**1,363 Ghanaians mount Pressure on Parliament:**

***“……..demanding the passage of the RTI bill”***

Citizens’ groups and individuals organized by the Ghana Integrity Initiative to fight corruption have begun an initiative to get their respective Members of Parliament to commit to ensuring that the Right to Information Bill is passed before the term of the sixth Parliament of the fourth Republic ends. The petitioners are Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) as well as individuals organized and trained by the GII Consortium under the Accountable Democratic Institutions and Systems Strengthening Project. The GII Consortium comprises Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII), Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition (GACC) and SEND-Ghana.

The petitioners are mounting this pressure through people signing onto a petition to be presented to their respective Members of Parliament, a practice consistent with the incessant calls made by anti-corruption CSOs and the Right to Information (RTI) Coalition over the years. With less than seven months to the general elections, the GII Consortium and Ghanaians are increasingly becoming concerned about the tokenism approach adopted by Parliament with regards to the passage of the RTI Bill into law.

The RTI Bill was first laid before Parliament on February 5, 2010 and public consultation started mid-2011. On December 17, 2014, the Select Committee tabled its report containing the amendments in Parliament. On June 25, 2015, the Attorney General and Minister for Justice, Mrs. Marrieta Brew Appiah-Opong moved the motion for the second reading of the Bill. On June 30, 2015 discussions on the Bill commenced and ended on July 24, 2015 and subsequently the Bill was referred to the consideration stage. On October 27, 2015, Parliament resumed sitting for the last quarter of the year 2015 but unfortunately, the RTI Bill was never considered even though it kept appearing on the agenda of Parliament throughout that session. The March 9, 2016 aborted debate of the Bill is heightening the fears of Ghanaians that the RTI Bill may not be passed before this Parliament elapses as it has happened over the years.

With the increasing reports of public sector corruption and the shocking revelations contained in the yearly Auditor General’s report, citizens can no longer sit aloof waiting for the passage of this important piece of legislation without result - they have decided to rise and speak out for their representatives in Parliament to listen and act. Therefore with a strong voice backed by the will of the people, the GII Consortium Anti-Corruption Champions working in fifty (50) districts across the ten regions of Ghana, have volunteered to collect signatures to petition their Members of Parliament to consider the Bill and pass it before the November 7 polls. So far over 1,363 Ghanaians have signed the petition and the number keeps rising daily as the exercise continues until the RTI law if finally passed.

The GII Consortium is confident that the passage of the RTI Bill into law will go a long way to expand the frontiers of the fight against corruption by aiding the effective operationalization of the legal regime for access to public information.

**Transparency! Transparency!! Transparency!!!**



**Hon. Sanja Nanja, Atebubu-Amantin MP**



**Hon. Atta Akyea, Abuakwa South MP receiving the RTI petitions.**