

Press Statement

March 7, 2025

**‘ACCELERATE ACTION’: COMMIT TO IMPROVING GENDER DIVERSITY
IN POLITICAL REPRESENTATION & PANEL/SPEAKER DIVERSITY IN
GHANA**

The Aya Institute for Women, Politics and Media extends to all Ghanaian women home and abroad, warm greetings on the occasion of International Women’s Day (IWD), March 8, 2025. This year’s celebration in particular, is one of multiple significant milestones in achieving gender equality in Ghana. Ghana has successfully elected its first woman vice president, a symbolic feat that has further consolidated our democracy. Again, the Affirmative Action Bill was passed into law in the last quarter of 2024. The 2024 elections saw a slight increase in the number of women representatives elected. Additionally, this year’s IWD sees three decades since the Beijing Conference in 1995, where Ghana first participated as the first step of commitment towards gender equality. While we are still working towards parity, we must celebrate significant leaps that have been recorded within the gender space in Ghana.

This year’s theme ‘Accelerate Action’ is one for reflection of the journey of gender equality and the need for actual commitments towards it. On this day, the Aya Institute is raising two key areas worth considering by various stakeholders to ensure gender parity:

First, is the area of political appointments by the executive arm of the government. According to the World Bank’s Women, Business and Law Index 2024, significant representation in politics further positions a country to huge investments needed to push it forward economically. According to the World Bank’s ‘Representation Matters Report’ 2025, women’s political representation is closely linked to the promotion of legal equality of economic opportunity. The report suggests that only if women have significant representation, will we achieve legal equality of economic opportunity and unlock the benefits and economic improvements associated with this diversity. Not only is it economically beneficial, but by extension, a reflection of a country’s democratic development. According to the World Economic Forum, in its 2024 Global Gender Gap report states that, at the current rate of progress, it will take until 2158, which is roughly five generations from now, to reach full gender parity.

This year’s theme is one of collective responsibility and immediate intervention. Gender diversity should be a main consideration in the selection of human resources in any functional democracy as all talents and professions are harnessed for national

development. We must see gender equality as a significant part of the ‘national agenda’ and work assiduously and be focused to work to achieve gender equality.

Secondly, panel/speaker diversity. Panel diversity is a global concern as the World Economic Forum 2020 report, 86 percent of global speakers are men while women have a share of 14 percent as global speakers. The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) 2020, reveals that Africa's media operates with an overwhelming dominance of male speakers, drowning and overshadowing the expertise and voices of women. This underrepresentation is evident in the lack of gender diversity in the use of experts by the media, at conferences and other speaker opportunities and platforms. Panels constituted are especially non-gender sensitive on media platforms. In neighbouring Nigeria, according to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), women are also underrepresented in the media, both as leaders and as expert sources, making up only 20% of expert news sources. According to the 2024 Ghana Women Experts Report, only 14% of experts in Ghanaian media are women with some media houses recording as low as 3% female expert representation. The Ghanaian media, despite the genuine challenge of raising women speakers in major socio-economic programming, must be committed to gender diversity in panel selection.

In celebration of the International Women’s Day, let us keep working to achieve gender diversity in our society to ensure that our collective efforts would yield the best outcomes towards an equal and fairer society where women’s voices, talents and achievements are recognized, and made visible to make our democracy properly situated and functional.