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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### ***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

## **TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL GHANA STRONGLY CONDEMNS VOTE BUYING INCIDENT IN THE AYAWASO EAST CONSTITUENCY PRIMARY**

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*Accra, Ghana - February 9, 2026*

### **Background**

Transparency International Ghana (TI Ghana), along with its partners, has, over the years, monitored and documented instances and made recommendations to address them. A recent statement condemning this destructive practice was issued on 3rd December 2024, and recommendations therein for further action have not been effectively implemented.

Once again, TI Ghana, in no uncertain terms, strongly condemns the reported incidents of vote-buying and inducements that occurred in recent primaries, including the NPP presidential primaries and the just-ended Ayawaso East Constituency primary by the National Democratic Congress (NDC). The brazen display of high-value goods and the subsequent defence mounted by some actors in the recently concluded Ayawaso East Constituency primary send a troubling signal to our young and vibrant democracy.

The increasing frequency and brazenness of such acts pose a serious threat to Ghana's democratic integrity, undermine public confidence in electoral processes, and signal deeper challenges in political party financing and election ethics. The distribution of items such as television sets and other high-value goods under the guise of goodwill cannot, by any reasonable standard, be considered acceptable gifts. These actions constitute undue influence and compromise the fundamental principles of free, fair, and transparent elections.

Equally troubling is the growing tendency among sections of the public to reconceptualise bribery as acceptable political gifting. The normalisation of accepting inducements from political actors across party lines, before, during and after elections, both internal and national, weakens electoral accountability and erodes the civic responsibility required to sustain democratic governance. Citizens' participation in any form of inducement to secure a candidate's election not only betrays the civic responsibilities bestowed on them but also commits a crime under Part V of the Representation of the People Act, 1992 (PNDCL 284), specifically sections 33 (bribery), 34 (treating) and 35 (undue influence).

### **Commending efforts**

TI Ghana recognises and commends His Excellency President John Dramani Mahama for his swift recall of Ghana's High Commissioner to Nigeria. TI Ghana also acknowledges the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the Majority in Parliament for their candid and

honest condemnation of this despicable and destructive practice. TI Ghana particularly welcomes the call by the Majority Caucus in Parliament that the primary held in Ayawaso East Constituency be annulled and that any candidate who participated and has been found culpable in this unethical conduct be banned from taking part in subsequent primaries.

### **Recommendation**

- TI Ghana recommends that all well-meaning Ghanaians support efforts to combat electoral corruption by:
  - making a deliberate choice to prioritise national development over personal gains
  - committing to a personal duty to elect an appropriate person to a position of power.
  - provide credible evidence to the appropriate authorities for investigation and redress.
- TI Ghana calls on political parties as well to put in place structures and internal protocols to deal with similar occurrences to reflect good practice and ensure future elections are guided by these examples.
- Furthermore, it is our earnest expectation that the Office of the Special Prosecutor (OSP) will receive the necessary institutional collaboration and citizen support to thoroughly investigate and prosecute all persons implicated in these allegations to their logical conclusion in an expedited fashion.
- Finally, TI Ghana urges the courts to adjudicate such matters expeditiously, guided strictly by the evidence presented without fear or favour, to send a strong signal that the era of impunity is giving way to a culture of accountability.

Issued by:

TI Ghana

signed:

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