



OFFICE OF PARLIAMENT
HON. SAMUEL NARTEY
GEORGE (MP)

Member of Parliament
(Ningo-Prampram, Greater Accra)

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Committees:
Deputy Ranking, Communications
Committee
Member, Public Accounts Committee

Monday 18th September 2023

Dear NDC Council of Elders,

I bring you warm greetings from the beautiful twin cities of Ningo and Prampram.

I am writing to you as a dedicated member of our great National Democratic Congress. I am currently the Deputy Ranking Member of the Select Committee on Communications, which exercises Parliamentary oversight of the Ministries of Communications & Digitalization and Information. I currently serve as the Secretary-General of the African Parliamentary Network on Internet Governance, the premier body recognised by the African Union Commission and the United Nations Multi Advisory Group to the UN Secretary-General, responsible for data policy and Internet governance issues. I have previously served on the Board of the National Information Technology Agency and also as a Communications Specialist to President John Dramani Mahama. I have run an ICT practice for almost two decades and have consulted on UNDP and World Bank-sponsored projects in the country. I speak at International Fora as a resource person for international CSOs, the AUC and the UN on technology, data policy, cybersecurity and internet governance.

Forgive the lengthy layout of the credentials above. It is necessary to establish that I have some level of competence on the subject matter to erase any doubts, if any, exist. My letter to you has become necessary following a petition addressed to your good selves and has become a matter of public knowledge. The petition touches on the suitability or otherwise of the nomination and appointment of Dr Edward Kofi Omane Boamah as the Director of Elections and ICT. I recognise the democratic rights of the petitioner to state his discomfort or disagreement with the appointment freely. However, that right must be exercised based on facts and evidenced by substance. I trust that you, our respected Council of Elders, will arrive at the best decision on the petition after consideration of my letter.

The petition raises issues that I will address individually.





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LACK OF EXPERTISE:

I find it highly troubling that the suggestion is even made that the appointee needs more election management and ICT expertise. The appointee has served our great Party in government as Deputy Minister for Environment, Science, Technology & Innovation from 2009 to February 2012. He also served as the Minister for Communications from 2013-2016. In both Ministries, he had responsibilities that covered the ICT sphere. As Minister for Communication, the nominee's extensive track record is evident. Our government saw growth in leaps and bounds under his leadership in the ICT sector.

The current digitalisation drive in our country runs on the backbone infrastructure that the appointee oversaw, covering investments worth over US\$300 million. From the 770km Eastern Corridor Fibre, which has opened up over 160 communities to the power of the internet, to the over 100 enhanced Community Information Hubs to the Accra Digital Center that has provided over 10,000 direct and indirect jobs and placed Ghana as a significant BPO destination to the several e-initiatives undertaken under the e-Ghana project that covered the Judiciary, Parliament, Health, Education, National Security, Immigration and Cybersecurity to the great strides we made in the areas of rural telephony and the National Data Center.

The footprints of the appointee are indelible and establish his remarkable credentials as not just a competent technology leader but a result-oriented leader who can build effective teams and exercise adequate oversight to achieve stellar results. If the appointee could accomplish these and more in four years for our government, I have absolute faith in him to deliver for our party. Indeed, it is even on record that he once strove to build a Mini Data Centre for our party at the national headquarters but for the inability of the then National Executives to agree on which office space to dedicate for the sensitive ICT project.

RISK TO PARTY CREDIBILITY:

The point made by the petitioner is vague. It needs to establish what credibility risk arises by appointing Dr Edward Kofi Omane Boamah (A former Minister for Communications and former Deputy Minister in two ministries between 2009 and 2013). A suggestion that "appointing an individual without substantial experience in the field could undermine the party's credibility and tarnish its reputation" cannot apply to the appointee. I have





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established above a summary of the appointee's experience and competencies, and as such, I am confident that this fear would not materialise as the appointee is well suited to ensure we are not saddled with such challenges.

NEED FOR SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE:

After reading the petitioner's submission on this point, I reached the respected professional conclusion that he lacks a fundamental understanding of technology leadership. It has long been established that the most efficient and effective technology leaders are not necessarily themselves geeks but those with leadership and administrative acumen and technical understanding. Technology geeks do not necessarily make the best leaders, and this is evidenced when you look at the CEOs of most major technology corporations. Persons with leadership and administrative acumen who appreciate and understand technology are the CEOs and COOs of many Silicon Valley firms.

