

Parliament ratifies bilateral agreement with Qatar on manpower export from Ghana

BY BENJAMIN ARC-TON-TETTEY

PARLIAMENT has ratified a bilateral agreement between Ghana and the government of Qatar on the regulation of manpower employment in Qatar.

The aim of the agreement, according to the report by the Committee of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, was to protect the rights of Ghanaian citizens who travelled to Qatar to seek greener pastures.

Addressing the House last Wednesday, following the presentation of the report, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa, said the agreement focused on issues such as accommodation and medical allowances for Ghanaian workers in Qatar.

“Mr Speaker, when Members of Parliament obtain original copies

of the bilateral agreement, you will be excited at the provisions. For example, Mr Speaker, Article 9 of the original agreement mandates that all employers in Qatar must sign contracts with every Ghanaian worker so that their rights will be protected,” Mr Ablakwa stated.

“Again, Article 10 of the mother agreement also requires that all the workers from Ghana should be given accommodation allowance, medical allowance, and other allowances,” he added.

Mr Ablakwa described the bilateral agreement between the two countries as the first comprehensive, far-reaching, and welfare focused labour mobility agreement that Ghana had entered into.

He indicated that although the country had entered into various labour mobility agreements with other countries over the years in the form of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), those agreements were not binding enough.

Mr Ablakwa said that made most employers to take advantage of

Ghanaian workers who worked outside the country.

The sector Minister said that Parliament of Qatar had already ratified their agreement, indicating its commitment, adding “once we also ratify ours today under Article 75 of the 1992 Constitution, the agreement comes into force, and its binding.”

Mr Ablakwa further said that “Only two weeks ago, I met with the Labour Minister in Qatar, they gave us full assurances that once Parliament of Ghana ratifies this agreement, it will come into force and they are ready to abide by the provisions in the agreement.”

He indicated that the agreement covered various sectors of the economy, including the health, tourism, engineering, information technology, transport, and logistics sectors.

Mr Ablakwa assured of a transparent and credible recruitment process of workers through advertisement under the bilateral agreement.



• Mr Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa, Minister of Foreign Affairs

“I don’t even know who will be selected or will not be selected. All I do is to negotiate, make sure that this agreement and other agree-

ments meet basic tenets that we are respecting the rights of Ghanaians who work in other countries,” he said.