

PRESS STATEMENT

GHANA NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS

SALARY NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN GES AND GNAT AND THE NATIONAL BUDGET FOR YEAR 2007

Introduction

The Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) is issuing this press statement to clarify its position on the current negotiations with the Ghana Education Service (GES)

We believe this statement is necessary because of recent developments which amount to lack of good faith on the part of those with whom we are supposed to be negotiating.

National Budget for 2007

When GNAT was granted a Collective Bargaining Certificate, the understanding was that we were thereby empowered under Labour Act 2003 (Act 651) to negotiate directly with the employer, viz GES and not centrally. GNAT is therefore disappointed with the impression created by the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning during that budget statement that the **FAIR WAGES COMMISSION** would take over all collective bargaining negotiations.

Status of Current Negotiations

It is now public knowledge that the Standing Negotiating Committee of GNAT and GES were inaugurated on October 12, 2006 to negotiate the proposals submitted by the teachers. The understanding was that the negotiations were going to be concluded in time for the National Budget to take into account the agreed remuneration package.

It is important to let the public know that after the sixth meeting of the joint negotiations committee on November 3, 2006 the GES management team sought to consult their principals. It is rather sad to say that since then, the GES management team has not return to the negotiation table. We in GNAT have written to ask them to return to the negotiation table but they have failed to return.

In the circumstances, we consider that the negotiations have been stalled and we have no option than to declare a deadlock and refer the matter to the National Labour Commission.

It is unfortunate that the wrong impression has been created that the Fair Wages Commission is to take over all negotiations on behalf of Government using the quota for Wages and Salaries allocated in the budget for the purpose.

GNAT views the work of the proposed Fair Wages Commission as a long term measure and purely technical administrative body to advise Central Government on implementation of a rational pay system for its direct employees.

As such, GNATs salary proposals were not addressed to the Commission. GNAT hopes that government will not do anything to undermine the leadership's credibility with GNAT member. We remind the membership that GNAT has, over the 70 years of its existence, built up a reputation of pragmatic approach to problem solving. We intend to resolve this current problem to the satisfaction of our members.

What we demand of the other social partners is good faith, commitment and integrity. The future of our dear country is at stake –let every player in these negotiations be ware of this.

JOSEPH KWAKU ADJEI (MR)
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

IRENE DUNGAN –ADANUSA (MRS)
GENERAL SECERTARY

DATED: 22ND NOVEMBER, 2006.