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**PETITION**

**TO:** THE COMMISSIONER, COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND ADMINISTRATION JUSTICE (CHRAJ)

**FROM:** THE STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL, GHANA SCHOOL OF LAW  
AND THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LAW STUDENTS

**SUBJECT:** INVESTIGATE POLICE BRUTALITIES AGAINST LAW STUDENTS ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2019 BY OFFICERS OF THE GHANA POLICE SERVICE

**DATE:** OCTOBER 14, 2019

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We the undersigned, on this 14<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2019 write to petition the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) to investigate the abuse of power and human rights abuses perpetrated by officers of the Ghana Police Service under the command of the Greater Accra Regional Police Commander, DCOP Frederick Adu Anim, during a lawful and peaceful demonstration embarked upon by law students in Accra in protest of the poor handling of legal education in this country.

**Account of events**

1. On September 27, 2019, the National Association of Law Students wrote to the Greater Accra Regional Police Command, notifying them of our intention to embark on a lawful and peaceful demonstration on Monday, October 7, 2019, as required by Section 1 of the Public Order Act, 1994 (Act 491).
2. The route for the lawful and peaceful demonstration was indicated in the letter thus: (i) the John Evans Atta Mills High Street (Law Court complex area); to (ii) the Independence Avenue (National Theatre area); and then to (iii) the Liberation Crescent (Jubilee House) where we had arranged to present a petition to the President of the Republic at the Jubilee House.
3. The Greater Accra Regional Police Commander, DCOP Frederick Adu Anim and his officers invited representatives of the association to a meeting on Wednesday October 2, 2019 which we attended.

4. At the meeting, the Greater Accra Regional Police Commander, DCOP Frederick Adu Anim and his deputies indicated that we could not embark upon the planned lawful and peaceful demonstration on chosen date of Monday, October 7, 2019 because in their estimation, Monday was not conducive to a lawful and peaceful demonstration.
5. Another meeting was proposed by the Greater Accra Regional Police Commander, DCOP Frederick Adu Anim and his deputies for Monday, October 7, 2019 (the date of our planned lawful and peaceful demonstration). The purpose of this proposed meeting was to continue discussions on the 'appropriate' date to embark on our lawful and peaceful demonstration. We were dissatisfied with this proposal.
6. We wrote back to the Greater Accra Regional Police Command on Friday, October 4, 2019 indicating that any shift from our proposed date would be unfavourable to the student body since logistics had been procured. Students were also travelling from different parts of the country to join us in Accra for the lawful and peaceful demonstration. We also indicated that it was a peaceful march and since we had complied with the legal requirements we would go ahead with our lawful and peaceful demonstration on Monday, October 7, 2019 as planned.
7. On Monday, October 7, 2019, law students converged at the forecourt of the Ghana School of Law, Makola campus and proceeded with the lawful and peaceful demonstration without any police escort. The demonstration continued peacefully without any incident.
8. At the Ako Adjei interchange, we were met by the Greater Accra Regional Police Commander, DCOP Frederick Adu Anim and his officers who were armed to the teeth. The police were in full riot gear. They had armoured vehicles, tear gas, water cannons, amongst others.
9. The Greater Accra Regional Police Commander, DCOP Frederick Adu Anim and his officers insisted they could not allow us to proceed to the Jubilee House to present our petition to the Presidency as indicated in our letter to the police.
10. Our leaders tried negotiating with the Greater Accra Regional Police Commander, DCOP Frederick Adu Anim and his officers to at least allow a few persons to proceed to the Jubilee House to present our petition but the police refused.
11. Suddenly, the police, without provocation and acting on the orders of the Greater Accra Police Commander, DCOP Frederick Adu Anim, fired rubber bullets at the students; sprayed the students with water from their water cannons and fired tear gas to disperse the students.

