AN ASSESSMENT OF GHANA’S DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION SINCE 1992 AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

BY

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10397177

THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS.

LEGON JULY 2013
DECLARATION

I, Alfred MawunyegaAmedeker, author of this MA thesis do hereby, declare that except for references made to others peoples’ work, which I have duly acknowledged, the work presented here was solely undertaken by me under the supervision of Dr.Boni Yao Gebe, of Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy(LECIAD) of the University of Ghana, Legon.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God the Almighty who has been the source of my inspiration and guidance as well as the foundation for my hope in the future.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, a very special thank you to my supervisor, Dr Boni YaoGebewhose thorough and critical reading, as well as corrections, has helped me bring this project to completion. Your guidance and support was invaluable. It was an honour working with you.

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Finally, I would like to thank my friends, Anthony and Lydia, for their inspiration and also to mention Mubarak and Sylvia, student colleagues for their encouragement.
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<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>AAEA</td>
<td>Association of African Election Authorities</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACP</td>
<td>African Caribbean and Pacific Countries</td>
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<td>AGOA</td>
<td>African Growth and Opportunity Act</td>
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<td>APRM</td>
<td>African Peer Review Mechanism</td>
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<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<td>BVDs</td>
<td>Biometric Verification Devices</td>
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<td>CDD</td>
<td>Centre for Democratic Development</td>
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<td>CEPA</td>
<td>Centre for Economic Policy Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHRAJ</td>
<td>Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice</td>
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<td>CI</td>
<td>Constitution Instrument</td>
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<td>CODEO</td>
<td>Coalition for Domestic Electoral Observers</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisation</td>
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<td>EC</td>
<td>Electoral Commission</td>
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<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
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<td>EMB</td>
<td>Election Management Bodies</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>GPP</td>
<td>Ghana Political Parties Programme</td>
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<td>HIPC</td>
<td>Highly Indebted Poor Countries</td>
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<td>ICB</td>
<td>Independent Constitutional Bodies</td>
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<td>IDEA</td>
<td>International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance</td>
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<td>IDEG</td>
<td>Institute for Democratic Governance</td>
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<td>IEA</td>
<td>Institute for Economic Affairs</td>
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<td>IDA</td>
<td>International Development Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>IFES</td>
<td>International Foundation for Electoral Systems</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
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<td>IPAC</td>
<td>Inter Party Advisory Council</td>
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<td>LECIAD</td>
<td>Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy</td>
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<td>MCA</td>
<td>Millennium Challenge Account</td>
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<td>MDRI</td>
<td>Multi-Donor Debt Relief Initiative</td>
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<td>MEPI</td>
<td>Middle East Partnership Initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCCE</td>
<td>National Commission for Civic Education</td>
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<td>NCD</td>
<td>National Commission for Democracy</td>
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<td>NDC</td>
<td>National Democratic Congress</td>
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<td>NEPAD</td>
<td>New Partnership for African Development</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisations</td>
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<td>NMC</td>
<td>National Media Commission</td>
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<td>NPP</td>
<td>New Patriotic Party</td>
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<td>National Redemption Council Decree</td>
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<td>OMR</td>
<td>Optical Mark Readers</td>
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<td>PCP</td>
<td>Peoples Convention Party</td>
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<td>PNC</td>
<td>People’s National Convention</td>
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<td>PNDC</td>
<td>Provisional National Defence Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>TUC</td>
<td>Trades Union Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>UKTI</td>
<td>United Kingdom Trade and Investment</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>VAG</td>
<td>Veterans Association of Ghana</td>
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<td>IDHR</td>
<td>European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights</td>
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### 4.0 Introduction

