THE INSTITUTE OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
THE GHANA POLITICAL PARTIES
PROGRAMME
HOSTS
AN EVENING ENCOUNTER
WITH
DR. MICHAEL A. SAKARA FOSTER
PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, CONVENTION PEOPLE'S PARTY (C.P.P.)

DATE
TUESDAY, JUNE 26 2012
VENUE
GHANA INDIA KOFI ANNAN CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE IN ICT
TIME
6:30PM - 8:30PM
PROGRAMME

6:00 pm - Arrival of Guests
6:20 pm - Arrival of Presidential Candidate
6:30 pm - Opening Prayer
6:32 pm - National Anthem
6:34 pm - Welcome Address
Dr. Michael Ofori-Mensah, Policy Analyst-IEA
6:40 pm - Introduction of Dr. Abu Sakara
- Representative of the CPP
6:42 pm - Presentation by Dr. Michael Abu Sakara Foster
7:07 pm - Question time
8:36 pm - Closing Statement by Dr. Michael Abu Sakara Foster
8:39 pm - Closing Remarks
8:45 pm - Cocktail
A NOTE ON THE IEA 2012 EVENING ENCOUNTER SERIES

“Those who wish to govern must allow themselves to be subjected to probing questions by the people, to ensure that they understand their concerns and have the capacity to address them.”

As part of its efforts to contribute meaningfully to multiparty democracy, The Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) under the auspices of the Ghana Political Parties Programme (GPPP) is hosting an “Evening Encounter” with the flag bearers of the four Political Parties with representation in Parliament namely; The National Democratic Congress (NDC); The New Patriotic Party (NPP); The Convention Peoples Party (CPP) and the People’s National Convention (PNC).

The Evening Encounter series was first initiated by The IEA in the lead up to the 2008 Elections.

The IEA believes that all Political Parties must have the opportunity to present their candidates, platforms and election manifestoes to the electorate. The electorate must also, at a minimum, be given the opportunity to be properly informed about options and proposals being offered by Presidential Aspirants and the Political Parties.

The “Evening Encounter” provides a platform for Presidential Aspirants to educate the electorate on their vision and plans and to provide strategies on how they intend to govern the country. The “Evening Encounter” also affords the electorate the opportunity to ask probing questions of the Aspirants who want to govern them to help them make informed choices on Election Day.

The “Evening Encounter” will also enable the electorate to discern what each Aspirant stands for, what each Aspirant intends to do and the direction in which each Aspirant intends to take Ghana. In addition, the “Encounter” will serve to ensure that the electorate takes ownership of the electoral process and provide a forum for accountability from the Aspirants even before they become President.
The IEA hopes that the “Evening Encounter” will promote constructive political discourse and an election that is focused on issues and policies and not on acrimony and personal attacks. Through the “Evening Encounter”, the Electorate will be better informed to debate, analyse and critique the plans of the various Aspirants to determine how realistic their plans are. This will ultimately deepen and promote multiparty democracy and good governance in Ghana.

Finally, the “Evening Encounter Series” will also provide fair access to the media. The “Encounter” will be broadcast live on radio and television throughout Ghana and it is hoped that it will be viewed by millions of Ghanaians who will be better informed to make their decisions at the ballot-box. A report will also be compiled based on the presentations and published in the newspapers and the electronic media to ensure that a wider audience is reached.
Dr. Michael Abu Sakara Foster, popularly known as Dr. Abu Sakara, is an agronomist (Agricultural Scientist). He has been married to Mary-Lily Kafela (MBA), an economist and Business Administrator for twenty seven years and has four children Miama, Seidu, Yomba and Alexia. Dr. Sakara is 52 years old and hails from Kekulasi at Mankuma, the Bole division of Gonja. He also has maternal links to Sunbgun in Kpembe Division, Eastern Gonja.

