

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY HON. NAANA EYIAH (MP), THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR THE INTERIOR ON THE OCCASION OF THE LAUNCH OF A GUIDE FOR INTEMPERATE LANGUAGE AT THE NATIONAL PEACE COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM**

The Chairman of the National Peace Council;  
H.E the Danish Ambassador to Ghana;  
The Chairman of the National Media Commission;  
The President of the Ghana Journalist Association;  
The Representative of GIBA, PRINPAG;  
The Media;  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is indeed an honor to officially launch this all-important document which aims to sanitize the air waves of needless verbal utterances against personalities, indicating tribal, ethnic, and religious discrimination. It is my hope that this document will go a long way to consolidate the nation's peacebuilding efforts as we approach our general elections in December, 2024.

The 1992 constitution states clearly that all persons shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression, which shall include freedom of the press among others; and the only time that this right may be revoked is when it is used by an individual to threaten, defame, insult and malign other individuals. This, the Government of Ghana shall uphold and protect to ensure that the peace building efforts of this country is consolidated.

Hate speech is a growing and an international threat which incites violence and bias in all spheres of life. The harmful effect of hatred is sadly nothing new. However, its scale and impact is now amplified by new communications technologies. Hate speech including online has become one of the most common ways of spreading divisive discourse on a global scale, threatening peace around the world.

The impact of hate speech cuts across numerous areas of focus, from protecting human rights and preventing violence to sustaining peace, achieving gender equality, and supporting children and youth.

In South Sudan, internet access is limited to a small elite, but some activists are however targeted by online hate speech. Hate speech, both in-country and from the diaspora, is contributing to violence in the world. It destroys the social fabric, relationships with others, and it generates mistrust and a lack of confidence in people.

In recent times, the Ghanaian media space has been flooded with an expression that borders on insult, defamation, and indecency. Internet and social media have made it easier to share information and stay connected which some people are using as channels for expression of hate speech. Some people have turn to using it to insult and defame great personalities in the country.

As citizens, we should be each other's keeper to condemn statements that suggest hate on our media space. This responsibility cannot be left only to Government and state agencies to control. The **Media** plays a special role of informing the public and of publishing views and not only the views of the journalists, editors, directors, but also, the views of other persons from the public who use the services of the media.

I would like to commend the National Peace Council for embarking and taking such a unique initiative to cut down the rate of hate speech in the country. The NPC should however find innovative ways to ensure these guidelines are observed by the media and culprits.

Once again, it is my hope that this document will go a long way to consolidate the nation's peacebuilding efforts as we approach our general elections come next year.

God bless us all.