### 4.1 Summary of Findings

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ABSTRACT

The holding of transparent, free and fair elections and the successive change of power from one party to another is thought to be rare in Africa. The end of the Cold War however brought adherence to democratic governance as it has become a key factor in the foreign policy directives and development assistance of most developed countries. Ghana witnessed its sixth successful democratic election in 2012 since democracy was restored in 1992. In the context of the research topic, the study covers Ghana’s democratic consolidation since 1992 and highlights some key achievements of democratic consolidation over the period. It further assesses the implications of Ghana’s democratic consolidation for international relations in line with Article 40 of the 1992 constitution. The findings of the study point to the fact that Ghana’s democratic transition has been consolidated as per the various criteria such as political competition through free and fair elections, freedom of expression, freedom of religion, free media, and respect for political and civil rights that are necessary for a consolidated democracy. This study concludes that these achievements have had an impact on the international scene and has also shaped Ghana’s relationship with other actors in the international system. It further recommends that Ghana’s democratic institutions can be used as an international relations tool in promoting its best democratic practices in consonance with her foreign policy objectives. Ghana must also increase its role in election monitoring and observation in more countries as a policy tool for defending the principles of free and fair elections.
CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Background to the Study

The holding of transparent, free and fair elections and the successive change of power from one party to another is thought to be rare in Africa. However, the end of the Cold War has brought adherence to democratic governance as it has become a key factor in the foreign policy directives and development assistance of most developed countries. In addition, a large number of national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as well as multilateral organisations have renewed and expanded their commitments to international engagement to support democracy.¹

Ghana is one country which has embarked on democratic and constitutional reforms and has made great strides in democratic governance since the 1992 constitution has been in place. On President Obama’s first visit to Sub-Saharan Africa, the White House explained the choice of Ghana as a symbol of hope of democracy and civil society in a volatile region.² It is therefore obvious that since 1992 Ghana has been leading the way in the region as a model of best democratic practices. Again Ghana’s impressive achievements in building the foundations for democratic governance have also led to international confidence in the country’s economic development prospects.³

Ghana cannot be said to have arrived at the destination as a fully fledged democratic state because democracy is a process and not an event. However, based on six successive elections, it is appropriate to examine the practical achievements. The praises and accolades showered on Ghana are not enough and do not mean anything unless these translate into democratic consolidation to impact on the country’s external relations.
1.2 Problem Statement

Over the last two decades, Ghana has made impressive progress and stands out as a beacon of democracy for the African region. The country witnessed its sixth democratic elections in 2012 since democracy was restored in 1992. This achievement has so far redefined the relationship between the state and other countries.

The 1992 Constitution establishes the fundamental principles that should guide her foreign policy. Article 40, under Chapter Six of the Constitution titled "Directive Principles of State Policy" is ordered around these major goals; attraction of development assistance and investment capital, maintaining friendly ties with her neighbours, and playing an active and constructive role in international and regional fora by engaging in peacekeeping and election monitoring missions.⁴

As a result of her democratic consolidation, Ghana has been an active participant in democracy promotion abroad. Ghana has mediated disputes in other countries, provided technical assistance and participated in election monitoring and peacekeeping. Ghanaian leaders have participated in international fora and been vocal in publicly condemning actions that subvert democratic processes.⁵

The AU’s Constitutive Act highlights the vision of an Africa that caters for all segments of society including women, youth, and civil society, and one that is determined to promote and protect human and peoples’ rights and consolidate democracy.⁶ In addition to the AU’s Constitutive Act, the adoption of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) and subsequently, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is to ensure the
promotion of democratic best practices. Ghana can lead the way in Africa by promoting these practices through its electoral system and other democratic institutions. It is in the light of these observations that it becomes imperative to explore the current state of Ghana’s democratic consolidation, the benefits that have accrued to the country from its engagement with other democratic states internationally, particularly, the development partners and the country’s role and place in the international system.

From the foregoing, the research sought to answer the following questions:

1. What have been the key achievements of Ghana’s democratic practice since 1992?
2. How has Ghana’s democratic consolidation contributed to enhancing its international image?
3. To what extent has Ghana’s democratic consolidation been used as an international relations tool in line with its foreign policy objectives under the 1992 constitution?

