
Workshop Report on

PUBLIC SAFETY

THE ROLE OF THE SECURITY AGENCIES

held at

Volta Hotel, Akosombo

13th to 15th October 2006

Organiser:

Ministry of Interior (Mol)

Co-organiser & Sponsor

Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAF), Berlin/Accra

Group Photograph



Centre (white trad. shirt): The Minister of Interior, Hon. Albert K. Dapaah

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Governments all over the world take public safety in terms of citizens, residents and property seriously. Ghana is considered to be peaceful and is doing better in the field of security, public safety and crime levels compared to many other countries. What then needs to be done are measures that will help curb the escalation of crimes and crime reduction.

As a result of this, the Ministry of Interior in collaboration with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, organized a workshop on "Public Safety - the Role of the Security Agencies" at Volta Hotel, Akosombo from 13th to 15th October, 2006.

Composition and topics discussed

The workshop which included both the Minister of Interior and his Deputy also drew participants from all the Security Agencies including NADMO and the Bank of Ghana. In all six papers were presented by six Resource Persons from diverse backgrounds and these were discussed by five groups after which recommendations were made. The topics were: Strategies to prevent violent crimes such as robbery, car snatching and rape; Enhancing public safety by combating robbery and violent crimes; Reducing the incidence of bank fraud; Ways of reducing road accidents in the country; Ways and means of combating the trafficking and usage of drugs in Ghana; and strategies to reduce the incidence of disasters in the country.

Recommendations

It was observed that most crimes in the country are economic crimes and since poverty can be said to be absence of opportunities, there is the need to create employment opportunities for the youth. This should be preceded by basic education for all and skills acquisition.

On bank fraud, it was observed that the criminals are outpacing the security agencies therefore there should be strengthening of the capacities and capabilities of the intelligence units to keep track and pace with the criminals.

On incidence of drugs, there were suggestions that more resources should be made available to pursue an effective educational campaign across the country. Printing of drug education handouts, flyers and the establishment of a NACOB website where these flyers and information be made available for people to update themselves of harmful effects of drugs, etc. PNDC Law 236 was also suggested to be amended in line with the current drug situation.

NADMO does not have the professional skills to handle "complex" emergencies/disasters. This leaves the entire nation extremely vulnerable. There is therefore the need for a national platform informing stakeholders what NADMOs plans are in combating disasters and there should be a standing operating procedure in place/strategies in managing disasters.

Death toll on our roads was also seen to be alarming. There was a call for strict enforcement and interpretation of all Road Traffic Acts and Legislative Instruments (LI) by the enforcement agencies (police, courts, DVLA, etc.) should be enhanced and encouraged and the outcome of rulings by the courts publicized in the media for people to know the consequences of traffic offenses. There should also be a ban on importation of used vehicle tyres.

INTRODUCTION

Governments all over the world take public safety in terms of citizens, residents and property seriously. It was in this line that a three-day workshop was organized by the Ministry of Interior in collaboration with Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAF) at Akosombo for representatives of the security agencies in Ghana and other civil society organizations to deliberate on their role in maintaining public safety. They were from: Immigration Service, Navy, Police Service, Customs Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS), Ghana National Fire Service, Prisons Service, National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO), Bank of Ghana (BOG), National Security, African Security Dialogue and Research, Coalition of Small Arms, Members of Parliament, Ministry of Interior, Narcotics Control Board (NACOB), Trades Union Congress, National Road Safety Commission, the Academia, etc.

In her opening address, Mrs. Leonora Kyerematen, Programme Coordinator, National Governance Programme, stated that Ghana does not have a choice but to ensure that security services are equipped, capacitated and disciplined, so that the public can continue to enjoy the peace and security that the people consider to be their right. She assured the security agencies that her outfit is committed to working harmoniously with them and other stakeholders in exploring and implementing solutions to important security and governance issues and to support the design and implementation of a National Security Policy Framework.

On his part, the Deputy Minister of Interior, Hon. Kwaku Agyeman-Manu, remarked that crime rates like car snatching, rape, fraud, manslaughter are at unacceptable level. Furthermore, the incidence of traffic accidents, fires, proliferation of small arms, and other disasters are a major source of concern to all. According to him, the effects of these could have far reaching implications since it has the potential to undermine Foreign Direct Investment, inflow of foreign tourists and general socio-economic activities. He hoped that this workshop could help the Security Agencies not only to help them to know one another and to network but will help to improve relations among officers of all the Security Agencies and to prevent crime in the country. He thanked all the participants and believed that they would come out with recommendations and output which will not only be well crafted but also implementable which will be within the reach of the national budget.

