Wading Through The Waters: The Governance Challenge to Ghana's Democracy.

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the implications of bad governance to Ghana's democracy. While it acknowledges the fact that Ghana's democracy has shown some level of resilience in the face of some collateral difficulties since 1993 when the country returned to democracy which has been sustained so far, it contends that bad governance, which is manifested mostly in widespread corruption in public institutions and the political leadership challenges exhibited by all political leaders since the inception of the country's fourth republic, pose a significant threat to the country's democracy if not effectively addressed. It argues that in the face of difficult national issues creating resentment and despair such as erratic electricity power supply, lack of potable water for many communities, high unemployment rates, poor but expensive health delivery system, unaffordable but low quality educational facilities at all levels of education, high maternal death rates, poor infrastructure, weak industrial sector, higher interest rates and unsustainable agricultural sector performance, among others, the continued existence and manifestation of these evils to national development present precarious and very dire implications for the country's democracy. This is especially against the backdrop of the fact that civil society is getting gradually more conscious of the responsibilities of their leaders towards the discharge of the social contract when elected into office.

KEY WORDS: Democracy, Corruption, governance, political leadership, Ghana, Africa.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Larry Diamond (1999:2) "democratization is generally a good thing and democracy is the best form of government". To him, " even if we think of democracy as simply the rule of the people, as a system for choosing government through free and fair electoral competition at regular intervals, governments chosen in this manner are generally better than those that are not"(ibid p.3). Democracy has therefore been accepted generally as the best form of governance that can deliver development and thereby improve the quality of life of the individual. At the core of most enduring democracies like that of the United States of America is the building of a strong economy, forging unity in diversity, leaning on strong principles of development and social justice, job creation, sound education, strong and informed civil society, effective health care delivery system, well organized electoral system, tolerance and an avowed political will to deal with corruption at every level of society. Larry Diamond, did not mince words when he said "it is by now a truism that the better the performance of a democratic regime in producing and broadly distributing improvements in living standards, the more likely it is to endure"(ibid p.78). Ghana has waded through so far, without most, if not all, of the aforementioned building blocks for an enduring democracy, in her democratic experiment. But to take that for granted and to deem Ghana's democracy impervious to the dangers of bad governance, massive and widespread corruption in public institutions, directly linked to bad political leadership in the long term with a growing sophistication and informed civil society is no mean danger to the country's democratic progress. This makes widespread thriving of corruption and bad governance which have the potency and venom to destroy the very foundation of the country's democracy, unwelcome at least and repugnant at best, if the country has to continue on its path as an African reference point for democracy.

1.1 DEFINITIONS AND CONTEXTUALIZATION

1.1.1 Governance

According to E. Gyemah-Boadi (2001), governance is a process that is common to all types of governments, regimes and administrations. It refers to "the exercise of political power to manage a nation's affairs," and or "the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for

development" (World Bank, Sub-Saharan Africa, 1989:1) also (Governance and Development, 1992) and (DAC Orientations on Participatory Development and Good Governance, 1994). To Gyemah-Boadi (2001), good governance is a specific type encompassing three core factors: (i) Effective States, (ii) mobilized civil societies and (iii) productive private sectors. Effective states, he explains, create an enabling political and legal environment for economic growth and equitable distribution; civil societies mobilize groups to facilitate political and social interaction and thereby foster societal cohesion and stability; and productive private sectors generate jobs and income. All these factors are universally recognized as essential for sustained economic development. According to the World Bank Report (1989) there is near unanimity on the key elements of good governance among development scholars, practitioners and policymakers. They include all or some of the following: transparency and accountability in public decision making and among public authorities, effectiveness of public administration and public services, judicial independence, rule of law, and respect for human rights and property rights and vibrant civil society. These according to the report are inter-linked and deemed as both necessary and complementary for securing state effectiveness, legitimacy, and equitable distribution. This underscores the fact, that, good governance plays a pivotal role in creating regime legitimacy and for delivering social services as well as ensuring equitable distribution, which are conducive for democratic development. On the other hand, bad governance, with its elements like corruption, failure to deliver development and social services to the citizenry, among others, carries with it the missiles for the destruction of the very foundation of democracy.