1.3 Research Objectives

The principal objective of the study is to assess Ghana’s democratic consolidation since 1992 and the implications for international relations. It however focuses on the following specific objectives:

- To highlight the significant achievements of Ghana’s democratic consolidation since 1992.
- To assess the contributions of Ghana’s democratic consolidation to international relations.
- To show how Ghana’s democratic consolidation can be used as an international relations tool in consonance with her foreign policy objectives.
1.4 Scope of the Study

In the context of the research topic, the study covers Ghana’s democratic consolidation since 1992 and highlights some key achievements of democratic consolidation over the period. It further assesses the implications of Ghana’s democratic consolidation for international relations in line with Article 40 of the 1992 constitution.

1.5 Rationale of the Study

Ghana’s democratic consolidation since 1992 has attracted a lot of international attention. The positive image it attained on the continent and the world at large has often been taken for granted by policy makers. This study is designed to highlight these achievements. The findings and recommendations of the study serve as an input for the various institutions involved in promoting Ghana’s foreign relations to factor into decision making processes.

1.6 Hypothesis

Ghana’s democratic credentials and achievements since 1992 has inured to her benefit and the international support she receives.

1.7 Conceptual Framework

The study is conducted within the conceptual framework of liberal democracy with traditional proponents such as John Locke and Montesquieu and contemporary proponents like Robert Dahl, Joseph Schumpeter, Samuel P. Huntington and Przeworski. These theorists shared different views on democracy; however, none of their contribution is completely perfect about democracy as it is today.
John Locke in his 1690 published seminal, “Two Treatises of Government” asserts that all legitimate government rests upon "the consent of the governed". On his views of natural law, He rebutted the claim on natural law that governance, specifically monarchy, was an aspect of a divinely ordained chain of being. Locke rather argued that, natural law is identical with the law of God, and guarantees to all men basic rights, including the right to life, to certain liberties, and to own property and keep the fruits of one's labour. Montesquieu like Locke believed in a republican government based on the consent of the governed, but not in democracy founded on majority rule. In “The Spirit of Laws”, published in 1748, Montesquieu advocated separating and balancing powers between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government as a means of guaranteeing the freedom of the individual.

Contemporary proponents such as Joseph Schumpeter defined democracy as a system “for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote.” Huntington, among others, embraces Schumpeter’s emphasis on competitive elections for effective power as the essence of democracy. Przeworski and his colleagues also defined democracy simply as “a regime in which governmental offices are filled as a consequence of contested elections.” The seminal elaboration in Dahl’s conception of polyarchy, also has two dimensions on the views on democracy; opposition and participation. Opposition in the form of organized contestation through regular, free, and fair elections and participation in the sense of the right of virtually all adults to vote and contest for office. Yet embedded in these two dimensions is a third, without which the first two cannot be truly meaningful: civil liberty. Polyarchy encompasses not only freedom to vote and contest for office but also freedom to speak and publish dissenting views, freedom to form and join organizations, and
alternative sources of information. However, there are several arguments against liberal
democracy, notable among them is the culturalist argument. The culturist argument centred
on the contention that, the liberal underpinning of liberal democracy are not suited to non
liberal or illiberal cultures or societies as discussed in Samuel Huntington’s Clash of
civilizations that cultural – historical factors will result in non-convergence towards
Liberal Democracy.\textsuperscript{13}

Nonetheless, the idea that democracy is a form of governance based on some degree of
popular sovereignty and collective decision-making remains largely unchallenged. Another
point of convergence in their views is that, Liberal democracy places both the individual
and the rule of law at the center of politics, and protects individual claims of liberty against
all assailants, ranging from the state to the church to the ethnic group and so on.\textsuperscript{14}