Dr. Sakara began school in Kpembe Primary school, East Gonja at age six years and then moved to Sawla Primary school for a short period. Thereafter he came back to school in Salaga untill the 1966. After the 1966 coup Abu Sakara was sent to study and live with friends of his father Mr. and Mrs. Foster, evangelical missionaries. He entered Yendi Secondary school as a pioneer in 1972. Under the stewardship of the Fosters he later went to study in the United Kingdom where he obtained his first degree in Soil Science from the University of Reading. Dr. Sakara trained for a year as a research Scholar at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture in Nigeria. He gained postgraduate training with the UK’s Overseas Development Administration for his Masters degree and then worked as an Associate Scientist in Mexico at the International Center for Maize and Wheat Improvement. He completed his PhD at 27 years old and took up appointments in Southern, Eastern, Central and West Africa consecutively.
Dr. Abu Sakara’s work experience as an Agronomist spans over 22 years of International Agricultural Development work in Africa and the Americas. Dr. Sakara has applied his profession in the development of rural economies. His speciality is on technology and institutional reforms for improving productivity of the small scale farming sector. During his career Dr. Sakara has visited over thirty (30) countries on four continents and been stationed on long term assignments in five countries. Dr. Sakara has engaged with several international organizations and was the World Bank Liaison person for his last employers, the Nippon Foundation. His versatility enables him to relate with peoples of any standing in society, from the high level policy makers to ordinary people, especially small scale rural farmers most of whom are women.

Dr. Michael Abu Sakara-Foster is the Executive Director of Rural and Agricultural Development Associates. Professionally, he advises on the promotion of economic growth through rural and agricultural Development. He currently consults for a number of organizations that are engaged in regional and country assistance programs, including the World Bank and FAO.

Dr. Sakara is committed to rebuilding the CPP to provide Ghanaians an alternative choice to the two dominant parties. This will hopefully free the country from the antagonism between the two major parties which seem to be mired in the politics of acrimony to the detriment of the country. Abu Sakara’s current and past efforts are firmly rooted in the belief that Ghana’s democracy will benefit from a process that depolarizes the political landscape to produce a more mature constructive opposition that emerges an alternative third force in Government.

Dr. Sakara has supported parliamentarians in four constituencies in northern Ghana since 1996 and participated in two election campaigns. He has also been an active member of the Patriots whose efforts were aimed at rebuilding the CPP. Dr. Sakara contested in the 2007 congress and won a position as the first National vice chair person of the CPP. He continues to play an active leadership role in support of the party and the current CPP campaign for the 2008 elections.
Dr. Sakara considers it a privilege that it is his generation’s turn to take on the mantle of responsibility to move the vision of the founding fathers from political liberation to achieve economic emancipation.

Abu Sakara is bred for leadership. His mature adherence to principles and pragmatic training in development planning and implementation, make him an asset to any development oriented institution and nation.
THE INSTITUTE OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS (IEA)

The Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), Ghana’s first public policy think-tank, was founded in 1989 with a view to broadening the debate on public policy, engendering private sector-led economic growth, and strengthening the pillars of democracy.

The ultimate mission of The IEA is to promote good governance, democracy and a free and fair market economy in Ghana, and Africa as a whole.

The IEA believes that the creation of an environment in which economic, social, political, and legal institutions function openly and freely, is the key to the attainment of sustainable economic growth and human development.

Objectives

- To serve as a centre for policy analysis and public education
- To provide a forum/platform for the exchange of ideas
- To promote research on important economic, socio-political and legal issues so as to enhance the understanding of public policy.
- To strengthen local capacity in Ghana by providing training to institutions of democracy such as Parliament, the Judiciary, the Media and Civil Society, thereby enhancing their oversight capabilities and enabling them to perform their roles as watchdogs of the society.

Activities

Through a series of policy fora and roundtable discussions, The IEA brings together Parliamentarians, Ministers of State, business leaders, representatives of donor countries,
academics, and civil society to deliberate on policy issues of national importance. These fora help shape public thinking and perception on a variety of policy issues, and have in the long-run influenced and chartered the course of policy-making in the country.

The IEA undertakes training programmes for key institutions of democracy such as Parliament, the media and civil society organizations. These workshops and training programmes are aimed at strengthening the capacity of those bodies and institutions that play an important role in the development of Ghana’s system of governance.

Bridging the world of ideas and action, The IEA also translates academic research and analysis on policy issues into more practical information, and makes recommendations for policy makers.

Through its numerous publications, The IEA makes important information available to the Ghanaian public. This further promotes and raises the level of debate on numerous policy issues.

**IEA Key Achievements**

**2012**

- The IEA releases the inaugural Petroleum Transparency and Accountability (P-TRAC) Index, to track the management of Ghana's oil and gas revenues. The publication includes a number of recommendations utilizing the IEA research on Harnessing Ghana’s Oil and Gas Revenue for sustainable development, which have been implemented in *The Petroleum Revenue Management Act (815), 2011*.

