begin in 2008. The Service will further undertake various programmes to monitor efforts at the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Fiscal Resource Mobilisation

Domestic Resource Mobilisation

1255. Mr. Speaker, Domestic Resource Mobilisation is key to the development of Ghana. In furtherance of the objective, a number of measures and activities will be undertaken in collaboration with the Revenue Agencies:

Revenue Agencies Governing Board (RAGB)

1256. Mr. Speaker, the Revenue Agencies Governing Board (RAGB) will expand the ongoing special tax audits of companies to cover Medium and Small Scale businesses in the informal sector to accelerate revenue generation. The Board will put in place publicity enhancement measures and centralise tax education of the public.

Customs, Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS)

1257. Mr. Speaker, the Customs, Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS) will set up transit monitoring units to prevent diversion of goods while resourcing the Preventive Department to become more effective in combating smuggling activities. The Service will also re-equip the Communications Department and the various laboratory offices at KIA and other stations.

Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

1258. Mr. Speaker, the Service will pursue the computerisation programme, broaden the tax base with the introduction of the Income Tax Verification stickers for owners of vehicles, expand further access to the GCNet, carry out analysis, share information gathered to enhance public relations and tax education.

Value Added Tax Service (VATS)

1259. Mr. Speaker, to improve domestic revenue, the Service will register and also facilitate trader/public education particularly on the VAT Flat Rate Scheme to enhance its effective and efficient implementation. The Service will also upgrade the VAT Information Processing System (VIPS), improve the general ICT environment as well as the implementation of the VAT Clearance Certificate (VCC) and the Cash Register Initiative.

Non Tax Revenue

1260. Mr. Speaker, Non Tax Revenue collection is projected at GH¢430.2 million out of which an amount of GH¢124.8 million will be lodged into the consolidated fund whilst GH¢305.4 million

is expected to be retained. To achieve the targets set, the following measures and activities would be implemented;

- Use retained IGFs to leverage funding for selected MDAs to improve their logistics, equipment and infrastructure base for the generation of revenue. These include PWD, Veterinary Services Directorate, Ghana Tourist Board, Ghana Immigration Services, Registrar General's Department and the Public Records and Archives Administration Department.
- Expand the monitoring of NTR collection points to include regular test purchases, examination of accounting records in collaboration with CAGD/Audit Service.
- Extend the on-site banking concept to cover all MDAs
- Work with MDAs to implement the provision of the Ministries, Departments and Agencies Retention of Funds Act, 2007, (Act 735) as it relates to the utilization of retained IGFs.
- Parliamentary approval will be sought for more MDAs to retain various percentages of their IGFs to make more funds available to MDAs for the implementation of revenue enhancement activities.
- The Ministry of Water Resources, Works & Housing and all MDAs who have acquired their residential units, would be required to carry out an audit with the view of ensuring that all beneficiaries of Government bungalows who are required to pay rent are doing so, and also retrieve all unpaid rents to the state. This measure is to maximize rents received from the occupancy of Government bungalows/flats.
- The Ministry will work with DIC/CAGD/ SEC to improve the management and oversight of Government equity investments in accordance with the FAA /FAR;

- Facilitate the provision of logistics/technical support for the improvement of revenue mobilization by the MMDAs in collaboration with Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment.

1261. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will facilitate MDA specific revenue enhancement interventions for the following MDAS:

- DVLA/Land Title Registry – extension of working hours
- Department of Parks & Gardens – To assume the role as regulator to regulate private horticultural companies.
- Ministry of Water Resource, Works & Housing – Registration of Tradesmen including masons, carpenters, plumbers, tile layers etc; leverage funding for rehabilitation of UNDP flats
- Ministry of Interior – to license / regulate rubber stamp producers

Administrative Control Measures on Exemption

1262. Mr. Speaker, in accordance with the government's intention to review the exemption regime as a whole to reduce the scope and eliminate abuses, the Ministry will explore for implementation the following administrative measures;

- Review of the exemption regime applicable to certain categories of beneficiaries
- Introduction of the Treasury Voucher system under which duties and taxes are paid on importation with vouchers issued by the government
- Introduction of a computer application for the management and monitoring of approved list of goods permitted for importation under exempt status by organizations and privileged persons.

- Configure the GCNet/GCMS to monitor, and regularize on line the imports that are in excess of the authorized quantities or values and control the deadlines for the execution of projects.

1263. Mr. Speaker, to achieve an effective monitoring and control surveillance of exemptions, an Exemption Monitoring and Control Unit will be established to co-ordinate exemptions between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, the Customs Excise and Preventive Service and Revenue Agencies Governing Board.

Streamlining Tax Exemptions on Ambulances

1264. Mr. Speaker, it has been observed that the purpose for which exemptions are granted for the importation of vehicles is being abused. In some instances, importers either convert these vehicles into vans and passenger buses or use them to convey dead bodies and charge commercial rates thus denying the public the use of these vehicles for the purposes for which they were tax exempted. To ensure this facility will be beneficial to the needing public, only recognised hospitals, clinics and registered ambulance service companies will be exempted from the payment of duties. The existing legislation will be amended to take care of this policy in 2008.

External Resource Mobilisation

1265. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will pursue its quest to secure more grants and concessional loans to support Government's development programme. To this end, the Ministry expects to mobilize an amount of US\$2.00 billion in the form of loans and grants from the country's Development Partners and also ensure

expeditious utilisation of all aid with a view to accelerating growth.

1266. Mr. Speaker, in furtherance of the aid effectiveness agenda, Ghana will play host to the 3rd High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, which is scheduled to take place in Accra from 2nd – 4th September, 2008. Furthermore, Ghana will host the 6th ACP Council of Ministers Meeting in Mid October 2008.

1267. The Ministry will conclude internal consultations to fashion out an appropriate framework to guide the development of an Aid Policy for Ghana, initiate sector- wide discussions with MDAs and DPs on the framework; and develop a draft Aid Policy for further consultations. Also, the Ministry in collaboration with the Development Partners will develop a compendium of donor policies, procedures and practices to guide all Ministries, Department and Agencies.

Human Resources and Institutional Management Capacity

1268. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning will continue to place capacity building at the centre of improving the Public Finance Management Function.

1269. To improve payroll processing the Ministry will procure and install servers for the subvented agencies. IPPD 2 will be deployed in all MDAs in Accra and 50 per cent of subvented agencies. In 2008, the Controller and Accountant General's Department will begin the decentralisation of IPPD with the creation of Regional Data Collection Centres to enable all MDAs and MMDAs at the Regional levels directly key in their data which will be linked up to the central payroll.

1270. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will organise training programmes for its staff as well as staff of its agencies and improve the working environment to enable the Ministry carry out its Public Finance Management Function efficiently and effectively.

Public Expenditure Management

1271. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will continue the process of improving the budget process by carrying out programmes that will further enhance the credibility, predictability and transparency of the national budget.

1272. To achieve the above objective, the Ministry will amongst others organise an Inter-governmental Forum to discuss the financial implications of government policies, prepare and implement Composite Budget in all MMDAs in furtherance of the Fiscal Decentralisation Programme. Additionally, the Ministry will implement Commitment Control and Cash Plans in all MDAs, Carry out Treasury and Expenditure Tracking and Analysis and Deploy BPEMS to all MDAs in Accra, the 10 Regional Capitals, and 15 MMDAs.

1273. Mr. Speaker, the second phase of the Treasury Reforms will be undertaken during 2008 with the introduction of a computerized bank transfer system at all Regional Treasuries as a way of minimizing the issuing of cheques and facilitating bank reconciliations. The Ministry will further collate information on IGF and Donor Funds using the Treasury system for incorporation in the Public Account.

1274. Mr. Speaker, the Public Procurement Board will continue with its programmes in the areas of Assessment of Procurement Entities to ensure compliance with provisions in the Public Procurement

Act, 2003 (Act 663) as well as build procurement capacity in the public service.

1275. The Board will also develop a price database for common user items for use in the country to provide a basis for value for money analysis. The concept of Framework Agreements in the Public Sector will be introduced on a pilot basis.

Debt Management

1276. Mr. Speaker, the venture into the international capital market poses a new challenge for debt management. The Ministry therefore intends to engage various measures to ensure continued debt sustainability and long-term access to the international capital market. In the area of External Debt the following activities will be undertaken;

- Maintain a healthy mix of both concessional (minimum grant element of 35 per cent) and non concessional loan financing in line with our new financing strategies.
- Step-up efforts at mobilising more programme type aid and seeking more grants to finance poverty reduction and growth enhancing activities.
- Maintain up-to-date information on contingent liabilities, in the quest to ensure comprehensiveness of the public debt and collaborate with Bank of Ghana to improve data on non guaranteed private sector debt.
- Publish the updated compendium of donor policies to serve as a reference point for information regarding policies of Development Partners. This is especially necessary after three years of MDDBS implementation.
- Enhance better capacity in middle office functions to identify and manage the trade-offs between expected costs and risks in the government debt portfolio.

- Publish a medium term debt strategy which will be updated annually.
- Facilitate the amendment of the loans Act of 1970 by Parliament which seeks to streamline and simplify procedures in the handling of public debt and to reflect changes in debt management operating and technological environment.

1277. Mr. Speaker, with respect to Domestic Debt the following activities will be carried out in 2008:

- Establish a regular, systematic issuance calendar which takes into consideration redemption payments as well as the net borrowing requirements of government.
- Establish a primary dealers system to encourage competition and trading in government securities in order to boost secondary market activity.
- Continue to build the capacity of the Treasury Management Committee (TMC) to improve the forecasting and managing of the Public Sector Borrowing Requirements (PSBR) of Government.
- Continue the process of lengthening the domestic debt profile through the issuance of longer maturity debt instruments.

Financial Sector

1278. Mr Speaker, to strengthen the Financial Sector a number of measures will be implemented under the ongoing Economic Management Capacity Building - Financial Sector Reform Project as follows:

- Trading on the Ghana Stock Exchange will be fully automated in 2008 as part of measures to deepen the capital market.
- An appropriate regulatory framework for the facilitation and regulation of over the counter or unlisted securities market will also be developed to make the capital market accessible for SMEs.
- Feasibility studies for the establishment of a Commodities Exchange will be completed.

