

Inclusion of queenmothers in National House of Chiefs appropriate — Former A-G

By Justice Agbenorsi

A FORMER Deputy Attorney-General (A-G) and Minister of Justice, Alfred Tuah-Yeboah, has called for queenmothers to be formally represented on the National House of Chiefs.

Speaking at a workshop for queenmothers, he argued that it was time for queenmothers to challenge in court their exclusion from the National House of Chiefs.

"The Constitution recognises that when we speak of a 'chief',

the queenmother is also included in that definition. If I am allowed to amend the Chieftaincy Act, I would ensure that queenmothers gain representation in both the Regional and National Houses of Chiefs to strengthen development and conflict resolution.

"Queenmothers are often only consulted when all other avenues have been exhausted. However, I believe they should be involved from the beginning to the end of every process to fully exercise their judgment. It is high time the queen mothers unite and challenge this in court", Mr Tuah-Yeboah stated.

Article 270 of the 1992

Constitution of Ghana guarantees the institution of chieftaincy, together with its traditional councils as established by customary law and usage.

Article 277 further defines a chief as a person hailing from the appropriate family and lineage, who has been validly nominated, elected or selected and enstooled, enskinned or installed as either a chief or a queenmother in accordance with relevant statutory law and usage.

However, over the years, queenmothers have not received representation in both the Regional and National Houses of Chiefs.

It is based on this that the former A-G is backing calls for their representation on those institutions.

Workshop

The workshop was on the theme, "Contemporary Role of Traditional Authorities in Ghana".

The 7th Annual Queen Mothers workshop was organised in Sunyani by the Konrad Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) Ghana, as part of activities towards the celebration of their 60th anniversary in Ghana.

The foundation officially opened its office here in 1966, making Ghana one of their oldest and most important partner countries on the African continent.

The Country Representative of KAS Ghana, Ms Anna Lena Sabroso-Wasserfall, highlighted their commitment to the promotion of democratic participation and civic education in Ghana, hence their collaboration with traditional authorities in the country.

Over the decades, she said, KAS had organised workshops, conferences, and dialogue forums with traditional

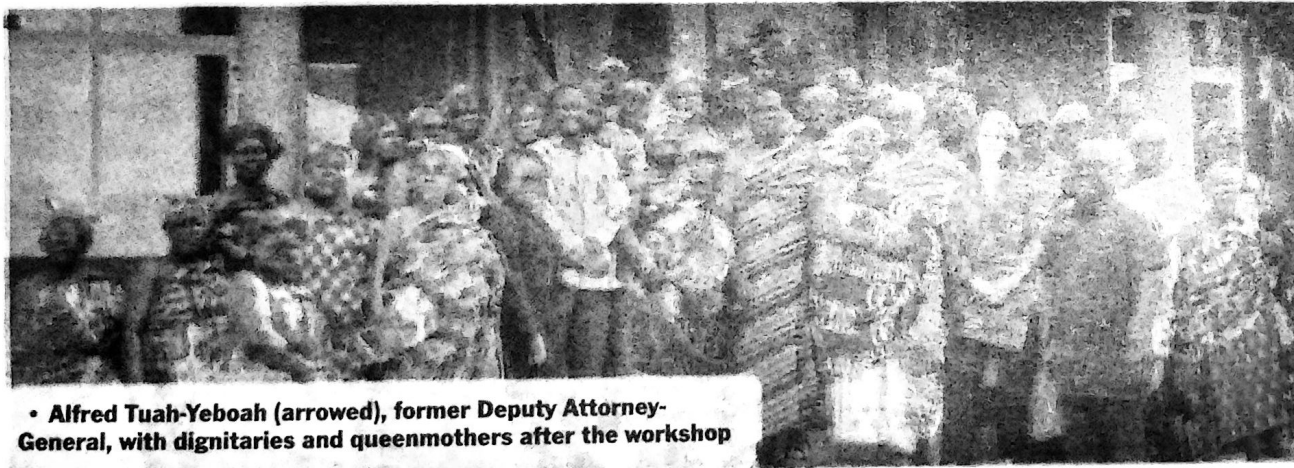
authorities throughout Ghana on a wide range of issues.

These include discussions on the role of traditional authorities within Ghana's modern political system, the constitutional role of traditional authorities, and the role of chiefs and queenmothers as mediators in conflict prevention and resolution.

"We have worked together on issues of social cohesion, on the prevention of election-related violence, and most recently, we concluded an almost two-year workshop series dedicated to combating the growing challenge of misinformation and disinformation — a challenge that increasingly threatens trust, unity, and democratic discourse within our societies.

For her part, the host of the workshop, Nana Yaa Ansua III, Secretary of the National Queen Mothers Association and President of the Bono Queen Mothers Platform, lamented the lack of recognition and support for queenmothers.

"Queenmothers are often denied stipends from the sale of stool properties, weakening us financially. Some lawyers undermine our arbitration powers by advising clients not to respond to summons from the palace, leading to disrespect toward queenmothers", she said.



• Alfred Tuah-Yeboah (arrowed), former Deputy Attorney-General, with dignitaries and queenmothers after the workshop