- Following an extensive collaborative process spanning over almost five years, Parliament approves the *Presidential Transition Act (845), 2012*. The legislation which was developed by The IEA provides a framework to ensure a smooth transfer of power from the outgoing President to an incoming President following democratic elections.

- IEA’s proposals for reforming Ghana’s Mining Regime is taken on board and implemented.
In a Legislative Alert, The IEA calls for deregulation and depoliticization of the petroleum sector as this was in the national interest. The official response was to partially reduce subsidies, although full deregulation remains to be implemented.

2011

- The Petroleum Revenue Management Act (815), 2011, which sets out a framework for the management of Ghana's oil and gas revenues, is passed by Parliament. The Act was prepared with significant input of the IEA.
- Dr. John Kwakye, Senior Economist at the Institute of Economic Affairs, is appointed to serve on the Monetary Policy Committee, the highest policy making body of the Central Bank.
- Dr. Michael Ofori-Mensah, Policy Analyst of the Institute, is appointed to serve and represent independent policy think-tanks on the Public Interest and Accountability Committee (PIAC), a statutory body established to oversee revenues flowing from the oil sector.

2010

- The Presidential Transition Bill, developed by the IEA, is introduced into Parliament. The Bill is a culmination of cross-party collaboration and consensus building and establishes strong evidence of our political leadership’s capability to rise above partisan politics in a quest to deepen multi-party democracy in Ghana.
- The work and contribution of the IEA in connection to public policy development, including the Presidential Transition Bill, is mentioned by President John Atta Mills in his Presidential State of Nations Address.
- Jean Mensa, IEA’s Executive Director, is appointed by President John Atta Mills as a Commissioner on the Constitution Review Commission (CRC).
• The twenty recommendations based on IEA research as captured in the Democratic Consolidation Strategic Paper (DCSP), form part of the twenty-five issues identified for action by the Constitution Review Commission.

• IEA Ghana is presented with a Millennium Excellence Award for its role in fostering good governance and multiparty democracy in Ghana and West Africa. The Millennium Excellence Award is the most prestigious and internationally recognised Awards scheme in Ghana. The awards scheme seeks to recognize, and reward, individuals and institutions in Ghana that have contributed positively to the wellbeing of the citizenry.

• The IEA conducts research into the high cost of credit in Ghana and calls for better regulation. As a follow-up, the President charges the Governor of the Central Bank to investigate and find possible solutions to the problem. The Governor’s response leads to introduction of guidelines for setting banks’ base lending rates based on their published costs.

• In a Legislative Alert, The IEA suggests that the best way to deal with the Tema Oil Refinery (TOR) debt stock is to securitize it and pay it through the budget. The Government responds by issuing bonds to cover the debt.

• The IEA conducts research in response to widespread concerns that the official goal of reducing inflation too rapidly in Ghana could cause severe output and employment losses. The results suggest that macroeconomic stability could support growth in the long-term, but care must be taken in disinflation too fast as this could have short-term adverse effects. The Government response is to set more moderate medium-term inflation targets than originally programmed.

2009

• In the 2009 State of the Nation Address, President John Atta Mills publicly commends The IEA for its work and pledges to consider the draft Bills initiated by the IEA. The Bills
include the Public Financing of Political Parties Bill; the Political Parties Bill; and the Presidential Transition Bill.

2008

- The IEA hosts the first ever debate between Vice-Presidential candidates.

- The IEA again organizes the 2008 Presidential Debate, which is the first Presidential Debate to have the participation of the candidates of all political parties with parliamentary representation. Complementing this, the IEA commences a series of Evening Encounters, providing an opportunity for Presidential candidates to outline their policies and respond to questions.

- IEA research on Ghana’s Democracy deficit dubbed the ‘Democratic Consolidation Strategic Paper’ (DCSP) is recognized by Parliamentary Political Parties in the preparation of their manifestoes. The Political Parties pledge to implement a number of reforms and recommendations proposed as part of the research including the review of the 1992 Constitution.

2007

- The Institute, recognising the deficiencies in Ghana’s democratic practice since the coming into force of the 1992 Constitution, undertakes an extensive study in key areas and proposes practical reforms for change in a document entitled Democracy Consolidation Strategy Paper (DCSP). The DCSP proposed practical reforms in the macro-political environment examining the Constitution itself, Political Parties, and the Electoral system; the governance agenda of Ghana covering decentralisation, anti corruption, human rights, media independence and the role of women and the youth in governance; the Legislative Framework for Governance including how to make Parliament effective; Judicial independence and the justice system and civil society participation in public policy formulation, implementation and monitoring.
• The Institute prepares and launches the Draft Public Funding of Political Parties Bill and the Draft Political Parties Bill. The Bills aim to strengthen the capacity of Ghana’s Political Parties and create a more liberal and flexible environment for Ghana’s Political Parties to flourish.

