

October 17, 2023

PRESS RELEASE

RESIGNATION: ARCHBISHOP DUNCAN-WILLIAMS & REV EASTWOOD ANABA

1. The attention of the Secretariat of the National Cathedral project has been drawn to a letter addressed to the President -- sighted in the media **before** Board members received copies -- of the resignation of two of the members of the Board, Archbishop Nicholas Duncan Williams and Rev Eastwood Anaba. The reason given in the letter for their resignation is said to be the lack of any information, whatsoever, following their January 23, 2023 resolution calling for an audit of the National Cathedral project, and a complete cessation of work on the project.

2) First, following the presentation of their resolution to the January 23, 2023 meeting of the Board,-- which the Board rejected but which still found its way to the media, -- both Archbishop Duncan Williams and Rev Eastwood Anaba fully participated (by zoom) in an emergency meeting the next day, 24th January 2023, to develop a Press release on the issue. The Press release included information on the audit, which was to be conducted by the international audit firm Deloitte (see appendix 1)

3) Following this, the engagement letter for Deloitte to officially begin the audit was drafted and signed by Deloitte on March 27, 2023 and the set up on their system on May 17, 2023. The expectation was that the first part of the audit was to be completed in July 2023. The audit process, so far, can be confirmed with the auditors, Deloitte.

4) The Board was constantly updated on the process through the Chairman and the Steering Committee, as well as the Executive Director's reports to the meetings of the Board. For instance, the Executive Director's report to the June 5, 2023 meeting included the following update on the audit:

***“III(3) Financial Audit:** ... the auditors, Deloitte, are currently in the middle of the audit and are receiving the cooperation of the Secretariat. “*

5) Similarly, at the September 27, 2023 meeting, the Executive Director updated the Board on the audit, and included the following in his written report to the Board:

***“Delayed Audit Report:** The audit report by Deloitte is needed to begin the fundraising campaign.. Following a number of delays due to documentation, it is now hoped that the audit will be completed soon to enable fundraising to restart in earnest.”*

6) Although Archbishop Duncan Williams and Rev Eastwood Anaba were not present at both the June 2023 and September 2023 meetings, they and all the other Board members who were not physically present at the meeting were sent copies of all the documents for the Board meeting, including the Executive Director's report. The claim that they have received no information, whatsoever, on the audit process is therefore false.

7) It needs to be stressed that the January 23, 2023 resolution of Archbishop Duncan Williams and Rev Eastwood Anaba was rejected by the Board on two grounds. First, their call for a complete cessation of all activity on the project until an audit was done, was redundant, as the meeting already had the audit on the agenda.

8) Second, and perhaps more critical, their resolution was rejected because of its linkage to the 2024 elections. As Archbishop Duncan Williams explained it, the National Cathedral has become a “trusted weapon” in the hands of the opposition, which they intend to use as part of their 2024 election strategy. Explaining that he had seen “part of the game plan”, he argued that unless the Board agrees to cease all work on the project until after the 2024 elections, the opposition will come after each of them, create divisions in the Board, and be relentless in their opposition to the project. This was rejected because of the undue politicization of the project this complete cessation would entail.

9) As the Secretariat of the National Cathedral Project, we are not unaware of the numerous attempts to politicise and cause disaffection for the project through fabrications and outright lies.

10) But, as we have always insisted, the National Cathedral project has been implemented with integrity. And we are working closely with the auditors to ensure that they complete their work, which will be shared with the general public.



Dr Paul Opoku-Mensah
Executive Director
National Cathedral Project

APPENDIX 1

January 24, 2023

PRESS RELEASE

1. At its meeting on January 23, 2023, the Board of Trustees of the National Cathedral of Ghana, as part of its oversight responsibility of the project, acknowledges concerns of the public relating to:

- a) The justification for the construction of a National Cathedral within the context of the current economic challenges confronting the nation.
- b) Issues relating to accountability and management of the National Cathedral project.

2. It would be recalled that the National Cathedral project evolved as a vision of the President of Ghana, H. E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, and is to be developed in partnership between the state and the Ghanaian Christian community. The project is to construct a complex comprising a Cathedral, Bible Museum, and Biblical Gardens of Africa. The Complex is to serve, among other things, as an interdenominational facility for National Prayer and Worship, Presidential Inaugural Services, State Funerals, and National Thanksgiving Services. It also includes a crypt for the nation.

3. To ensure its additional relevance to the churches and the nation, the Board integrated additional elements to the National Cathedral project, including i) a Bible Museum focusing on the Bible in Africa, ii) a Biblical Garden with the trees, shrubs, and flowers of the Bible, and iii) an economic engine consisting of 10 revenue streams to ensure the economic viability of the project. Beyond its national religious functions, the National Cathedral is being developed as a site for religious pilgrimage and tourism that will attract large numbers of tourists and researchers to Ghana annually to help boost the economy.

4. So far, substantial preparatory work and foundational construction work has been done on the project.

5. This work has been made possible through the support of the state, and generous donations by individuals, churches, and institutions. Even non-Christians have made significant contributions towards the construction of the project. The Board of Trustees is grateful to such contributors and prays God's blessings upon them.
6. Quite regrettably, inadequate funding has brought the construction work on the project to a standstill.
7. The major reasons for the inadequate funding include the following:
- a) A general misunderstanding that it is the state that is fully funding the construction of the National Cathedral, and that within the challenging economic atmosphere in the country, this is misplaced.
 - b) The general impression being created that the National Cathedral project is not being executed with the expected high Christian standards of integrity, transparency, and accountability.
8. In response to these developments, the Board of the National Cathedral of Ghana, at its meeting on January 23, 2023, made the following decisions:
- a) The Board is already in discussions to engage Deloitte, which accepted to be the auditors when the National Cathedral was registered, to commence the normal statutory audit.
 - b) In addition, the project submitted all relevant documentation on the project to Parliament in December 2022. Thus, if Parliament so desires, it may set up a commission or appoint an independent auditor to review all issues concerning the award of contract, procurement, construction works, and financial operations of the National Cathedral project so far.

c) The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), which is the constitutionally mandated body to investigate matters of procurement and accountability in such projects, has also made the Board a respondent in its investigations into the operations of the National Cathedral project. The Board will cooperate fully with CHRAJ in its work.

9. It is the hope and trust of the Board of the National Cathedral of Ghana that once these nagging issues are satisfactorily dealt with, the public interest and confidence in the project would be restored and rekindled to enable the citizenry to contribute generously to complete the Cathedral to the glory of God.



Apostle Prof Opoku Onyinah
Chairman, Board of Trustees

