CAGI

an IMANI CPE weekly

Criticality Analysis of Governance Issues | March 23 – 29, 2025

Policy & Administration • Transparency & Accountability • Anti-corruption

Peace, Security & Stability • Human Rights & Justice • International Relations

IMANI Center for Policy & Education | Center for Economic, Governance and Political Affairs

In this issue

When the military publicly pledges allegiance to constitutional norms and civilian leadership, it reinforces a culture of accountability and trust.

Effective asset recovery and corruption prosecution demand more than high-profile public announcements

Ghana's progressive visa policy may, act as a soft diplomatic measure influencing regional integration debates and power dynamics within ECOWAS.

President Mahama's international engagements enhance Ghana's soft power by positioning the country as a key player in regional governance and diplomacy.

The unfolding petition process against Ghana's Chief Justice encapsulates a complex interplay between constitutional mandates, the evidentiary standards of a prima facie case, and emerging political influences.



What is the Criticality Analysis?

The output of good governance is socioeconomic development that has greater impact on the citizens. Government takes the wheels of affairs of the state on the back of the many promises made to the electorates. Yet, it is no easy task when it comes to the processes and mechanisms required for true public services delivery. It must follow policy guidelines religiously, maintain the social contract, avoid excesses and wastages, and be an accountable steward of that which it has been entrusted.

IMANI Centre for Policy and Education in a bid to monitor the processes and mechanisms for public services delivery has devised the Criticality Analysis to evaluate the key actions of the government in this pursuit. The Criticality Analysis follows the major news reports on the key governance issues categorised under the following six (6) themes:

1. Policy and administration.
2. Transparency and accountability.
3. Anti-corruption.
4. Peace, security and stability.
5. Human rights and justice.
6. International relations and development.

The Criticality Analysis assesses the key governance issues by employing rigorous narrative analysis. First, we collect the key governance issues from reliable and credible news sources. A preliminary screening is conducted to filter out low-impact and non-governance-related issues. The issues are then categorised under the 6 main themes. The criticality analysis is not a performance assessment of government actions.

During the assessment, critical attention is paid to the factual accuracy of the reports, relevance and timeliness, and impact and significance. In view of this, the reports are corroborated by analysing same from multiple sources and monitoring the trends and development. In addition, expert opinions on the key issues are analysed to inform the final output of the Criticality Analysis which includes our recommendations for policy and practice to enhance public service delivery and accountable stewardship.

Key Governance Issues and Trends

1. President Mahama inaugurates Armed Forces Council, Military Chiefs pledges allegiance to the State, the Constitution, and the President

a. Mahama swears in new members of the Armed Forces Council - MyJoyOnline
b. Your service was invaluable – Mahama to outgoing Armed Forces Council Members - MyJoyOnline

c. The decisions you make shapes the future of our armed forces - Mahama to military chiefs - MyJoyOnline
d. Jane Naana Opoku Agyemang Chairs Armed Forces Council
e. Prof. Opoku-Agyemang becomes first woman to chair Armed Forces Council
f. Protect nation's sovereignty - President charges new military chiefs - Graphic Online
g. Chief of Defence Staff pledges unflinching support to President Mahama
h. Ghana's Military Leadership Pledges Loyalty to President Mahama

2. Attorney General addresses the public on ORAL, web catches Adu-Boahen, former cybersecurity chief and wife

a. GH₵49m diverted, GH₵39.4m stolen – A-G exposes former NSB director & wife | Pulse Ghana
b. We've only released 20 per cent of the evidence—Deputy AG on Adu-Boahen investigations - Graphic Online
c. Attorney-General warns banks against moving assets of former Director-General of National Signals Bureau
d. We are still tracking the assets of Adu Boahene and wife – AG Dominic Ayine
e. Adu Boahene and wife yet to be formally charged - Deputy AG - MyJoyOnline
f. Ex-NSB boss, wife's lawyers challenge Attorney-General over looting claims - Ghana Business News
g. 'I'll be proven innocent' – Adu Boahene breaks silence on corruption allegations | Pulse Ghana
h. Adu Boahene's GH¢120m bail sum reduced to GH¢80m, court restricts couple's movements - MyJoyOnline
i. Deputy A-G claims Adu Boahene's wife attempted to move suspected currency bills on the night of husband's arrest – — Ghana News Online
j. Adu-Boahene's wife tried destroying evidence after husband's arrest – Deputy AG tells court
k. Adu Boahene, wife's movement restricted as court reviews bail condition

