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Interview with Commissioner of Police George Asiamah, Ghana National Police Service Interviewed by Gordon A. Crews and Angela D. Crews

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A Conversation with Commissioner of Police George Asiamah:

Ghana National Police Service

Interviewed by

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Background

In January of 2007, Drs. Gordon and Angela Crews traveled with their graduate assistant, Mr. Kofi Annor Boye-Doe, and Ghanaian Fulbright Scholar, Mr. Ken Aikins, to Ghana, West Africa, in order to conduct a research study. The original research plan was to conduct a three part examination of: 1) the blend of indigenous government (rooted in religious practices and strongly associated with spirituality and mysticism) and state government in the Ghanaian justice system; 2) the treatment of women and children within these systems; and 3) the alternative dispute resolution, restorative justice, and conflict resolution strategies within the two systems.

During this trip, the researchers met with Commissioner of Police Mr. George Asiamah (who has become the driving force for the current Community Policing initiative in Ghana), other officials from the Ghana Police Service (GPS), faculty of the University of Ghana Legon and the University of Cape Coast. In the course of these meetings, the Crews' became better informed about the practice of justice in the country and some immediate law enforcement needs related to the development of the nation, specifically the dire need for training in "community" and "intelligence-led" policing.

Citizens in Ghanaian society (as well as citizens in most sub-Saharan African countries)

do not trust the police, preferring to rely instead on “magico-religious” forces and traditional authority figures to settle disputes (Abotchie, 2002). When circumstances do reach severity levels such that citizens are forced to contact law enforcement, the police role is circumscribed as reactive. Unfortunately, this tends to reinforce the perception of citizens that police only exist to take away the “bad guys.” Ghana’s police force has a tradition of being used as a militaristic tool of oppression and this history, unfortunately, remains entrenched in the collective social conscience.

The current project has been developed to meet the needs of a more modern Ghanaian law enforcement agency. A recent name change from “Ghana Police Force” to “Ghana Police Service” reflects the desire of a more progressive administration to provide service to the community, rather than act strictly as an agent of governmental force. Of primary concern to the Ghanaian government and to the GPS, is the development and implementation of an effective “community policing” program.

Ghana is occupied by approximately 22 million citizens over roughly 92,000 square miles (about the size of Illinois and Indiana combined). It is now in its 4th Republic, having endured military rule and political upheavals since gaining independence from British rule in 1957. The President, H.E. J.A. Kufuor, represents the New Patriotic Party, and was elected to his second three year term in 2005.

There are 10 governmental administrative regions, similar to U.S. states, each with corresponding capitol cities except for the Greater Accra region, which is the Ghanaian capitol. Those regions, with capitol cities in parentheses are: 1) Greater Accra; 2) Ashanti (Kumasi); 3) Brong Ahafo (Sunyani); 4) Central (Cape Coast); 5) Eastern (Korofidua); 6) Northern (Tamale);

7) Upper East (Bolgatanga); 8) Upper West (Wa); 9) Volta (Ho); and 10) Western (Sekondi/Takoradi).

In addition to the formally elected government, the country's political, social, cultural, and economic landscape is significantly affected by the National House of Chiefs and the 10 regional houses of chiefs. These entities represent more than 32,000 traditional rulers, designated by lineage, who are the trustees of communal lands and resources and who are believed to be the living representatives of the ancestors (Gyekye, 1996). The Ghana Constitution recognizes and protects the chieftaincies as an integral part of Ghanaian governance.

Although there are 10 governmental regions, the country is divided into 13 police administrative regions, with additional regional offices for the National Headquarters, one in Tema, and one to deal with railways, ports, and harbors. Within these 13 regions are 51 Police Divisions with Divisional Commanders, 179 Police Districts with District Commanders, and 651 Police Stations and Posts, headed by Station Officers.