1279. Mr. Speaker, in order to improve the legal framework in which the financial sector operates the following financial sector bills have been slated for promulgation into law in 2008:

- Lenders and Borrowers Bill
- Non –Banking Financial Institutions Bill
- Municipal Finance Authority Bill
- Bills and Cheques Bill

1280. Mr. Speaker, a feasibility study being conducted to draw up a detailed implementation programme for the Non–Bank Financial Sector under the International Financial Services Centre Programme is expected to be completed by October, 2008.

1281. Furthermore, the First Annual Financial Literacy Week to be coordinated by the Ministry in collaboration with financial Institutions and Industry stakeholders will be launched in the first quarter of 2008. The objective is to enhance customer understanding and awareness of the range of financial products and services available in Ghana’s financial sector.

1282. Mr. Speaker, for the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢90,574,171 has been allocated. Out of this, GoG is GH¢45,325,616, IGF is GH¢1,182,390, Donor is GH¢38,766,166 and HIPC is GH¢5,300,000.

OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT MACHINERY

1283. Mr. Speaker, the Office of Government Machinery consists of agencies whose functions are central to government business. The Agencies include the following

- National Identification Authority
- Public Utility Regulation Commission
- Ghana Investment Promotion Centre
- National Population Council
- Office of the Head of Civil Service
- Millennium Development Authority

Performance in 2007

NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION AUTHORITY

1284. Mr. Speaker, the National Identification Authority accomplished the following in the year under review.

- Completed a strategy document on mass registration. It outlines in detail the planned activities of the NIA during the implementation period of the mass registration exercise.
- Designed the Registration Official's Manual to serve as a reference document for registration officers.
- Designed registration Application Form to capture personal information of applicants during the registration period to cater for resident and non resident Ghanaians, and permanent resident non-Ghanaians.
- Identified and compiled a list of the registration centres that will be used during the registration exercise. Most of

the Centres will be the same as the Electoral Commission's twenty-one thousand Polling Stations.

- Submitted the NIA draft Bill on Data Capture and Protection of Personal Information reviewed and approved by Cabinet to Parliament.
- Continued with its field visits and conducted orientation programmes in the month of April for the Temporary Returning Officers across the country.
- Conducted a Pilot Registration Exercise in partnership with SAGEM to assess the suitability and adaptability of the registration equipment (MRW), the adequacy of materials, personnel as well as the entire registration process developed for the mass registration exercise
- The inspection of Registration Centres is on-going with special emphasis on inaccessible and riverine areas where deployment of logistics and the registration activities are likely to pose major challenges. The selection and recruitment of field personnel is on going.

Outlook for 2008

1285. Mr. Speaker, the National Identification Authority will undertake a Mass Registration Exercise. The successful execution of the exercise however depends on the implementation of certain infrastructure and the availability of the required inputs. Some of the key activities which the NIA is supposed to do to facilitate the successful implementation of the NIS include the following:

- Organise training of all Trainers and Field Personnel (Registration Officials and MRW Operators) and inspect training venues.
- Conduct orientation programme for National Service Personnel to be used in the exercise.

- Continue the selection and recruitment of field personnel.
- Deploy Registration Mobile Workstations to regions of registration exercise.
- Create public awareness and organise educational campaigns.
- Strengthen the Institutional Capacity of the National Identification Authority
- Continue the construction of the Data Centre.
- Acquire Logistics Depots in all the ten Regional Centres.
- Procure office equipment

NATIONAL POPULATION COUNCIL (NPC)

1286. Mr. Speaker, the NPC is set up to advise Government on population and related issues to ensure that population issues remain central to development planning through effective co-ordination of Population Policy and programmes, advocacy and networking and the integration of population variables into development programming at all levels.

Performance in 2007

1287. Mr. Speaker, the Council undertook the following activities during the period under review.

- Organised Regional Population Advisory Committee (RPAC) to discuss region-specific issues on migration, labour and adolescent reproductive health issues.
- Coordinated GOG/UNFPA 5th Country Programme (CP5) and undertook a review of the implementation of project activities.
- Undertook monitoring trips to all the ten regions to provide technical support to Regional Offices and also interacted with partner organizations.

- Prepared and submitted the NPC Newsletter "Population Platform" to the printer for publication. Furthermore preparation of Fact Sheet VI on "Urbanization" has commenced and will be completed before the end of the year.
- Celebrated the World Population Day at Savelugu in the Savelugu/Nanton District of the Northern Region on the theme "Men as partners in Reproductive Health: The Ghana @ 50 Experience"
- Organized a two-week Training Programme on integration of population into development planning for District Planning and Budget officers from the Volta, Central and Western Regions in collaboration with KNUST and the UNFPA
- Established task force to facilitate the integration of HIV/AIDS and Sexual and Reproductive Health. A proposal on the Integration of HIV/AIDS and SRH have been prepared with in-puts from key stakeholders and submitted to the Ghana AIDS Commission for support
- Conducted in-depth assessment of ten years of implementation of the National Population Policy (Revised Edition, 1994) to establish whether targets set in the Population Policy have been achieved.
- Organized a training of trainers for leaders of youth groups in adolescent sexual and reproductive health in all the ten regions.
- Prepared a concept paper on various aspects of urbanization to facilitate the hosting of a Forum on Urbanization.
- Conducted a review of selected Districts Plans to ascertain the extent to which population variables have been integrated into these plans in collaboration with NDPC.

- Participated in the General Assembly of the APC held in South Africa under the theme "Implication of the State of Africa's Population".

Outlook for 2008

1288. NPC will undertake the following activities:

- Build a strong population information network.
- Submit proposals to Ghana AIDS Commission to mobilize more resources for continuation of MSHAP activities.
- Source for funding from Development partners to conduct research into the linkages of population, tourism and the spread of HIV/AIDS.
- Train District Planning and Budget Officers in the integration modules.
- Publish Fact Sheets on Housing and Changing Age Structure.
- Publish NPC Newsletter on Population Platform.
- Co-ordinate the entire 5th Country Programme.
- Undertake monitoring visits to the regions and districts to monitor implementation of 5th Country Programme and the population management component of the GPRS II.
- Celebrate 2008 World Population Day.
- Organise population forum on the contribution of ICPD-PoA in the realization of the MDGs.
- Participate in UN and Africa Population Commission meetings
- Organise advocacy seminar for parliamentarians on the changing age structure.
- Train NPC staff in administration and management, selected computer software and population studies (M.A.)

GHANA INVESTMENT PROMOTION CENTRE (GIPC)

1289. The Ghana Investment Promotion Centre exists to promote and facilitate both domestic and foreign investment in the various sectors of the economy.

Performance in 2007

1290. Mr. Speaker, the Centre intensified measures to generate more income to support government financing of the Centre by raising fees charged.

1291. Established an inter-agency monitoring team to ensure that all enterprises with foreign participation operating in the country complied with the regulations in the GIPC Act 478 of 1994. This special exercise which started in Accra has resulted in some of these companies meeting the minimum requirements of the law.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

1292. The centre has registered a total of 211 projects with an estimated total investment outlay of US\$485.33 million. This indicates an appreciable increase in the number of projects as compared to the same period over the last five years with a greater number of the projects originating from China and Indian. Other countries include the UK, Lebanon, Germany, USA, South Africa, Korea, La Cote d'Ivoire, Benin, the Netherlands, Austria, Bahrain, Sweden and Cyprus.

Wholly Ghanaian Owned Companies

1293. During the period under review, the Centre registered all wholly Ghanaian owned companies to establish a credible database of 100 per cent Ghanaian owned companies, the sectors in which they operate level of employment and other details. In all

nineteen new wholly Ghanaian owned companies were registered with seven in the manufacturing sector, five in General Trading, one in Tourism, three in the Services Industry, one in Export Trading and the remaining two in Agriculture.

Conferences and Seminars

1294. The Centre participated in UNCTAD Expert Meeting on comparing best practices for creating an environment conducive to maximizing development benefits, economic growth and investment in Developing Countries.

IPPA Negotiations

1295. A Ghanaian delegation visited Barbados at the end of August 2007 to negotiate and initial the Agreements on Double Taxation and Investment Protection with the Government of Barbados. In addition, the 2nd round of negotiations with the Czech Republic took place at the Centre in October.

The Ghana Investment Forum

1296. Mr. Speaker, as part of the Golden Jubilee celebration, the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre in collaboration with other stakeholders organised the Ghana Investment Forum under the theme "Ghana- Africa's Golden Gateway" in May. The forum focused on Financial Services, Agriculture, Industry, Information Communications Technology, Tourism, Public Private Partnerships and Minerals Processing and brought together one hundred and twenty local and forty-four foreign participants as well as representations from all the Ministries, the Embassies and some development partners.

1297. In all, thirty-two projects were screened and prepared for joint ventures out of which sixteen were matched during the Forum while enquiries have been made on the others.

Inward Investment Missions

1298. The Centre hosted a total of twenty-six delegations from various countries with a view to exploring trade and investment opportunities. The countries included Italy, China, the Netherlands, USA, South Africa, India, France, Lebanon, Sweden, Germany, Israel, Malaysia, South Korea, Turkey, U.K. and Denmark.

Outlook for 2008

1299. Mr. Speaker, during the year ahead, the Centre will implement its new business plan in conjunction with other relevant government agencies. The main focus of the plan will be to “contribute pro-actively to retaining and attracting investment as the basis for Ghana’s Golden Age of Business”

1300. Mr. Speaker, the implementation of the new business strategy will facilitate an increase in investments from GH¢880 million in 2007 to GH¢1.8 billion by the end of 2008.

1301. The broad areas of implementation will be the consolidation of the reorganisation of the Centre, improving the marketing strategies, sector specific promotion, lead/investment generation, investment servicing, monitoring and improved advocacy.

1302. Mr. Speaker, on the in country investment promotion, the Centre will establish regional offices in Kumasi and Tamale to improve

its outreach programmes aimed at addressing concerns of the investors.

1303. Sector specific targeted investment promotions missions will also be undertaken to follow up on identified investors as well as open at least one international office to help facilitate investments into the country.