3. Ghana and Morocco agree to visa free waiver agreement, initiate processes

a. Ghana and Morocco agree to visa-free-waiver agreement
b. Ghana and Morocco move to scrap visa requirements | Africanews
c. Morocco, Ghana Agree on Visa Waiver and Stronger Cooperation Morocco, Ghana Agree on Visa Waiver and Stronger Cooperation

4. President Mahama travels to Abuja on a one day working visit

a. Tinubu hosts Ghana's President Mahama in Abuja - Daily Post Nigeria
b. President Mahama briefs Tinubu on diplomatic efforts with Sahel nations - Graphic Online
c. Mahama returns home from Nigeria after discussions with Tinubu | Ghana News Agency

5. President Mahama petitioned to remove the Chief Justice, consults the Council of State

a. Mahama consults Council of State on petitions to remove Chief Justice - MyJoyOnline
b. Mahama consults with Council of State on three petitions for removal of Chief Justice | Ghana News Agency
c. President Mahama's CJ removal procedure challenged with application at Supreme Court - Graphic Online
d. PNP condemns Mahama for entertaining moves to remove Chief Justice - MyJoyOnline
e. A Politically Motivated Attempt To Remove The Chief Justice By President Mahama And The NDC
f. Petition to remove CJ is not politically motivated - Adawuda - MyJoyOnline
g. Chief Justice's removal must not be politically motivated – Prof. Agyemang-Duah - MyJoyOnline
h. It would've been helpful to receive initial comments from CJ on her removal – Dr Osae Kwapong - MyJoyOnline
i. Chief Justice requests copies of petitions seeking her removal from Mahama - MyJoyOnline
j. Chief Justice request for copies of petitions filed against her - Ghana Business News
k. There's nothing wrong with Chief Justice requesting copies of petition for her removal – Prof. Antwi — Ghana News Online
l. Mahama gives Chief Justice 10 days to respond to petitions for her removal
m. President Mahama gives Chief Justice 10 days ultimatum to respond to petitions | Ghana News Agency
n. Petition for the Removal of Ghana's Chief Justice: A Legal and Political Development
o. Petition Request: Chief Justice knows her job but shouldn't have bothered - Ansa-Asare

Categorisation of Key Governance Issues

Policy & Administration	President Mahama petitioned to remove the Chief Justice, consults the Council of State.
Transparency & Accountability	Attorney General addresses the public on ORAL as web catches Kwabena Adu-Boahen, former cybersecurity chief and wife.
Peace, Security & Stability	President Mahama inaugurates Armed Forces Council, Military Chiefs pledges allegiance to the State, the Constitution, and the President.
International Relations & Development	Ghana and Morocco agree to visa free waiver agreement, initiate processes. President Mahama travels to Abuja on a one day working visit.

Criticality Analysis

President Mahama inaugurates Armed Forces Council, Military Chiefs pledges allegiance to the State, the Constitution, and the President



The inauguration of the Armed Forces Council and the public pledge by military chiefs symbolize more than a routine exercise in ceremonial duty—they represent a deliberate reinforcement of Ghana's constitutional framework. Under the 1992 Constitution, such acts demonstrate the government's commitment to ensuring that the nation's security apparatus remains a tool of statecraft rather than an independent political force. In essence, these events reinforce that the military stands as a guardian of peace and stability, operating strictly under civilian control. Symbolically and practically, by reaffirming allegiance to the State, the Constitution, and President Mahama, Ghana's security institutions are clearly positioned as partners in the democratic process, underpinning trust both among citizens and within the political hierarchy.[1][2]

One of the defining challenges in good governance is balancing military professionalism with the supremacy of civilian authority. By swearing in a new, constitutionally anchored Armed Forces Council, Ghana reasserts an institutional model that promotes transparency, accountability, and clear separation of roles. The proactive engagement of high-ranking officials—including Vice President Jane Naana Opoku-Agyemang, who chairs the Council—signals a systemic effort to align military operations with nationally determined security policies. This arrangement not only curtails any vestiges of an independent military power that could otherwise threaten democratic legitimacy but also creates an environment where the armed forces serve as reliable executors of state policy rather than as potential destabilizers. Academic studies have noted that such institutional clarity is key to avoiding the pitfalls of politicized military intervention, which has destabilized many nations in the region.[3]