The GPS is headed by the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Patrick Acheampong, who is aided by 2 Deputy IGP, one in charge of Operations and one in charge of Administration. The GPS has 9 main divisions, each headed by a Deputy General. Five of these divisions are the responsibility of the Deputy IGP of Operations, and four are the responsibility of the Deputy IGP of Administration. A Chief Staff Officer operates directly under the IGP and serves each Deputy General. Seven other individuals/units have administrative relationships with the IGP (e.g., Executive Secretary), or are in a lateral relationship with the IGP (e.g., Audit Unit). The GPS currently numbers approximately 17,000, with a police/civilian ratio of about 1/1200.

Ghana has six police training schools: 1) National Police Training School at Accra; 2)

Kumasi in the Ashanti Region; 3) Pwalugu in the Upper East Region; 4) Koforidua in the Eastern Region; 5) Ho in the Volta Region; and 6) Winneba in the Central Region. All recruits must be Ghanaian by birth, between eighteen and 25, of good character with no criminal record, and of minimum height and medical fitness. There also are minimum education requirements. Police recruits attend a six-month training academy, consisting of instruction in physical training and drill, firearms use, unarmed combat, and first aid. Recruits also attend classes such as ethics, criminal law and procedures, methods of investigation, human rights, and domestic violence.

A ten member National Police Council, established by Article 203(1) of the 1992 Constitution, is charged with advising the President on “matters of policy relating to internal security, including the role of the Police Service, budgeting and finance, administration and the promotion of officers above the rank of Assistant Commissioner of Police.” Until March 2006, however, there was confusion in Ghana as to whether this Council actually existed (Foley, 2006). This uncertainty adds to the evidence that the GPS is plagued by questions of administrative and legislative oversight.

Since early 2007, the Crews’, working closely with Commissioner Asiamah, have developed a team of researchers and practitioners who currently are developing training programs to be delivered onsite in 2008 to Ghana National Police Service administrators dealing with “community” and “intelligence-led” policing. This team includes practitioners, experts, and academics, from the University of Ghana Legon (Ghana), the University of Cape Coast (Ghana), Washburn University (US), and the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (US). This team is also currently working with the U.S. Embassy in Ghana to ensure the implementation of programs and training which will be most beneficial to Ghana.

The Interview

This interview was conducted through a series of conference telephone calls between December 1st and 17th, 2007, due to Commissioner Asiamah's duty schedule. The interview began in early December while Commissioner Asiamah was stationed in Tbilisi, Georgia serving on the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG). UNOMIG was established in August of 1993 to verify compliance with the ceasefire agreement between the Government of Georgia and the Abkhaz authorities in Georgia. UNOMIG's mandate was expanded following the signing by the parties of the 1994 Agreement on Ceasefire and Separation of Forces. The interview concluded in Istanbul, Turkey as the commissioner was travelling back to Ghana for a brief holiday break.

Views on Career

GAC: *Let us begin by discussing your policing career. Tell us a little bit about your career, educational background, and training.*

GA: I am currently the Commissioner of Police for the Ghana Police Service having held this position since 2006. In this capacity I serve as the Director General for Legal & Special Duties. Prior to this position I served over 27 years with the Ghana Police Service in various positions such as Assistant Staff Officer to the IGP, District Police Commander, Divisional Police Commander, Deputy Regional Police Commander, and Director General for Human Resources.

I hold a Post Graduate Professional Law Certificate (Barrister at Law) from the University of Ghana School of Law, Master of Arts in Police and Criminal Justice Studies from Exeter University of the United Kingdom, and Bachelor of Arts (with Honors) in English Linguistics and Russian from the University of Ghana Legon. Early in life, I had trained as a

teacher at Nkoranza Training College. Later, I was very fortunate to have received extensive management training from the Ghana Institute for Management and Public Administration. In addition, I worked as a police trainer and human rights trainer in a workshop in Abuja, Nigeria and helped to develop a human rights training manual for West African police training schools.

