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Press Statement

The fracas between a police officer and the suspended Metropolitan Chief Executive of the Sekondi-Takoradi Municipal Assembly, Mr Abdul Mumin Issah, leaves much to be desired. Not to belabour the point made vociferously elsewhere, it is obvious that the MCE in question is in desperate need of information about the Western-North Region, which until recently, used to be part of the Western Region.

As the Paramount Chief of the Aowin Traditional Area—Enchi is the municipal capital of the Aowin Municipality—I did not precipitate to make a statement because I understand Mr Abdul Mumin Issah is such a pleasant man that what transpired between him and the police officer has left those who know him astounded. Describing his behaviour as a probable rush of blood, I thought once his head was cleared up, Mr Abdul Mumin Issah would deem it expedient and prudent to render an unconditional apology to the chiefs and people of the Aowin Municipality.

Despite the propriety and indispensability of a fitting statement to counter the offensive and degrading light in which Mr Issah cast Enchi, I stayed calm, thinking Mr Issah would see the need to render an unreserved apology to the people of Enchi as soon as he was granted bail. My equanimity under the provocative circumstances of his unfortunate effusions was underpinned by the belief that it would be inhumane to strike a man who was already down. However, Mr Issah has shown his total lack of deference and decorum to the people of Enchi by refusing to offer us a sincere apology. This is exemplified in a statement he issued in which he completely ignored his foul reference to Enchi but went ahead to thank those who have stood with him during his so-called ordeal.

I have deduced two possible conclusions from the incident, viz.; that either Mr Abdul Mumin Issah does not realise how hurtful and demeaning his undesired reference to Enchi in the now infamous scuffle is or he really meant to bring the name of Enchi and its inhabitants—and by extension the illustrious people of Aowin—into opprobrium. The fact that he disregarded his disastrous allusion to Enchi in his statement makes me inclined towards the latter conclusion.

As made abundantly clear by the police officer involved in the spat, let me reiterate that being posted to Enchi is not a crime! In fact, contrary to his uninformed view, Enchi is not your typical God-forsaken town. Mr Issah might want to confer with people from different parts of the country who have been posted to Enchi to work. I can place it on record, without equivocation, that some people do everything to resist transfer from Enchi because of the peaceful nature of the town, its peace-loving people and how welcoming and generous they are!

A point which cannot be glossed over is the fact that notwithstanding the shame Mr Issah has brought to a government which has been instrumental in creating the Western-North Region from the Western Region, I shudder to think what he would have done if he were the Regional Minister of either region or what he has been doing to suburbs of Sekondi-Takoradi which he considers synonymous to his distorted view about Enchi.

Believing in the compassion of Ghanaians, I venture to opine that Mr Issah has now been educated about Enchi in particular, and Aowin in general. Enchi, as the capital of the Aowin Municipality, boasts of a Government Hospital and a College of Education (Enchico) both built by Professor K. A. Busia. Countless are the Ghanaians who have passed through Enchico from all parts of the country. In addition, Enchi has one senior high school and a couple of clinics. Aowin contributes its quota to the national economy in terms of cocoa production, timber, gold and foodstuffs. These will be augmented upon the completion of the Enchi-Elubo road which is currently under construction, not forgetting the Kordjour-Wiawso road.

Of course, as a developing country, we need more infrastructural development and perhaps, in this area, Aowin (Enchi) may not have had its fair share of the national cake. We have only one senior high school, which lacks an assembly hall and other basic facilities. Indeed, we can do with the Ministry of Education helping to ameliorate this situation by way of a new senior high school

and equipping the existing one to bring it to the required standards. Having said that, it must be mentioned—quite sadly—that our only senior high school has no means of transport and has been despondently left out of the recent bus donations by the Ministry of Education.

In sum, since the show of remorse expected from Mr Abdul Mumin Issah is not forthcoming nor his apology, I am inviting him to apologise with immediate effect. Let me also use this occasion to thank the people of Enchi and those who have been posted there for the impeccable restraint they have shown up to today. Aowins' peaceful and peace-loving nature can be gleaned from the fact there have been no riots despite the unjustified provocation. What would have been the reaction had Mr Issah said the same thing about another town? As this rhetorical question seeps in, let me also use this opportunity to caution those, who for inexplicable political expediency and solidarity, are perpetrating the *I stand with Hon Issah* phenomenon. How can any politician condescend to rationalise the derisive reference to Enchi or to another town or even its people?

Beyeeman Tano Kwaw Benbuin III

Omanhene of the Aowin Traditional Area

Enchi.