On his part, a representative of KAF, Mr. Isaac Owusu-Mensah apologized on behalf of the Resident Representative, Mr. Klaus D. Loetzer who was in Liberia on official duties. According to Mr. Owusu-Mensah, KAF was delighted when the Ministry of Interior approached them to support them to sensitize the members of the security services on public safety. This continued their previous programmes that they have on many occasions given their support to strengthen democracy and good governance in Ghana. According to him KAF finds this as their modest contribution towards building good governance and sustainable democracy in the country. He expressed the hope that whereas the security agencies will continue to perform their professional duties, the civilians must also collaborate in this direction to achieve public safety in the country. He stressed the need for public safety if the ideals of Millennium Development Goals and Growth and Poverty Reductions Strategies are to be achieved. The security agencies are bedeviled with several limitations which hampers their work.

METHODOLOGY OF THE WORKSHOP

Six papers bothering on the role of the security agencies in public safety were presented by six resource persons. The topics were: strategies to prevent violent crimes such as robbery, car snatching and rape; reducing the incidence of bank fraud; ways of reducing road accidents in the country; ways and means of combating the trafficking and usage of drugs in Ghana; strategies to reduce the incidence of disasters in Ghana; and enhancing public safety by combating robbery and other violent crimes from the perspective of the police.

Five discussion groups were formed to discuss the presentations and made recommendations.

The following were the presentations and recommendations:

1. REDUCING THE INCIDENCE OF BANKING FRAUD – BY MR. DANIEL OWUSU

Public safety does not only refer to walking freely without threat to one's life but also extends to security of assets - both tangible and financial assets. The paper presented, examined what banking fraud is, the perceived reasons for fraud, types of bank fraud and measures to minimize their occurrence.

Bank fraud was defined as knowingly executing or attempting to execute a scheme or artifice to defraud a financial institution by means of false or fraudulent pretenses.

Reasons for fraud

- Lack of clear cut legislation against perpetrators
- Laxity in prosecution which may be due to lack of cooperation from banks in order to avoid reputational risk
- Weak internal controls which create fertile grounds for fraud
- Greed to get rich soon
- Unreasonable social and family demands
- Negligence in regular reconciliation of counterparty and other accounts

Types of fraud

- Forgery of mandate accounts
- Suppression of deposits
- Unauthorized withdrawals from both active and dormant accounts
- Fictitious domestic transfers
- Electronic card fraud
- Internet fraud

Measures to minimize fraud

Fraud creates social unrest eg. Pyram & R5 scam – people lost their money as well as lives. So, stringent measures must be taken to combat them.

There are a lot of acts to deal with fraudulent acts some of which are issuing of dud cheques, forgery, tax evasion, and an act that empowers the S.F.O. to monitor, investigate and prosecute offenses involving serious financial and economic loss to the state. There are also collaboration between the Bank of Ghana (BOG) and the law enforcement agencies in financial crime prevention and prosecution and BOG and international financial institutions in fighting cross-border financial fraud.

Banks have also instituted effective internal control system like processes and security features. There is education on security of financial instruments eg. cheque books, bank statements and reconciliation statements are prepared with counterparties regularly and there is a follow-up on long outstanding items.

Recommendation

There should be stronger collaboration between institutions that help to detect, investigate and prosecute financial frauds. Investigators should review their investigative procedures to be abreast with current sophistication of financial fraud.

Courts are also stakeholders in fighting bank fraud so they should be invited into such workshops.

RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE GROUP

1. Appropriate Legislation

- There should be appropriate legislation and laws for the prosecution of technology related crime
- The existing laws should be strengthened so that punitive sentences will be given out to persons convicted of computer and banking fraud

- Special courts should be established to deal with banking and computer systems related crimes. On the other hand, the jurisdiction of the existing commercial courts must be widened to deal with financial crimes.

2. Build Institutional capacity of Banks and Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs)

The group observed that criminals are constantly expanding their capabilities as new technologies become available and affordable to perpetuate their activities and avoid detections by LEAs. Some of the tools they use are computer, computer systems, cell phones and the internet.

For the LEAs and the banks to deal with these challenges, the group suggested the following:

- Strengthening the capacities and capabilities of economic crime and other intelligence units to keep track and pace with the criminals
- LEAs should acquire, develop and maintain ICT strategies to keep pace with advancement in technology and criminal activities

3. Attorney-General's Department

The A-G's Department should be strengthened with the recruitment of more skillful lawyers to prosecute financial and computer related crimes.

4. Effective Internal Control Mechanism

- That banks and financial institution and organizations whose operations are technology driven should improve upon their Information System infrastructure security to reduce vulnerabilities in their systems.
- That such institutions also improve upon and maintain a proactive internal controls and supervision. That they as well review the culture of secrecy in exposing wrong doings
- That Financial Institutions and LEAs introduce **suspicious character reporting** mechanisms that will report on colleagues whose lifestyles suddenly change into affluent ones as a measure to check internal corruption. This mechanism should be handled in a manner that it will not become a tool for victimization at the workplace.