The concept of liberal democracy is relevant to this study because, the 1980s brought
about a revival of Political Theory, and within that is the concept of liberal democracy.
From various interests and perspectives, questions related to basic values, and the most
influential factors in the transition towards liberal democratic political systems have been
studied with a renewed emphasis. With the ending of the Cold War and the collapse of the
soviet bloc, liberal democracy seems to have become the only acceptable form of
government by many countries around the world undergoing democratization. Indeed
some are pressed to do so by the emergence of the “good governance” agenda within such
international institutions as the World Bank. Obviously we can say today that, the concept
of democracy has become one of the most important issues within the field of Political
Science and International Relations.
1.8 Literature Review

The term “democratic consolidation” has been widely researched. Most writers on democratisation such as David Beetham agree on two propositions. One is that the process of consolidating democracy, which begins where the 'transition to democracy' ends, i.e., with the inauguration of a new government at the first free and fair elections since the end of the pre-democratic regime, is a much more lengthy and difficult process than the transition itself.¹⁵

Establishing democratic electoral arrangements is one thing, sustaining them over time without reversal is quite another. Not all who make the transition will be able to sustain it. This follows a second proposition: the factors making for the consolidation of democracy are not necessarily the same as those contributing to its inauguration.¹⁶ Analysis of this work of David Beetham suggests that, democratic consolidation needs to be looked at beyond procedural definitions of democracy based on fair, honest and periodic elections to more normative ideas about decision-making being controlled by all members of the group as equals. This work is clearly relevant to the study as it agrees with the view that, democracy is a matter of the degree to which basic principles are realised and democratisation is always and everywhere an unfinished business.¹⁷

In spite of the in depth analysis of the conditions for democratic consolidation in the work of Beetham, it focuses only on these four factors which facilitate democratic consolidation - the experience of transition itself, a country's economic system, its political culture and its constitutional arrangements.¹⁸ The limitation of this work is that it does not take into
account the formal institutions of democracy which must also be effectively in existence in any effort at consolidating democracy.

Larry Diamond elaborates on the concept democratic consolidation and tends to agree with Beetham on the necessity of commitment to the specific rules and practices of the country's constitutional system. He further identified three dimensions of democratic consolidation: deepening democratic structures to make them more liberal, accessible, accountable, and representative; strengthening the formal institutions of democracy, including parties, legislatures, and the judicial system; and improving regime performance, both economically and politically by maintaining order, safeguarding liberty, and combating corruption.

1.8.1 Democracy

The term democracy is a common phrase virtually mentioned by everyone in recent times as far as governance systems are concerned. The Merriam Webster online dictionary defines democracy as government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections. The word Democracy is originally a Greek word made up of two words ‘demos’ meaning People and ‘kratein’ are meaning to govern or to rule. “Democracy” can then be literally translated by the following terms: Government of the People or Government of the Majority. Democracy, as a State form, is to be distinguished from monarchy, aristocracy and dictatorship. One popular definition of democracy, the government of the people, by the people and for the people’ can be attributed to Abraham Lincoln. The above definitions as observed in the literature only give a very broad description of what is to be considered a democracy. However in practice, these definitions tend to have their shortcomings. To explain the different facets
of democracy some conceptual work of academic scholars is reviewed for example Diamond sees democracy in the minimal sense, as a system of government in which the principal positions of political power are filled through regular, free, and fair elections.\textsuperscript{23}

Diamonds minimalistic view of what constitutes a democracy somewhat closely gives a practical meaning to it. Then again, it also has its shortcomings as the conduct of regular, free and fair elections are not enough to describe a state as democratic. As a result of the gap created by Diamond’s minimalistic view, Robert Dahl explaining further identifies seven key criteria that are essential for democracy, namely;

(i) Control over governmental decisions about policy constitutionally vested in elected officials;
(ii) Relatively frequent, fair and free elections;
(iii) Universal adult suffrage;
(iv) The right to run for public office;
(v) Freedom of expression;
(vi) Access to alternative sources of information that are not monopolised by either the government or any other single group;
(vii) Freedom of association (i.e. the right to form and join autonomous associations such as political parties, interest groups, etc.)\textsuperscript{24}