1304. Mr. Speaker, other specific activities to be undertaken during the year will include:

- Conducting perception surveys and stakeholders meetings towards improved advocacy and image building
- Promoting Local investment
- Facilitating the passage of the revised GIPC law
- Review and production of promotional materials, including the video.
- Participation in Conferences/fairs, and workshops eg.(hosting WAIPA, and the World Investment Forum during the UNCTAD meeting)
- Registration and facilitation of Investment.

GHANA AIDS COMMISSION (GAC)

1305. Mr. Speaker, the Ghana Aids Commission continued with the implementation of the National Strategic Framework 2006-2010 (NSF II) and the accompanying Programme of Work (POW) which focused on the following thematic areas:

- Policy, Advocacy and Enabling Environment
- Coordination and Management of Decentralised Response
- Mitigating the Economic, Socio-Cultural Impact, Prevention and Behavioural Change Communication
- Treatment, Care and Support

- Research, Surveillance, Monitoring and Evaluation

Performance in 2007

1306. Mr. Speaker, the Commission undertook the following activities geared towards the achievement of the set objectives as contained in the 2007 Annual Programme of Work.

- Supported National Stigma and Discrimination Campaign including mass communication efforts on TV, Print and Radio.
- Organised and held World AIDS Day activities at National and regional levels including organisation, print, radio and TV announcements
- Monitored programme activities at District, Municipal, Metropolitan and Regional levels.
- Organised Pre-proposal, Financial Management and Technical Capacity Building Workshops for key stakeholders.
- Supported the implementation of the Lagos-Abidjan Corridor Project
- Supported PLWHA and undertook Sensitisation activities.

Outlook for 2008

1307. Mr. Speaker, the GAC 2008 Programme of Work will focus on intervention activities that will bring about behaviour change and also achieve a stabilized situation. The focus for the year will, therefore, be on prevention and control as well as upscale of treatment and care.

1308. The priority areas will include:-

- Providing greater support for PLWHA in the national response
- Enhancing interventions to reduce stigma and discrimination against PLWHAs
- Continuing with acceleration of treatment, care and support services for PLWHAs
- Strengthening decentralization, monitoring and evaluation of the national response
- Giving higher attention to districts with high prevalence rates
- Focusing more on the vulnerable and high at risk groups e.g. security agencies, uniformed services

OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF THE CIVIL SERVICE

Performance for 2007

1309. Mr Speaker, the Office of the Head of the Civil Service organised four meetings for Chief Directors and Regional Coordinating Directors as well as Civil Service Council Meetings and Activities. Other activities implemented during the year under review include the following:

- Organised three consultative meetings for Civil Society and the Media on reforms in the Civil Service.
- Participated in six overseas training seminars and conferences including two conferences on Performance Management and service delivery initiative.
- Received, analyzed and submitted feedback on 108 MDAs Annual Reports.
- Developed and distributed Annual Performance Report of the Civil Service to all MDAs.

- Reviewed and validated Performance Agreement Document for Chief Directors.
- Organised a Sensitization workshop to review and update existing complaints and grievances procedures.

Outlook for 2008

1310. Mr. Speaker, activities outlined to be undertaken by the Service in 2008 include the following:

- Organize Civil Service Awards Day and stakeholders meeting.
- Undertake six Chief Directors/Regional Coordinating Directors meeting and Civil Service Council meetings and activities quarterly.
- Organize 10 Regional Performance Review monitoring workshops.
- Evaluate the performance of Chief Directors/Regional Coordinators and develop Performance Agreement and Staff Appraisal formats as well as review and validate performance of Civil Servants.
- Organize Consultation meetings with Development partners and Civil Society Organization on Civil Service Reforms.
- Organize three sensitization meetings with MDAs on Decentralization as well as two Validation Workshops on Draft HIV/AIDS Policy for the Civil Servants.
- Conduct entrance examination and interviews for 100 newly recruited Administration Officers in the Civil Service.
- Organize two Efficiency Training Courses for OHCS Administration Class Officers, Executive Class Officers and Secretarial Class Officers

- Facilitate three training programs for Human Resource Practitioners in the Civil Service in collaboration with JICA.

INTERNAL AUDIT AGENCY (IAA)

Performance for 2007

1311. Mr. Speaker, the objective of the Internal Audit Agency is to coordinate, facilitate and provide quality assurance for internal audit activities within the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs). The following activities were undertaken:

- The Internal Audit Regulations for effective implementation of the Internal Audit Agency Act, 2003 (Act 658) was forwarded to the Attorney-Generals Department for Parliamentary Approval.
- The Agency reviewed and provided feedback on quarterly Internal Audit Reports from the Internal Audit Units (IAUs) of the MDAs and MMDAs. It also monitored the formation and activities of the Audit Report Implementation Committees (ARICs) of the MDAs and MMDAs.
- Special Audit Assignments on Confirmation of Bank Account Balances of MDAs and MMDAs, Monitoring of Procurement Compliance and the facilitation of the Audit of Internally Generated Funds (IGFs) of 28 public institutions including 10 MMDAs. The Agency also started Information Systems (IS) audit of some key Government IS installations.
- As part of the Internal Audit Agency's mandate to improve the capacity of staff of the Internal Audit Units (IAUs), 17 training programmes were organized for 624 Internal Audit staff from 77 MDAs and 7 MMDAs. As a follow up

on the training programmes, On-Site Support to 14 MDAs and 4 MMDAs to assist the trained Internal Auditors to translate the knowledge and techniques acquired at the training programmes were carried out.

Outlook for 2008

1312. Mr. Speaker, the following activities will be undertaken:

- Continue to provide training and capacity development to the Internal Auditors of the MDAs and MMDAs
- Develop manual for the On-Site Support Programme and offer on-site support to Internal Auditors in MDAs and MMDAs to enhance their performance.
- Continue to ensure quality in the work provided by Internal Auditors of the MDAs and MMDAs through the on-site inspections and monitoring of their submissions of Internal Audit Reports and the implementation of their recommendations.
- Conduct Internal Audit Reviews with emphasis on the Revenue Agencies to ensure that recommendations are implemented.
- Build the capacity of some MDAs and MMDAs in Information Systems Audit and the Monitoring of Fraud cases in the Public Sector.

PENSION REFORM IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

Pension Reforms

1313. Mr. Speaker, the Pension Reform Implementation Committee (PRIC) commenced work in November, 2006. As part of the Implementation Plan, the PRIC has established five (5) Sub-Committees based on strategic stakeholders interests and

expertise to advise the Main Committee on specific areas in the Government White Paper.

Performance in 2007

1314. Mr. Speaker, the Committee undertook the following activities during the period under review:

- Organised a sensitisation and public education for stakeholders on new pension system and pension reforms.
- Developed a National Pension Reform Bill and Basic National Social Security Bill, for submission to cabinet. It is expected that the two Bills will be passed into laws by the end of 2007.
- Organised workshops as part of the process to develop the bills for major stakeholders and their general acceptance.
- Facilitated Cap 30 pension payments.

Outlook for 2008

1315. Mr. Speaker, the Commission will undertake the following activities:

- Public Education and Training on new pension laws
- Facilitating the implementation of the new law, in particular the second and third tier privately-managed schemes.
- Orientation for MDAs and other statutory bodies on their role in new pension reform
- Establishing the administrative structures of the National Pensions Regulatory Authority.

- Completing the restructuring of Cap 30 scheme, including decentralization of Cap 30 management and codification of administrative instructions, judicial rulings, etc.
- Continuing the supervision of the restructuring of SSNIT
- Completing actuarial work on the pension reforms, actuarial costing of proposed reforms to SSNIT in particular, lump sum benefits for workers aged 55 years and above (to be exempted from the new scheme) and past credits for workers aged below 55 years.
- Completing reviews and advise Government on the necessary action to take on the following:
 - The Ghana Universities Staff Superannuation Scheme;
 - The Ghana Armed Forces Pension Scheme;
 - Pension Increase policy for Cap 30 scheme; and
 - Headcount of public sector employees.
- Education and promotion of special schemes for the Informal Sector under the 3rd tier of the new pension system

DIVESTITURE IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE (DIC)

1316. Mr. Speaker, the Divestiture Implementation Committee is the government agency mandated to carry out the implementation and execution of Government of Ghana's divestiture programme.

Performance in 2007

1317. Mr. Speaker, the DIC set out to complete the divestiture of some eighteen companies including the sale of GOG shares in five Joint Venture Companies and another five large State Owned Enterprises. The companies involved are as follows:

- GIHOC Meat Products - Tema

- GNTC Dept Store Building - Takoradi
- GNTC Property - Dunkwa –on Offin
- GNTC Property – Agona Swedru
- Ghana Consolidated Diamonds
- Western Veneer & Lumber Co
- SCC Yard 2 – Koforidua
- SCC Yard - Bolgatanga

1318. It is planned to off-load Government shares in the following Joint Venture Organisations:

- PSC Tema Shipyard
- Ghana Textiles
- Ghana Agro Foods Co
- Twifo Oil Palm Plantations
- Ghana Oil Palm Development Co

Outlook for 2008

1319. Mr. Speaker, in the year 2008 the DIC will continue and complete the process of divestiture of the remaining companies.

PUBLIC RECORDS AND ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT (PRAAD)

1320. Mr. Speaker, PRAAD exists to preserving Ghana’s collective memory by facilitating and overseeing effective records management in Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs)

Performance in 2007

1321. In pursuit of this objective, the department trained records staff of selected MDAs in the management of current records and processed semi current records for custody in the National Records Centre, decongested records offices of semi current

records in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and transferred 120 boxes to the National Records Centre.

1322. Completed work at the Public Services Commission to overhaul its records system and transferred 100 boxes to the Records Centre and commenced the installation of new records system at the Ministry of Aviation.
1323. Mr. Speaker, PRAAD also organized a review workshop at its head quarters for all professional and sub professional staff in the Principal and Chief Records Officer Grades, commenced the review and installation of new Manual and Electronic records system at OHCS. A total of 179 boxes of semi-current records from the Secretariat of the former Head of Service, Civil Service Council, Personnel Processing Section and Records Office, have been processed and transferred to the Records Centre at PRAAD and repaired and rehabilitated documents for Ghana @ 50 exhibitions

Outlook for 2008

1324. Mr. Speaker, PRAAD will continue the sensitisation of all staff, management and politicians on their role in records management principles and processes and build capacity in Electronic Records System within PRAAD and OHCS
1325. In addition, the Department will develop the following:
- Strengthened legislative framework to address electronic records issues
 - Desk procedures and guidelines for the use of action officers creating and using electronic records

- Model Regional Records Centres along the line of the National one for effective decongestion of records offices in the regions.

