

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT ON THE PEABO DISASTER BY HONOURABLE FRANK ANNOH-DOMPHEH MP FOR NSAWAM-ADOAGYIRI BY HON SARAH ADWOA SAFO MP FOR DOME/ KWABENYA - 27 JANUARY, 2017**

Mr Speaker, I would want to start by commending the Hon Member who made the Statement, the Hon Member for Nsawam-Adoagyiri for sharing such an experience with us.

I believe that with many other Hon Members of Parliament here, if we were to recount one after the other such crises or disasters in our constituencies, it would be endless. And that should give the nation one signal or focus, which is that, urgency and the necessary importance be attached to disaster management or crisis situation and plan accordingly so that we are not caught in the middle of such disasters, where nothing really is done to the victims who suffer as a result of such disasters.

Mr Speaker, if you go to other jurisdictions like the United States of America where I formerly trained, crisis management is a whole discipline on its own, where people go and study and acquire the necessary skill in planning for it. In the event of its occurrence, the immediate measures that ought to take place as well as the long-term — Mr Speaker, so, I believe that Ghana could take a cue from those practices in other jurisdictions; we do not need to reinvent the wheel. We just have to learn from how people in other advanced jurisdictions have handled the matter.

Mr Speaker, not too long ago, we experienced an explosion at the Kwame Nkrumah Circle area and Ghana was saddened by such crisis situation. We lost many lives and many families have been affected. There are many such incidents in other constituencies that if we should put all together, we are losing the lives of our dear people; we need the manpower or the human resource to build our nation. So, if the nation is not planning adequately in terms of disaster management, and the lives of our families, brothers and sisters are taken away as a result of our failure to plan adequately and give the necessary budgetary support to that effect, then we are failing as a nation.

Mr Speaker, I would want to add my voice to that of my Hon Colleagues who earlier spoke, and have made the point, that inasmuch as Members of Parliament, we are the first point of call when such things happen, there is very little that we can do within the resources that are allocated to us as Members of Parliament. So, we need to have a nationalistic approach to how we are going to deal with any crisis situation in our country.

The last Parliament passed the NADMO Act and it is now in force. Mr Speaker, this country is noted for having many laws on its shelves but when it comes to enforcement and implementation, that is where we have our struggle. So, inasmuch as we have the law, all the relevant agencies that ought to make sure that the law is implemented in collaboration with the Environmental Protection Agency, I think we ought to make sure that these institutions that we have put in place are actually functioning and enforcing the laws that ought to be enforced.

Mr Speaker, in conclusion, I would urge that as a country, if we do not take care, a time would come where we would have a number of class actions in this respect. If these victims or their families should sue the State on the damages that have been caused to their families, we would be saddled with many and multiple actions or legal matters in court.

I do not think that we would want to go on that path. So, when people have suffered as a result of such incidents, if they are entitled to compensation, we need to take the necessary steps to ensure that indeed, they get what they deserve. Mr Speaker, on this note, I would want to commend the Hon Member who made the Statement and to add my voice to the fact that, indeed, we need to take crisis management seriously as a country and plan accordingly.

Thank you.