Ghana's democracy, though relatively young, shines as a beacon in a region that has witnessed frequent episodes of political upheaval and military coups. In a context where neighbouring states have struggled with the legacy of military rule, Ghana's renewed commitment to constitutionalism and rule of law—as exemplified by the Armed Forces Council's functioning—serves a dual purpose. First, it bolsters the country's internal security by ensuring that the military remains subservient to democratic norms. Second, it sends a strong signal internationally and regionally that stability in governance can be achieved without resorting to authoritarian practices. This measured approach not

[1] Mahama swears in new members of the Armed Forces Council - MyJoyOnline
[2] Military-civilian relations is far from waning – GAF | Ghana News Agency
[3] Analysis of Civil-Military Relations of Ghana from 1957 to 2022 | European Journal of Law and Political Science

only safeguards the democratic process in Ghana but also provides an invaluable reference point for other nations striving to build resilient democratic institutions in the face of historical and regional instability.[4]

States within West Africa that experience persistent military influence, or even outright military dictatorship can draw several lessons from Ghana's example. First, the institutionalization of military oversight through mechanisms such as the Armed Forces Council offers a replicable model for assuring that military power remains a servant to the state. Ghana's adherence to a constitutional model of civil–military relations has been instrumental in preventing the recurrence of military takeovers—a threat that looms large over other countries in the sub-region.[5] Second, the transparent public ceremonies and clear articulation of responsibilities underscore the importance of legitimacy and adherence to the rule of law. When the military publicly pledges allegiance to constitutional norms and civilian leadership, it reinforces a culture of accountability and trust. Such models, which have been rigorously analyzed in scholarly works, demonstrate that a well-defined legal framework and proactive citizen oversight are critical to overcoming the historical legacy of coups and instability in the region.[6]

Attorney General addresses the public on ORAL, web catches Adu-Boahen, former cybersecurity chief and wife



The case involving former National Signals Bureau (NSB) Director Kwabena Adu-Boahene and his wife has sparked an intense debate over the balance between transparency and due process in Ghana's ongoing anti-corruption efforts. Allegations that the couple diverted millions of Ghanaian cedis—reports indicate approximately GH₵49 million diverted and GH₵39.4 million misappropriated[7] —have been publicized through a series of press briefings. Central to this debate is the public disclosure by the Attorney General (AG), whose pronouncement revealed that only a fraction (20 percent) of the evidence has been released so far, ostensibly to avoid compromising the investigation.[8] This incident not only provides a window into the challenges of corruption in Ghana but also serves as a case study on how transparency measures can both reinforce and undermine public trust in governance.

[4] West Africa has experienced a wave of coups - superficial democracy is to blame
[5] Democratization and the Resurgence of Military Regimes in West Africa
[6] Ibid
[7] Adu-Boahen and wife held over GH¢39m for no work done – Attorney-General - Ghana Business News
[8] We've only released 20 per cent of the evidence—Deputy AG on Adu-Boahen investigations - Graphic Online

The AG's decision to hold a public briefing in the midst of the investigation was intended to demonstrate a robust commitment to transparency and to assure citizens that no misuse of public funds would be tolerated. By openly detailing the financial irregularities—such as the diversion related to a high-profile $7 million cyber defence system contract— the government aimed to signal that its anti-corruption mandate, spearheaded by initiatives like Operation Recover All Loots (ORAL), is not mere rhetoric but a vigorous effort to reclaim looted resources and enforce accountability. Such proactive disclosure is particularly important in a context where past government misconduct has eroded public confidence in institutional checks and balances.

However, while the merits of transparency are widely acknowledged in expert panel opinions, significant concerns have been raised about the manner and timing of this public briefing. Some experts argue that by revealing crucial investigatory details and emphasizing partial evidence, the AG may have inadvertently undermined the presumption of innocence—a legal cornerstone in both domestic and international jurisprudence. In essence, the public pronouncement might have created a climate where Adu-Boahene and his wife were judged as guilty before formal charges were laid, thereby risking a trial by media. This approach raises the fundamental question: does the quest for accountability justify the risk of prejudicing the judicial process?

Judicial fairness and the presumption of innocence remain critical, especially in politically charged cases where public opinion can significantly influence proceedings. While the AG's intent was to establish clarity and assert state resolve against corruption, critics have noted that such public declarations may tacitly condemn the individuals involved even before a court establishes their culpability.[9] The legal framework governing civil and administrative procedures in Ghana mandates that suspects remain untainted by prior public judgment until due process has occurred in a court of law. This careful balance between public transparency and the rights of the accused is essential for maintaining confidence in the rule of law.