Millennium Development Authority (MiDA)

1326. Mr. Speaker, the core objective of the Millennium Development Authority (MiDA) is to implement the integrated programme under the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) compact, signed between the US Government and Ghana Government in August 2006. It is expected that the MCA programme will contribute to the reduction of poverty through the transformation and modernization of Agriculture. The programme seeks to

- enhance the competitiveness of high value cash and food crops in local and international markets; and
- increase the production and productivity of high value cash and food crops in intervention zones in Ghana

Performance in 2007

1327. Mr. Speaker, the Authority established Offices and recruited all Key Staff, organised consultative seminars and workshops for Stakeholders and prepared detailed Financial Plans and Rolling Quarterly Budgets.

1328. The Authority also developed 14 Work and Audit Plans covering all project activities, prepared governing Legal Agreements covering Bank, Procurement, Disbursement and other Implementation Plans as well as developed Implementing Entity Agreements (IEA) with various government MDAs.

Outlook for 2008

1329. Mr. Speaker, the Authority will undertake the following activities:

- Prepare three Strategic Environmental Assessments in connection with Feeder Roads, the Tetteh Quarshie-Mallam Junction Highway (N1 Highway), Trunk Roads and Ferry Activities
- Conduct feasibility studies and design N1 Highway, Trunk and Feeder Roads and rehabilitate sections of feeder roads in 8 Districts of the Intervention Zones.
- Upgrade sections of the N.1 Highway from Tetteh Quarshie to Mallam Junction.
- Improve Volta Lake Ferry Services to facilitate growth in Agriculture in the Afram Plains Zone
- Support Community Services to complement Agriculture project
- Strengthen Rural Financial services through Bank Automation and Interconnectivity
- Build Pre-Coolers and a Perishable Cargo Centre at KIA to help farmers with post harvest activity.
- Grant credit to farmers and other operators in the agriculture value chain.
- Build procurement capacity through training and award of scholarships to Students of Tertiary Institutions.
- Rehabilitate 35 schools in 8 Districts.

PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY COMMISSION (PURC)

Performance in 2007

1330. Mr. Speaker, the PURC opened a new office in Tamale to increase access to the public and to improve customer service and handling of customer complaints in the Northern parts of the country.

1331. The Commission also accelerated arrangements to start projects which will provide water services for areas which are currently distressed and to increase accessibility to water at reasonable prices. It organised extensive public education and awareness on regulations on termination of service and complaints policy and procedure, improved collaboration with stakeholders in the water and energy sectors and reviewed and adjusted utility prices.

Outlook for 2008

1332. Mr. Speaker, the PURC will undertake the following activities:

- Conduct Technical and operational audit of the Utility Agencies.
- Conduct tariff and cost of service studies to enable the Commission determine tariffs more efficiently and effectively.
- Develop a comprehensive programme to monitor the operations of the Utility Agencies.
- Establish Regulatory Framework for developing secondary market in natural gas.
- Promote ICT application in complaints handling to streamline, speed up and enhance information management.

1333. Mr. Speaker, for the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢110,039,251 has been allocated. Out of this, GoG is GH¢56,255,790, IGF is GH¢242,830 and Donor is GH¢53,540,631.

**DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES COMMON FUND (DACF)
ADMINISTRATOR**

Performance in 2007

1334. Mr. Speaker, the formula for sharing the DACF was presented and approved by Parliament in accordance with the Constitution.
1335. A total sum of GH¢68,996,500 was disbursed during the first two quarters as the allocation for the 138 Districts of the country.
1336. To enhance efficiency, the Office re-installed network systems and continued to update its internet website for the public to access information on the management of the Fund.
1337. The Secretariat has also relocated to the old office of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.

Outlook for 2008

1338. Mr. Speaker, the following activities will be undertaken:
- Visit to some selected MMDAs to collate and analyse new data and to develop District poverty profiles
 - Submit draft formula for sharing the DACF to Cabinet and Parliament.
 - Inform DAs RCCs and MPs about quarterly and annual shares of Common Funds.
 - Transfer Funds to MDAs, RCCs, and MPs quarterly.
 - Monitor and evaluate the utilization of the Common fund to enhance effectiveness.
 - Submit quarterly Reports to Parliament.

1339. Mr. Speaker, for the implementation of the above activities, an amount of GH¢236,371,200 has been allocated. Out of this, GoG is GH¢173,700 and DACF is GH¢236,197,500.

SECTION SEVEN: POVERTY REDUCTION EXPENDITURES AND PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1340. Mr. Speaker, Government's commitment to poverty reduction continues to be evident in all areas of the economy in support of the targets of the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II) as well as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Spending on poverty continues to be significant. The Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) which came into effect in 2006 provided the necessary fiscal space to address the energy crisis, contributing appreciably to bringing the situation under control. Spending from the HIPC debt relief initiative continued in activities in support of both poverty reduction and growth enhancement.

1341. In April this year, the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) published the results of the fifth round of the Ghana Living Standards Survey, (GLSS 5) which provides an up-to-date analysis of the living conditions of Ghanaian households. The results of the Ghana Living Standards Survey allows an objective assessment of progress made in Ghana over the period from 1991/92 to 2005/06.

1342. Mr. Speaker, the GLSS 5 reports that the proportion of Ghanaians defined as poor fell from 51.7 percent in 1991/92 to 39.5 percent in 1998/99 and further to 28.5 percent in 2005/06. In line with the general decline of poverty in Ghana, the

percentage of rural population living below the poverty line declined from about 64 percent in 1991/92 to about 50 percent in 1998/99 and has further declined to about 39 percent in 2005/06.

1343. The report provides details on three different dimensions of poverty – consumption poverty, lack of access to assets and services as well as on human development, reporting on trends in poverty since the beginning of the 1990s. The report further examines the variations in poverty among geographical and administrative regions as well as among various socio-economic groups.

Government Spending on Poverty Reduction Expenditures in 2007

1344. Mr. Speaker, the 2007 budgeted expenditure (including supplementary expenditures) by Government was GH¢4,605.29 million. An amount of GH¢1,317.69 million representing 26.26 per cent of the total Government expenditure was set aside for poverty reduction activities. By end September, a total of GH¢1,082.35 million had been spent on poverty related expenditures. On current trends, the projected actual expenditures on poverty related activities will likely exceed budgeted amount.
1345. In the Education Sector, out of a budget of GH¢1,007.30 million set aside for the financial year, a total of GH¢832.43 million has been spent, of which GH¢435.27 million representing almost 52.29 percent went for Basic Education expenditure.
1346. Out of a target expenditure of GH¢484.69 million for the Health sector, about GH¢486.35 million has been utilized, with

GH¢247.55 million representing 50.90 percent being spent of Primary Health Care.

1347. A total of GH¢53.42 million was budgeted for agriculture. Out of this, an amount of GH¢26.92 million was spent on poverty focused agriculture.
1348. Mr. Speaker, an amount of GH¢27.70 million was budgeted for the Water Resources, Works and Housing sector. As at end September, total expenditure was GH¢31.37 million indicating over-expenditure of about 13 percent. Approximately 52.49 percent of this total amount was used for Rural Water.
1349. Expenditures on Feeder Roads amounted to GH¢53.04 million representing over 33.36 percent of the total road sector expenditure.
1350. Out of a total of GH¢174.82 million actual expenditure of the energy sector as at end September, GH¢75.83 million, constituting about 43.37 percent of the total was spent on Rural Electrification.
1351. Mr. Speaker, a total amount of GH¢195.70 million was expended on Other Poverty which includes social welfare, public safety, drainage, human rights, environmental protection, rural housing, legal aid, decentralization, among others as at end September 2007. This amount is over 4.25 percent of Government's total discretionary expenditure and approximately 18.62 percent of the total poverty reduction expenditure.

Progress Towards the Millennium Development Goals

1352. Mr. Speaker, Ghana continues to make good progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, as detailed below:

MDG 1 – Target – Halve Extreme Poverty

1353. As result of the increased focus on poverty reducing initiatives, pro-poor growth activities and increased spending on these, poverty trends in Ghana have declined significantly. As indicated in the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS 5) data, poverty declined from 51.7 per cent in 1991/92 to 39.5 per cent in 1998/99 and 28.5 per cent in 2005/2006. Extreme poverty has also declined from 36.5 per cent to 26.8 per cent to 18.2 per cent over the same period. Ghana has thus achieved the MDG 1 target of halving extreme poverty. This is no mean achievement considering that it happened nine years before the target date of 2015.

MDG 1 Target Reduce hunger

1354. Small-scale programmes in agriculture, industry and mining, rural energy, micro credit as well as employment generation programmes have variously led to improvements in incomes and to the food security situation in Ghana. Complementing these have been specific programmes to improve nutrition. The effects of these interventions on child malnutrition though, need to be enhanced. Children under-five who are underweight constitute 18 per cent, while those stunted comprise 23 per cent and those wasting are about 5 per cent. The challenges that need to be addressed in this area include reducing seasonal variations in food production, particularly in “famine prone” areas, and improving cross sectoral collaboration in implementation of nutrition programmes.

MDG 2 Target Achieve Universal Access to Primary Education by 2015

1355. Mr. Speaker, education in Ghana continues to record good progress. Gross Enrolment Ratios at the primary level have improved from 77 per cent in 2001/02 to 93.7 per cent in 2006/07 academic year. Improvements in education indicators can be attributed to implementation of a number of measures such as the nationwide rollout of the Capitation Grant Scheme in 2005/06 (after being piloted in the 2004/05 academic year). In addition, the roll out of the School Feeding Programme, and the active implementation of activities to promote girls' education, has together removed barriers to enrolment and encouraged participation and attendance. There is increasing international interest in supporting school feeding. Spending has also gone to recruit and train teachers and support staff to help improve pupil teacher ratios.