I have always tried to maintain a very high level of service to the international law enforcement community. I have served as the Ghana Contingent Commander to Bosnia (UN Mission), Police Trainer in Human Rights at Tito Barracks in Sarajevo, and many other peace keeping missions around the world. I am currently serving another tour of duty with the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG).

ADC: *I am not sure how many people know of this security effort. Could you please tell us more about this group?*

GA: I am currently on special assignment as a police advisor of the police component to the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG). The UNOMIG was originally established in August 1993 by Security Council Resolution 858. Its mandate was revised following the signing, on May 14, 1994, of the Moscow Agreement, which established a cease-fire and separation of forces plan.

In accordance with this agreement, a Security Zone (SZ) of roughly 12 kilometers was created on either side of the cease-fire line. In this Zone, military units are forbidden; only personal weapons, including RPGs (Rocket Propelled Grenade launchers), may be carried. On either side of the Security Zone is the broader Restricted Weapons Zone (RWZ), in which tanks, armored transport vehicles, and artillery and mortars equal to or greater than 81 millimeters are prohibited.

The mandate tasks UNOMIG to monitor and verify compliance with the Moscow Agreement, and to observe the operations of a CIS peacekeeping force (PKF), as was stipulated in the Moscow Agreement. The CIS PKF is currently composed of some 1,700 officers and soldiers from one single contributing country, the Russian Federation. The CIS PKF maintains stationary checkpoints along both sides of the cease-fire line. UNOMIG operates independently from the CIS PKF, but keeps in close contact with them.

UNOMIG maintains a political head office in Tbilisi, mission headquarters in Sukhumi and sector headquarters in Zugdidi and Gali, on the Georgian and Abkhaz sides of the cease-fire line respectively. Its primary tools for ensuring compliance with the Moscow Agreement are observation and patrolling, reporting and investigation, and close and continuous contact with both sides at all levels. To facilitate its operational patrolling tasks, UNOMIG has two helicopters and 38 mine-protected vehicles. UNOMIG patrolling teams not only observe and conduct liaison; they also promote dialogue among CIS PKF, heads of local administration, security personnel and local residents. Each sector usually conducts one helicopter patrol per week. Currently, UNOMIG consists of 120 military observers from 25 countries, approximately 99 international staff and 183 local staff. Its mandate is reviewed every six months by the UN Security Council.

UNOMIG personnel patrol unarmed in the face of armed threats such as mines left over from the war, attacks by insurgents and bandits, and kidnappings. UNOMIG patrols have been ambushed and come under direct fire on several occasions. The most common threat is hostage-taking. Seven hostage-taking incidents have occurred in UNOMIG's history. The last four took place in the Kodori Valley, most recently in June 2003.

GAC: *Have you been surprised by anything related to your career development?*

GA: I joined the police as a direct entrant from the University. In those days there were few college graduates in the police service. Many graduates believed that the police service was “anti-graduate,” and rightly so. A few graduates who entered were regarded as people who had entered a profession that had very little to do with book knowledge. The old crop of police inspectors and chief inspectors who had served for more than 20 and had to take a highly competitive entrance exam to police college, believed that direct entrants had come in without taking exams thereby making worse the competitive nature of entrance exams to police college. Consequently, the few graduates in the service in those days were looked down upon with disdain.

In terms of practical police duties, direct entrants had to undergo on the job training to acquire practical knowledge. It was therefore the case that direct entrants had to be submissive and friendly in order to learn from the old station officers. Graduate officers who appeared to be snobbish had much difficulty in learning on the job. And, the old and experienced station officers who had passed through the ranks often boasted or bragged whenever some graduated made little mistakes and tried to vindicate themselves saying graduates had come to pollute the service.