5. Centre for Crime Research

In order for LEAs to remain proactive, vibrant and keep pace with technology and criminals, a Centre for Crime Research (CCR) be established. The membership of the CCR should be distinguished personalities with diverse backgrounds in Intelligence, Policing, Academia and Business. The CCR may be tasked to produce strategies and vision for policing areas not limited to the following:

- Technology and its effect/impact on Law Enforcement
- Future crimes and future laws
- Policing practices and tradecrafts
- Security and policing leadership and management
- Policing and the youth

6. Payment Systems

The group observed that there is a very large volume of cash movements that has contributed to commitment of some crimes. The following were therefore recommended:

- Banks should introduce cashless products and maintain secure security system to reduce both internal and external fraud
- Banks should employ both staff and supervisors who are technologically skilful, professional, honest, loyal and trust worthy
- Review and improve on the Know Your Customer concept to reduce the frustrations that the concept has brought into the sector to reduce the cash in private residences

7. Build Partnerships

- LEAs must build inter and intra agencies partnerships for knowledge and intelligence sharing
- Collaborate with business and the public and private sectors such as IRS, PMMC, VELD to track the behavior of people to know who is doing what and buying what

8. Ghost Names

That to remove ghost names from the government payroll, the system should be completely decentralized to improve internal controls at the regional and district levels.

9. Fighting Corruption and Fraud

The group observed that Public Servants sometimes facilitate fraud and other criminal acts. The group therefore suggested that:

- Public sector wages and salaries should be improved to reduce enticements
- Criminals should be tracked and put to shame irrespective of their social standings
- Inefficiencies in state institutions should be improved. Inefficiencies in tax administration, criminal justice, records management and document acquisition were observed to be too rampant

2a. STRATEGIES TO PREVENT VIOLENT CRIMES SUCH AS ROBBERY, CAR SNATCHING AND RAPE – BY DR. RAYMOND ATUGUBA

Security needs to be built firstly, for the people of Ghana. It is only when Ghanaians are happy that foreign investors and tourists will come into the country.

There is a general misconception that public safety is crucial for socio-economic activities, investment and tourism to thrive. However, public safety is the basic rights of the people. Therefore, it is important that this fundamental mistake is not replicated in any national security policy that the country may have. Whether foreign investment or tourism, Ghanaians need to be safe so that they can be: secure, confident; entrepreneurial and happy. That is the basis of development.

Crime & poverty - security strategies needed

Crimes in the country are mostly economic crimes. These are: fraud, narcotics and robbery. All these are as a result of poverty because crime is inextricably linked to poverty. Poverty per se is not the absence of income or amenities etc but it is the absence of opportunities. This is because studies have shown that people turn to criminal offenses when they have no legitimate opportunities for livelihood. Therefore creating opportunities for the youth must be integrated into ways of fighting crime.

Strategies of working against criminal groups should not be encouraged. Instead, security agencies should try and work with the criminals not only in words but also in deeds. This will go a long way to help the security agencies go down to the roots of gangs and flush them out and stop emerging ones. This is because if, for instance, a leader of a gang group is killed, since they don't have a leader now, the group splits and forms various different groups.

Conclusion

Compared to many other countries, Ghana is doing better in the field of security, public safety and crime levels. What needs to be done is reorientation of the concept of security and change in security strategy.

2b. ENHANCING PUBLIC SAFETY BY COMBATING ROBBERY AND OTHER VIOLENT CRIMES – THE POLICE PERSPECTIVE – BY C/SUPT BRIGHT ODURO

What is armed robbery?

Armed robbery in Ghana today involves the use of a weapon of any kind to threaten, intimidate or cause bodily harm and thereby depriving the victim of his money or property or other valuables.

Forms of armed robbery

- Ø Residential – attacks are done at residential locations with pistols, guns, cutlasses, etc.
- Ø Highway robbery – robbers mount road blocks, or trail people from the Airport or from banks and rob them

- Ø Street robbery – armed youth attack people with knives and locally made pistols on busy roads and steal mobile phones, handbags, purses etc. from them
- Ø Car snatching/jacking – vehicles are snatched and are either re-sprayed and/registration numbers changed
- Ø Workplace robbery – the robbery takes place at eg. fuel filling stations, internet cafes, mobile phone shops etc.

CAUSES OF ARMED ROBBERY

Unemployment; proliferation of small arms and use of other offensive weapons; use of narcotic drugs; lack of legislation of used goods; lack of proper residential addresses; carrying of large sums of cash; porous national borders; adjudicating process being too slow and frustrating – e.g. in Accra alone, there are about 500 robbery cases still pending since the year 2000.

Limitations of the Police

- The police lack intelligence capabilities
- Poor response to call for service
- Inadequate Criminal Investigative competency
- Logistics – poor ICT system, inadequate vehicles
- Inadequate manpower
- Poor media coverage of robberies

Addressing the problems of armed robbery

- Political will – political leaders must see to it that good laws are enacted
- Intelligence – Led Approach (especially working in the new residential areas where most residential robberies take place)
- Working in partnership with the security agencies
- Creation of public awareness
- Training of police personnel in crime combat

The police needs to focus on: Preparation, Information, and Partnership (PIP) if the war on armed robbery is to have positive impact.

RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE GROUP

A study at one prisons revealed that majority of prisoners (inmates) are from poor background alluding to the fact that most of the violent crimes that take place are committed by people from poor backgrounds. Poverty has also been found out to be the absence of opportunities. Therefore, the absence of opportunities could also be a cause of violent crimes. The following recommendations are therefore made to prevent violent crimes:

- 1) There is the need to create employment opportunities for the youth. This should be preceded by skills acquisition and basic education. The recent launching of the National Youth Employment Programme by H.E. the President is laudable and must receive the support of all.
- 2) There should be a declaration of total war on robbery, which would attract the provision of logistics for effective policies and operations.
- 3) The Police should have effective patrol system to ward off or apprehend criminals.
- 4) There should be effective co-ordination of all security agencies to combat or prevent crime e.g. Police, Military, NSC, BNI, Prisons, CEPS, Immigration, Fire and NACOB.
- 5) There should be effective border controls by monitoring and equipment - CEPS and Immigration for efficient delivery.
- 6) When as a result of Regional Protocols people are able to enter our country without restrictions we should be able to monitor such immigrants. This could be done through liaising with Hotel Managements, landlords and Neighbourhood Watch Committees, District

Assemblies.

- 7) There is also the need to check the importation and sale of illegal drugs.
- 8) The current judicial process is very slow and so there is the need for the speedy adjudication of robbery cases by establishing fast track courts for such purpose. The role of the Attorney General in these cases is very crucial and so the need for the department to expedite cases brought to them for advice.
- 9) Since violent crimes are mostly committed with arms, there is the need for an arms control mechanism. The sources of supply of arms to these criminals should be tackled for example the local manufacturers.

This could be done by;

- a) Pushing for an effective legal framework for the control of arms.
 - b) Monitoring our porous borders
 - c) Persuading local manufacturers to abandon the manufacture of weapons and giving them alternative livelihoods.
 - d) Providing security in our neighborhoods so that the desire to acquire weapons for self-defense would be diminished since some of such weapons could fall into worry hands.
 - e) There should be the political will to control the flow of arms into the country through licensing and imports.
 - f) There should be effective monitoring of licensing of weapons dealers through re-vetting upon expiring of their licenses. i.e. both dealers and owners.
- 10) There is the need for a database of all prisoners and rehabilitate them according to their peculiar nature e.g. some may have been there on peer pressure; some by their very make up, some even may have been there by accident etc. This could lead to an effective career planning for them.
 - 11) The issue of social link after rehabilitation should be considered seriously if one is rehabilitated to be a carpenter or farmer or whatever, the person should move out of prison with appropriate tools to have a meaningful life afterwards. There should be a follow up by the appropriate institutions e.g. Social Welfare and the security services.
 - 12) There should be extra budget funding through the GETFund among other sources for both academic and vocational training for inmates.
 - 13) There should be legislation for the control of purchase and sale of second hand goods.
 - 14) There should be proper residential addresses for easy direction and policing.
 - 15) The withdrawal, keeping and carrying of large sums of money should be discouraged.

There were disagreements on the issue of fraternizing with criminals. Some were of the opinion that criminals should rather be combated and not fraternized with.

3. WAYS AND MEANS OF COMBATING THE TRAFFICKING AND USAGE OF NARCOTIC DRUGS IN GHANA – MR. K. B. QUANTSON

There is a drug problem. It is a borderless globally syndicated criminality that affects all nations in all respects. "We are assembled here today in response to the threat posed by DRUG ABUSE. Let us not underestimate this threat. We are talking about personal tragedy, severe damage to the health, the destruction of society, economic breakdown, the undermining of democratic institutions, corruption, violence and death. Drug abuse is a time bomb ticking away in the heart of civilization. We must now find measures to deal with it before it explodes and envelopes us."

- Perez de Cuellar, April 1990

The extent of Narcotics

1. At the national level, the destructive effects of drugs can be brutal and impersonal on the physiological, psychological and even the psychic health of the people.
2. Drug-dealing is a crime on its own. But the more dangerous point to stress is that it promotes or aggravates crimes like money laundering, banking and financial frauds, violent crimes like armed robberies, prostitution, bribery and corruption.
3. The illicit drug industry thrives massively on corruption through which it influences and subverts vital and sensitive national institutions.
4. The illicit drug industry is a DIRECT threat to democracy, good governance, probity and accountability etc.

Problems so far

There are drug problems in our country. One can go to our lorry parks, Tudu, Nima, not to mention our beaches etc. It is virtually impossible to police. Once the society accepts it, it becomes a big problem. Our secondary schools, universities and even in our sports stadia, you have people dealing in the drug business and its usage and the people around them sometimes connive with these peddlers and barons. There is:

1. Public appreciation of the drug problem in purely economic and business terms – no scruples, no ethics, no morals
2. Poor financial and logistical support
3. Corruption in the enforcement mechanism mainly because of ineffective command and control
4. Perceptible tardiness to enforce the property confiscation laws
5. The interference or intervention of persons with influence
6. Very poor sensitization programmes towards drug abuse prevention
7. The effective compliance of the UN recommended approach i.e. Enforcement Action Prevention through Education Treatment, Rehabilitation and Social Re-integration

Measures to tackle the problems

To deal with the problem the following should be kept in view:-

- a. effective national awareness,
- b. the political will and commitment of government with the active support of the frontline agencies
- c. an effective institutional and legal framework,
- d. anti-corruption profiling buttressed by financial and logistic support.

RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE GROUP

The group was in agreement with the International Narcotics Control Board's **Comprehensive Multi-Disciplinary Outline (CMO)**, came out with the following recommendations:

Enforcement

- i. The NACOB and its collaborating agencies (Navy, CEPS, Police, etc) should be better resourced both in terms of manpower and equipment to deal with the drug situation
- ii. The NACOB should set up its own legal department to handle the prosecution of drug cases
- iii. Confiscated property and proceeds from drug trafficking should be given to the NACOB and other agencies to be used in fighting the drug war and also as an incentive
- iv. More courts should be established to handle drug cases. In Accra for instance, it is only the Regional Tribunal that handles drug cases but in a day there are about 18 to 23 people who go there on drug related cases and there is only judge. This means most cases are adjourned as a result
- v. The PNDC Law 236 should be amended in line with the current drug situation

Education and prevention

- i. More resources should be made available to pursue an effective educational campaign across the country (printing of drug education handouts, flyers and the establishment of a NACOB

- website where these flyers and information be made available for people to update themselves of harmful effects of drugs, etc)
- ii. NACOB offices should be opened up in the Regions to reach out to the people. This will require the recruitment of more staff. This is because now those in Accra have to travel to all over the country to educate people.

Treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration

This is an aspect that NACOB has virtually done nothing. Although the Board is working with the Psychiatric Hospital, because of the stigma attached to the Hospital, people don't want to go there. There is therefore:

- i. an urgent need to establish a national rehabilitation centre to treat, rehabilitate drug addicts and
- ii. a specialist should be trained to manage the treatment centre.

General recommendations

- i. the remuneration of the operatives of NACOB should be reviewed
- ii. Accommodation should be provided for the staff of NACOB to ensure easy command and control
- iii. The issue of interference in drug cases and corruption should be looked at.

4. WAYS OF REDUCING ROAD ACCIDENTS IN THE COUNTRY

By Nobel John APPIAH

Introduction

Until recently i.e. 1998 thereabout, road safety had not been an issue. In 1998, road traffic accidents ranked 9th on the death toll. In sub-Saharan Africa, it ranks 2nd.

There is also a cultural perception in Ghana that when someone dies through an accident, that is his/her destiny. This does not augur well for the country. Statistics also show that more men compared to women are dying on our roads and this also has serious implications.

Ghana's situation

Current road traffic accident statistics from 1998-2005 prove that 81,588 road traffic accidents were reported in Ghana. Out of these, 13,240 deaths were reported and 42,717 persons were injured. The statistics show that one out of every six registered vehicles was recorded in a traffic accident.

Global road safety situation

Rank	1998	2020
1	Lower respiratory infections	Ischaemic heart disease
2	Perinatal infections	Unipolar major depression
3	Diarrhoeal diseases	Road traffic accidents
4	HIV/AIDS	Cerebrovascular disease
5	Unipolar depression	COPD
6	Ischaemic heart disease	Lower respiratory infections
7	Cerebrovascular disease	Tuberculosis
8	Malaria	War
9	Road traffic accidents	Diarrhoeal diseases
10	Tuberculosis	HIV/AIDS

From the above, indications are that if care is not taken, by the year 2020 road traffic accidents will move from the 9th position to the 3rd position as a killer in the world.

Statistics also show that most accidents happen where there are least vehicles of which Ghana is one.

Forecast up to 2010

It has been forecast that by the year 2010, the vehicle population in Ghana will increase from 800,000 to 1.2million. This could also lead to 12,000 people being killed in road accidents and more than 40,000 persons being injured.

Key focus areas

- v Overloading
- v Fatigue
- v Speeding
- v Pedestrian safety
- v Child safety
- v Safety of cyclists
- v Unsafe drivers
- v Unsafe vehicles
- v Accidents spots
- v Driving under influence of alcohol
- v Conspicuity of vehicles

Ways of reducing road traffic accidents**National road safety strategy:**

- v Development and implementation of NRSS 1 and Action Plans 2001-2005
- v Evaluation of NRSS 1
- v Development and implementation of NRSS II and Action Plans 2006-2010

Vehicle Factors:

- v Roadworthiness
- 1. lighting
- 2. braking
- 3. design standards
- v Safety features
- 1. seat belts
- 2. air bags
- 3. visibility of vehicles

Legislation:

- v Entry into the road transport industry
- v Land use and transport planning
- v Mechanical speed control
- v Traffic regulations

Human factors:

- v Education, information and publicity
- v Attitudes
- v Use of restraints
- v Risk taking