The Adu-Boahene case does not exist in a vacuum. It is an integral part of the broader Operation Recover All Loots (ORAL) mandate, an initiative designed to track, prosecute, and recover misappropriated state resources. Launched with the promise of transparency and accountability, ORAL aims to reverse the financial damage wrought by corruption and restore public trust in governance.[10] By targeting high-profile cases like that of Adu-Boahene, the government intends not only to reclaim state assets but also to send a clear message to potential wrongdoers throughout the region.

Yet, effective asset recovery and corruption prosecution demand more than high-profile public announcements. They require a carefully coordinated effort among multiple bodies—including the Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO), the Office of the Special Prosecutor, and independent judicial institutions—to ensure that evidence is gathered systematically and that legal

[9] Government to press charges against 15 suspects in Adu-Boahen case — Deputy Attorney-General - Graphic Online
[10] Everything you need to know about Operation Recover All Loot

procedures are strictly followed. In this light, the Adu-Boahene case serves as a critical test of whether ORAL can balance aggressive asset recovery with the imperatives of a fair trial.

For anti-corruption agencies in Ghana to successfully manage high-profile cases, robust inter-agency collaboration is indispensable. Joint task forces that include forensic experts, legal practitioners, and law enforcement officials can create an environment where transparency and due process reinforce each other rather than conflict. Such collaboration serves as a best practice, ensuring that while the public is kept informed, the rights of the accused are duly protected, and the investigation remains free of external pressures that could jeopardize its outcome.

Ghana and Morocco agree to visa free waiver agreement, initiate processes



The recent visa-free waiver agreement between Ghana and Morocco represents a pivotal stride in Ghana's broader continental policy to enhance intra-African mobility and economic integration under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). By eliminating visa restrictions for African citizens, Ghana not only reinforces its leadership in promoting a borderless Africa aligned with Agenda 2063[11][12] but also sets the stage for deeper economic engagement that could extend to sectors such as tourism, agribusiness, and renewable energy.

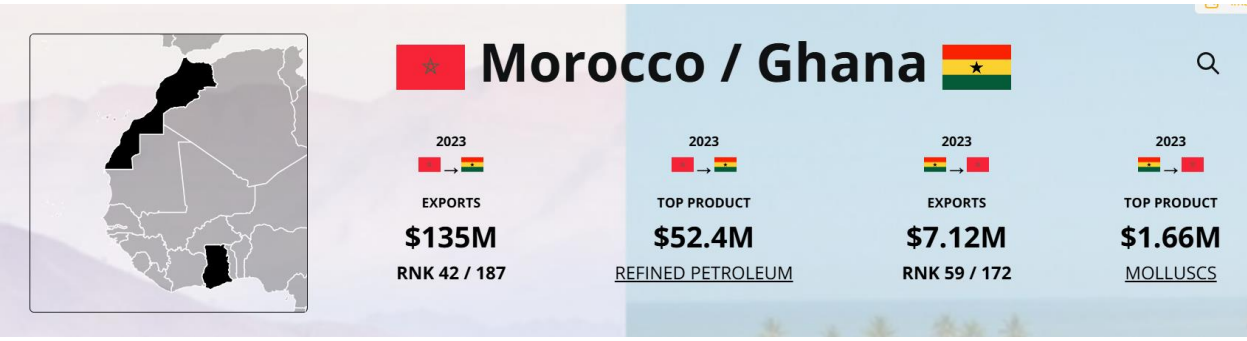
This policy move dovetails with efforts to dismantle non-tariff barriers—thereby facilitating smoother goods and services flows—and serves as an instrumental lever in bolstering the single market envisioned under AfCFTA, ultimately contributing to substantial trade and investment enhancement. Moreover, the agreement's timing is particularly notable in light of Morocco's earlier expressed interest in joining ECOWAS, an ambition complicated by geopolitical and legal challenges.[13][14]

Ghana's progressive visa policy may, therefore, act as a soft diplomatic measure influencing regional integration debates and power dynamics within ECOWAS, where Ghana plays a leading role. Trade data from the OEC in 2023, indicating Moroccan exports to Ghana of approximately US$135

[11] Ghana becomes 5th African country to offer visa-free travel for African passport holders
[12] Visa-Free Travel for African Passport Holders: Implications for Ghana's Role In Intra-African under the AfCFTA | The Ghana Report
[13] Morocco-ECOWAS: Good intentions are not enough – MIPA Institute
[14] Morocco's Difficult Path to ECOWAS Membership | Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

million juxtaposed with Ghana's exports at around US$7 million[15] underscore significant untapped potentials that this visa-free regime can help unlock by facilitating increased business partnerships, cultural exchanges, and investment opportunities across both West and North Africa.

