**The Rt Hon Speaker,**

**Parliament of Ghana**

**Parliament House**

**Osu-Accra**

29th June, 2022

Dear Rt. Hon. Speaker, Kingsford Bagbin,

**PETITION TO PARLIAMENT BY ARISE GHANA ON 29TH JUNE, 2022 FOLLOWING MASS STREET ACTION IN ACCRA**

Right Hon. Speaker, we submit this petition on behalf of the masses who poured out on the streets of Accra for the ‘Arise Ghana’ demonstration on the 28th and 29th of June, 2022 to register their dissatisfaction and displeasure at the recklessness in the management of the public finances, excruciating hardships, gargantuan corruption, looting of state resources including forests, among others.

Right Hon. Speaker, “Arise Ghana” is an amalgamation of activists who through advocacy and nationalistic mobilization, is leading a crusade against the continuous misrule, mismanagement and maladministration of our dear nation Ghana by today’s duty bearers. We are relentlessly championing the common cause of the Ghanaian people, providing a voice for the voiceless and seeking reforms that will bring about the needed change in the socio-economic, politico-social and general wellbeing of the Ghanaian citizenry.

Right Hon. Speaker, we are a coalition of patriotic, conscientious and concerned Ghanaians drawn from various political parties, including the Peoples’ National Convention (PNC), the Convention Peoples’ Party (CPP), the Ghana Union Movement (GUM), the Great Consolidated Popular Party (GCPP), the All People’s Congress (APC), the New Patriotic Party (NPP), the National Democratic Congress (NDC), various Civil Society Organizations, the media, the creative arts industry, Driver Unions, Traders and citizens from all walks of life including ordinary and unaffiliated Ghanaians.

Right Hon. Speaker, Parliament of Ghana represents the collection of the interests and aspirations of the ordinary people. Today, we submit this petition to your office after our two-day mass street protests to register our displeasure about the mis-governance and maladministration that has brought untold and excruciating hardships on the people. We submit this petition to call on you to bring this to the attention of government and the collective representatives of the aspirations of the people in the House you lead as Speaker. Our concerns are hereby presented:

1. Worsening economic conditions. Rt. Hon. Speaker, there is no doubt in the minds of any Ghanaian the worsening conditions in which they live today. As we speak, the nation is saddled with huge debts taking our debt burden above 80% of GDP. Prices of goods and services are skyrocketing making the living conditions and the purchasing power of the ordinary man weaker every passing day. Inflation remains on the upward trend and currently above 27%. The cost of fuel for transport services have gone up leading to increased transport fares imposed on the ordinary Ghanaian in recent times. And you are rightly aware, Rt. Hon. Speaker, that the cost of fuel has a cascading effect on every sector of the economy. The Cedi continues to depreciate contributing to a rising public debt portfolio as well as driving the cost of inflation. Rt. Hon. Speaker, this economic situation which is our worst performance in the history of this Fourth Republic has worsened our credit worthiness and dampened investor confidence in our economy leading to our worst ever downgrades by reputable sovereign credit rating Agencies such as Moody’s and Fitch. Simply put, our beloved Ghana is broke and this is a direct product of the bad leadership, insensitivity, misplaced proprieties and gross economic mismanagement of the present Akufo-Addo/Bawumia administration.

2. Draconian taxes. Rt. Hon. Speaker, while wages of the Ghanaian worker remain static with almost all labor unions up in arms over poor wages in the wake of worsening economic hardships, the Akufo-Addo/Bawumia government continues to impose killer and draconian taxes on the already burdened taxpayer. The recent passage of the obnoxious E-levy by Parliament and its subsequent implementation by government remains yet another slap in the face of the already suffering Ghanaian people. Never in the history of our country has a government behaved so obstinately in imposing a draconian tax measure on its citizens, despite loud public outcry. Unfortunately, Rt. Hon, Speaker, government’s subsequent use of judicial shenanigans in an attempt to defend the illegal imposition of this E-levy remains yet another clear demonstration of how desperate and callous the government has been.

