

ICE BREAKER MEETING BETWEEN THE CHAIRMEN OF GHANAIAN POLITICAL PARTIES AND THEIR IVORIAN COUNTERPARTS



THE IEA chalks another milestone in growing
Democracy in the West African Sub Region



A publication of The Institute of Economic Affairs

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The Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), Ghana, was founded in October 1989 as an independent, non-governmental Institution dedicated to the establishment and strengthening of a market economy and a democratic, free and open society. It considers improvements in the legal, social and political institutions as necessary conditions for sustained economic growth and human development.

The IEA supports research, and promotes and publishes studies on important economic, socio-political and legal issues in order to enhance the understanding of public policy.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 7th and 8th of April 2006, were extremely historic days in the calendars of Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire, for, it marked the period when The Institute of Economic Affairs (The IEA) Ghana, and the Netherlands Institute for Multi-Party Democracy (NIMD), brought together Chairmen of Ghanaian Political Parties and their counterparts from Cote d'Ivoire under their West African Regional Programme for Political Parties (WARPPP) in an Icebreaker Meeting.

The Meeting, commencing with a Welcome Reception at the Kotoka International Airport, through two days of comprehensive fruitful dialogue and ending with a Farewell Dinner was a resounding success. It was difficult to identify a single factor that made the meeting particularly successful one that it was.

Highlights of the Meeting

Calibre of Participants

The calibre of Participants at The Meeting was outstanding.

• Ghanaian Participants

From Ghana, the Party Chairmen that attended the Meeting included **Madam Hawa Yakubu, 1st Vice Chairperson of the ruling New Patriotic Party, (NPP)**, who captivated all with her thorough grasp of the issues and her amazing delivery; **Mr. Kwabena Adjei, the newly elected Chairman of the National Democratic Congress, (NDC)**, the largest opposition party in the country, who injected some verve into the Meeting with his Social Psychology; **Alhaji Ramadan, Acting Chairman of the Peoples National Convention (PNC)** and **Dr. Edmund**

THE IEA/IMD WEST AFRICAN REGIONAL PROGRAMME ICE-BREAKER MEETING BETWEEN THE CHAIRMEN OF IVORIAN POLITICAL PARTIES AND THEIR GHANAIAIN COUNTERPARTS

THEME : CONSOLIDATION OF DEMOCRACY: THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES
ORGANISED BY THE INSTITUTE OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, (IEA), GHANA,
IN COLLABORATION WITH THE NETHERLANDS INSTITUTE FOR MULTI-PARTY
DEMOCRACY (NIMD)

VENUE: THE CONFERENCE HALL DATE: THUR. 6TH - 8TH APRIL TIME: 9am - 7pm



Delle, Chairman of the Convention Peoples Party (CPP), both of whom having participated in the Togolese Meeting had a wealth of ideas to share. Also present were other members of the various Ghanaian political parties.

• Ivorian Participants

On the Ivorian side, that The IEA, was able to bring together such political heavy weights is a feather in its cap.

The ruling party, the **Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI)**, was ably represented by Messrs Akoun Laurent and Sery Bailly both Members of Parliament; the largest opposition parties, the **Rassemblement des Republicains (RDR)** Ouattara's party was represented by his Special Advisor M. Adama Toungara and the **Parti Démocratique de Cote d'Ivoire-Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (PDCI-RDA)** Konan Bedie's Party, was represented by H.E the Former Prime Minister, Daniel Kablan Duncan. Also in attendance were the Chairman of the **Parti Ivoirien des Travailleurs (PIT)**, Prof. Francis Woodie and representatives of the **Mouvement des Forces d'Avenir, (MFA) Union**

Démocratique et Citoyenne (UDCY) and **Union Pour la Démocratie et pour la Paix de Côte d'Ivoire (UDPCI)**. Other representatives of the various political parties attended and participated in the event.

• Calibre of Speakers

The depth of knowledge and experience shared by the Speakers, all experts in their fields of endeavour was profound.

From B.J da Rocha's '*Political Parties and National Integration*' to Kwame Pianim's '*Political Tolerance and Power Sharing In A Multiparty Democracy*', through Brigadier-General Francis Agyemfra's very well-researched and powerfully delivered '*Political Parties, National Security and Stability*', to Kwamena Ahwoi's '*Potential Causes of Conflicts and Mechanisms For Achieving Consensus And Avoiding Conflicts*' and finally to J.V. Gbeho's '*The Role of Political Parties In Conflict Prevention And Post Conflict Reconstruction*', all lectures were lauded by the Participants as being deep and thought-provoking.