• The IEA publishes Ghana’s first multidisciplinary policy Journal – the *Ghana Policy Journal*.

• The IEA, through the Ghana Political Parties Programme, commences work on drafting a Presidential Transition Bill which will ensure the smooth transfer of power from one President to another.

2006

• The *Whistle Blowers Act*, which was initiated by the Institute of Economic Affairs, is passed into law by Parliament in 2006.

2005

• The IEA initiates the West African Regional Programme for Political Parties (WARPPP) to extend the successes chalked and lessons learned in Ghana’s democratic consolidation to other West African Countries. WARPPP provides an opportunity for political parties across West Africa to engage in democratic dialogue and to collaborate with civil society organizations.

2004

• The IEA facilitates the formation of a *Political Parties Code of Conduct* and the setting up of a national enforcement body to regulate the code.

2003

• Cabinet approves two bills which originated from The Institute, namely the Whistle Blowers Bill and the Right to Information Bill.
• The IEA establishes a Platform to bring together the General Secretaries of Political Parties to discuss pressing policy issues for the purpose of reaching a consensus and finding solutions together.

2001
• The IEA succeeds in the campaign against the Criminal Libel Law. After persistent advocacy for its repeal, the law was repealed in 2001.

2000
• The first ever nationwide Voter Education Programme and Ghana’s first Presidential Debate is organized by The IEA.

1996
• In the lead up to the 1996 national election The Institute forms the National Domestic Election Observers (NADEO), Ghana’s first ever coalition of Civil Society Organisations, and trains them to monitor the elections. To date, The Institute has monitored all major national elections in the country.
• The Institute launches the Economic Review Report which serves as a vehicle for analysing the state of the nation’s economy and providing useful recommendations to policy makers.
• In furtherance of its institutional support to Parliament, The IEA deploys the first batch of IEA-trained Legislative Research Assistants to provide technical and research support to Parliamentarians. The programme has now been institutionalized by Parliament with several of the original IEA trained assistants now working as full-time clerks in the House.

1992–1996
• The IEA launches its flagship publication – The Legislative Alert series - which provides a review and analysis of existing legislative policies and recommendations for future policy development. This is the first of IEA’s collection of publications including The IEA
Governance Newsletter, Policy Analysis, Occasional Papers, IEA Monographs, Celebrating Democracy, Quarterly Highlights, Economic Review and Analysis among others.

- During its founding years, the IEA is at the centre of public policy discourse, giving voice to the community’s desire for good governance and accountability in Ghana. For the duration of this period of democratic development under the Fourth Republic, there was no effective opposition in the Ghanaian Parliament and IEA was key in providing meaningful analysis and advocacy on Government policy.

The IEA 2012 Election Programme

In addition to the Evening Encounter Series, The IEA is also undertaking a number of other initiatives as part of its 2012 Election Programme. These are:

- **Presidential Debates:** The fourth in the series, the 2012 Presidential Debates will provide a single platform for the Presidential candidates to answer questions on various aspects of the nation’s development process. It will be a form of policy dialogue engagement at which the Presidential Aspirants will be enabled not only to present their own viewpoints and programmes but also point out weaknesses in the policies of their co-contestants and present alternatives to those policies and programmes. Two moderators will field questions to each of the Presidential Aspirants. Questions will be based on information received from the general public, various interest groups and organisations. The debates would be held in Accra, Takoradi and Tamale.

- **Political Code of Conduct Enforcement Bodies:** Following an agreement amongst the Political Parties, the Political Parties Code of Conduct has been revised in the lead up to the 2012 Elections. The purpose of the Code is to provide a set of guidelines by which the Parties agree to be bound with respect to their conduct in the lead up to and at Election time. Integral parts of the revised Code are the provisions for the creation of national and regional enforcement bodies. As part of its 2012 Election Programme The IEA is facilitating the creation and work of these bodies.
Further information

Further information on The IEA, as well as copies of its various publications, can be found on The IEA’s website: www.ieagh.org.