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News release

Afrobarometer Director Gyimah-Boadi honoured with MLK Award for Peace and Social Justice

Afrobarometer Executive Director E. Gyimah-Boadi has received the 2017 Martin Luther King, Jr. Award for Peace and Social Justice in recognition of his role in advancing democracy, good governance, and economic opportunity in Ghana and throughout the continent.

Gyimah-Boadi, who co-founded the non-partisan research network Afrobarometer in 1999 and also serves as executive director of the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana), accepted the award July 20 at the U.S. Embassy in Accra.

"Professor Gyimah-Boadi has set a lofty standard for scholarly research among the think tank community in Ghana, and across Africa," U.S. Ambassador Robert P. Jackson said in presenting the award. "His work has helped promote democracy, good governance, and economic opportunity.

"He has championed human rights for marginalized and vulnerable populations. In doing so, he has served as an advocate for millions of people, giving them greater access to essential services and a greater voice in how they are governed."

Over decades as a professor and social scientist, Gyimah-Boadi has distinguished himself through pioneering research, evidence-based advocacy, and mentoring of the next generation of analysts and advocates for accountable governance.

Jackson cited his contributions to "shaping positive political outcomes across the continent," including CDD-Ghana's "tremendous role in Ghana's credible elections and peaceful transfer of power" last year. Gyimah-Boadi also played a key role in incubating Ghana's two main anti-corruption civil-society organizations, the Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII) and Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition (GACC), as well as the foremost election-observation body in Ghana, the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO).

Of his work with Afrobarometer, Jackson said Gyimah-Boadi has helped give "the ordinary man or woman on the street a voice" through "this treasure trove of rich and comprehensive data. ...

"Professor Gyimah-Boadi understands that when the will of people is known, they can be included in policy decisions. When citizens can compare the progress their government is making with other governments across the continent, they can challenge the status quo. They can demand better services. They can demand transparency and accountability. And when citizens are satisfied that their government is responsive and accountable, peace and stability follow.

"These are not easy issues to tackle, in any country. But Professor Gyimah-Boadi has dedicated his life to doing just that, in multiple countries — and democracy, social justice, and equality across the continent are stronger because of it."

Afrobarometer

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues across more than 30 countries in Africa. Six rounds of surveys were implemented between 1999 and 2015. Round 7 surveys (2017/2018) are currently underway.

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