1.1.2 Corruption

Corruption is found in all countries of the world from Australia to Ghana. It is far from being a peculiar preserve for the Third World but has over the years been an undeniably persistent feature of the political and administrative spheres of developing countries for decades. Myrdal (1968) noted that it was 'rampant' among lower level officials in colonial India. Harrison (1981) has written of Nigeria that 'corruption riddles every part of the public edifice like a bad infestation of woodworm'. In 1981, the head of the Indonesian Financial Audit Board stated publicly that no department was clear of corruption while the country's vice-president spoke of corruption reaching 'epidemic proportions' (Robison, 1986:393). And corruption can be a leading issue with the public. For example, in the 1992 presidential elections in the Philipines, Miriam Santiago almost won on a one-issue platform of anti-corruption despite having far less resources for her campaign than her rivals (Turner and Hulme, 1997: 100). Recently, members of the African Union expressed worry over the continuous domination of the continent at the bottom of most corruption perception and public sector governance indexes (Daily Graphic p.20).

Corruption has been defined variously. To Gould (1991:471) administrative corruption is 'the institutionalized personal abuse of public resources by civil servants'. Typical examples would include 'kick-backs' on construction contracts, bribery to secure a favourable decision on the granting of an import license, 'tips' after a decision has been made on the allocation of land, the use of public resources such as labour, vehicles, travel and accommodation for personal consumption, providing unqualified family, friends, and co-ethics with public sector jobs, selling state property such as construction materials or weapons and pocketing the income, or payment of salaries of 'ghost' staff into one's own bank account; or hiring a middleman to 'grease' appropriate personnel to speed up the issuance of a passport or any other service. The details of what constitutes corruption vary between regions and countries. What is seen as polite and culturally necessary gift giving in one place may be deemed as unfair attempts to win favour in another. But culture itself can be manipulated and mobilized by the corrupt to legitimate their corrupt practices; for example, by labeling them as 'traditional'.

Corruption has a number of effects. First, political legitimacy and stability may be threatened. People may become morally outraged or alienated by corrupt behavior. Alternatively, there may be resentment by those excluded from receiving the benefits of corruption. In both cases political opposition may be mobilized to destabilize or overthrow the regime. Secondly, there is a negative effect on productivity as the public interest is subsumed by the individual bureaucrat's pursuit of private gain. Thirdly, inequity is likely to increase as those who can afford corruption secure the desired outcomes while the poor lose out. Fourthly, there is an opposing view, which believes that 'if the prevailing system is bad, then corruption may be good'. It cuts red tape, makes decision-making predictable, substitutes for social welfare, gives motivation to underpaid workers and enables out groups to buy into political power thus avoiding violence. But such a view overlooks the millions of taxpayers' money diverted from productive investment to Swiss banks and conspicuous consumption (Turner and Hulmes, 1997:102).

1.1.3 Leadership

The leadership question continues to hang, as an albatross around the necks of many governments and institutions in Africa and many parts of the world today and Ghana is no exception. Every nation rises and falls on its leadership. Meanwhile, there is no universally accepted definition of leadership because of the complex nature of the concept. Nevertheless different scholars and practitioners have defined leadership variously. According to Lippitt (2003:7) leadership has to do with the ability to set a realistic direction, develop effective plans, get others to implement the plans, and measure the results. The role of leadership to the survival and realization of the vision and dream of any nation or organization is so important that Lippitt had this to say, "an organization short of money can arrange for credit. An organization short of space can lease new facilities. But an organization short of good leaders will fail. Leadership involves performance, execution, and achieving the results that derive from setting an appropriate direction, motivating others to implement it, and measuring effectiveness". Irving L. Janis studied four U.S presidents and found that their decision-making skills could be either outstanding or miserable. The difference between success and failure was a matter of how those individuals approached their decision-making process. Andrew DuBrin (2008) defines leadership as the ability to inspire confidence and support among the people who are needed to achieve organizational goals. To Achua and Lussier, (2010) leadership is the influencing process of leaders and followers to achieve organizational objectives through change. To J.P. Kotter (1988) leadership is creating vision of the future that takes into account the legitimate long-term interests of the parties involved in that activity; of developing a rational strategy for moving towards that vision; of enlisting the support of key power centres whose cooperation, compliance, or teamwork is necessary to produce that movement; and of motivating highly that core of people whose actions are central to implementing the strategy. Leadership can also be described as a combination of credible authority, persuasion, empowerment of others (Conger 1989), inducement and perhaps, above all, good judgment (Quinn et al. 1989). Ayee, in Kwame Boafo-Arthur ed. (2007:166) says leadership revolves around purpose, and purpose is at the heart of the leader-follower relationship. He further posits that in some cases a compelling statement of mission not only gives direction to a group, but also is its formative experience, shaping the identity of group members by highlighting a shared aim. According to Burns, leaders can be distinguished from their followers: "Leaders and followers may be inseparable in function, but they are not the same. The leader takes the initiative in making the leader-led connection; it is the leader who creates the links that allow communication and exchange to take place…. The leader is more skillful in evaluating followers' motives, anticipating their responses to an initiative, and estimating their power bases, than the reverse…. Finally…leaders address themselves to followers' wants, needs and other motivations, as well as to their own, and thus serve as an independent force in changing the makeup of their followers' motive base through gratifying their motives (Burns 1978:20).

