



MINISTRY
OF
COMMUNICATIONS AND
DIGITALISATION

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My Ref No. _____

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Date. 17th October, 2022 _____

PRESS STATEMENT ON SIM REGISTRATION EXERCISE

I commend the millions of Ghanaians and non-Ghanaians resident in Ghana who have diligently registered their SIM Cards in accordance with the SIM Registration directives since the process commenced on 1st October 2021.

The primary objective of the SIM Registration exercise, as we have continually emphasised, is to protect us all against fraud, promote our collective security and advance our transformational digital agenda.

Mobile phones and SIM enabled devices have become essential livelihood tools and underpin many digital innovations we find indispensable, but despite the immense benefits of modern digital technology, there are also significant risks, some of which we are seeking to mitigate through the SIM registration exercise. We must ensure a safe digital eco-system for us all. Government has no intention of just inconveniencing or overburdening citizens, or depriving them of the use of their SIM Card enabled devices.

The good news is that despite the challenges that this exercise has encountered, including challenges with the acquisition of Ghana Cards, we have chalked significant successes we should be proud of. Between 1st October 2021 and 4th October 2022;

- 28,959,006 **SIM Cards** have been linked to Ghana Cards (Stage 1 registration); representing 67.28% of the **42,749,662** total SIM cards issued nationally.

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- 18,930,664 **SIM Cards** have been fully registered (Completed both Stages 1 and 2) – representing 44.28% of the total SIM cards issued. This equates to 69.64% of all Stage 1 registrations.
- 13,720,687 unique Counts of Ghana Cards have been used so far for the registration exercise

While we have not yet achieved our target, by every measurable yardstick and against the challenges that we have as a developing economy, this is quite an achievement. 14 million Ghanaians and non-Ghanaians can sleep safely, comforted by the fact that their 18.8 million SIM Cards are safe and secure. We have made good progress, and this is a collective gain that we must celebrate.

It is however disconcerting that **almost 10 million** people who have linked their SIM Cards to their Ghana Cards (i.e. completed Stage 1 registration) have not completed their Stage 2 registration. There is no excuse for this since these individuals have their Ghana Cards, have started the process and had ample opportunity to fully register their SIM Cards, including through the use of the self registration app which is the first of its kind in the world.

There may be some who are opposed to the SIM Card registration exercise for either ideological, philosophical, or political reasons. Let me just remind them that they may be exercising their right to opt out of this exercise but all actions have consequences. All unregistered SIMs will be deactivated. Regulation 1(b) of the **Subscriber Identity Module Registration Regulations, 2011 (L.I 2006)** states that “*A network operator or service provider shall not activate a Subscriber Identity Module for a subscriber unless the subscriber complies with the directives given by the Authority under the Act and the National Communications Authority Act, 2008, (Act 769) on the registration of Subscriber Identity Module.*” This imposes a legal obligation on all Network Operators to activate ONLY SIMs registered in the manner prescribed by the

NCA on their network. Any SIM which is not duly registered in accordance with NCA directives cannot be activated on any network in Ghana.

The Authority, NCA, therefore, has the power to issue **DIRECTIVES** detailing the entire procedure for SIM registration and to impose penalties/sanctions for non compliance with the Directives.

As a responsible government, we will ensure that they enforce the law to the letter.

We also acknowledge that some of our citizens have had difficulties obtaining Ghana Cards to enable them undertake their SIM registration, although 1.3 million Ghanaians have also been issued their Ghana cards but have not collected them. This is regrettable and we will continue to engage the National Identification Authority to expedite the process.

At the end of July 2022, I announced a two-month extension of the deadline for registration to 30 September 2022. Following consultation with the industry, I hereby announce the following:

1. All SIM Cards that have been linked to Ghana Cards (i.e. completed Stage 1 registration), but have not completed their Stage 2 registration will be blocked from the end of October. This is not an extension of the deadline but a temporary moratorium to encourage these individuals to complete the process. If they have any peculiar challenges, they should contact the NCA. These good people have the Ghana card, have started the process and will be encouraged to complete it with this gentle reminder. All other unregistered SIMs will also be blocked progressively.

2. The NCA is in discussions with the NIA on registered amputees and other categories of persons and will make an announcement shortly on arrangements made to accommodate them. The provision made earlier for SIMs active outside Ghana and diplomats still stands.

3. All data-only SIMs including those issued by Surfline, Busy Internet, Telesol, and any institution such as ECG, have up to the end of November to complete registration.

4. Some people have registered more than ten (10) SIM Cards for personal use and the database has identified it and will clean it up. They should, as a matter of urgency, delink the unwanted SIM Cards immediately because any excess SIM Cards over the individual limit of 10 SIMs per person will be removed from the database and blocked. This will also address issues of pre-registered SIMS. Let me remind all SIM card vendors that it is an offense to pre-register and sell SIM cards. The NCA has been directed to conduct mystery shopping and enforce the law against those miscreants. If found guilty, they could be imprisoned for up to 5 years.

Let me conclude by stating that the government is fully committed to ensuring that we have a safe digital ecosystem underpinning our collective cybersecurity. A successful SIM Card registration exercise is an essential part of this goal and I therefore appeal to us all to put our national interest first and do the right thing for this country.

As we celebrate our successes on the SIM Card registration, the government will continue to uphold its commitment to protect all citizens. We encourage all of us to live up to our obligations to each other and to the state. We need your cooperation to ensure that this essential SIM Card registration exercise succeeds.

Thank you.



MRS. URSULA OWUSU-EKUFUL (MP)
MINISTER