MDG 3 Target Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005

1356. Mr. Speaker, to bridge gender gaps in access to education, a number of measures continue to be funded including scholarship schemes for needy girls, provision of food rations for females. The gender parity index at primary level improved from 0.93 in 2003/04 to 0.96 for 2006/07. Though Ghana did not attain this MDG in 2005, indications are that this would be possible within the next couple of years. The rehabilitation of senior secondary facilities including the construction of female dormitories to encourage female participation at that level has contributed to an increase in female enrolments at the second cycle level. Enrolment has more than doubled in four years and female enrolment appears to be growing faster than male enrolments. Male enrolments increased by 24 per cent while that for females increased by almost 30 per cent. Gender parity will no doubt improve in the coming years.

MDG 4 Target Reduce Under-Five Mortality by two-thirds by 2015

1357. Though under-five mortality in Ghana increased from 109 per 1,000 in 1998 to 111 per 1,000 in 2003¹ and appears to have stagnated by 2006 as estimated in the Ghana Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, other important indicators on child survival have improved. For example, under-five malaria case fatality has declined steadily over the years 2002-2006 from 3.7 per cent to 2.1 per cent. Immunization coverage in all antigens in 2006 was 84.5 per cent up from 71.9 per cent in 2005.

MDG 5 Target Reduce Maternal Mortality Ratio by three-quarters by 2015

1358. Mr. Speaker estimates of the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) range between 200 per 100,000 to 700 per 100,000. Institutional maternal mortality ratio, which measures maternal deaths occurring in health facilities only, decreased from 197 per 100,000 live births in 2005 to 187 per 100,000 live births in 2006. Coverage of supervised deliveries increased from 40.3 to 44.5 per cent in 2006, though below the target of 50 per cent. With respect to ante-natal coverage of four or more visits, on the other hand, was on course with the target of 90 per cent was achieved during 2006.

MDG 6 Target Halt and reverse the Spread of HIV/AIDS

1359. The most recent data indicates a slight increase in HIV zero prevalence from 2.7 per cent in 2005 to 2.9 per cent in 2006. The aim is to ensure national prevalence of HIV below 5 per

¹ The Ghana Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) specifically measures under-five mortality. The most recent DHS was in 2003.

cent. Interventions being undertaken to reduce the spread of the disease include programmes for safer sex particularly among the most vulnerable, reducing mother-to-child transmission and promoting voluntary counseling and testing and increasing Anti-retroviral Therapy (ART) for Persons Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs).

MDG 6 Target Halt and Reverse the incidence of Malaria

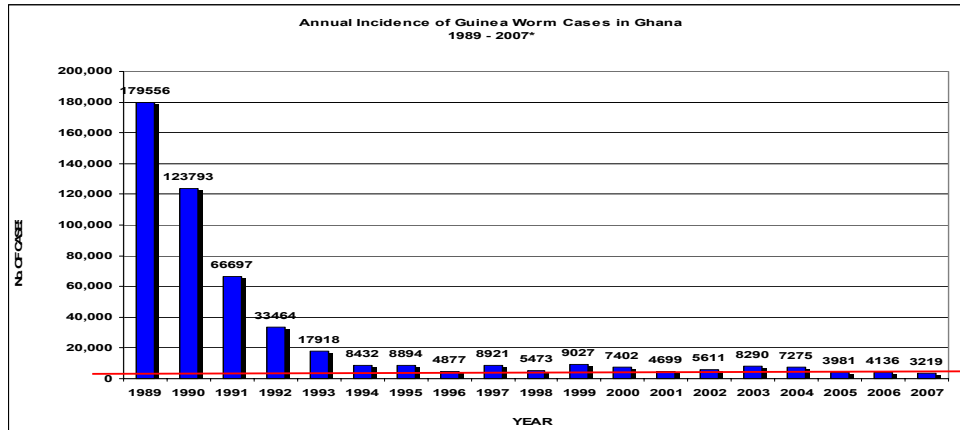
1360. Mr. Speaker, Ghana's programme to halt and reverse the incidence of malaria focuses on both curative and preventive care. Progress is being made in various areas and though malaria remains a public health concern, the national under-five case malaria fatality rate has improved from 3.7 per cent in 2002 to 2.1 per cent in 2006. Reports indicate that the percentage of children under five years and pregnant women sleeping in ITNs has increased – over 46 per cent for pregnant women and over 35 per cent for children under-five.

MDG 7 Target Halve by 2015, the proportion of persons without access to safe drinking water

1361. In year 2000, safe water coverage for the urban population was 70 per cent while that for rural was 41 per cent. Coverage for rural water has been increasing steadily for the past five years; from a base of 41 per cent in 2000, by end 2006 it had reached 52.8 per cent. Urban water coverage by end 2006 had reduced to 59 per cent due mainly to the rapidly increasing urban population. Government continues to fully subsidise the provision of safe water in guineaworm endemic areas. HIPC funds have also been directed towards the provision of safe water to complement the regular budget flows and have

provided for 382 boreholes (the majority fitted with hand pumps) in guineaworm endemic areas. Incidence of guineaworm continues to decline as shown below.

Table 11: Incidence of Guinea Worm Disease in Ghana, 1989-2007*

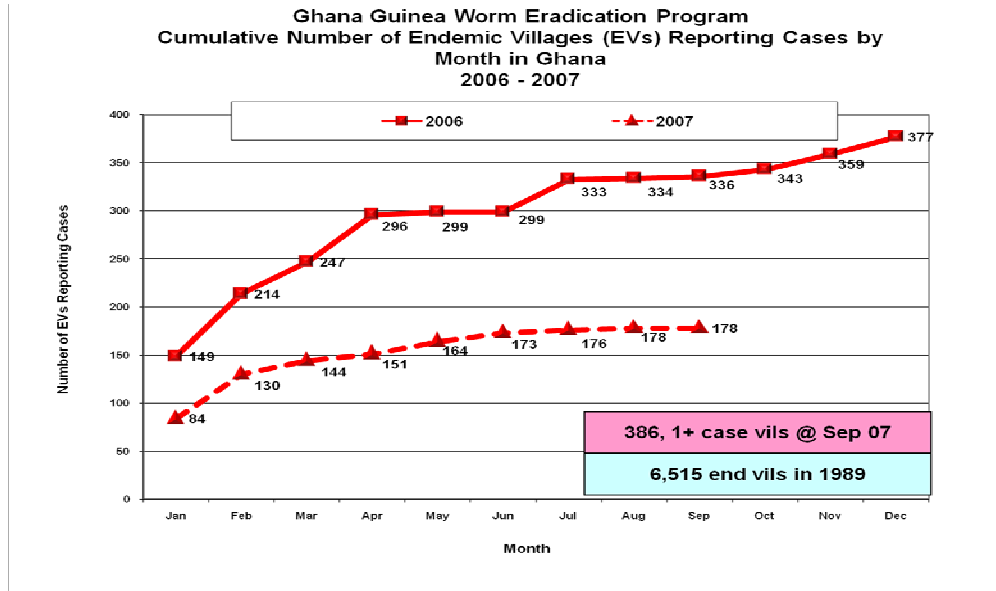


Source: Ghana Health Service/GWEP
*** January – October 2007**

1362. Guineaworm is on the decline.

1363. Though total reported cases by October this year show a 3 per cent increase over the number of cases reported for the same period last year, it is encouraging to note, that the monthly incidence of guinea worm disease has been decreasing since April 2007 in comparison to the same months last year and this is likely to continue for the rest of the year. (See chart below). The number of communities reporting indigenous transmission of disease has also dropped significantly from 336 in October 2006 to 178 in October 2007.

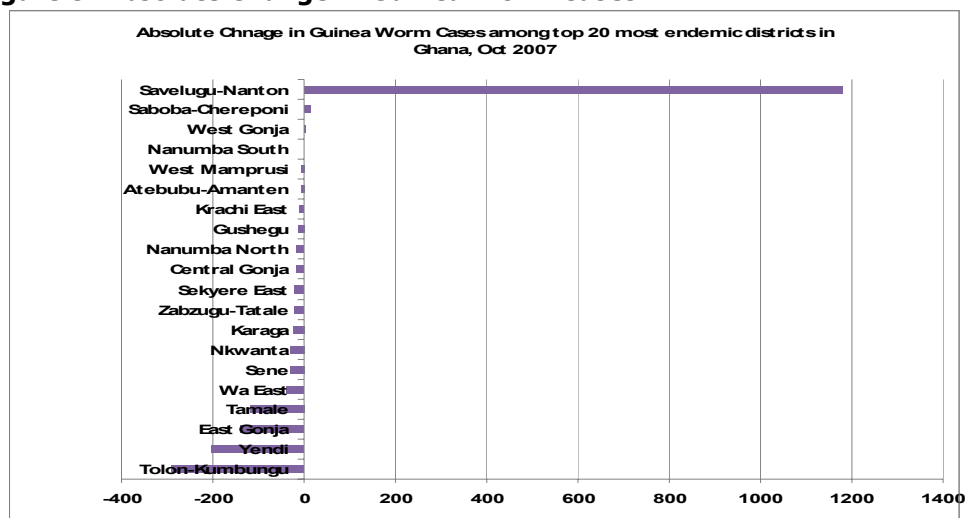
Table 12: Ghana Guinea Worm Eradication Program



12

1364. But for the outbreak in Savelugu-Nanton district late last year (especially Savelugu Township) and spilling into the first quarter of this year, Ghana would have made an overall case reduction of at least 45 per cent . All the endemic districts, except Savelugu-Nanton, have made significant case reductions during the period. (See chart below).

Figure 8: Absolute Change in Guinea Worm Cases



Source: Ghana Health Service/GWEP

Utilisation of Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) Funds

1365. By the end of September, total HIPC expenditures were GH¢139.4 million. HIPC funds supported interventions in the 3 pillars of GPRS II as well as interest payments for domestic debt as follows:

Table 13: Utilisation of HIPC Planned Expenditure and Releases Sept. 2007

Pillar	Planned (GH¢m)	Share (%)	Releases (GH¢m)	Share (%)
Human Devt	50.097	22.6	36.79	26.46
Private Sector Devt	113.836	51.49	87.09	62.63
Governance	12.933	5.85	11.51	8.28
Domestic Debt	44.218	20.00	3.65	2.63
Total	221.084	100.00	139.042	100.00

Source: MOFEP

1366. More than half of HIPC expenditures for human development were used for education, in particular the supply of exercise books to basic schools, amounting to GH¢2.9 million, school feeding in selected schools in disadvantaged areas with over GH¢6 million, upgrading of senior secondary school, and payment of subsidies for senior secondary schools. District Assemblies supported education to the tune of GH¢1 million through the use of MPs share of the HIPC Fund. These measures have contributed significantly to the high rates of increases in enrolment and retention at basic and senior secondary school levels.
1367. For health, HIPC expenditures by end of September went to primary health care mainly from the MPs share of HIPC. Other health expenditures included the refurbishment of the outpatient department of Komfo Anokye (KATH) Teaching Hospital and the setting up of a foundation for orthopedics.
1368. Improvement in the sanitation in the big cities and other urban centres received a big boost during the year. An amount of GH¢13.7 million comprising almost 50 per cent of total human development spending under HIPC went to sanitation. Almost GH¢0.8 million was also spent on disaster relief for victims of severe rainstorms in various parts of the country.

