**GHANA FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION**

**ACCRA**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**CHARGE OF IMPROPER CONDUCT - COMMENTS ON GHANA PREMIER LEAGUE**

I, George Kwesi Afriyie, Official/Member of Akim Tafo Susubiribi SC, hereby respond to the charge received on 8th Novemeber,2024 regarding my comments on the Ghana Premier League during a media interview aired on Kessben TV on **6th November 2024**.

**PLEA:**

I therefore plead NOT GUILTY to the charge of improper conduct.

**RESPONSE:**

My comments were made in response to some specific question about:

1. The third term proposal for President Kurt ES Okraku which has dominated the airwaves during the week
2. The perceived inconsistencies in refereeing decisions and the need for improvement in our leagues.
3. The overall performance of our National Teams and leagues under President Kurt ES Okraku.
4. Some incidents about the Premier league and FA cup which notable people in our ecosystem has termed as manipulation.

While I acknowledge making the comments in question, I strongly assert that your charges were taken out of context, misinterpreted, and do not constitute improper conduct based on the following;

The Ghana premier league over a period have witnessed some allegation in respect of match manipulation and match fixing which raises a lot of concerns to persons who invest in football. As a stakeholder match-fixing allegations are a public concern, warranting open discussion.

FIFA defines match manipulation as the unlawful influencing or alteration, directly or by an act or omission, of the course, result or any other aspect of a football match or competition.

Following this, permit me to cite the following instance which the Ghana league have experienced acts which constitutes match manipulation.

1. 2021/22 league season

 Medeama SC vs King Faisal (Match day 22)

In the 38th minute of the game, there was a foul committed outside the penalty area of King Faisal by a defender of King Faisal per the video watched. The referee picked the foul which occurred outside the penalty area but signaled for a penalty in favour of Medeama SC which was an error. We found that decision very strange since the markings were visible.

Referees’ response

The referee, Misbaw Mohammed and the Assistant Referee, Kenneth Tweneboah-Kodua both claimed they did not see clearly that the foul was committed outside the penalty area. They blamed each other for the error committed. The referee said he relied on the Assistant for his decision and the Assistant also claimed he relied on the action of the referee for his decision.

DECISION(S)

Since the referee and his assistant erred in their decision which changed the result of the match, Referee Misbaw Mohammed and Assistant Kenneth Tweneboah-Kodua are therefore suspended for the rest of the season. This includes all GFA organized matches.

2.The Ghana Football Association's (GFA) match review panel has suspended Assistant Referee Patrick Papala for one year for denying Accra Hearts of Oak a legitimate goal in the game against Real Tamale United on matchday 33 of the 2022/23 Ghana Premier League season.

With a few minutes to end the game which was held at the Accra Sports Stadium, Yaw Amankwa Baafi of Hearts of Oak scored to restore parity as they had trailed 2-1 until then.

However, the goal was denied as a result of Papala who flagged the youngster offside thereby denying the Phobians a crucial point while leaving them in danger ahead of their final Ghana Premier League game of the season.

The result meant a loss on the final day could have seen Hearts of Oak relegated but the Phobians were fortunate to have seen their competitors at the time, Tamale City lose to Medeama on the final day.

The citations made above and the punitive measures given is a clear indication of the GFA not putting pragmatic measures to address potential manipulations.

Again, similar comments made by others in the past have gone uninvestigated, which raises concerns and eyebrow about selective prosecution and the fairness of the disciplinary process. It is therefore essential to address the underlying issues rather than targeting individuals.

See:

* <https://footydreamsgh.com/bombshell-albert-commey-claims-gpl-final-day-matches-were-fixed/>
* <https://sportsworldghana.com/fc-samartex-won-the-ghana-premier-league-through-bribery-and-corruption-hearts-of-oak-board-member-nyaho-tamakloe/>
* <https://kickgh.com/gpl/great-olympics-were-relegated-from-the-ghana-premier-league-because-of-match-fixing-mcdan-alleges>

Finally, the lack of response by the GFA on the above issues is testament that the GFA agrees that the leagues is manipulated. If the F.A had a contraty view on the comments made, it would have taken steps to investigate it.

**CONCLUSION:**

I respect the Ghana Football Association's role in maintaining the integrity and therefore request a fair hearing and consideration of my response.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely

**George Kwesi Afriyie**

***Cc: General Secretary***