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Ghana Scholarships Secretariat Sponsored Students  
United Kingdom PhD Cohorts

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The Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer MP

Prime Minister

10 Downing Street

London

SWA 2AA

United Kingdom

Dear Sir,

**APPEAL FOR URGENT INTERVENTION IN THE CASE OF SPONSORED GHANAIAN STUDENTS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM (UNPAID TUITION FEES AND STIPENDS)**

**Brief background**

The Ghanaian students studying in the United Kingdom (UK), particularly the PhD cohort, wish to bring to your good office's attention the perilous challenges faced by students sponsored by the Ghana Scholarship Secretariat (GSS) in Ghana. We, the executives of the PhD students, representing an estimated one hundred sponsored students, find it necessary to bring these issues to your attention for an immediate resolution after several efforts to get Ghanaian authorities to address the challenges have stalled.

We were sponsored by the government of Ghana to pursue our Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree at different universities in the UK with the assurance of full tuition fee payment and a monthly stipend, which ranges between £1,023 and £1,200, depending on the location of the university in the UK. Regrettably, these promises have not been adequately fulfilled for several months and years. Several attempts by both present and past governments to address the issues

have faltered, leaving several of our members in a state of deprivation, hunger, homelessness, and withdrawal from academic activities.

Recently, the Ghana Scholarship Secretariat released an amount of £1.6 million to enable the education section at the Ghana High Commission in London to pay some tuition fees, but it was woefully inadequate to address the tuition fee problems, let alone pay the monthly stipends promised to students.

Honourable Prime Minister, in total, there are three categories of students sponsored by the GSS in the UK. These include those studying on the undergraduate level, the master's level, and PhD students. The PhD cohort, consisting of 110 students, is the hardest hit by the excruciating delays in making the payments, although we are unable to determine how many students from other cohorts are affected. This is also because, by the very rigorous nature of our studies, we hardly have the luxury to engage in any meaningful paid jobs that can sustain our immediate basic needs, such as food.

### **Impact on our members**

The delay in releasing tuition fees by the GSS has led to the mass withdrawal of our members from their courses. For instance, 15 of our members have been withdrawn from their studies, while the universities have passed on the debts to the students. Currently, 30 PhD students have not had any of their 2024/2025 academic fees paid. Equally, there are students among us who also had their tuition fees unpaid for the entire period of their studies in the UK. We are now in a new academic year, and students have received various notifications from the universities regarding the outstanding fees whereas no renewal letters have been issued for the new academic year (2025/26). This cataclysmic situation is taking a huge mental toll on our members' academic activities, while others are battling different kinds of ill health. Painfully, we have recently lost one of our fellow students after a prolonged illness. Furthermore, the situation has also led to the deportation of some of our members, after their universities have notified the Home Office of their withdrawal and sponsorship.

Additionally, some of our members have completed their studies but are unable to submit their academic work because the universities have blocked access to their student portals. Those who manage to complete and graduate are unable to obtain their certificates due to the outstanding tuition fees owed to the universities. Similarly, students who have borrowed money from friends and family back home in Ghana cannot return home for fear of legal action. Moreover, many of our colleagues cannot afford return tickets to travel back home. The stipends, which are to be paid monthly, have also been in arrears for several months.

Currently, the stipends are overdue between 5 and 48 months. Several of our members have received eviction notices from their rented accommodations due to years of non-payment of these stipends, which are intended to cover rent and living expenses. The situation is so severe

that some colleagues are now facing court cases over unpaid rent. To survive, some have had to depend on food banks because they have no money to feed themselves.

### **Actions taken**

Over the period, we have taken several actions to inform the authorities in Ghana to assist in addressing the situation with little prospect of resolution. Among some of the efforts we have made are:

1. We have written to the Ghana High Commissioner, who, in turn, replied to acknowledge our letter with a promise of further engagement with the Ghanaian authorities. Unfortunately, we have yet to receive any substantive response to our plight.
2. We have met with the Registrar of the scholarships and other stakeholders, including the Liaison Officer at the education section of the High Commission, but no substantive resolution.
3. We have tried to reach the Minister of Education, the Chief of Staff and other concerned authorities in Ghana, but to no avail.
4. We have on countless occasions engaged in the media, including press statements and interviews, to highlight our frustrations, but we have received little attention regarding our concerns.

Please see the link below to some of our media engagement on the issue.

[Ghanaian students in UK warn of “perilous” conditions as funding crisis deepens - MyJoyOnline](#)

[Ghanaian PhD students in UK face deportation over unpaid fees, stipends - Report](#)

[110 Ghanaian scholars in UK face deportation over unpaid fees](#)

[SAMSON'S TAKE: Deportation of Ghanaian Scholarship Students Abroad || #Newsfile](#)

[Deportation Looms for Ghanaian Students Abroad as Scholarship Support Collapses](#)

### **Amount involved**

Based on our own assessment of the situation and the data we have gathered among our PhD cohort, we estimate that an amount of **£3.6 million** (54 million Ghana cedi) is needed to sufficiently address all the pending issues affecting the PhD students sponsored by the government in the UK. The table below gives the breakdown of our calculations.

Item	Amount (£)	Amount (GHC) at 15.00 exchange rates.
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<b>(PhD cohort)</b>		
Tuition fee (2024/2025)	428,810	6,432,150
Tuition fee (2025/2026)	412,871	6,193,065
Stipend	2,786,550	41,798,250.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,628,231</b>	<b>54,423,465.00</b>

Whilst these figures are exclusively for only PhD students under the GSS scheme, we believe that this amount can resolve all the outstanding tuition fee issues and also cater for the stipends owed to the cohort group for the past years.

### **Our request**

Sir, we kindly appeal to you to use your good office to prevail on the authorities in Ghana to immediately release funds to address our excruciating circumstances. We are confident that with the friendly relationship that exists between the United Kingdom and Ghana, your office can communicate directly with the president of Ghana, His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, to come to the aid of our stranded members in the UK. Further, we also plead that you encourage our authorities to release funds to cater for other cohort groups who are equally experiencing similar situations to the ones we find ourselves in.

We, the executives of the student group, are available should you need us to discuss the issue further in person. We hope to hear from you at your earliest consideration and convenience.

SIGNED

On Behalf of the Executives, PhD cohort, UK.

Prince Komla Bansah (The President)

(PhD student, University of Lincoln).

Cc:

The speaker of the British Parliament (The Commons)

The speaker of the Scottish Parliament

The Mayor of London

All media outlets.