



GenCED

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Cassava Street, Ashaley Botwe
Accra, Ghana

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PRESS RELEASE

GENCED CONDEMNS CYBERBULLYING AND DIGITAL HARASSMENT AGAINST WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT

The Gender Centre for Empowering Development (GenCED) unequivocally condemns the escalating cyberbullying and digital harassment targeting young women Members of Parliament. Of serious concern is the online harassment directed at Hon. Millicent Amankwah Yeboah, Member of Parliament for Sunyani West, which has sought to demean her competence and dignity based on language and unfounded personal attacks.

This sustained online hostility, often framed as ridicule for speech and rhetorical style, reflects deep-seated gender bias and has the effect of discouraging women from full and confident participation in democratic discourse.

Recent monitoring of Ghana's digital space highlights how pervasive online abuse has become:

- Between August 2024 and March 2025, the Media Foundation for West Africa recorded 583 incidents of online gender-based violence (OGBV) targeting women, including female politicians and public figures, across major social platforms.
- National data from the Cyber Security Authority (CSA) shows cybercrime cases in Ghana rising sharply, with cyberbullying among the top reported offences, accounting for hundreds of complaints in 2025 alone.
- A UNICEF-U-Report poll found that 49 % of young people in Ghana have experienced online violence, with emotional distress a common outcome, further evidence that the digital environment is not safe for many citizens.

This pattern of sustained online harassment often includes derogatory comments, personal insults, character attacks, and threats designed to intimidate and silence women in public life. These behaviours not only impact the individuals targeted but also threaten democratic inclusion by signalling to women and girls that their voices are unwelcome.

Ghana's Cyber Laws

Ghana's legal framework clearly recognises cyber harassment as a punishable offence:

- The Cyber Crimes Act, 2025 (Cyber Crimes Act) criminalises online harassment and cyberbullying, including using digital platforms to be rude, indecent, or vulgar with the intent to humiliate another person, punishable by fines and/or imprisonment.
- Other relevant statutes, the Cybersecurity Act, 2020 (Act 1038) and related provisions in the Electronic Transactions/Electronic Communications Acts provide additional mechanisms to hold perpetrators accountable and protect digital rights. These laws reflect Ghana's commitment to safe and secure online engagement.

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Despite these legal protections, enforcement is weak, and online gender-based abuse continues to proliferate, often with impunity.

GenCED reiterates that:

1. Cyberbullying against elected officials, especially based on gender or language, undermines Ghana's democratic principles.
2. Online harassment that seeks to shame, intimidate, or silence women in public office must be recognised as a form of gender-based political violence that has no place in a free, inclusive society.
3. All parts of society, political parties, state institutions, media organisations and online platforms have a responsibility to uphold standards of respect, dignity and equality in digital engagement.

Call to Action

We call on:

- Law enforcement and regulatory agencies to apply cybercrime provisions decisively against those who perpetrate online harassment targeting women.
- Parliamentary leadership to publicly affirm that cyberbullying against MPs is unacceptable and to support measures that protect digital civic space.
- Media and online platforms to moderate abusive conduct and support digital literacy and safe reporting mechanisms.
- Ghanaian citizens to reject misogynistic and sexist attacks online, and to instead encourage constructive debate rooted in policy rather than personal denigration.

Hon. Millicent Amankwah Yeboah, like all elected representatives, has a constitutional and moral mandate to serve her constituents without fear of digital intimidation. Ghana's democracy is strengthened, not weakened, by diverse voices and robust debate that respects the humanity of all participants.

Signed

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