Private Sector Competitiveness

1369. Funding from HIPC in support of Private Sector development improved significantly in 2006, by the end of September this year, government spent over 60 per cent of total HIPC expenditure for various interventions in support of private sector development.

1370. Expenditure on micro finance alone constituted about 30 per cent of private sector expenditure. Housing Delivery received 16 per cent while energy received 15 per cent. Government also spent 11 per cent of private sector expenditure on forestry development. HIPC funds of over GH¢1 million support also went to the establishment of a liquid nitrogen plant. Other area of focus included agricultural and industrial development and also employment. Roads and communication also received support.

Good Governance and Civic Responsibility

1371. Communication on Government strategies and policies also received significant support; a total amount of GH¢ 2.2 million went into this area. In the area of public financial management, Government spent over GH¢ 2.2 on strengthening capacity of the Controller and Accountant General's Department including expenditures on the IBM 'P' Series for IPPD 2 and the VSAT network.

1372. Government support to improve conditions in the Prison environment continued in 2007. In all a total amount of almost GH¢ 2.5 million was utilized on the Ankaful Maximum Security Prison. The Justice Ministry and Judiciary Service also received a total of GH¢ 1.3 million to build their capacity. National Commission for Civic Education received GH¢1.3 million for capacity building to undertake their functions.

1373. Government expenditure on domestic interest payments, as at end September 2007, was GH¢ 3.6 million, constituting 2.63 per cent of total HIPC funds released.

Utilisation of Multilateral Debt Relief (MDRI) Funds

1374. An amount of ₺159.87 million was provided under the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) to support growth enhancing and poverty reducing measures in the 2007 Budget. This amount was allocated to the Volta River Authority to address the energy crisis the country was facing. The strategy was two-fold: to provide energy to make up the shortfall of demand and secondly, to put in place measures to conserve power. The funds were applied to the procurement of gas turbines, a barge, emergency power generation and the supply of Compact Fluorescent Lamps to conserve energy in institutions and households.
1375. By end September, expenditure from MDRI funds was ₺133.4 million, constituting about 83 per cent of the total planned expenditure. Of this, 28.5 per cent was classified as poverty reducing expenditures, reflecting the current proportion of people below the poverty line.
1376. Details of the use of these funds are as follows: ₺120.35 million was allocated to fund the Emergency Power Generation, constituting about 90 per cent of the total, ₺7.8 million (about 6 per cent) to fund the supply of Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs) to conserve energy, and the remaining ₺5.3 million (about 4 per cent) for the rehabilitation of the Osagyefo Barge.
1377. As a result of these expenditures made, VRA has almost completed the installation of a 126 megawatts (MW) emergency power plant. Additionally, there are plans underway by VRA to acquire adequate plants to increase its energy generating capacity.

Outlook for 2008

Spending on Poverty Reduction

1378. An allocation of GH¢1,681.77 million has been made for total Government expenditure for poverty reduction expenditures in 2008. This constitutes almost 31 percent of total Government expenditure. This includes spending from HIPC and MDRI funds. Funds have been allocated for basic education, primary health care, poverty-focused agriculture, provision of rural water, feeder roads, and rural electrification. This allocation also includes GH¢10.00 million for Electricity Lifeline payments to support consumption of electricity by poor households and about GH¢13.40 million for Safety Net payments in various strategic areas such as Self Help Electrification Programme (SHEP 4).
1379. Total planned HIPC funds for 2008 is GH¢159.44 million. Of this, 20 percent will be used for interest payments for domestic debt, while 65 percent of total funds, amounting to GH¢103.64 million will be used for sectoral programmes in the human development, private sector competitiveness and good governance pillars of GPRS II. Specific priorities are sanitation, provision of water, affordable housing, SHEP 4, forestry development among others. A further 10 percent of the total HIPC allocation will be used for District Assembly programmes and projects of which an amount of GH¢4.60 million is allocated as MPs share of HIPC funds, to be used for specific poverty related projects.
1380. For MDRI funds in 2008, a total of GH¢55.63 million is expected to be spent on programmes in support of both poverty reduction and growth. Education programmes, including capitation, school feeding, subsidies for Basic Education Certificate Examination and subsidies for feeding for senior high schools will attract about 87 percent of the total. The remainder will partly fund Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme as well as micro credit schemes for women.

SECTION EIGHT: POLICY INITIATIVES

Private Sector Development

Improving Regulatory Structures for Doing Business

1381. Mr. Speaker, during the past two years Ghana's efforts to reform its business environment has made it a "top 10" reformer globally as measured by the World Bank Group's Doing Business Report. This also makes Ghana the highest ranked country in the ECOWAS sub-region.
1382. Mr. Speaker, we wish to assure Ghanaians and the international community that we will not be complacent but rather maintain the pace of reforms that have brought us this far.
1383. Mr Speaker, although a lot of progress has been made with the passage of new laws and revisions to existing laws, limited attention has been given to institutional issues that make such laws effective in promoting private sector-led growth. Typical weaknesses of our regulatory system include unclear divisions of regulatory responsibilities among agencies and duplication in their functions and powers.
1384. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, an initiative will be launched in 2008 to further strengthen the regulatory environment. Specifically, the initiative will focus on simplifying the current regulatory regime applicable in Ghana, reviewing the functions of regulatory agencies to remove overlaps, scale down on the number of regulatory authorities and establish benchmarks for good practices.

Energy Sector

Importation and Use of Incandescent Lamps

1385. Mr. Speaker, the nation has just come out of an energy crisis that was characterised by shortage in power supply. Government's efforts to resolve the crisis have focused on modernising and expanding power infrastructure, ensuring full cost recovery of power supply and the productive and efficient use of energy.
1386. While increasing the percentage of households with access to electricity supply, Government is mindful of the need to conserve power. In order to promote the efficient use of energy Government will introduce legislation seeking to phase out the importation and use of incandescent lamps in Ghana.
1387. Mr. Speaker, under the proposed legislation, Compact Fluorescent Lamps will replace the high power consuming incandescent lamps in the system. Standards will also be developed for street lights which have become very popular but are not governed by any regulations or standards.
1388. Mr. Speaker, to reduce the rate of energy waste through refrigeration, energy efficiency standards and labels will be developed and introduced.

Promoting Alternative Energy Sources

1389. Mr. Speaker, the Government's efforts to secure the energy future of the country includes providing support for renewable energy sources. The key areas of concern in respect of renewable energy include solar, wind, small hydro resources,

bio-fuel production and supply and the promotion of renewable energy technologies and their efficient utilization.

1390. Mr. Speaker, the Energy Commission will, in 2008, undertake the following activities aimed at ensuring that renewable energy is integrated into the national energy mix:

- develop and facilitate the passage of a Renewable Energy Law; and
- develop and enforce standards and codes for renewable energy technologies. This will include standards for bio-fuels, solar lighting and solar water heaters.

1391. To encourage the production of biodiesel, the government will introduce special incentives, including the removal of excise duties, VAT and all local charges on biodiesel for a minimum of 20 years. This will encourage the participation of private entrepreneurs in the sub-sector.

National Transportation Policy

1392. Mr. Speaker, a good transportation system is a prerequisite for economic growth and poverty reduction. National targets for growth and poverty reduction also rely heavily on an effective transportation system.

1393. Mr. Speaker, in 2008, Government will adopt an integrated Transport Policy which combines various modes (road, rail, maritime including inland water transport and aviation) of transportation together to achieve maximum benefit for the system.

1394. Mr. Speaker, the objectives of the Transport Policy will be to:

- Integrate Land Use, Transport Planning, Development Planning and Service Provision;
- Create a vibrant investment and performance-based management environment that maximises benefits for public and private sector investors;
- Develop and implement comprehensive and integrated Policy, Governance and Institutional Frameworks;
- Ensure sustainable Development in the Transport Sector; and
- Develop adequate Human Resources and apply New Technology.

Financial Sector

Financial Sector Strategic Plan (FINSSP II)

1395. Mr. Speaker, Ghana's financial sector has undergone significant changes since the first generation of financial sector reforms were launched under the Financial Sector Adjustment Program (FINSAP) in 1988. In 2003, government approved the Financial Sector Strategic Plan (FINSSP) to serve as the blueprint for Ghana's financial sector development for the period 2004 – 2008. The objectives of FINSSP were to:

- make Ghana the preferred source of finance for domestic companies;
- promote efficient savings mobilization;
- enhance the competitiveness of Ghana's financial institutions within a regional and global setting;
- ensure a stronger and more facilitative regulatory regime;
- achieve a diversified domestic financial sector within a competitive environment.

1396. Mr. Speaker, as at October 2007 nearly 80 per cent of the 98 recommendations in FINSSP had been implemented. The implementation of FINSSP has produced dramatic changes in Ghana's financial landscape.

1397. The changes in Ghana's financial market have also brought new challenges:

- Ghana's public and private sector investment needs have created a need for a further deepening of the bond market to provide long-term financing;
- The entry of Ghana into the global capital market as a sovereign borrower has created new opportunities and challenges for both public and private sector participants in the domestic and international financial markets;
- There is a continuing need to strengthen our regulatory agencies to adapt to the changes that are taking place on both local and international financial markets;
- Ghana needs to develop appropriate strategic responses to the current ECOWAS drive for financial integration;
- Capital account liberalization under the Foreign Exchange Act, 2006 has created new risks and opportunities for financial institutions as well as regulatory challenges; and
- The International Financial Services Centre project needs to be expanded to cover the non-bank financial sector.

