**CHAIRPERSON’S SPEECH – POLICY LECTURE**

**RESPONSIBLE CIITIZENSHIP AND ACCOUNTABLE LEADERSHIP**

Hon Ministers,

Members of Parliament,

Niimei, Naamei, Nananom,

Religious Leaders,

Distinguished guests,

Friends of the media,

Fellow countrymen and women,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to speak to you this morning, to welcome you most cordially to the second edition of the GHANA ACTION SERIES organised by OneGhana Movement and CITI FM and in partnership with the National Commission for Civic Education.

It has regrettably become commonplace to note that the failure of responsible citizenship largely accounts for the prevalence of corruption, avarice and deterioration in the social and moral fibre of Ghana and Ghanaians. Lamentably, the exploitation of public offices and spaces for private gain continues to significantly impact on the development of Ghana in a negative way in spite of attempts ostensibly made to reverse the tide. On the other hand, the persistence of the problems not only has dire consequences for the governance of the country, but further undermines the very fabric of the very social life of Ghana.

My dear fellow citizens, in democratic governance, once a public official assumes office and the responsibilities that come with it, they acknowledge that their primary responsibility is to serve the interests of the ordinary citizen first and foremost. Public officials therefore have a duty of care, to remain accountable to the ordinary citizen who works to pay their tax and to contribute to the development of the nation.

Similarly, everyone has a duty to be a responsible citizen; however, not everyone takes this responsibility seriously. There are many people the world over who do not know what it means to be a responsible citizen, and these are the people who inadvertently destroy our communities. Being a responsible citizen covers many areas – some of them legal obligations, some social and others moral. It is obvious, that because not all of them are legal obligations, much more is required to be a truly responsible citizen. It goes without saying that beyond obeying the laws, we sometimes must go out of our way to do things which bring value to our society.

So what action do we take? In order to address this problem, there is the need for a paradigm shift in the mind-set of Ghanaians and the general psycho-social aspects of Ghana’s approaches to dealing with the menace of corruption, social indiscipline and poor work ethic among others. In this regard, ensuring a marked degree of social inclusion and public engagement of whole populations directly impacted by the issue of citizen responsibility and accountable governance remains central to any model developed to combat the menaces identified.

My fellow citizens, it is my hope that this lecture will provoke a national conversation on the issue of leadership failures at all levels of our national life; from the junior office to the most senior, from parents to teachers, from preachers to individual members of the congregation; as well as the need for a change of mind-set and a collective national re-awakening and re-orientation in order to march forward to achieve our goals for the good life which we all aspire to.

Thank You.