Emergency medical response capability

- v First aid skills
- v Access to emergency medical and rescue facilities
- 1. National Ambulance Service
- 2. Ghana Army Rapid Medical Response
- 3. Private Emergency Medical Capacity

Enforcement of traffic regulations

- v Construction and use regulations
- v Roadworthiness
- v Police enforcement

v Interpretation of traffic regulations

Speed management

Speed management has not only been determined as a major accident contributory factor globally but also an important determinant of accident severity. In a recent speed measurement survey carried out in the most trafficked roads in Ghana, 96% of all vehicles exceed the posted limits, the lowest speed recorded was 75km/h (50% above the speed limit and the highest was 120km/h)

Conclusion

"Road safety is an issue of immense human proportions, it's an issue of social proportions and it's also an issue of equity. Road safety very much affects poor people" *James D. Wolfensohn – Former President, The World Bank.*

RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE GROUP

- 1) A legislation should be put in place that a minimum academic qualification of BECE must be a prerequisite to acquire a valid drivers license
- 2) All categories of drivers license at any stage must be issued only after the applicant has passed a vigorous driving test in the relevant class
- 3) Medical certificate from a recognized Medical Officer should accompany all applications for driver's license renewal since some people might have developed eg sight problems
- 4) Strict enforcement and interpretation of all Road Traffic Acts and Legislative Instruments (LI) by the enforcement agencies (police, courts, DVLA, etc.) should be enhanced and encouraged and the outcome of court rulings on motor traffic offenses publicized in the media for people to know the consequences of traffic offenses
- 5) There should be established specialized courts for motor traffic offences to curtail delays in the prosecution of traffic offences. This will also give prominence and seriousness to such cases
- 6) More vehicle examination centres should be opened to increase accessibility by applicants
- 7) Education on road markings and road signs for all road users including pedestrians should be intensified
- 8) Communities should be involved in road engineering designs eg. for bus stops, speed ramps, etc
- 9) There should be a ban on the importation of used and expired motor vehicle tyres
- 10) The Motor Union Executives should be proactive in enforcing the internal mechanisms against accidents especially on alcoholism by acquiring Alco meters
- 11) MDAs should be made to send all those who drive government vehicles including the Directors and Heads to the classrooms at least once in a year to update their driving knowledge and skills to prevent avoidable accidents.

STRATEGIES TO REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF DISASTERS VIS-À-VIS THE ROLE OF SECURITY AGENCIES IN IMPROVING PUBLIC SAFETY

By Dr. Ishmael D. NORMAN

Introduction

In dealing with disaster management issues, one should ask the following questions: how well prepared are the security agencies in these areas: disasters and emergencies, terrorism, hostage taking and hostage.

Status of the law on emergencies and disasters

There is a body of laws consisting of Administrative Regulations, Legislative Enactments and Executive Instruments on Emergencies, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Management, forming the basis for a National Platform on Disaster Management. In 1996, the Ghana government formalized disaster management as a national priority, by passing Act 517 establishing the National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO).

Research suggests that there is confusion between the various legal authorities. The challenge is to harmonize the laws into a unified system of legal and administrative reasoning or framework. Secondly, DRR and Management are often seen as the sole responsibility of NADMO but not backed by financial means. The creation a National Platform, articulated by the Hyogo Framework for action, would go a long way to mainstream DRR and management. This is important in reducing disaster risks in setting national development agenda and goals.

Why this is important (Community impact)

Disasters cause the breakdown of other complex socio-technical systems. The frequency of disasters in Ghana and the rest of the world are anticipated to worsen. Ghana's population of 22million (2006) with a growth rate of 3.5% per annum, is expected to double by 2016. Preparedness mitigates disasters and preparedness means proper laws that are enforceable, etc.

Examples, the impact in both human and economic terms of any kind of large scale disaster in Ghana, whether it is natural or human-caused, would be devastating. Domestic and industrial fires in Ghana in 2005 for instance caused over \$700,000 of damage to individuals and companies within the Accra-Tema city areas. Ghana again spent \$5.8million in 2005 in disasters/emergencies.

Human-caused disasters: fires, civil wars, terrorism, food insecurity and crop failure, etc.

- v Armed conflict, societal upheaval and escalation of slow on-set disasters
- v Bush fires, industrial/domestic fires, aviation/maritime accidents, pollution of water bodies, industrial accidents, failure of structures eg. collapse of buildings, radioactive leakages and oil spillage
- v Food insecurity and crop failure: availability, access and utilization.

The 1984 Ethiopian famine led to the escalation of the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The Sudan/Chad civil war and refugee crisis that has so far displaced over a quarter of a million Chadian and about a million more from the Darfur region of the insecurity, social systems, increased in vice, violence and economic crimes.

Natural disasters

- v Pest and insect infestation disasters
- v Hydro-meteorological disasters
- v Geological disasters
- v Epidemics

No warning disasters and emergencies

The speed necessary to address "no warning emergencies/disasters" is not consistent with the legal charge on the Executive branch to meet the constitutional and parliamentary "notice and publication requirements of the law" as demanded by the Emergency Powers Act, the NADMO Act and the proposed (2006) National Emergency Management Service Bill.