Turn out for the meeting was impressive. In the picture are, Madam Araba Bentsi-Enchill, Vice Chairman, CPP and Mrs Cecilia Bannerman, former Minister of Mines and Employment

● **Calibre of Chairmen**

The quality and calibre of Chairpersons chosen for the event was phenomenal. All highly respected in their various fields of endeavour, the Chairpersons drawn from both countries and from across the political divide, performed their role with unrivalled flair. At the Opening Ceremony, it was Mr. Sam Okudzeto, a legal luminary and former chairman of the Ghana Bar Association who got the meeting off to a roaring start with his insight on African matters. At the First Session, it was Prof. Adjei Bekoe and Ambassador Chris Kpodo who held the fort for Madam Hawa Yakubu, at the Second Session, it was Mr. Akoun Laurent, the Deputy General Secretary and MP of the FPI, who with his infectious sense of humour ensured the success of the Meeting, whilst Dr. Kwabena Adjei and H.E Mr. Daniel Kablan Duncan for the third and fourth Sessions respectively, steered the Meeting creditably. Dr. Adama Toungara of the RDR and Special Adviser to Alassane Quattara and Ambassador Chris Kpodo also performed their roles with distinction.

● **Distinguished Personalities**

The presence and well-researched address by

Ghana's first Cardinal, His Eminence Peter Cardinal Appiah Turkson at the Closing Dinner was phenomenal.

Other distinguished guests at the Meeting included Maulvi Wahab Adam, the Ameer of the Ahmadiyya Mission in Ghana, the Dutch Ambassador to Ghana H.E. Arie Van Der Wiel, the Guinean Ambassador to Ghana H.E Mr. Baa and the Ivorian Ambassador to Ghana H.E Kakou Langba Paul.

● **Shared Experiences**

The wealth of ideas shared at The Meeting reinforced the need for more of such meetings in shaping a country's democracy.

● **Dialogue and Discussion**

The cocktail of contributions at The Meeting indubitably contributed to its success! It was exciting to see the Ghanaians and Ivorians interacting with each other and members of the Ghanaian and Ivorian opposition and ruling Parties interacting among themselves. Even though the Ivorians attest to having a spirit of 'conviviality' among them, they acknowledged the need to make political gain out of it.

- **Tolerance**

All the Participants agreed that tolerance of each other's differences in opinions, ideology, religion and gender among others, was requisite for the growth of multi party democracy.

- **Bringing Together**

The Meeting brought together political heavyweights from Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. It was exciting to watch them sharing coffees, having lunch, sharing jokes and dining together in a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere.

- **Platform**

It provided a platform for Participants from both Countries to exchange ideas and learn first hand issues pertinent to the establishment of multiparty democracy in their respective countries.

- **Comments**

The success of The Meeting was captured in some of the comments made.

"The Meeting was an excellent thing"

"We wish that it would happen more often".

- **Democracy**

In a fine display of democracy each participant had a chance to effectively contribute towards The Meeting either by chairing a session, in remarks made, or by simply reviewing the draft Joint Communiqué.

- **The West African Regional Programme for Political Parties (The WARPPP)**

All the Parties represented were particularly impressed by the ideals of this Programme and committed themselves to be part of it by signing the Joint Communiqué establishing a Permanent Consultative Conference of their respective Chairpersons.

- **Joint Communiqué**

The Joint Communiqué signed at the end of The Meeting among other things, commended The IEA/NIMD for their pioneering role in the growth and consolidation of multi-party democracy in the two countries; agreed to establish a permanent Consultative Conference

of Chairmen of Political Parties of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire under The IEA/WARP Programme which would meet regularly; condemned violence in the sub-region; and agreed to establish a Platform to enable women and children contribute to the growth of peace and democracy in the sub region.

