

2nd April, 2024**For Immediate Release****PRESS STATEMENT****ENSURE TRADITIONAL/CULTURAL PRACTICES ARE IN SYNC WITH THE LAWS
AND 1992 CONSTITUTION OF GHANA - NCCE**

The National Commission for Civic Education, NCCE is appalled by the recent announcement by the Nungua Traditional Council that, a 12-year-old girl has been betrothed to a 63-year-old Gborbu Wulomo of Nungua, Nuumo Borketey Laweh Tsuru XXXIII. The Commission wishes to express concern about this development and emphasizes that cultural practices that are illegal and unconstitutional have no place in our democracy.

The NCCE wishes to remind the Ga Traditional Council that the Children's Act, Act 560 of 1998, Section 13, (1&2) provides that "*The minimum age of marriage of whatever kind shall be eighteen years*". It is also worth pointing out that the same section of the Children's Act says that "*No person shall force a child (a) to be betrothed; (b) to be the subject of a dowry transaction; or (c) to be married*". While the Nungua Traditional Council contends that this union is voluntary, it is unclear to the NCCE how a pre-pubescent, pre-teen minor can consent to such an arrangement.

The 1992 Constitution of Ghana recognizes and even encourages Ghana's many ethnic groups to practice and extol their culture. However, the Commission calls on the Nungua Traditional Council to note that the same 1992 Constitution, in Article 39 also states that "*..... traditional practices which are injurious to the health and well-being of the person are abolished*". Furthermore, for over a century, our courts have held that traditional practices that are contrary to "*natural justice, equity, and good conscience*" are outlawed.

The NCCE urges the Nungua Traditional Council to review its traditional practices to bring them in line with the laws and 1992 Constitution of Ghana, and to refrain from actions that may have a negative impact on the youth of Nungua.

The Commission also calls for the intervention of the National and Regional Houses of Chiefs, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection as well as the Department of Social Welfare to ensure that the best interests of the child are protected and child marriages are removed from our customary practices.

God Bless Our Homeland Ghana and Make Our Great and Strong!!

(SIGNED)

KATHLEEN ADDY (MS.)

CHAIRMAN, NCCE