1398. Mr. Speaker, in view of these developments, Government will, in 2008, undertake a comprehensive review of FINSSP with a view to identifying the next generation of financial sector reforms. The review is expected to result in an updated FINSSP document (FINSSP II) to guide financial sector development for the next five years.

Development of the Bond Market

1399. Mr Speaker, in 2006, the development of a vibrant capital market requires a well balanced bond market, which implies that instruments on the market must have regular issuances with varying maturities to promote secondary activity and thus liquidity on the capital market.
1400. In this regard, Government has been implementing a programme to issue long-dated instruments as part of measures to lengthen the yield curve of Government debt to serve as a benchmark for the pricing of medium- to long-term corporate bonds.
1401. Mr Speaker, last year the Government successfully sold two issues of a debut 5-year fixed rate bond on the domestic market and a maiden \$750 million dollar Eurobond with a maturity of 10 years on the international capital market.
1402. Mr. Speaker in furtherance of its objective to develop the long term investor segment of the domestic capital market, Government will issue for the first time a 10-year domestic bond in 2008. Additionally, Government will rationalise the issuance calendar to achieve issue predictability and to encourage secondary trading between issues.

Enhancing Access to Agricultural Finance

1403. Mr. Speaker, Government has observed with concern the decreasing flow of credit to the agricultural sector. Although agriculture accounts for 35% of GDP and 60% of employment, only 6% of bank credit goes to the sector. The lack of access to credit for key activities such as farming, fishing, livestock and needed ancillary services and infrastructure has been a drag on productivity growth and incomes in the sector.

1404. Mr. Speaker, to address the agricultural finance problem, a number of measures will be introduced in the course of 2008. The objective of these measures would be to ensure that viable projects in the sector are fully funded. The measures will include:

- Tax incentives to financial institutions to increase not only the flow of credit to the sector but also to reduce interest rates on agricultural loans to the 5%-10% range and to lengthen maturities of term loans to between 5 and 10 years
- The development of an Agricultural Investment Fund/Farm Credit Corporation with a 100% agriculture focus to provide a range of financial services such as working capital and term loans, insurance and leasing.

1405. Mr. Speaker, the implementation of these measures will expand the sources of funding for the agricultural sector and provide a significant boost to the sector's contribution to our growth agenda.

National Switch and Biometric Smartcard Project

1406. Mr. Speaker, the banking system in Ghana serves a small proportion of the population with only an estimated 20 per cent of the population having bank accounts. To deepen the financial system, the un-banked and under-banked segments of the population should be joined with the banked segment within a coherent national payments system framework.

1407. Mr. Speaker, guided by this goal, the Bank of Ghana is establishing a national switch (the E-ZWICH) to allow the establishment of a common platform for all payments transactions in the country. E-ZWICH will have the capability to

deal with transactions that take place online (in places with telecommunications) and offline (i.e. where telecommunications are not present, e.g. in some rural areas).

1408. Mr. Speaker, associated with the E-ZWICH is a biometric smart card that eliminates the need to have basic literacy and numeracy to operate a bank account since it relies on the identification features of fingerprints. The E-ZWICH smart card is a major vehicle for financial inclusion. The smartcard will address the shortcomings of existing debit cards which cater for only a small fraction of the population.

1409. The smartcard can also be used for:

- payment of wages to workers on government payroll. Because of the biometric identification system, ghost workers on the public payroll should become a thing of the past;
- payment of pensions to pensioners;
- spending on goods in merchant outlets with VAT credited directly to Government;
- payment of utility bills;
- transferring funds to third parties; (Individuals, Merchants, Employees, Cocoa farmers, Pensioners, Revenue Agencies, etc);
- receiving funds from third parties from within or out of the country;
- withdrawing cash from any ATM in the country.

1410. Mr. Speaker, the National Switch and smartcard project will serve as the vehicle to transform Ghana from a predominantly cash economy to an economy dominated by electronic transactions using modern state of the art technology.

Promoting Financial Literacy

1411. Mr. Speaker, as Ghana's economy becomes increasingly complex, there is a mounting concern that understanding and managing the details of financial products and services is becoming a daunting task for most Ghanaians, especially the low-income and rural segments of the population.
1412. Even in more developed markets, research shows that a large percentage of people of all ages, incomes and education levels, lack the basic financial knowledge and skills to ensure long-term stability for themselves and their families, and to drive the savings-investment requirements of the economy.
1413. Mr. Speaker, lack of financial literacy undermines efforts to deepen financial intermediation. In Ghana's case, savings and investment rates have been consistently below the levels needed for accelerated growth and poverty reduction. Thus, financial literacy should be part of any comprehensive strategy to develop a financial sector that supports growth and poverty reduction.
1414. Mr. Speaker, in pursuit of this, Government will, in 2008, establish a financial literacy programme, anchored by an Annual Financial Literacy Week to raise awareness of the range of products and services available to consumers and the rights and obligations of consumers and service providers to help Ghanaians better understand and manage their finances. The proposed Financial Literacy Week will be a cooperative effort of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, regulatory agencies, industry associations and consumer groups.

Promoting Long Term Investment by Insurance Companies

1415. Mr. Speaker, a new Insurance Act was passed by Parliament in December 2006. The new act aims among other things, at

ensuring adequate capitalisation of insurance companies, improving corporate governance, and ensuring adequate protection for policy holders.

1416. The Act also abolished composite insurance companies. This means that an insurance company can either be a life or non-life company. It also implies that insurance companies that are currently composite must separate their life business from the non-life.
1417. Mr. Speaker, the main rationale for the separation of the life and non-life business is to make it possible for the necessary attention to be given to the life business to enable it to grow and contribute effectively to national development by helping to mobilise long term funds for development.
1418. Mr. Speaker, to achieve this objective, the regulatory framework will be reviewed to enable insurance companies restructure their investment portfolios to reflect the current economic environment. There will be provisions to encourage insurance companies, especially life companies, to invest in such areas as real estate and long-term mortgages.

Fiscal Responsibility Act

1419. Mr. Speaker, Ghana's overall fiscal deficit was reduced from 9.0 per cent of GDP in 2000 to 2.7 per cent at December 2005. However, by December 2006 the fiscal deficit had increased to 7.8 per cent due to nonrecurring expenditures such as the Golden Jubilee celebrations, the energy crisis, shortfalls in anticipated divestiture proceeds and import related taxes and overruns in spending on wages relative to budget due to one-off discretionary adjustments.

1420. Mr. Speaker, although significant progress has been made in fiscal consolidation, we cannot afford to be complacent. Ongoing fiscal consolidation holds the key to macroeconomic stability and maintaining the confidence of the international capital markets as expressed through our sovereign credit ratings and our cost of access to global capital markets.
1421. Mr. Speaker, several countries have adopted “fiscal responsibility” legislation - encompassing a variety of fiscal rules and administrative/managerial processes aimed at ensuring better discipline and efficiency at all levels of government. Key elements of a fiscal responsibility law are:
- ceilings on public debt or debt service, expenditure, or budget balances, expressed in actual or cyclically-adjusted terms; and
 - escape clauses allowing for deviations from fiscal targets under exceptional circumstances.
1422. Mr. Speaker, in 2008, Government intends to begin the process of introducing a Fiscal Responsibility Bill which will be designed to achieve the following objectives:
- to set out fiscal targets and fiscal principles for the State
 - to make it a goal for the Government to pursue its policy objectives in accordance with those fiscal targets and fiscal principles
 - to provide for reports on departures from those fiscal targets and fiscal principles to be prepared by the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning
 - to provide for corrective measures when fiscal targets are missed.

1423. The Fiscal Responsibility Bill will also provide a powerful signal to underscore Ghana's commitment to fiscal discipline and debt sustainability.

Special Initiative on Sustainable Development of Northern Ghana

1424. The development gap between Northern Ghana and Southern Ghana has been a long historical process dating from the colonial era. The recent floods that affected most of the North have exacerbated the gap.

1425. Government of Ghana is preparing a medium to long-term development strategy that will transform the economy and society of Northern Ghana, in a manner that will ensure effective utilization of the region's competitive advantages in food production, adding value to agro-processing, boosting private sector confidence and improving incomes and general living conditions.

1426. Following the formulation of the Northern Development Strategy, a more detailed financing plan will be prepared by the Government.

1427. In the interim, Government has earmarked an amount of GH¢25.0 million as seed money for the establishment of a Northern Ghana Development Fund, and will encourage Development Partners to contribute to the Fund.

Managing Future Oil Resources

1428. Mr. Speaker, Ghana has been blessed with the discovery of oil in significant commercial quantities at the Cape Three Points off the West Coast.

1429. Mr. Speaker, the discovery of oil is usually celebrated as a one-way ticket to wealth and economic growth. But recent history shows that poorly managed oil resources in a developing country can make life worse, not better, for most of its population. Oil can ruin local environments and create inequalities of income that destroy the fabric of a society and can become a curse rather than a blessing.
1430. Mr. Speaker, in pursuit of the objective of maintaining social and economic stability and long-term economic growth, Government has set up a Task Force to prepare a Master Plan for the emerging oil industry. In 2008 the Task Force will examine the social and economic implications of Ghana becoming an oil-producing country and present proposals that will, among others, ensure that oil revenues will be used for economic diversification for the benefit of all Ghanaians, and to minimize the potential social and economic dislocations associated with oil wealth.
1431. Additionally, the task force will identify the requisite legal and regulatory framework as well as the infrastructure and human resource needs of the new sector.

Establishment of a Stabilisation Fund

1432. Mr. Speaker, achieving and sustaining macroeconomic stability has been the cornerstone of our economic development strategy. This strategy has served us well and the Ghanaian economy has been resilient in recent times as evidenced by the recent high oil prices. However, the economy remains exposed to external shocks as a result of volatility in commodity prices, compounded by an anticipated progressive reduction in donor inflows, and increased competition from other emerging economies for foreign direct investment.

1433. Mr. Speaker, Government will, in 2008, design a Stabilisation Fund to serve as a measure to insulate the economy from external shocks specifically the unpredictability of export earnings from our major exports, i.e. cocoa, gold, timber and oil in the near future.
1434. The funds will be invested to ensure protection as well as the growth of the Fund.

