

Deepen gender reforms, inclusion across ranks ... Deputy Chief of Staff urges GAF

BY STEPHANIE BIRIKORANG

THE Deputy Chief of Staff in charge of Administration at the Office of the President, Nana Oye Bampoe Addo, has urged the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) to deepen gender reforms and institutionalise inclusion across all ranks to strengthen the country's global reputation in peacekeeping and security.

She said greater representation of women in command, operational and peacekeeping roles was essential to building a professional, disciplined and responsive Armed Forces that reflected the country's constitutional values of equality and fairness.

Speaking in Accra yesterday at the GAF's commemoration of the 25th anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, on the theme "1325 @ 25 – Embracing the Future of Women, Peace and Security for a Gender Responsive Ghana Armed Forces," Ms Bampoe praised the GAF for its strides in advancing gender inclusion and professionalism.

She recalled her early years of advocacy in the 1990s when female officers struggled with inadequate facilities, noting that the adoption of a Gender Policy and the appointment of a Gender Advisor at the Command level demonstrated the GAF's commitment to

progress.

Ms Bampoe said the GAF had come a long way from those early days and were now recognised internationally for their role in advancing women's participation in peace operations.

The Deputy Chief of Staff highlighted the country's broader achievements in implementing the women, peace and security agenda, including the appointment of women to 23.6 per cent of key leadership positions in government, with the Vice-President, Professor Naana Jane Opoku-Agyemang, serving as the first woman to chair both the Armed Forces and Police Councils.

She cited the appointment of Ghana's first female Chief Fire Officer and first female Director-General of the Prisons Service as milestones in breaking gender barriers in national security institutions.

Ms Bampoe commended the exemplary service of Ghanaian female peacekeepers such as Captain Cecilia Erzuah and Squadron Leader Sharon Mwinsote Syme, who have received international recognition as UN Military Gender Advocates, describing them as "trailblazers of transformation."

She urged the Armed Forces to continue upholding professionalism, discipline and accountability while fostering an environment

that enabled women to excel.

The Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS), Lieutenant General William Agyapong, in his remarks noted that the commemoration marked a reaffirmation of the Forces' commitment to sustaining progress in women's participation and leadership within the military.

He said the GAF had developed a Gender Affairs Office, introduced gender-based training across operational and command facilities, and implemented policies that enhanced women's participation in technical and leadership roles.

Those measures, he noted, had improved operational effectiveness and strengthened the Forces' contribution to peacekeeping missions.

Lt Gen Agyapong expressed appreciation to development partners, including Global Affairs Canada and the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre, for their continued support in advancing the women, peace and security agenda.

He urged personnel from all security services to embrace gender inclusion as a shared national responsibility.

Lt Gen Agyapong indicated that GAF would continue to demonstrate that a gender-responsive military was not only stronger and more capable but also a model for sustainable peace and democratic growth.



• Nana Oye Bampoe Addo (seated middle) with Lieutenant General William Agyapong (seated forth from left) and other dignitaries at the event