These things have changed now that the service has got more graduates in the system. The tide began changing when the old crop phased out due to retirement and the top brass eventually became filled with college graduates. When I look back 27 or more years ago, I do smile in my head that at long last I have made it to the rank of Commissioner of Police. Since there were no policy guidelines for promotion, it was sometimes a matter of luck or depended on

the connection that you had at the top. I had no connection or god father and so I always got a raw deal. While some graduates came straight away as senior officers, I came in as a Chief Inspector and had to serve as a trainer at the police academy for almost three years. This all occurred before I entered the police college to be commissioned as an officer. Anyway, I do not regret because the solid foundation I got in policing can be traced to those days when I wrongly thought that I was being delayed in climbing the professional ladder.

ADC: *Did your work prove as interesting or rewarding as you thought it would?*

GA: Yes, I could not imagine doing anything else with my life. At one time I thought about dedicating my life to the practice of law, but I did not think that would be fulfilling enough. I found law enforcement and the service to my country a career that has given me enormous pleasure in seeing the results of my work. Actually seeing how my efforts help others is the greatest gift a police officer can experience.

Changes Experienced

GAC: *Let's talk a little bit about the changes you have experienced during this time. What do you see as the most important changes which have happened in policing over the course of your career?*

GA: Many changes have happened in Ghana police. Philosophically, there has been a great shift from post colonial policing philosophy to Democratic policing. From the time of political independence in 1957 to early 1992 Ghana, Police Service operated in the shadow of colonial hang over. The new African elite also stepped in the shoes of the colonial masters (i.e., the British). The top hierarchy indeed suffered in the hands of the new breed of politicians who dislodged police independence and wanted very much to dictate to the police.

Police officers who tried to assert their independence were victimized. Whereas the colonial masters through their white officer corps used the police to maintain the status quos, and to protect trade and commerce of the colonial powers, the post colonial political elites, very much interfered with police operations and in many cases politicized the police.

In terms of organizational arrangement, very little has changed. The hierarchical structure with IGP at the top, followed by schedule offices down to Regional Commanders, Divisional Commanders, District Commanders to Station officers remain the same. Police powers are centered at the HQ and the IGP seems to be too powerful. It is a pity that that now that we have two Deputy IGPs, the Overall IGP powers has not dwindled. The Deputy IGPs continue to function like Schedule officers. The so called Decentralization of political power to the Regions and Districts did not affect the Police. To date Regional Commanders down to the District Command and the stations do not control their own finance. Even though they are nominally consulted during budgeting season their contributions are mere formalities.

In terms of specialization, it is true to say that little emphasis is laid on police specializations. Even at the senior officers level there appears to be no distinction between Detectives and Uniformed police officers when it comes to postings. It is therefore not uncommon to find that the officer of say the Narcotics Unit at the CID HQ has been transferred to head a police district, and vice versa. The same goes for the junior ranks to some extent. At that level, IGP has given the power to transfer detectives to the Director of CID, but in many cases during punitive transfers, IGP reserves the right to revert the detectives and post them to general duties irrespective of level of specialization of the affected officer.

The most contentious policy has been that of Police Policy Guidelines for promotions.

Until that policy came into force the Service had no formal policy in terms of promotions in the service based on academic qualifications. Generally promotion had been on merit, seniority and through examinations. Even though meritocracy seems to be holding the sway its application has not been all that equitable. The present administration has taken the bull by the horns to streamline the policy guidelines on promotions very many gaps remain in place.

In terms of equipment, very modest gains have been made. But the police still remain under resourced and ill equipped. The 2001 May stadium disaster in which several lives were lost when police fired tear gas to dispel foot ball hooligans, little did the public know that the police were indeed ill equipped and that public order equipment needed to be modernized to reflect international standards. Public outcry and resentment went into how the police were trained to handle public order situation and the need to give them better equipment to do their work efficiently and effectively.

ADC: *What changes in external conditions (i.e., support from communities, legal powers, judicial relations, relations with minority communities, resource provision, political influence, etc) have had a significant impact on policing?*

GA: Police powers in Ghana are unambiguous. They are found in the Statute books (e.g., The Police Service Act 320 and the accompanying LIs). The Public Order Act also guides the police in the exercise of their powers in times of public demonstrations.

