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**PRESS RELEASE ON THE ALL-MALE ADVISORY BOARD
CONSTITUTED BY THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORTS**

The inauguration of the Ministry of Youth and Sports' Ministerial advisory board published on its Facebook platform on 30th June 2021 has come to our attention. We at the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ), hereby express serious disappointment for the blatant disregard for a gendered and youth representation on this board. We find it wholly appalling that a ministry that deals with a sector involving females and males and other vulnerable groups including young people found it expedient to constitute an advisory committee without women, youth and Persons with Disability (PwD).

The reasons adduced for appointing this all-male Advisory Board are untenable, incredibly implying an absence of well qualified women, youth and PwD in the public and private sectors with the requisite expertise.

From the Ministry's own statement shared on Facebook;
"Inaugurating the Board, the Hon Minister indicated that members of the Board were carefully chosen due to the recognition of their rich experiences both in private and public spheres which is relevant to the development of the critical mass of the society being the youth of the country."

The Ministry indicates that it took this step-in accordance with the requirements of the “Civil Service Act, 1993 (PNDCL327) which mandates it

“to establish a Ministerial Board to help promote constant interaction between the Ministry and users of its services and secondly to advise the sector Minister on adjustments in policy direction, planning, objectives and operational strategies.”

Women have from time immemorial been traditionally trusted with the duty of raising children (female and males respectively), continuing to coach and mentor various children and youth into adulthood. In the corporate professional sporting world, we recall how the recent elections for President of the Ghana Football Association fielded a female contestant. Further, we have an uncountable number of capable women whose rich professional duties in the public and private sectors positively impact the youth of this country, including many women directly involved in sports.

In our opinion, the appointment of an all-male team is in very poor taste as it hardly reflects the best practice of drawing deeply from a rich and diverse pool of skills and resources available in the country currently. It beggars belief how the Ministry expects a team, completely shorn of women, youth and PwDs to make thoughtful decisions impacting a subsection of the population whose lived experiences they are totally ignorant of.



We believe the criteria for selecting these board members is neither inclusive nor diverse enough and requires a relook. **We are by this release directly calling on the minister and ministry to as a matter of urgency and priority, reconstitute the board including at least 50% of women, PwDs while being cognisance of youth to make it representative.**

We are of the opinion that there is the need for the minister to go further to address other issues such as representation, participation and active involvement of other vulnerable and marginalised groups. There is the need to undertake an analysis of its stakeholders, the sporting activities they are seeking to focus on and who are the participants in these activities. Answers to these will enable the Board to better understand, clarify and streamline its activities to address these stakeholders' needs.

In conclusion, we wish to use the constitution of this board to highlight the now widespread problem of woeful under-representation of qualified women on State Boards, and Ministerial and Chief Executive lists appointed by H.E the President Akufo Addo. It is time for the President to fulfil his pledge of 30% of all appointees being women as contained in the 2020 Manifesto of the New Patriotic Party. From the perspective of the CSJ, the excuse of not finding qualified women, often given by political leaders, is untenable and not progressive. Neither should this be about appointing women as a symbol of tokenism as the country truly abounds in effective and qualified women and young leaders that are very capable of making a difference at all levels of the Ghanaian society.

The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) is a platform of academics, social change activists and patriots advocating for progressive social transformation and people centered development in Ghana.
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