12. The police started chasing students with their water cannons and sprayed more water on students while simultaneously firing tear gas. Students had to run from the Afrikiko area all the way to the Canadian High Commission to seek protection from the police brutality. The police continued to spray students with much more water even after students had moved away from the Jubilee House area and converged peacefully in front of the Canadian High Commission.
13. A Deputy Chief of Staff at the Presidency, Mr. Abu Jinapor, who was on his way to the Jubilee House witnessed this unlawful and excessive use of force by the police against defenceless law-abiding citizens. He told the police to allow us to proceed to the Jubilee House and present our petition but the police ignored his plea.
14. Some students sustained various degrees of injury from the rubber bullets fired by the police. Some had to be rushed to the hospital for immediate medical treatment. The use of tear gas by the police also triggered one female student's asthmatic attack. Some journalists were also injured in the process.
15. About 13 students including the SRC President of the Ghana School of Law, Mr. Jonathan Alua, were violently arrested by the police and detained for more than 6 hours without any formal charge.

**Section 7 of the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice Act, 1993 (Act 456)** provides that

- (1) In accordance with Article 218 of the Constitution, the functions of the Commission are (a) to investigate complaints of violations of fundamental rights and freedoms, injustice, corruption, abuse of power and unfair treatment of a person by a public officer in the exercise of official duties;

We are by this petition, making a formal complaint to CHRAJ that,

1. The Greater Accra Regional Police Commander, DCOP Frederick Adu Anim and his officers infringed on the rights of law students to freely assemble and take part in processions and demonstrations—a right conferred on us by Article 21(1)(d) of the 1992 Constitution—when they sought to prevent and indeed prevented us from embarking and completing our demonstration on Monday October 7, 2019 despite our compliance with the requirements of the Public Order Act 1994 (Act 491).
2. The Greater Accra Regional Police Commander, DCOP Frederick Adu Anim and his officers denied us the enjoyment of our Article 14(2) rights when they violently arrested

about 13 students on Monday, October 7, 2019 and detained them for over 6 hours without any formal charge(s);

3. The Greater Accra Regional Police Commander, DCOP Frederick Adu Anim and his officers, in breach of Article 15(1) and (2)(a)(b) of the 1992 Constitution, subjected us to cruel, degrading and inhumane treatment when they tortured us with tear gas, water cannons and rubber pellets on Monday, October 7, 2019 resulting in some students sustaining various degrees of injury; some of which were nearly fatal.
4. That the Greater Accra Regional Police Commander, DCOP Frederick Adu Anim and his officers failed in the exercise of their duty to protect citizens when they abdicated their responsibility to escort us on Monday, October 7, 2019 during the peaceful march.

We are therefore petitioning CHRAJ to

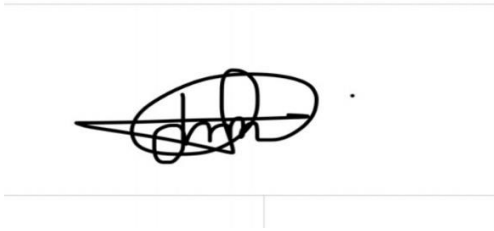
1. Investigate the actions of the Greater Accra Regional Police Commander, DCOP Frederick Adu Anim and his officers in respect of the events of Monday, October 7, 2019 and determine to what extent those actions constitute (i) abuse of power and (ii) violations of the rights and freedoms of law students who embarked on a lawful and peaceful demonstration
2. Initiate or cause to be initiated disciplinary proceedings and criminal prosecution against any police officer or persons found culpable;
3. Take any other appropriate actions consequent upon these investigations;

pursuant to the Commission's powers under **Article 218 (a), (b) and (d) of the 1992 Constitution and Sections 7(a), (b,) (d) and 9 of the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice Act, 1993 (Act 456),**

We have attached to this petition all the necessary documentation and evidence which might help CHRAJ in its investigations.

We are also available to assist with these investigations when called upon.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Alua

President, Ghana School of Law SRC

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