The police enjoy the support and co operation of the Judiciary and the Justice ministry. Being a Common law country, the Police prosecute minor offences on behalf of the Attorney General Department, and leave the indictable offences for the AG lawyers to prosecute. Since the police is not part of the Justice Ministry (but of Interior Ministry) many gaps remain to be filled

in terms of police prosecution. Many Judges and even the media as well as the general public seem to have very little confidence in police prosecutors and accuse them of inefficiency and corruption, police prosecutors will have to be countenanced for many years to come . This is because the AG lacks professional lawyers who are prepared to prosecute criminal cases. In recent days many serious attempts are being made by the Police Service in collaboration with the Justice Ministry to enhance the capacity of the police prosecutors through training courses.

Ghana Police has no minority problems to deal with as may exist in many countries. Nevertheless, many critics seem to opine that the police are more inclined to protect the rights of the rich and powerful in society than the poor who are vulnerable. A social commentator once observed that the police indeed spend more time in protecting people with political power than the ordinary people who are left at the mercy of criminals in their neighborhood. Community policing, if well implemented, can make the neighborhoods safe for all. If the public continues to think that sporadic police swoops in the deprived communities can solve the crime problem, they are far from right.

GAC: *Overall, has the quality of policing improved or declined (street work, specialized units, managerial capacity, self-evaluation, interagency cooperation, etc.)?*

GA: The present Ghana Police Service appears to be very undermanned. The police are encumbered because most of the men who should be on the street to fight crime are invariably posted for guard duties (e.g., Financial Houses and the Houses of Dignitaries). There is a need to encourage the more private police to do guard duties so that the police can concentrate effectively on their core duties of fighting crime.

The Police in recent times have sought assistance from the French Government in terms

of Public Order Policing; American Government in terms of Criminal Investigations and basic officer skills; and the British in terms of Organized Crime and Money Laundering. The police also do cooperate with INTERPOL in the fight of transnational crimes (e.g., child trafficking, drug trafficking, and terrorism).

For many years the police have paid lip service to community policing as an organizational philosophy and strategy. There is a need for political will and serious commitment from both the police managers and the people in government to concretize community policing and make it work. The recent community police officers drafted from the unemployed youth to assist the police cannot be a substitute for proper community policing. The newly community formed community police appears to be an avenue to find jobs for the jobless in society, but its efficacy as a crime prevention tool suffers from so many gaps.

ADC: *In general, is it more or less difficult to be a police officer now than in the past?*

GA: The present day vigilant press, which is always very critical of the police, has put policing into sharp focus. Police misconduct and malfeasance can no longer be swept under the carpet. The general public is wide awake and sensitized about their rights. Gone are the days when police brutality on campuses went unreported people in power thought that it was not in the national interest to do so. Now we have a free press and the government no longer has the monopoly on the media front.

Policing in such an atmosphere is not only challenging but interesting. The present day police must be accountable not only to the law, but to the people. The new police managers must rethink their strategies and adopt operational measures that are in conformity with the tenets of democratic policing.

In the good old days when we were young officers Information and Communication Technology (ICT) had not reached such an advanced stage. The security services including the police had monopoly over wireless messages which were deemed to be faster and convenient but with globalization, even a street corner FM station can easily outdo the police in terms of reporting incidents. The reality is that if as a police manager or commander if you don't sit on your feet you will be overtaken by events and will find yourself in a tight corner where you can't explain away your inefficiency.

Personal Policing Philosophy

GAC: *I am very interested in your own personal policing philosophy; what do you think should be the role of the police in society?*

GA: I think policing should be a mixture of combating crime, law enforcement, public order maintenance, and a social service. In a sense policing strategy must be crafted to suit the society in which it operates. It must be dynamic in order to cope with new crimes and public safety issues. In the area of public order maintenance and crime prevention and public safety issues, the police must forge a close partnership with the larger society.