From Burns and other scholars, it is clear that leadership is about purposeful activity, which operates interactively with a body of followers and also as a form of power and causation.

An essential ingredient of effective leadership is the establishment of a set of values that will provide the foundation for the development of mutual trust and commitment. Mistrust is the cholesterol of organizational systems; like its medicinal analogy, it clogs and incapacitates the arteries of the organization; it impedes its performance and may ultimately bring about its demise. And like a heart disease, it is an epidemic of modern organizational life (Bartolome 1989:135-42).

This paper therefore discusses the governance challenge to Ghana's democracy by critically examining the governance conundrum, corruption quagmire in public institutions and poor political leadership and their potential dangers to Ghana's emerging democracy.

2. BACKGROUND

Ghana gained independence from the British March 6, 1957. After independence and until 1993 when the country returned to democracy which has been sustained so far, there have been military coup d'etats and counter coups citing cases of corruption, mismanagement of the economy, bad governance and leadership deficiencies leading to mass suffering. The first coup that ousted the first president Kwame Nkrumah, according to the coup makers, was as a result of a myriad of issues including corruption, leadership difficulties and bad governance. For example, Joe Appiah (1996) had this to say about Nkrumah, "Self preservation and ordinary common sense dictated flight out of a country in which the 'rule of man' had replaced the 'rule of law'. Unless I could return home leading an army of liberators fully armed for battle, my place was still here". A perceived or actual oppressive regime is most often explained on leadership challenges. On the issue of corruption, accusations against Nkrumah were deep and frightening. According to Rooney (2007:261), "Nkrumah had been