Fig.1. Morocco – Ghana trade



Source: Observatory of Economic Complexity

President Mahama travels to Abuja on a one-day working visit



President Mahama's recent diplomatic visit to Abuja underscores Ghana's active engagement in regional diplomacy. His discussions with President Tinubu focused on strengthening bilateral relations and addressing pressing regional issues, including the implications of the Sahel nations' withdrawal from ECOWAS. This visit highlights Ghana's commitment to fostering stability and cooperation within West Africa.

To ensure democratic governance in Sahelian states, ECOWAS, under President Tinubu's leadership, must adopt a multifaceted approach. This includes promoting inclusive political processes, supporting transparent electoral systems, and addressing the root causes of instability, such as economic disparities and violent extremism. Collaborative efforts with international partners can further bolster these initiatives.

President Mahama's international engagements enhance Ghana's soft power by positioning the country as a key player in regional governance and diplomacy. By actively participating in discussions that shape the political landscape of West Africa, Ghana reinforces its reputation as a mediator and advocate for democratic principles, even without holding the ECOWAS chairmanship.

[15] Morocco (MAR) and Ghana (GHA) Trade | The Observatory of Economic Complexity

President Mahama petitioned to remove Chief Justice Gertrude Torkorno



The renewed controversy surrounding the petition process to remove Ghana's Chief Justice has once again thrust constitutional principles and judicial independence into the national debate. Under the 1992 Constitution—specifically Article 146—the removal of a Chief Justice can only proceed once a correct procedural path has been followed. Central to this process is the establishment of a prima facie case, a Latin term meaning "at first glance," which requires that the evidence presented be sufficient to justify a deeper inquiry into allegations of misconduct or incompetence. Legal experts emphasize that while natural justice mandates the right to be heard, a preliminary prima facie determination does not necessarily require the immediate ex parte hearing of the accused if subsequent due process provisions can be ensured.[16][17]

The spate of petitions—now the third attempt in recent years—raises critical concerns. Repeated efforts to initiate the removal process suggest that what might appear prima facie may well be intertwined with political agendas aimed at undermining judicial independence rather than a genuine pursuit of accountability. Previous petitions[18], as documented by several news reports, were dismissed after failing to meet the evidentiary threshold, yet the recurrence of these actions casts a lingering shadow over the integrity of the process. Critics warn that when removal petitions are continuously repeated, they risk eroding public confidence in the impartiality of Ghana's judiciary, potentially transforming a legally prescribed procedure into a tool for politically motivated interventions.[19]

In response to the emerging allegations, Chief Justice Gertrude Torkornoo's decision to formally request copies of the petitions submitted against her is nonetheless both a constitutional right and a procedural safeguard. By insisting on the documentation of allegations prior to any further consultations with the Council of State, she upholds the common law principle of *audi alteram partem*—the right to be heard—which is embedded in both our legal tradition and the 1992 Constitution.[20] This measured course of action enables her to prepare an appropriate response, ensuring that any subsequent inquiry is grounded in a comprehensive review of evidentiary material rather than in

[16] Mahama consults Council of State on petitions to remove Chief Justice - MyJoyOnline
[17] Legal Opinion On Petition To Remove The Chief Justice; At What Stage Can The Chief Justice Have Knowledge Of The Content Of The Petition To Remove Her?
[18] Prof. Kwaku Asare petitions Prez Akufo-Addo to remove Chief Justice Torkornoo over alleged misconduct and incompetence - Graphic Online
[19] Justice Torkorno: President Mahama consults Council of State over petitions to remove Chief Justice - Graphic Online
[20] Chief Justice request for copies of petitions filed against her - Ghana Business News

hearsay or selective allegations. She attests to have predicated same principle in matters of similar nature regarding other Justices of the Supreme Court in her request to the President.

What complicates the narrative further is video evidence[21] from an NDC lawyers' conference in 2022, where the current president—then a leading candidate—was recorded alluding to the potential change in judicial leadership of the current government to instil trust in the judiciary. In the speech he asserted that:

> *"Unfortunately, we have no hope that the current leadership of our judiciary can lead such a process of change. We can only hope that a new Chief Justice will lead the process to repair the broken image that our judiciary has acquired over the last few years."* [**See from 8:00 – 9:30**]

Such evidence not only casts doubt over the impartiality of the removal process but also suggests that these latest petitions may have underlying political motivations. The appearance of this footage has led many observers to label the petitions as preposterous and malicious, indicating that the initiative might be driven by a strategic recalibration of political narratives rather than by a bona fide concern for judicial misconduct.