- **Presentation of Joint Communiqué to Vice President of the Republic of Ghana
HE Alhaji Aliu Mahama**

It was probably the visit to the Vice President that provided the feather in the cap of the organizers. At approximately 7:00 pm on the 8th of April 2006, an impressive convoy of vehicles carrying the Participants left the Golden Tulip Hotel where the Signing Ceremony had taken place, to the Vice Presidents Residence. The Participants were all eloquently introduced by Madam Hawa Yakubu to His Excellency who warmly welcomed each and every one of them.

Having been ushered into the Veep's home, the leader of the delegation, Dr. Kwabena Adjei, National Chairman of the NDC briefed the Vice President on the Ice Breaker Meeting and presented him with a copy of the Joint Communiqué.

The Vice President on his part thanked the leader of the delegation and congratulated him on his appointment as chairman of his party.

He commended both the Ghanaian and Ivorian delegates on the pivotal role they were playing in consolidating democracy in the sub-region.

He was particularly appreciative of the efforts The IEA in growing democracy in West Africa.

After a light refreshment, the delegation returned to the Golden Tulip Hotel where a dinner was being held by The IEA/NIMD in honour of the Chairmen and representatives of the Ivorian Political Parties.

A real climax of The Meeting!

The IEA and NIMD

Speaker after speaker commended The IEA and NIMD for the pivotal roles they were playing in establishing multi-party democracy in the sub-region.

Kudos IEA/NIMD for a job well done!

THE INSTITUTE OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS (THE IEA)



The Administration Block of The IEA

The Institute of Economic Affairs, (The IEA) Ghana, is Ghana's premier public-policy think-tank. Founded in 1989, The IEA has at its principal objectives.

- The promotion of good governance in Ghana;
- The establishment of multi-party democracy in Ghana;
- The creation of a free and fair market economy in Ghana, the West African sub region and the entire African continent.

The IEA ensures that these objectives are achieved by:

- providing a forum/platform for the exchange of ideas;
- promoting research and publication on important economic socio-economic political and legal issues
- providing training to institutions of democracy such as Parliament, the Judiciary, the Media and Civil Society;
- promoting the use of economic reasoning

with particular regards to scarcity and trade-offs;

- Monitoring and providing in-depth analysis on the establishment of democracy in Ghana.

Meeting these targets

The IEA translates academic research and analysis on selected policy issues into easily readable information.

The Netherlands Institute for Multi Party Democracy (NIMD)

The NIMD is The IEA's main collaborator in organizing the West African Regional Programme.

The NIMD is based in The Hague, Netherlands and has as its principal objective the forging of partnerships around the world with the view to spreading and sustaining multi-party democracy in every part of the world.

The NIMD currently supports multi-party democracy in eighteen countries throughout the world, five of which are in Africa.

The IEA/NIMD realizing that the key element to the attainment of their common objectives i.e. the sustenance of multi-party democracy, was the Political Party, decided to jointly sponsor The IEA/NIMD West Africa Regional Programme (WARP).

The West African Regional Programme for Political Parties (WARPPP)

The IEA and NIMD have since July 2003, effectively collaborated to implement The IEA/NIMD Ghana Political Parties Programme. The gains of which have been far reaching.

The Programme has succeeded in, among others, deepening dialogue, building and nurturing confidence and trust among the leaders of Ghanaian Political Parties and consolidating the gains made in growing democracy in the Country.

The ultimate mission of The IEA is to promote good governance, establish multi party democracy and a free and fair market economy not only in Ghana, but also in West Africa and throughout the continent of Africa.

It was in keeping with their mission that The IEA in collaboration with the NIMD agreed to institute the WARP, to extend the gains made

under the Ghana's Political Parties Programme to the countries in the sub-region.

The WARP is a Programme by which The IEA and NIMD bring together political parties, civil society organizations and experienced politicians from the countries in the West Africa sub-region.

The aims of the WARP include promoting peace and stability, consolidating democracy, and reducing poverty in each of the countries in the sub-region.

Three types of programme are organized under the WARP.

These are:

- *National Programmes designed among things to target specific national situations, stabilize peace, grow democracies and deepen dialogue.*
- *Bilateral Programmes which bring together Political Parties, civil society organizations and political leaders of two West African countries to share experiences through dialogue for the mutual improvement of political conditions in their countries.*
- *Joint Programmes which involve groups from three or more countries in the sub region.*

The Ice Breaker Meeting organized between the Chairmen of Political Parties in Ghana and their counterparts from Côte d'Ivoire was a bilateral one.



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