convinced that a modern political party needed the backing of big business, and this was one reason why he set up the National Development Corporation (NADECO). The formation of NADECO raises the important and complex question of how far Nkrumah himself was corrupt". According to him, from 1957 onwards, Nkrumah did his best to establish a system under which his Contingency Fund, the Bureau of African Affairs and other organizations were not subject to civil service audit. The issue of corruption in Ghana under Nkrumah was investigated by an American Scholar Victor Le Vine who wrote that Nkrumah 'clearly was involved in a variety of corrupt transactions' (Le Vine, 1975:29). Le Vine, quoting W. Scott Thompson, argues that the assassination attempt at Kulungugu unhinged Nkrumah and after that he could not resist temptation. Le Vine continues, "He used public funds to distribute largesse to his favourites (he tapped the President's Contingency Vote and at least two public corporation votes to buy cars for mistresses and to make various 'gifts' to relatives, friends, associates, and ideological cronies". Le Vine alleges that the NADECO was set up to facilitate the collection and handling of bribes, and that, "The prices paid by the government for properties purchased from a Greek businessman (A.G. Leventis) were deliberately inflated so that one million pounds… could be turned back to Nkrumah for his own use. At least ninety thousand pounds sterling from the Leventis transaction went into Nkrumah's private account" (ibid). For Rooney "Factories were refused licenses for vital pieces of equipment and for raw materials, and farms were refused sprays and fertilizer. Price controls did little to help the really poor, and merely created another category of control which was open to abuse and corruption" (Rooney D. 2007:267). It is important to note, that in as much as criticism of the corruption of Nkrumah's regime has to be measured and guarded for obvious reasons, one being that, after the coup, a number of formal investigations were made and the purpose of some of these appeared to blacken him and everything that happened under his rule, there is no doubt that corruption was one of the most important single factors that underlay the failure of his attempt to create a socialist state. To W.E.F.Ward (1969::432), prices of food-stuffs, whether imported or home-grown, had risen tremendously, and there was much suffering among the poor. To him, the economic distress was intensified by the atmosphere of terror; everyone was afraid of being denounced by an informer and whisked away to a concentration camp as an enemy of the state. The reasons advanced for the overthrow of the government of the second Republic under Kofi Abrefa Busia hinged around corruption and mismanagement of the economy or bad governance. According Shellington, "despite the democratic rhetoric of the Progress Party and the high hopes of the electorate, the government of the Second Republic was a great disappointment. Busia proved no respecter of democracy; in fact, he became just as dictatorial as Nkrumah had been. He sacked judges, and fired newspaper editors when they disagreed with him. Moreover, there were strong rumours that the party was syphoning off gold to neighbouring Cote d'Ivoire to buy Peugeot cars for party elites" (Shellington K.1992:17). According to him, "Six years of anti-socialist 'free market' policies had produced few tangible gains for the country as a whole. There was little long-term investment in agriculture. The proceeds of a boom cocoa harvest in 1970 were spent mostly on imports of luxury consumer goods to satisfy the urban bourgeoisie. There remained a balance of payments deficit, shortages of basic commodities in the shops, rising unemployment …" (Ibid: 18). The reasons for the fall of the Third Republic can be likened to those for the First and Second Republics, even though, with different emphasis, intensity and peculiarities. According to Shellington (1992:72), the Limann administration was characterized by "…lack of confidence in the government's record on the economy which derived from a failure to balance government finances, falling agricultural production, loss of confidence in the cedi and unacceptably high inflation, all in the face of the intolerable hardships being faced by the vast majority of Ghanaians." There were also high expense allowances awarded to ministers and members of parliament in the face of significant difficulties facing the larger population of the country. This was to lead to the overthrow of the Third Republic. Then came the fourth republic, which was inaugurated in January 1993 following the promulgation of the 1992 constitution. Between 1992 and 2012, Ghana has held six elections to elect the president and parliamentarians who are expected to deliver on all fronts including, solving the challenges of unemployment, poor health delivery system, weak industry, inadequate but expensive housing situation, poor agricultural sector, lack of pipe borne water, erratic electricity supply etc for the good of all.

3. History of Ghana's democracy.

Over the two decades of the 1970s and 1980s, Africa has been through a rather bad patch of military and unconstitutional rule, which also badly affected the continent's economic performance. However, starting from the early 1990s, a wave of democratic governance began to sweep across the continent of Africa. Most countries that had been under military rule, adopted the basic rudiments of democratic rule (Boafo-Arthur ed. 2004:41). They adopted constitutions, which set the rules for democratic governance in which elections play a major role. Ghana is a classic example of a country whose military intervened in national politics and helped to drive the country's economy down. Ghana began along the road of democratic governance under the 1992 Constitution with its first elections in December 1992. Since then, the country has stayed the course of democratic governance

with general elections in 1996, 2000,2004, 2008 and 2012. Elections have been a major measure of the democratic governance credentials of especially emerging democratic states. Elections play a vital role in the democratic process because they allow citizens to assess the performance of the government they elected in the previous elections. Since 1992 governments have had to struggle with numerous challenges bothering on basic human needs like water, electricity, employment, healthcare issues, sanitation, infrastructure, housing, to mention only these. According to Gyimah-Boadi (2001:57), "Ghana appeared to be evolving a "Party-Sate" in which…opposition parties, civil society, independent media and other key institutions of democratic governance established under the 1992 Constitution were constrained by severe handicaps." More so, issues of the basic necessities of life such as food, clothes and shelter were of major concern to many especially in the rural areas. Erratic electricity supply, high unemployment rates, difficult economic conditions, lack of pipe born water, inadequate infrastructural development, lack of agricultural enhancement equipment, poor health delivery system, high infant mortality rate and poor maternal health care, underemployment, corruption, the list can continue, characterized the administrations of Rawlings, kufuor, Mills, and now Mahama. To Joseph Ayee (2001:23) some issues in the 2000 elections were "…widespread disenchantment with the ruling government…particularly in the urban areas where problems such as increasing unemployment, inflation, and depreciating currency had become conspicuously burdensome. These real economic problems were exacerbated by reports in the media of corruption among government functionaries."