ADC: *What should be their job, functions and roles? What should be left to others?*

GA: The job of the police must be not only performed according to the mandate prescribed by statute, which may be restrictive, but should perform in the overall context to ensure that there is peace and order in society. And, by extension, I mean to say that policing functions should not be put into water-tight compartments, so that the police would be selective in their operations and say no to public safety issues that are crucial to the survival of society. What needs to be done is to ensure that policing roles are in are performed in the larger interest of society and

within the law.

I think that as much as possible certain roles of the police can be civilianized. For example guard duties can be performed by ordinary civilians. Much more so certain secretarial and administrative work in the offices can be civilianized. Police property management must be left for civilian professional. Certain aspect of traffic management, apart from investigation of accident cases must be given to civilian agencies to operate.

ADC: *What policies on relations with the community, with political groups, with other criminal justice organizations work well?*

GA: I think that, for the police to be efficient and effective they must win the trust and confidence of the people they police. If there is widespread perception of corruption in the police organization and policing strategies also tend to alienate the general public, police legitimacy will be undermined.

Police neutrality must be sacrosanct. There must not be attempts to politicize the police. The police must be law abiding, because if law enforcers become law breakers then the society is doomed. Police as an organization should work in harmony with the criminal Justice society, including those in the academia. Policing research must not be shelved must be given the chance to be tested just as the scientific community and industry collaborate to bring technological advancement in society.

GAC: *How should policing be performed? What should be the preferred priorities and strategies; hard edged crime control, prevention, services, order work, what mix for which types of problems; proactive-reactive; community policing-law enforcement, etc.?*

GA: I think proactive interventions should be more prominent, and that as far as possible police

work, must be intelligence led. The police must avoid labeling of certain social groups especially the poor communities as the cause of crime. Stereotyping in policing operation can be counterproductive so there must always be covert intelligence report before the police embark on swoops in deprived communities.

Problems and Successes Experienced

ADC: *Let's move on to discussing problems and successes you have experienced. In your experience what policies or programs have worked well and which have not? And can you speculate for what reasons?*

GA: At a certain point in my career as a Commander I found out that police swoops in deprived communities always tend to rope in innocent passerby thereby making the whole operation a failure. It is also my contention that much as regional security committees have a role to ensure police operational efficiency in the overall context of national security, they must give the police the chance to do their professional work for which they have been trained. The fact that one has been given political appointment does not mean that he should carry himself as a security guru. He should depend on the police and other security agencies for informed security advice.

GAC: *What would you consider to be the greatest problem facing the police at this time?*

GA: To me the greatest problem facing the police is not so much about logistics and resources, but the crisis of legitimacy. The police must earn the respect and trust of the community so that the community can support the police in its work. If there is apathy among the general public and the police are singled out as the main organization to fight crime, the police will woefully fail.

The modern media also appears to be one of the main agents more often prone to exaggerate police misconduct and malfeasance thereby massing public resentment against the

police. In the effort of the police to boost its public image they need the media to deliver the goods. But, invariably, it is the same media that builds up police image is the same organization that nibble police image to extinction. In the bid of the police organization to boost its image, when police take twenty steps forward, the media comes in with damaging report to send police a hundred times backward.

I think that, as much as the media has the right to criticize the police, it must not be done in such a way to kill the very spirit of the police organization. Policing as a service organization must be owned by the community. It should not be seen as an external occupation force in society. The police and the public must always be involved in a healthy partnership for the good and survival of society and for the sustenance and safeguarding of individual rights and liberties. Policing issues must be put on public agenda for a healthy debate and that a few press houses should not be given the monopoly to determine what is good policing and what is bad policing.