To a large extent, of the literature reviewed on the concept of democracy so far gives different views and perceptions about the term but fails to address the international context of democracy. In order to satisfy the purpose of this study, it is required that democracy be looked at in the context of international law, values and norms. Although the United Nations Charter makes no mention of the word “democracy”, the opening words of the
Charter, “We the Peoples”, reflect the fundamental principle of democracy and that the will of the people is the source of legitimacy of sovereign states and therefore of the United Nations as a whole.25

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, clearly projected the concept of democracy by stating “the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government”.26 The Declaration spells out the rights that are necessary for effective political engagement. Since its adoption, the Declaration has inspired constitution making around the world and has contributed greatly to the global acceptance of democracy as a universal value.27 Member States at the World Summit in September 2005 reaffirmed that “democracy is a universal value based on the freely expressed will of people to determine their political, economic, social and cultural systems and their full participation in all aspects of their lives.”28 With this, the international community has also tended to place remarkable confidence in the importance of elections and what they can achieve for the democratisation process.

The study of democratic governance has been developing for centuries, embracing new elements and dimensions, numerous non-partisan organizations, carefully study countries around the world and apply variables to determine whether a democracy exists and to also determine its quality and the extent to which it is considered durable.29 Freedom House, the Center for Systemic Peace (which maintains the Polity IV data set), and the Economist Intelligence Unit of the Economist magazine all annually evaluate the state of democracy in the world. In their analysis, Freedom House uses a combination of “political rights” and “civil liberties”.30 Other definitions are more basic and do not use a twofold distinction between the two. The definition used by The Economist Intelligence Unit is “a
government based on majority rule and the consent of the governed, the existence of free and fair elections, the protection of minorities, respect for basic human rights, and equality before the law, due process, and political pluralism.”  

Authoritarian governments or autocracies can be said to occupy the lowest end of the democratic spectrum. Leaders come by their positions through heredity, conquest, coup, or appointment. Once in power, all rights and responsibilities are vested in the government over which they preside. Throughout the literature review, various scholarly definitions have been given to the concept of democracy of which Ghana has met most of the conditions and variables set forth, however it is necessary at this stage to turn to the concept of democracy in the Ghanaian context in order to conjecture properly its international implications.

The term "democracy" in the Ghanaian context, according to the Institute of Economic Affairs and Ghana Political Parties Programme is used to denote “a political system” that has three main characteristics: a meaningful and extensive political competition among individuals and organized groups (notably political parties and interest groups) for all important positions of governmental power, for which competition should occur at regular intervals and exclude the use of force; the existence of an inclusive level of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies through regular free and fair elections in such a way that no major group - social, ethnic, regional or religious - is excluded; and thirdly, the existence of a level of civil and political liberties sufficient to ensure the integrity of meaningful competition and political participation, where every person enjoys certain basic rights including the right to express how he or she is governed, the freedom to criticize the government, the freedom to express one's views and to associate with others,
protection from arbitrary arrest; and the freedom to practice one's religion. Any attempt to consolidate this democracy must therefore consider these three basic factors. The definition offered by the IEA/GPPP and the elements embedded in it duly satisfies the relevance of our study as it also embodies the earlier definitions offered by other scholars and experts on the subject.

1.8.2 Democratic Consolidation

According to National Endowment for Democracy in an article authored by Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan in the Journal of Democracy the working definition of a consolidated democracy is as follows: ‘Behaviourally, a democratic regime in a territory is consolidated when no significant national, social, economic, political, or institutional actors spend significant resources attempting to achieve their objectives by creating a nondemocratic regime or by seceding from the state’. Attitudinally, a democratic regime is consolidated when a strong majority of public opinion, even in the midst of major economic problems and deep dissatisfaction with incumbents, holds the belief that democratic procedures and institutions are the most appropriate way to govern collective life, and when support for anti-system alternatives is quite small or more-or-less isolated from pro-democratic forces. Constitutionally, a democratic regime is consolidated when governmental and nongovernmental forces alike become subject to, and habituated to, the resolution of conflict within the bounds of the specific laws, procedures, and institutions sanctioned by the new democratic process.