NB: Recently, the Foreign Minister and Government nominated a Parliamentary sub-committee to coordinate the repatriation of Ghanaians who might be trapped in Lebanon. This is clearly a misunderstanding of the law of disaster management. That function should have gone to NADMO and the diplomatic mission concerned.

Behavior of people in disasters (problems and opportunities for improvement)

- v Coordination between and amongst the various disaster services and organizations and their equipment

- v Post traumatic stress syndrome and its impact on people in disasters and how the nation handles its implications
- v The protection of first responders and volunteers
- v Community self-help, national training for various communities in disasters, where are we at?
- v Protection of vulnerable groups, People with Disabilities, the blind, evacuation of those with chronic diseases, intensive care units, etc.

Why a national platform

- v Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management is important in ensuring the readiness of all stakeholders in the nation in fighting disasters, reducing coordination problems and enhancing service delivery.
- v Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction is a new concept in disaster management that needs to be embraced by all, starting from the children.
- v It is/should be a basic prerequisite in setting national development goals

Declaration of state of emergency

Article 31 of the 1992 constitution vests too much power in the President and Council of State. The President then submits it to the Parliament and Parliament has 72 hours to accept or reject the proclamation to declare the state of emergency which causes too much delay on the declarative process. The question then is, what happens when the president doesn't have parliamentary majority? Another constriction of Presidential ability to declare emergencies is that the proclamation will last for only 7 days unless Parliament extends it for another 3 months. The question again is, how does NADMO have the authority to intercede in providing relief to communities impacted by minor emergencies without a formal declaration of a state of emergency when its act does not explicitly provide for such intervention?

Where does this leave Ghana and disaster/emergency management?

1. In the 10 years of its creation, the National Committee consisting of all the ministries in the nation have never met.
2. NADMO is reduced to handling "simple" emergencies
3. NADMO does not have the professional skills to handle "complex" emergencies. This leaves the entire nation extremely vulnerable
4. Security agencies unprepared/uncoordinated for complex emergencies, because the lead coordinator is unprepared. *(preparedness plan is base on (1) vulnerability assessment of key infrastructure, such as ports, airports, highways, railroad and water ways, including bottlenecks, alternative routes, etc, (2) determination of available resources, such as supplies, drugs/clothing/food/fuel/rescue equipment, taking into consideration the time of transportation, location of alternate supply points, ability of airports and ports to handle the increased traffic, coordination with international NGOs etc. (3) knowledge of government policy on relief and emergencies, what would be accepted or not accepted as donations/relief, storage and warehousing facilities, etc.*

TERRORISM

What is terrorism?

Terrorism is a deliberate act. It is carried out to force or compel a modification of government policy of position or to encourage a paradigm shift on a national, regional or global scale. The outcome of any specific act of terrorism is pre-determined to yield a specific goal.

What is the picture in Ghana today?

Ghana has:

- § Religious fervour and religious fanatics mixed with politics?
- § Disenfranchised youth with good education and access to internet?

§ Youth with extensive knowledge of energetic substances like TNT, fuel, fertilizer, cyanide, mercury, etc? (Ghana has a large group of youth with such skills in the stone quarries and in galamsey mining activities)

§ Habitual or recreational use of narcotics, (traffickers)?

Timothy McVeigh, a Gulf war veteran, was presumed by law enforcement officials to be a drifter. Yet, he was able to cause the death of 131 people, mostly children, in a single bombing act on the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. He used a combination of TNT (dynamite), ammonium nitrate (fertilizer) and nitroglycerine (diesel) to build his ANFO bomb

Symbiotic relationship between drug traffickers and terror cells

- 1) Traffickers benefit from Terrorist's military skills and weapons supply
- 2) Access to clandestine organizations
- 3) Protection, transportation and money laundering
- 4) Migrants/drug couriers

What is the probability of terror cell in Ghana?

Perhaps terrorist agents are already in Ghana, working with narco-traffickers, the disenfranchised and disillusioned youth, influential Ghanaian service personnel, civilian, religious men and women, who have already disconnected from society.

Intervention by security agencies

- 1) Enactment of laws to expand the powers of the agencies in specific anti-terror ways
- 2) Interdiction of terrorist finances via cooperation from the banks and other financial institutions
- 3) Vetting of banking activities by forensic audit teams
- 4) Shutdown of "charitable" organizations and other non-governmental front units
- 5) Infiltration, espionage, eavesdropping and surveillance of known/suspected criminal groups
- 6) Interrogation/data collection from incarcerated offenders on narcotics
- 7) Surveillance and surveillance, because terror acts have no "fail-safe" mechanism
- 8) Table-top scenario, role-playing, mock-traits, and general preparedness for complex emergencies, etc.

