

# Women still underrepresented in political leadership

## • Report reveals

By Gloria Apprey

WOMEN in Ghana remain significantly underrepresented in political leadership and public decision-making, despite the passage of the Affirmative Action Gender Equity Act in 2024, the 2025 Status of Women Report has said.

The Affirmative Action Gender Equity Act, passed by Parliament in July 2024 and assented to in September 2024, required a minimum of 30 per cent representation of women in public appointments between 2024 and 2026, with a gradual increase to 50 per cent by 2034.

However, the report found that Ghana is already falling behind on these early targets and that as of the end of 2025, women make up 41 of the 276 Members of Parliament, representing 14.9 per cent.

“This is an increase of just one seat from the

previous Parliament. Women’s representation in local assemblies stands at about 4.1 per cent, while women appointed to substantive ministerial positions account for less than 20 per cent,” the report added.

These figures, the report said, fall far below both international benchmarks and the requirements set out in the new law.

The Convenor of the Women’s Manifesto Coalition, Hamida Harrison, presented the report during Network for Women’s Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT)’s End of Year review of the ‘Status of Women in Ghana’ at an event held in Accra last Friday.

The occasion also marked NETRIGHT’s 25th anniversary.

Ms Harrison raised concerns that government appointments have not complied with Section 14 of the Act, which mandates a minimum threshold of 30 per cent women’s representation in each category of public appointment.

The report also criticised the government’s

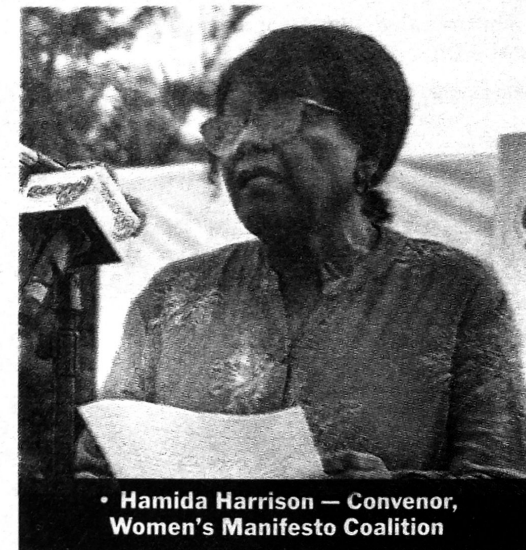
approach of grouping all appointments, including presidential staffers, instead of applying the quota separately to ministerial, ambassadorial, board and local government appointments, as required by the law.

### Budgeting

On the bright side, the 2025 review acknowledged some steps taken by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, including the inauguration of a Gender Equity Committee and efforts to develop the necessary legislative instruments.

She noted that a strategic plan for the committee’s secretariat has also been submitted for funding. Despite these efforts, the report noted that implementation has been slow.

Concerns were also raised about the lack of gender-responsive budgeting, expanding that, under Section 19 of the Act, ministries, departments and local authorities are required to include budget lines addressing gender-



• Hamida Harrison — Convenor,  
Women’s Manifesto Coalition

specific issues.

The report said recent budget statements show limited evidence that this requirement is being met.

Ms Harrison further reported economic challenges as a major barrier to progress.