In this particular case, the appointee has vast administrative expertise as a former Student Leader, Medical Doctor, Deputy Minister, Minister and Deputy Campaign Coordinator in 2012 and has shown stellar knowledge of the technology landscape when he served as Minister for Communications and when he represented Ghana at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the GSMA on several occasions. A case that readily comes to mind is the award Ghana received from the International Telecommunications Union under his watch for our homegrown solution to rural telephony challenges. This solution has been replicated in other parts of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. In addition, under his leadership, Ghana was elected to serve on the Council of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) for four (4) more years with 130 votes out of 165 ballot papers issued at the Plenipotentiary Conference of the ITU in October 2014 in Busan South Korea. (<https://www.myjoyonline.com/ghana-elected-to-the-council-of-the-international-telecommunication-itu-union/#!>)

Furthermore, as a technology leader, Dr. Edward Kofi Omane Boamah represented Ghana competently at the international level and successfully lobbied and hosted delegates from the African Region in Ghana for the Regional Development Forum and the Africa Regional Preparatory Meeting ahead of the 2014 World Telecommunication Development.





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Conference (WTDC) in the United Arab Emirates. (<https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC14/RPM-AFR/Pages/item.aspx?ItemID=576>) (<https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC14/Pages/item.aspx?ItemID=974>). I firmly believe Dr Omame Boamah can leverage his vast network in ICT to benefit our party, the NDC.

It is also important to note that the claim that the Director of Elections and IT must possess specialised knowledge to safeguard against hacking attempts and voter data breaches exposes a need for more understanding of the subject matter by the petitioner. When has this been a requirement in previous appointments in our Party? No one in the world can prevent hacking attempts or data breaches! Absolutely no one! What we require is a team leader who assembles a team that has all the competencies to build a robust system with adequate guardrails to protect the systems in place if hacking attempts happen. Even Google and Microsoft get hacked, but what is essential are the systems in place to ensure process continuity and disaster mitigation. Having experienced first-hand the appointee overseeing the construction of the first Tier 3 Data Center in West Africa under the John Mahama administration and the safety and disaster recovery systems put in place which continue to serve our Nation and its technology and national security needs, I am confident and assured in his ability to replicate same systems for our beloved Party.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT:

My dear Elders, the facts of the matter cannot be further from the truth. As a former Deputy Minister for Youth and Sports (February 2012 to January 2013 – during the election year of 2012), the appointee has distinguished himself in his relationship with the youth of our party and the country. He is young, in touch with different age demographics, tech-savvy, and has one of the most active presence on several social media platforms. He is a voice from our Party that connects and resonates with the country's youth. I state that the appointee has a better rapport with the youth of our party and country on technological platforms than any previous appointee to the said position in the history of our Party. This is the stark truth. Moreover, Dr. Omame Boamah successfully led the youth of Ghana to the 2013 Africa Cup of Nations tournament in South Africa and brought them back home safely without a hitch. The Chairman of the Local Organising Committee of the 2012 ECOWAS Youth Games further operationalised the Mathematics and Science Scholarship Scheme (MASTESS) and the Better Ghana ICT Project, which benefitted many Ghanaian youth.





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My beloved and respected Council of Elders, this particular Party appointment sent the most emphatic signal of our seriousness and resolve to annexe power in the 2024 polls. Let no one seek to, for whatever motivation, walk back such a positive and pragmatic step on which our 2024 electoral victory is anchored. The appointee – An ICT Leader, NDC Deputy Campaign Coordinator for the successful 2012 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, and Secretary to the successful 2011 Get Atta Mills Elected (GAME) campaign team – is loyal, dedicated, focused, analytical and practical. He is a pragmatic perfectionist and is meticulously intentional and thorough. His attention to fine details is rare. His technical ability is without doubt, and his record is without blemish. Moreover, he has quickly set the entire party structures in readiness, exemplified by his management of the ongoing Limited Registration Exercise by the Electoral Commission.

I urge you to dismiss the said petition with alacrity as it has the propensity to shift the focus of the appointee from the solemn task we have handed him. Dr. Edward Kofi Omane Boamah is an asset to our great tradition, and we must use this as an example that our Party appreciates the sacrifice of young people and truly believes in their abilities to deliver whenever the need arises. I am a young man deeply connected to the 'streets of Ghana', and I can assure you that the appointee is the best choice at this given time.

I urge the petitioner to withdraw his petition and come on board for us to work towards the rescue mission to build the Ghana we want together.

God bless our Homeland, Ghana
God bless our great National Democratic Congress
God bless our beloved Council of Elders

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Samuel George'.

HON SAMUEL NARTEY GEORGE(MP)