4. METHOD AND MATERIAL
The data used in the discussions is from secondary sources.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. The Governance Challenge To Ghana's Democracy.
"Never lose sight of this new consciousness of the Ghanaian people: Never before have the eyes of so many been focused on so few, Mr. President. The few are you, the illustrious members of your new civilian administration. The many are those in the factories and on the farms, in the dormitories and junior quarters who will be watching you, with eagles' eyes to see whether the change they are hoping for will actually materialize in their lifetime."
Jerry John Rawlings.
This encapsulates the expectations that occupy the hearts and minds of many if not all citizens who have decided to be part of a democracy as a system of governance the world over. During the dark days of military rule in Ghana, people's basic freedoms were denied them, there were limited opportunities for self-expression and advancement, some suspected corrupt public officers faced the firing squad and almost every conceivable sector of the nation's economy was incapacitated either by resources or by poor sector performance. The return to democracy was seen as the only way to national development, prosperity and individual self-actualization and self-expression. It was seen as a dispensation where development was going to reflect in opportunities for all without discrimination, a time when hospitals will be lifesavers and not death traps. There were very high hopes by the Ghanaian people of the level of development that they expected, thus, development that would result in more job opportunities for all, massive infrastructural development across the length and breadth of the country, (and not the kind only centred in a few major cities), provision of pipe born water for all, elimination of some if not all evils to development such as corruption, cronyism, political paternalism, bad governance, regionalism and tribal discrimination. These expectations, which continue to grow with successive electoral successes has posed daunting challenges to political leadership in Ghana and to the very core of the country's democracy. Leaders are faced with a myriad of problems including the almost insurmountable challenge of meeting expectations with meager resources, the need to grapple with continued dependence on an unfavourable international economic order, the need to incorporate a diverse population into a workable whole, and to establish the guidelines for a distributive Ghanaian path of not only constructive change but also socio-economic development (Pellow and Chazan, 1986). Such challenges are acknowledged in Chapter 6 of the 1992 Constitution, the Directive Principles of State Policy, which enjoins political leadership to establish a just and free society and take steps for the realization of basic human rights, a healthy economy, the right to work, the right to good healthcare and the right to education.
The challenge to political leadership has no doubt affected the performance of all presidents since Ghana's return to democracy in 1993. All Ghanaian presidents since then have not only acknowledged the prevalence of the challenge in their sessional addresses but also in their budget statements presented to parliament. Ethnic violence have erupted in Northern Ghana and other parts of the country during the regimes of Rawlings, Kufuor, Atta-Mills and currently under John Mahama leading to loss of life, displacement of people and destruction of property. All governments under Ghana's Fourth Republic have at one time or the other resorted to imposing a state of emergency to curb the violence. The poor state of the Ghanaian economy, human rights issues, the

canker of unemployment, and underemployment have also been key election issues and have cost both the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) election victories in one way or the other. For instance, in the year 2000, the poor state of the economy and the perception of corruption, apart from the widespread need for change, were contributory factors leading to the NDC losing power to the NPP. Similarly, the NPP lost the Asawase constituency seat in the Ashanti Region in the by-election in April 2005 largely because of harsh economic measures such as the increase in petroleum prices and indirectly because of the decongestion of the city of Kumasi by the Metropolitan Assembly, which displaced hawkers. The inability to formulate a comprehensive national wage policy has not only led to strikes and threats of strikes but has also led to the mistrust that has characterized government-labour relations (Ayee, 2007:167).

In addition, all governments since the beginning of Ghana's Fourth Republic have had to deal with the challenge of insulating national issues from partisan considerations. Discussions on issues such as the economy, the appointment of people to public offices, parliamentary procedures and the national health insurance scheme, have been politicized. This has led to the politicians reacting to problems in a knee-jerk fashion that has further compounded them and created problems of legitimacy for their governments.

Dealing with corruption has become a major challenge. Even though Rawlings, for example, declared that he was not corruptible, at the time he left office, his NDC government was perceived as corrupt. Consequently, when Kufuor won the 2000 elections, he announced a policy of 'zero tolerance for corruption' at his inauguration. Five years later, in spite of the promulgation of appropriate legislation such as the Public Procurement Act and the Internal Audit, there was a perception that Kufuor and the NPP government's fight against corruption had become blunted. Dealing with corruption has become a major barometer for measuring the performance of political leaders in office. Consequently, judging by rankings by Transparency International, no government since 1993 can be said to have performed well in minimizing the incidence of corruption. This has created serious legitimacy problems for the governments.