The unfolding petition process against Ghana's Chief Justice encapsulates a complex interplay between constitutional mandates, the evidentiary standards of a prima facie case, and emerging political influences. As the dispute continues, it becomes imperative for all stakeholders to commit firmly to transparency and due process. Only a rigorously fair procedure—anchored in the rule of law—can safeguard both judicial independence and the public's enduring trust in Ghana's democratic institutions

[21] You are watching a playback of John Mahama's address at the 2nd NDC Lawyers Annual Conference | W... - YouTube

Recommendations for Policy and Practice

1. It is recommended that the government continue to strengthen the institutional framework for civilian oversight of the military by formalizing regular, independent reviews of defense policies and ensuring accountability through transparent, merit-based appointments. In practice, establishing a permanent independent oversight committee—with representation from both civilian policymakers and military experts—can provide rigorous, routine audits of the Armed Forces Council's decisions and operations. This committee should also facilitate ongoing dialogue between military leadership and civil society, reinforcing the role of the military as a neutral guardian of peace and security while upholding democratic principles. More importantly, embedding these practices within a robust legal framework will not only consolidate Ghana's young democracy in the face of regional political instability but also serve as an instructive model for other West African states confronting the challenges of military influence in governance. Chiefly amongst these is making the foremost function of the Armed Forces the defence of the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana.

2. In order to enhance transparency without compromising judicial fairness, it is recommended that Ghana's anti-corruption framework mandate the creation of an independent, inter-agency task force responsible for coordinating and standardizing public disclosures during investigations. This policy should require that only non-prejudicial, rigorously vetted information be released to the media—ensuring that the presumption of innocence is upheld throughout the judicial process—while also reinforcing accountability measures through regular oversight and inter-agency collaboration among bodies such as EOCO and the Office of the Special Prosecutor. In practice, this approach would involve systematic evidence reviews, clearly defined disclosure protocols, and ongoing training for all stakeholders in managing high-profile corruption cases, thereby bolstering initiatives like Operation Recover All Loots (ORAL) and setting a sustainable benchmark for anti-corruption efforts in the West African sub-region.

3. Ghana and Morocco must streamline customs, regulatory, and non-tariff barrier processes to boost trade and investment flows and promote deeper economic integration under AfCFTA. Additionally, policymakers should advance sector-specific collaborations—particularly in tourism, agribusiness, and renewable energy—while engaging in continuous dialogue regarding Morocco's aspirations within ECOWAS. These measures aim to address existing trade imbalances, where Moroccan exports significantly outpace Ghana's, and pave the way for joint initiatives that leverage complementary national strengths to drive inclusive regional growth and sustainable development.

4. It is recommended that Ghana harnesses these diplomatic engagements to foster a coordinated regional approach that bolsters democratic governance and ensures stability across West Africa. Specifically, Ghana should leverage its recent goodwill to push for ECOWAS leadership to initiate a structured regional dialogue that prioritizes institutional

reforms in the Sahelian states, focusing on transparent electoral processes, accountable public service delivery, and robust capacity-building to counter extremism and socioeconomic disparities. By positioning itself as an active mediator and advocate for comprehensive democratic reforms, Ghana can significantly enhance its soft power dynamics, reinforcing its regional influence and contributing to a more stable, interconnected West African governance framework.

5. The safeguards and transparency mechanisms inherent in the constitutional process must be strengthened by mandating that all submissions and evidentiary materials related to removal petitions of the Chief Justice be made available for to the accused person, thus minimizing the risk of partisan manipulation and reinforcing judicial accountability. This approach should include a statutory reform or a constitutional interpretation of establishing a prima facie in the removal of the Chief Justice whereby the petitioner must provide concrete evidence supporting their claims, while the Chief Justice is afforded sufficient time and resources to engage in a comprehensive adversarial process, including public hearings and the submission of detailed written responses.

IMANI
Center for Policy & Education

Policy & Education Think Tank

IMANI Center for Policy & Education is a Think Tank of considerable local and international repute based in Ghana. Founded on the 9th of March 2004, IMANI has carved a niche in Ghana's policy environment for putting out objective, independent analysis and critique on many issues, using tried and tested techniques that apply across different disciplines

Office Loc: No. KD14 Darko Street KOANS Estate-Kutunse
P.O.Box Box 443, Achimota, Accra-Ghana
Tel: +233 554 309 966 | 0302 972 939
Email: info@imanighana.org