



Public Utility Workers' Union of TUC - Ghana

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STATEMENT BY PUWU ON RECENT ABUSE OF THE ASHANTI EAST REGIONAL GENERAL MANAGER OF ELECTRICITY COMPANY OF GHANA (ECG)

The attention of the Public Utilities Workers' Union (PUWU) has been drawn to a recent incident, which if not handled with care, will fester and cause significant challenges for workers of the ECG who are members of the Union. On Wednesday, 10th April 2024, a Revenue Taskforce, established by the Board and Management of ECG with the support from the Minister of Energy went on an operation in the Ashanti region and disconnected power supply to the Kumasi Technical University for owing over GHS600,000.00 of electricity consumed. Prior to this disconnection, the University had been served a demand notice reminding them of their indebtedness to ECG, and the consequences of not negotiating for payment. Led by the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dumor, the University engaged Ing. Michael Wiafe, the General Manager for Ashanti East, for a payment terms since they could not afford the 75% upfront payment before reconnection.

The General Manager, Ing. Wiafe, informed the University that the national taskforce must be brought into the picture since it is handling the issue. On Thursday, 11th April, at about 9.00pm, the Regional Minister for Ashanti Hon. Simon Osei Mensah called Ing. Michael Wiafe, threatening him to reconnect power supply to the University. Ing. Wiafe stated that he did not have that authority since the disconnection was done by a team from the Head Office and that he is engaging with the parties for a solution. Despite this explanation by Ing. Wiafe, Hon. Osei Mensah told Ing. Wiafe that he shall report him to the Police for refusing to reconnect power to the University.

Shortly after he ended the call, the Police at Zongo Police station called Ing. Wiafe and demanded him to report to the Station. Ing. Wiafe pleaded with the Police to make his visit the following morning since it was late. On Friday, 12th April, Ing. Wiafe visited the Zongo Police Station with Ing. Peter Fletcher, the General Manager in charge of ECG Sub Transmission network in Ashanti region. Upon their arrival, Ing. Wiafe was informed that the Police is investigating a charge against him for causing public unrest due to the disconnection. He was asked to write his statement, which he did, and after

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was granted a self-recognition bail by the Police. Technically, Ing. Wiafe is under investigation by the Ghana Police Service for the lawful disconnection by the national taskforce of a University which happens to be situated within his operational jurisdiction, and the complainant is the Regional Minister. This is unacceptable and clear case of abuse of power.

The Union strongly condemns this action by the Regional Minister and finds this particular incident very unfortunate and an affront to the right of the ECG staff and members of the Union. These actions by some politicians are becoming too rampant, and the Union is sending a strong warning against it.

It is important to state that ECG has been given the mandate to distribute power and collect revenue, and since it still operates a credit system, staff of ECG and members of the Union, shall continue to send demand notices and disconnect customers who refuse to pay for electricity consumed, as per the rules of engagement stipulated by PURC.

The National Union is strongly against the tendency of persons who wield political power using it to oppress or harass public servants who are carrying out their official duties. We wish to use this opportunity to admonish all political office holders to use tact and decorum in dealing with public servants who are carrying out their legitimate official duty.



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GENERAL SECRETARY

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