Governance and economic policies help to shape economic performance, but there is an asymmetry in the consequences of getting them right and getting them wrong. While excellent governance and economic policies can help the growth process of an economy, terrible governance and policies can destroy an economy with alarming speed. Leadership failures and corruption, which are usually topical issues in almost all African nations, have characterized every government in Ghana since independence. Whether perceived or real, leadership failures and corruption have often been cited as factors responsible for the poor state of development of the country. Some call it tips, others call it an appreciation of service. Yet still, others think it is a way of propelling fast action from public sector workers. The attitude of deliberate delays of action or service delivery by public sector workers in anticipation of some kind of "gift" has become a norm and not an exception in many public institutions in Ghana. The lack of transformational leaders with the vision and personal resolution and political will to implement policies and programmes irrespective of their political consequences, makes corruption a very lucrative enterprise in many public institutions in the country. Most of Ghana's political leaders since independence are transactional ones whose emphasis is creating implicit social exchange or transaction over time between themselves and their followers, including reciprocal influence and interpersonal perception. As a result of their transactional leadership, opportunities have been created for corruption and other rent-seeking activities. No wonder, in a communiqué issued by AU Public Servants after a meeting in Accra, the African Union expressed worry over the continuous domination of the continent at the bottom of most corruption perception and public sector governance indexes (Daily Graphic, Tuesday, June 25, 2013). The AU explained, "the degree of corruption in the continent has been partly attributed to the weaknesses in Africa's public services emanating from political patronage and appointments and promotions in the service"(ibid). According to Joseph Ayee (ed) (2007:16) dealing with problems created by poor leadership and corruption will be with us for a long time to come. For example, corruption issues involving government and public officers, non-fulfillment of due process before payment of contract sum to individuals and companies on government contracts, continue to dominate the newspapers on daily basis (Daily Graphic, Saturday, June 15, 2013,p.1 &13, Daily Guide, Tuesday, June 11, 2013,p.1 & 3, Daily Guide, Friday, June 14,2013,p.2, Daily Graphic, Saturday, May 11, 2013,p.1&3, The Ghanaian Times, Wednesday, May 22, 2013, p.1 & 16). This trend, coupled with the waning hope in the ability of government to deliver by the generality of the populace is a significant pointer to the fact that the country's democracy could suffer a severe drawback as political apathy is already manifesting in the voting patterns year after year. The people of Ghana are watching government with eagle's eyes to deliver on promises contained in their manifestoes and to also make the gains of democracy real in their daily lives and circumstances. At least, most Ghanaians watch with keen anticipation for more employment opportunities, greater access to affordable and quality education, provision of pipe borne water for all urban and rural communities, provision of sustained electricity to households and for business entities, provision of affordable housing, good sanitation and favourable economic conditions generally from the government as necessary outcomes from democratic practices as evidenced in the developed democracies. The prevailing situation, which

is highlighted elsewhere and also characterized by high inflation and interest rates, high unemployment and underemployment rates, poor but expensive healthcare delivery system, lack of pipe borne water in the cities as well as in rural communities, erratic electricity supply, high cost of doing business in Ghana and the bad state of the economy generally, sums up the economic hardship that confronts Ghanaians in this democratic dispensation.

6. CONCLUSION

It has been demonstrated in the foregoing that bad governance characterized by high levels of corruption and poor political leadership are not only responsible for the less than expected level of development in the country, but have betrayed the hopes of many Ghanaians over the years since the inception of the fourth Republic. The future of Ghana's democracy is faced with a waning confidence in government in the light of these challenges among Ghanaians. This calls for intensification of efforts towards arresting the evils to democracy including positive measures such as building social capital, which is the key to making democracy work. Measures used to promote trust, reciprocity, community spirit, strong and well informed civil society, demonstration by high political office holders of equity and high sense of leadership on national issues while efforts are made to address the issues of corruption, unemployment, health care delivery, power and water supply deficiencies as well as transportation, among others, would be a positive path towards restoring public confidence in the country's democracy. Building strong governmental and other public institutions which would be resilient and efficient for delivering public services with high levels of transparency, accountability and integrity, as well as strengthening constitutionalism to assure citizens that their rights and interests would be protected fairly and justly to all manner of persons within the ambit of the law could help restore public confidence in the country's democracy.

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