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NATIONAL SECRETARIAT
P. O. BOX OS 3264
OSU, ACCRA
GHANA
TEL.: 0244924696/0208981981
Website: www.ahsag.org
Email: f.affahyeboah@yahoo.com
bpolley7@gmail.com

14th August, 2018

AHSAG CONDEMNS THE CHASING OUT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF TAMALE TEACHING HOSPITAL FROM HIS OFFICE BY POLITICAL VIGILANTE GROUPS

The Association of Health Service Administrators, Ghana (AHSAG) has noted with displeasure the unfortunate chasing out of the Chief Executive Officer of Tamale Teaching Hospital, Dr. David Zaawumya Kolbila from his office on Monday, August 13, 2018.

The incident has been widely reported in the mainstream traditional media as well as several social media platforms that the unprofessional conduct was allegedly perpetrated by two youth groups in the Northern Region. These two groups are known political vigilante groups and this raises serious concerns about political interference in the management of Tamale Teaching Hospital and other Government Hospitals in the country.

As an Association of professional Healthcare Managers, we are deeply worried about this sad development in our health sector, considering the fact that this is not the first time it is happening. Indeed, on February 23, 2017, it was reported that the former Chief Executive Officer of this same Tamale Teaching Hospital, Dr. Prosper Akambong was chased out of his office by a group calling itself Northern Young Patriots. The Chief Executive Officer was eventually relieved of his position by the appointing authority.

The prevailing legal framework governing the management of our Teaching Hospitals is the Ghana Health Service and Teaching Hospitals Act, 1996 (Act 525). The Act in Section 39 explicitly provides for the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer by the Board of a Teaching Hospital. We are therefore calling for the immediate formation of a Board for Tamale Teaching Hospital since the absence of a duly constituted Board is negatively affecting governance in the Hospital. We further call on all stakeholders to allow our institutions to work if we intend to ensure the delivery of quality healthcare in our Teaching Hospitals. The political interference in the appointment of managerial positions in our health sector must stop immediately. It has adversely affected the delivery of quality health care in most of our health institutions.

We appreciate the fact that state institutions must be accountable to the people. There are however laid down procedures and channels in seeking for that accountability. Hence, in as much as the rampaging youth may have genuine concerns, we advise them to use the appropriate laid down procedures and channels in seeking redress to their concerns. This is the only way to ensure that our institutions function effectively and efficiently.

We have also seen a video in circulation which vividly captured the incident in real time. We are therefore calling on the security agencies to activate all the investigative arsenals within their disposal to

investigate the incident and ensure that the perpetrators are taken through our established criminal justice system.

His Excellency President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo during his State of the Nation Address in 2017 condemned lawless and hostile take-over of state institutions. He stated that:

“Wrongdoing has no political colour and I do not subscribe to the lawlessness of political party supporters simply because their party has been elected into office”.

We are therefore optimistic that the security agencies will be guided by this emphatic statement by our president and take the bold step in this matter by conducting a thorough investigation into it without fear or favour. At the end of the day, when the perpetrators are brought to book it will serve as a deterrent to others and go a long way to forestall a recurrence of these unfortunate incidents in our health sector.

We therefore condemn the incident in no uncertain terms and also call on the security agencies to immediately take steps to unlock the office of the Chief Executive Officer and ensure that he and his secretariat are provided with a conducive and safe atmosphere to continue with their official tasks. We further call on the security agencies to assure the nation that adequate protection would be provided for the Chief Executive Officer in the discharge of his duties.

Thank you.

FRED EFFAH-YEBOAH
PRESIDENT, AHSAG