HOSTAGE TAKING VIS-À-VIS HOSTAGE NEGOTIATIONS

Hostage taking and abductions

Pressure from the built environment creates grievances. The inevitability of chaos facing mankind today has been a part of our world, except earlier, it was introverted. Today, every absurdity is extroverted. Hostage taking used to be the preserve of nation-states that engaged in warfare and slave taking. Today, it is a multinational business in international or national trade in humans. Abductions, kidnapping and hostage taking are a growing business in some markets, where organized criminal gangs pin-point targets such as members of a prominent family, the CEO of a successful company or a journalist for the extraction of ransom or media coverage.

Why Hostage Taking (HT)?

The Hostage Takers (HT) know that:

1. With repeated hostage taking, government would curtail the freedoms of the individual across board, thus fermenting civil discontent
2. It provides opportunity for rumors to undermine society

3. Media coverage would exacerbate the extent of the HT invasion on civil rights
4. Police apparatus would be pitched against civil society, etc.

Types of Hostage Takers

Criminals, mentally disturbed, prisoners, terrorists, ex-spouses, employee-on-employee, irate co-worker, angry client-on-employee, road and air rage.

Hostage taking, abductions, and kidnapping

We read the events in the oil rich regions of Nigeria. Their activities impact the world crude oil prices to the dismay of everyone. But a few years ago, Nigerian authorities would have categorically stated that such behavior is inconsistent with native Nigerian modus operandi or national cultural identity.

Ghanaian gold mining town residents could copy-cat Nigeria oil Delta rebels

Residents of gold mining towns talk about the inequities they feel. There is also an obvious environmental abuses and the lackluster concern of the government and the gold mining companies in addressing the persistent problems in those communities. They complain of a string of broken promises. Whether such complaints are valid or not depends on which side one listens to.

Abductions and custody disputes

In Ghana, there are cases of international spouses, who have been denied visitation and other rights to their wards by their Ghanaian ex-spouses. In most cases, perpetrators use the services of the security agencies to achieve their aims, by alleging the woman to be drug dealer/hooker.

The Hostage Negotiator

In Ghana, the official responders, mainly police/military officers are often young, adrenaline and high testosterone driven macho men, with zero or marginal experience in critical hostage intervention. They are not able to diffuse a hostage/barricaded subject challenge without bloodshed and with minimum amount of destruction.

Four options for Police Commanders at Hostage situations

1. Traditional confrontational approach, amass officers and massive firepower, assault
2. sniper fire
3. use of chemical agents
4. contain the area and negotiate with a trained negotiator

RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE GROUP

- There should be a national platform informing stakeholders what NADMOs plan is in combating disasters because there is no coherent platform to inform the both citizenry and the stakeholders what NADMO is
- There should be a standing operating procedure in place/strategies in managing disasters
- Every stakeholder should present strategies and readiness in managing disasters and every stakeholder must be aware of this
- There is the need to identify disaster prone areas in the country eg. on the Volta Lake etc
- Contingency plans for tackling each particular disaster be identified
- There should be simulation exercises among the agencies should be carried out from time to time to sharpen disaster prevention and combating

- There is the need for the establishment of National Disaster Fund to help in prevention and in times of emergencies
- There also the need for establishment of Strategic Disaster Reserves at the National, Regional, and District levels to be able to cope with unforeseen contingencies
- NADMO will be an efficient disaster management organization if it is brought directly under the Vice Presidents office

HONORABLE MINISTER OF INTERIOR'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Hon. Minister thanked all the participants especially the Service Commanders and the Resource Persons for availing themselves for this important workshop. He expressed the hope that with these excellent ideas exhibited at the workshop, Ghana will make it.

He expressed interest on the discussion on the internet fraud and the recommendation on the establishment of Centre for Crime Research and promised that he will discuss this with friends at the Kofi Annan Institute.

On the quest for reporting directly to the Vice President, the Minister threw a challenge to NADMO that that is not going to work because the Vice President has not got the budget line. He advised them that if there is a genuine case of the Ministry being an impediment, they should bring it out for discussion so that a lasting solution is found. He however admitted that NADMO is just not working and assured Dr. Norman who presented a paper on NADMO that he will invite him to present a paper on NADMO at a meeting with the National Security Council. He assured the participants that some of the recommendations made will be implemented.

CONCLUSION

Participants expressed the opinion that such interactions are very good and should be replicated for all security agencies to appreciate the level of security issues in the country and what complementary roles each can play. There were suggestions that the courts are also stakeholders in this topic so they should be invited to such workshops. There was also a call for public sensitization of outcomes of programmes such as this. The media was also seen as very important in driving the message of crime combat. There was a call for bringing back the TV programme "Crime Combat".

Calls were again made for the establishment of special courts like Motor Traffic Courts to speed up adjudication of cases.

Participants expressed their happiness that apart from rape which should have been treated separately, as result of the increasing incidence lately, this workshop has touched on almost all aspects of security in the country and the wonderful recommendations that have come out would be considered for the citizenry to feel secured. Above all, it has been able to bring about fraternity of the security agencies and the necessary networking.