ADC: *What problems in policing do you find is the most difficult to deal with?*

GA: In my opinion, it is the enormous responsibility of trying to build the capacity of the police service to serve the needs of its people and government. This capacity building involves so many things internally and externally. Internally, we need to increase the resources given to police officers to fight crime. Externally, we need to find ways to increase public confidence and trust in police. These things are obviously connected.

Theory and Practice

GAC: *In our courses and training we are always discussing the connections between theory and practice. In your opinion, what should be the relationship between theory and practice?*

GA: Yes, of course there is a strong connection between theory and practice. I should probably

say, theory driving practice. In Ghana we have tried to do just that, we have tried to learn from our own academic pursuits and those of others from which we can seek assistance. We have a large number of police administrators who are college educated. They have the background in education to see how what they have learned can be implemented in their daily practice.

ADC: *What is the relationship right now? Does it exist? Does it work? What holds collaboration or interactions back?*

GA: A good example right now is the work that you (the Crews') and I are doing with the GPS, and with NOBLE (National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives) from the states. We currently have a wonderful team working together to implement Community Policing in Ghana. We have you (the Crews') as current researchers/academics and former practitioners, and others who are current practitioners and currently involved in Community Policing training in many parts of the world. This is currently one of the biggest initiatives we have in Ghana working towards proper implementation of Community Policing from a theoretical and practical foundation.

GAC: *What kind of research, in what form, on what questions would you find most useful for practice?*

GA: Again, the current Police Officer and Household Surveys that you (the Crews') are administering in Ghana in support of our mutual research/training efforts are the kinds of information we desperately need. The findings that you have offered to us so far on police officer perceptions of the citizens and the citizens' perceptions of police are incredible. And, it confirms what we know; there is a very strong lack of trust between these two groups. But, it is nice to have the research to back up these beliefs.

ADC: *Where do you find theory based information? Where do you look? What journals, books, publications, reports?*

GA: Those of our service who are educated read and study any and all information they can find. We are all avid readers and sponges for any information which can help us do our jobs more effectively.

GAC: *Does the organization do research on its own? On what types of issues or questions?*

GA: No, actually, we have very little internal research being conducted. It just has not been an organizational priority.

Transnational Relations

ADC: *I want to ask you a few questions about transnational relations and Ghana. Have you been affected by, and how, in the work of your organization by developments outside the country (human rights demands, universal codes of ethics, practical interactions with police from other countries, personal experiences outside the country, new crime threats, etc.)?*

GA: When I was a post graduate student in the Exeter University in the UK in the early 1990s I had a rare opportunity to travel to most European countries including Germany, Holland, Denmark, and Belgium on a study tour. I visited police organizations and police academies and shared professional experience with my colleagues. I was also in Bosnia to serve under the IPTF (International Police Task Force) where police from 42 countries worked harmoniously together to monitor the local police and also to entrench an internationally recognized police standards which had at its base the protection of human right and democratic policing. I see that these exposures have positively impacted my work as a police officer and I see policing as a service oriented profession designed to promote world peace through protection of the rights and human

rights of all, irrespective of color, sex, religion, station of life.

I am also convinced that through international police cooperation we can fight transnational crimes and all crimes (e.g., genocide). I am convinced that crime and criminals do not know state boundaries. Criminal operations are stateless therefore we need concerted and deep police internal co operation to confront all crimes that defy boundaries.

ADC: *Have those interactions been beneficial or harmful? What kind of external international influences are beneficial and which ones less so?*

GA: Ghana is very receptive to outside assistance. We have been very fortunate to have received help from a number of countries. In recent years, we have been fortunate to receive training and assistance from the French Police, the British Police, and from the FBI and International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) in the United States. Given our training needs and problems, these types of assistance are greatly appreciated.