Excise Tax on Phone Airtime

1435. Mr. Speaker, because it is easy to smuggle mobile phones, a great proportion of them enter the country undeclared and, therefore, untaxed. Import duties and import VAT on such undeclared phones are lost to the state. The nation is, thus, not deriving maximum revenue from the expected taxes on mobile phone imports.
1436. Mr. Speaker, considering the situation, Government has decided to abolish import duty and import VAT on all mobile phones imported into the country and introduce a more effective means of taxing mobile phone usage. Consequently government proposes to impose a specific excise duty per minute of air time use.
1437. Mr. Speaker, it is worthy of note that over the last several years, the cost of phone airtime has fallen dramatically in Ghana due to competition and technological advancement. It is, therefore, expected that further technological advancement and improvements in the efficiency of the sector will further reduce the cost of airtime and, thereby minimize the impact of the excise tax.

Easing the Burden of Importing Vehicles

1438. Mr. Speaker, in line with Government policy of easing the burden of transportation for Ghanaians, government has since July 2007 established a Committee to review the valuation, depreciation of values and the age penalties of vehicles.
1439. Mr. Speaker, Government will shortly announce new policies for imported vehicle valuation and age penalties that will reflect a significant simplification of the existing regime and ease the financial burden of vehicle acquisition.

Tax on Stated Capital for Companies

1440. Mr. Speaker, currently, a stamp duty of 0.5 per cent is levied on stated capital of a business on incorporation, and on subsequent increases in stated capital during the life of the company. The effect of this tax is that the incorporated business is left with less cash with which to start operations, at a time when external financing is most difficult to raise.
1441. This regime could be quite burdensome for businesses, small and large. Furthermore, it has the tendency to discourage formalizing business through incorporation and could be a disincentive to raising equity capital, as no such tax is borne for capital raised through loans.
1442. Mr. Speaker, in keeping with the objective of making Ghana an attractive destination to do business compared with other jurisdictions and making the private sector the engine of growth, Government will initiate a comprehensive review of the stamp duty on stated capital with a view to eliminating its negative impact on the capitalization of companies.

Climate Change and Preservation of Environment

1443. Mr. Speaker, the Government is committed to ensure a balance between physical development and preservation of the environment. The phenomena of climate change and environmental pollution poses a great challenge to all countries, both developed and developing.
1444. Mr. Speaker, in 2008, Government will work closely with international partners to establish programmes for reducing greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming, with appropriate incentives for local companies to reduce their emissions.
1445. Mr. Speaker, there is an emerging market in the trading of carbon emissions with daily quotations in the commodities section of the Financial Times of London. Mr. Speaker, the proposed programme will encourage local companies with low levels of emission to participate in carbon emission trading as a source of income.

SECTION NINE: IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

Maintaining Macro-Economic Stability

1446. Mr. Speaker the 2007 Budget Statement identified a number of challenges that could adversely affect our macro-economic stability and our transition from stability to growth. These include the following:

- Maintaining debt sustainability as part of debt management strategy
- Public sector reform and high wage demands.
- Unpredictability of fuel prices and supply constraints in power.

1447. Mr. Speaker, the Government promised to manage these challenges to ensure that Ghana still maintained macro-economic stability.

1448. Mr. Speaker, the overall macroeconomic developments in Ghana in 2007 have been favourable, notwithstanding all the above challenges. This positive outcome reflects sound and good macroeconomic management.

1449. The above challenges will still have to be managed to ensure that significant growth is achieved. The trade-off between expectations of the Ghanaian populace and maintenance of prudent fiscal stance required for the realisation of the twin goal of stability and accelerated growth will continue to pose a challenge for the country which the Government will need to monitor and address.

Meeting the Millennium Development Goals – Improving under-five Child Mortality Rate

1450. Mr. Speaker, though Ghana is performing creditably well in most of the MDGs, the target of reducing under-five Child Mortality rate continues to pose a major challenge.
1451. Reduction in poverty levels has been found to have a direct positive impact on reducing under-five mortality rate. Despite Ghana's success in reducing poverty coupled with a number of interventions (viz NHIS, intensification of immunisation against the 5 killer diseases, introduction of insecticide treated nets, etc) believed to impact positively on Child Mortality, progress on this goal has been slow over the past 3 years.
1452. The Ministry of Health has been focusing on these areas to identify the causes of this stagnation to guarantee that appropriate interventions are implemented to ensure that Ghana by 2015 achieves the goal of reducing by two-thirds the under-five mortality rate and maternal mortality.

Election Year and Fiscal Management

1453. Mr. Speaker, in 2008 the country will be holding its fourth Presidential and Parliamentary elections under the Fourth Republican Constitution.
1454. Election year comes with its own challenges. There are always enormous political pressures on government to undertake developmental projects. However, in the 2004, government was able to break the past record of fiscal slippage in an election year and is resolved to continue to exercise the same discipline and prudence in fiscal management to ensure that the nation does not derail her accomplishments for electoral benefits.

Towards Fair Wages

1455. Mr. Speaker, government committed itself to reform the pay system and administration of the country to rationalize Public Sector wages in a comprehensive manner. The Fair Wages and Salaries Commission Act, Act 737, has since been enacted and the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC) established to administer a new comprehensive pay structure.
1456. Mr. Speaker, the reform process is on going and the major challenge is managing labour expectations especially in an election year.
1457. The FWSC will begin the necessary consultations with key stakeholders and also educate public sector workers, management and organised labour on its recommendations, in order to facilitate the task and implementation of the new conditions of service including pay policy. In the interim, government will ensure that the real income of workers is protected.

SECTION 10: CONCLUSION

1458. Mr. Speaker, Government has made major strides in ensuring sustainable growth and development and considerably reducing poverty levels in the country. We have come a long way since January 2001 and we all know that a great deal has been achieved.
1459. It has been a challenging but rewarding journey thus far. Many successes have been chalked and considerable progress made, and we should all be proud of these laudable accomplishments. Indeed the future looks bright and promising for all of us.
1460. Mr. Speaker, we believe that we are closer to our dream of attaining our desired and cherished goal of reaching middle income country status. We have moved from a state of economic fragility to a stabilised and robust economy, halved extreme poverty from 36.5 per cent in 1991/1992 to about 18 per cent in 2005/2006, and improved the business environment for a thriving private sector. Likewise, we have increased the real minimum wage from less than US\$0.50 to US\$2.1 as at today.
1461. Mr. Speaker, with regard to the provision of infrastructure, significant investments are being made in the energy and road sectors to further accelerate economic growth. We have reconstructed several major roads, such as Mallam – Kasoja, Pantang – Mamfe, Tema – Sogakope, Ofankor – Nsawam, the Asafo Market-UTC Roundabout Interchange and the Tetteh Quarshie Interchange.
1462. We have expanded educational facilities at all levels and fostered rapidly increasing enrolment through the capitation grant, school feeding programme and subsidies to senior high schools. We have also created 31 model senior high schools.

1463. Mr. Speaker, we have created a more health conscious population with our shift from curative to preventive health. Ghanaians now have improved access to better health facilities through the National Health Insurance programme, launched the effort for early detection of breast and prostate cancer.
1464. Mr. Speaker, we want to encourage lifestyle changes especially in our eating habits, so as to improve our life expectancy. Let us pray to do all we can to live longer to see the fruits of our labour.
1465. On governance, through a number of various interventions government has provided a much more open, transparent and accountable government. The creation of more districts and the increase in the DACF allocation will deepen the decentralisation process, facilitate more participatory governance, and increase funding for the development of our communities.
1466. Government is resolved to do what it takes to get us even closer to our goal and I am confident that the policies and programmes being implemented will get us there. However we also believe that we need to address and change certain critical issues to hasten our journey.
1467. These critical issues include our work ethic, time management, general attitude towards state property (our collective assets) and our maintenance culture. It is our conviction that equal, if not more attention should be paid to these soft developmental issues as they set the context for all the policies we are implementing.
1468. Mr. Speaker, we are of the opinion that progress is underpinned by a sense of purpose. With a population of 22 million Ghanaians, any minute wasted is 22 million minutes wasted. We

should therefore ensure that we manage time effectively to make maximum use of this important resource.

1469. Mr. Speaker, I wish to call on all Ghanaians to rededicate ourselves to the achievement of our goals and the dreams we have for ourselves and our country. We should work harder and strive for excellence in all our endeavours and show respect to our country men and women. Let us look into the future with hope and a sense of anticipation because the future is certainly bright.
1470. I believe that the coming years hold good and bright prospects for all of us. We should have high expectations of ourselves and not be content and complacent with our accomplishments. We wish therefore to encourage all Ghanaians to give of their best in all areas of our lives because the future is bright.
1471. Mr. Speaker, it is also my expectation that when we put in a little bit more effort, with belief in ourselves and our country we will definitely create an improved lifestyle for ourselves and our children through hard work and perseverance. We signed a contract with our society the day we entered Primary One classroom.
1472. I want to take the opportunity to express my gratitude to all Ghanaians for our fortitude and determination to succeed. I want to make special mention of those who provided memoranda and inputs into the 2008 budget process. We appreciate your invaluable support and wish to thank you for taking the time to respond to our invitation.
1473. Mr. Speaker, this country belongs to all of us and it is bigger than anyone of us. Therefore we should always act in the best interest of this nation and be accountable for our deeds.
1474. May God bless us all as we continue this journey into a brighter future.
1475. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move.

**LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS INTO THE 2008-2010 BUDGET
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Mr. Kweku Botwe

Mr. Reinjedorf B. Perbi , KPMG

Nana Adom-Boakye

National Lottery Authority (NLA)

Owusu Amoah, Financial Consultant, P. O. Box BT615, Tema

Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association of Ghana

PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS

Private Enterprise Foundation, P. O. Box CT 1671, Cantonments, Accra-Ghana

Ranking Mechanism for Consultants and Contractors

Rationalizing Consumption Taxes on Mobile Phones in Ghana

Revenue Agencies Governing Board

Standards Strategy for Development

Trade & Investment Program for a Competitive Export Economy (TIPCEE)

Value Added Tax Service

Victor Boadu, USA

Wastecare Associates

World Food Programme

World Food Programme, P. O. Box 1423, Accra-Ghana