

GNAT URGES PARLIAMENT TO PASS PENSION BILL INTO LAW

The Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) has appealed to Parliament to ensure that the Pension Bill is passed into law before the end of its tenure in December, 2008.

The government presented to parliament a comprehensive pension bill to provide pension reforms in the country by the introduction of a three-tier pension scheme.

The Association is of the opinion that, the Pension Bill, when passed into law, will ensure sustainability and adequate pension income security for Ghanaian workers.

The second reading of the bill began before parliament adjourned in July, 2008.

The Association's appeal to the law-making body is contained in a six-point communiqué issued at the end of a two-day National Council meeting of GNAT held from 6th -7th of August at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Kumasi.

The meeting, which is held once every year, brought together 143 GNAT Council members from the ten regions of the country to deliberate on ways to advance the cause of teachers and also formulate policies to improve upon teachers' contribution to national development.

The Association emphasized that, a natural reaction to the passage of the bill and its eventual receipt of Presidential assent, would be the expression of joy by all pensioners who stand to benefit from the scheme.

It called on the government to put premium on measures to retain teachers in the classroom alongside plans to increase intake into Teacher Training Colleges in the country.

The National Council of the Association expressed grave concern about payroll anomalies, and called for the “cleaning up” of the payroll by urgently solving the current confusion emanating from the operation of the IPPD 2 system.

On the Single Spine Salary Structure, members of the council were of the opinion that, it held great promise for workers in the country and appealed to the government to assist employee organizations to educate workers to understand the rationale and nuances involved in the implementation of the new system.

The Association believed that, it was the responsibility of the government to plan and systematically design the linkage of various levels of education with the world of work and asked, “How will we configure the current NYEP programme to equip the youth with appropriate skills to enter the world of work and ensure their tenure and security?”

While calling for a review of the implementation of the School Feeding programme, GNAT also requested government to review the current operations and plan seriously for its expansion.

On the impending elections, the Association called on all political parties to be tolerant of opposing views and focus on issue-based campaigns to ensure violence-free and credible parliamentary and presidential elections in December.

It also called on citizens to ensure that they use their legal franchise to ensure peaceful elections for the country, adding, “The peace and stability being currently enjoyed by Ghanaians should not be taken for granted”.

Earlier in a welcome address, the National President of GNAT, Mr. Joseph Kwaku Adjei expressed worry about teacher supply in subject areas like Mathematics, Science and Social Studies, among others.

He noted that, without quality training in these areas, the effectiveness of the teacher in ensuring the success of the new education reforms would be hampered.