3. State Capture; Rt. Hon. Speaker, one of the cardinal, yet regrettable legacies of President Akufo-Addo and Alhaji Bawumia remains the unprecedented levels of state capture we are witnessing in our country today. The practice of state capture under this government has assumed such alarming proportions that the God-given resources of this country that are supposed to benefit present and future generations are being utilized by only a few families, friends and cronies in government today. One of the most bizarre, yet brazen display of state capture has manifested itself in the unpopular decision of this Government to Monetize our mineral resources in perpetuity under what we consider a fraudulent scheme dubbed “Agyapa” for the benefit of a select few. It initially gladdened our hearts that when the Ghanaian people spoke in unison including the Minority members of Parliament against this organized state assault called “Agyapa” it forced government to suspend same. We are however mortified to note that despite the public outcry over this deal, the NPP/Akufo-Addo government is headstrong and is seeking to reintroduce the “Agyapa” deal in Parliament as recently announced by the Finance Minister.

4. Grabbing of Achimota forest reserve lands as well as other public lands; Rt. Hon. Speaker, a few weeks ago, we woke up to an E.I 144 which sought to declassify portions of the Achimota Forest as no longer a Forest Reserve. We hold the view that President Akufo-Addo and his land grabbers in government were only hiding behind a certain historical claim by one Owoo Family to turn around and appropriate the Achimota Forest Reserve, a nature conservation of huge environmental importance to all of us, among themselves. We are more convinced to stand by our conviction as it has now emerged through some leaked portions of the Will of the late Kwadwo Owusu Afriyie, aka Sir John, a former CEO of the Forestry Commission, that elements within the Akudo-Addo/Bawumia Government have already shared lands in the Achimota Forest Reserve among themselves. To imagine that the Achimota Forest, one of the few surviving nature reserves in Ghana, would become another subject of the state capture of President Akufo-Addo and his members in Government breaks our hearts greatly.

5. Corruption and Abuse of the Public purse; Rt. Hon. Speaker, Arise Ghana holds the strongest view that corruption remains endemic and pervasive under President Akufo-Addo and Alhaji Bawumia who have turned themselves into the greatest enablers and promoters of same. Despite being the most resourced government in Ghana’s history, this government has wasted all the unprecedented revenues that have accrued to them totaling about GHS500 billion mainly through profligacy and corruption. Rt. Hon. Speaker, it bears reminding that corruption scandals such as the BOST scandal involving the illegal sale of five million liters of contaminated fuel to dubious entities, the Australian Visa Fraud Scandal, the Galamsey Fraud Scandal, the PPA Contracts for Sale scandal, the PDS scandal, the Missing Excavators scandal and the most recent Sputnik V Scandal remain unresolved instances of daylight heist that President Akufo-Addo has either turned a blind eye to or whitewashed the perpetrators. All attempts to demand accountability for the use of Covid-19 funds continues to be suppressed by President Akufo-Addo who has effectively doused the flame of accountability. We are however happy to note that on Wednesday 22nd June, 2022, you stood on the side of the ordinary Ghanaian and directed investigations into the Covid-19 related expenditure.

From the foregoing, Rt. Hon. Speaker, Arise Ghana demands the following:

1. We demand an immediate withdrawal of E.I 144 and an end to the land grabbing of the Achimota Forest Reserve lands. We want to use this medium to caution President Akufo-Addo and his land grabbers to stay their hands off the Achimota Forest lands. We demand from Parliament which represents the collective aspirations of the people to institute a bi-partisan probe into the matters relating to the sale of lands in the Achimota Forest immediately. This probe should be transparent and all persons, be they past or present government officials, civil or public servants, and all whose hands are soiled by this shameless grabbing of Achimota Forest lands should be named, shamed and the stolen lands retrieved for the State.

1. We demand an immediate and total cancelation of the Agyapa Royalties deal as same is not in the national interest. We are unable to sit aloof and allow a few individuals in government to appropriate our mineral royalties for themselves and their families.
2. We demand an immediate reduction in fuel prices through the scrapping of crippling fuel taxes such as the sanitation levy (“borla tax”) of 10 pesewas on every liter of diesel and petrol. We believe that this if done, will provide some respite to the suffering drivers and lessen the burden of cost of transportation on Ghanaians as a whole.

1. Additionally, we demand the immediate repeal of the obnoxious E-levy Act which is nothing but an insensitive attempt to rob the meager resources of the citizenry by the Akufo-Addo/Bawumia government.
2. We demand that in the wake of heightened youth unemployment, the Ministers responsible for Finance and Employment should take practical and pragmatic steps to expand the public space for more Ghanaian youth to ve employed.
3. Sir, we further demand a transparent, uninhibited and unimpeded inquiry into the Covid-19 expenditure by government following what was presented to the Parliament of Ghana.

We respectfully submit, Rt. Hon. Speaker.

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**Cmd Bernard Mornah**

**Leading Member, Arise Ghana**