ADC: *How have developments post September 11 affected your work?*

GA: The developments in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, brought to the fore that international terrorism, organized crime and international drug trafficking issues must be tackled with intense policing cooperation globally. Police forces must share intelligence information. Developed countries should assist build the capacity of police organization in poor countries. Global terrorism is not only a problem for US and her allies but a problem confronting the whole world. The whole world must appreciate more than ever before that global conflicts must be resolved peacefully. The UN and the Regional Groups including the US must agree that there must be peaceful resolution of conflicts worldwide and that in all attempt to solve conflicts, UN must take a leading role.

General Assessments

GAC: *In that same vein, I wanted to discuss with you briefly your general assessments of policing. Are you basically satisfied or dissatisfied with developments in policing?*

GA: Generally, I am satisfied with the developments in policing. Especially with INTERPOL as well as UN police peacekeeping, capacity building, mentoring and monitoring, supervision of elections and confidence building in post conflict environments thereby encouraging safe return of IDPs and refugees to their original homes. In the old days the police were concerned only with the internal security of their countries, but now the wings of police operation are stretching far and wide and police men and women are cooperating to fight crime in this global village of ours. This means that policing has responded positively to globalization.

The “police” as an institution that had very little regard for book knowledge has now open its door wide to intellectuals and professional of all shades. Policing research has doubled in most universities.

Community policing as an organizational and operational philosophy has gained currency in most police departments and organization worldwide. The future of policing as an organization better placed to safeguard human rights and guarantee fundamental freedoms is deeply entrenched. Democratic policing is gaining roots in areas that were once noted for repression and abuse of human rights.

Policing has embraced gender issues in its planning and that women police are now coming to the forefront to champion the cause of peace. Many more women have joined the police and that policing have lost its poor image as a profession reserved for men only.

But what is more worrying to me is the incipient perception of corruption that is working

like a virus in a computer. Another worrying factor is the politicization of police work such that, in some societies police men with political connection, but little experience are being promoted over and above their hard working professional colleagues. Generally most police forces are underpaid and are working with poor conditions of service (e.g., third world countries).

I think that there should be an international movement to fight for better conditions of service for the police. The so called corruption eating up most police organizations can be traced to the fact that the police are not well catered for by the society. The larger society should not simply take it for granted that the police can thrive and survive on corruption. An incorruptible police service should not be an ideal, but a requirement.

I watch with trepidation a new crop of police who are trigger happy and very sadistic. I condemn people with ulterior motives who join the service for selfish gain. I abhor the wicked practice whereby criminal organizations sponsor people to join the police in order to protect their interest. I dislike officers who are not prepared to learn the job of policing but only prefer accelerated promotion to fill round holes with their square pegs. The service should not be a place for people who reveal the identity of police informants.

GAC: *What are the most likely developments you see happening and which would you like to see happening.*

GA: I had been yearning for an organization attracting the best cream of society to address crime problems and public safety. I see this happening. I had a vision of a police service which regarded service role as supreme; a service that saw itself as a calling, like the priesthood. I am optimistic that the light is at the end of the tunnel. More police officers are becoming more professional and highly committed. I will be happy for the day the title of corruption will be

wiped away from our professional garb.

GAC: *What is most needed now to improve policing?*

GA: I think what is most needed to improve policing is to take a critical look at the human resource base of the police and ensure that the police are well trained. The police service needs a customer oriented approach in order to work to satisfy the aspirations and the security needs of the public.

There must be an aggressive capacity drive in all police forces so that the police will update their professional competence and thereby provide efficient and effective service to themselves, citizens, government, and most importantly, their government.

Conclusion

The central themes of this interview are obvious. First, this represents the views of a man who loves his profession, organization, and mostly his country. Second, his dedication to police professionalism and credibility cannot be overstated. Third, he demonstrates a keen understanding of the connections between police resources, practices, and eventual police perception. Finally, as is being adopted by more and more international police leaders, he points out the crucial connection and understanding that law enforcement must have with those they serve. Without such connection and understanding, all is potentially lost.

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More information on the Ghana National Police Service can be located at:

<http://www.ghanapolice.org/>

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<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/unomig/>

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