To summarise the work of Linz and Stepan, they argue that democracies can be consolidated when democracies become internalised attitudinally behaviourally and constitutionally.
The work of Andreas Schedler also comes to supplement the work of Linz and Stepan, he contends that, once a transition from authoritarian rule in a given country has reached a point where more or less free, fair, and competitive elections are held, democratic actors often cannot afford to lean back, relax, and enjoy the “bounded uncertainty” of democratic rule. More often than not, regime threatening “unbounded uncertainties” persist and the democrats’ fundamental anxieties do not recede but only shift from establishing democracy’s core institution to securing what they have achieved. For these actors, consolidating democracy means reducing the probability of breakdown to a point where they can feel reasonably confident that democracy will persist in the near (and not-so-near) future. Also, democratic consolidation, in the words of Michael Mandelbaum, “institutions, skills, habits, and values” is developed and takes root. The rule of law is established through government systems, the expansion of constitutions, and the development of accountability mechanisms.

It must be noted at this stage that consolidating democracy can take generations and occurs when a democratic culture matures around the rule of law. This occurs once the expectations and responsibilities that run horizontally between the branches of government and vertically from the government to the people are codified and practiced with success, often in the context of internal and external stressors or tests.

Samuel P. Huntington's metaphor of democratic wave also stresses: “each new historical wave of democratisation leaves more established democracies on the beach when it retreats, even though many countries will fall back with the tide.” But what exactly is meant by 'consolidation' and how do we recognise a 'consolidated democracy' when we see one? Beetham notes the 'two-election' test, or more properly the 'transfer of power' test,
democracy is consolidated when a government that has itself been elected in a free and fair contest is defeated at a subsequent election and accepts the result. The thrust of this criterion is that it is not winning office that matters, but losing it and accepting the verdict; because this demonstrates that powerful players, and their social backers, are prepared to put respect for the rules of the game above the continuation of their power.\(^{40}\)

Democratisation can be understood as a process subdivided into three phases: (i) the liberalisation phase, when the previous authoritarian regime opens up or crumbles; (ii) a transition phase, often culminating when the first competitive elections are held; and (iii) the consolidation phase, when democratic practices are expected to become more firmly established and accepted by most relevant actors.\(^{41}\)

In the scholarly circles and the think-tank world, support of the international dimensions of democratization has grown. Also, studies of democratic transition and consolidation have become more internationalized in the past decade. However, the subject still remains understudied. Given the prominence the task of democracy promotion has assumed for policy makers and the international community at large, this gap in our knowledge is cause for concern. The existing literature reviewed on democracy and its consolidation found that there is no specific framework by which one can measure democratic consolidation, but rather a broad range of factors that account for democratic consolidation. In the assessment of Ghana’s Democratic consolidation since 1992 and its implications for international relations, the various dimensions of the concepts reviewed are factored in the analysis.
1.9 Sources of Data and Research Methodology

The research is a case study and therefore adopts a case study approach which involves a literature overview of research conducted in the field of Ghana’s democratic consolidation since the return to constitutional rule and international relations. The methodology is qualitative and relies mainly on secondary sources of data gained. This includes books, journal articles, documents, reports, internet sources, among others. The methodology employed a descriptive analysis of which variables are identified and interpreted to measure Ghana’s democratic consolidation its implication for international relations.

1.10 Arrangements of Chapters

The research is arranged in four chapters.

1. Chapter One constitutes the Research Design.
2. Chapter Two looks at Ghana’s democratic transition and consolidation since 1992.
3. Chapter Three assesses Ghana’s democratic achievements and the implications for international relations.
4. Chapter Four provides the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.
ENDNOTES


5 ibid.


8 Ibid.


16 ibid, p.159.

17 ibid, p.160.

18 ibid, p.157.


20 ibid.


26 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 21.


ibid.

http://www.economist.com/media/pdf/.


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ibid, pp. 14-33.


ibid.


2.0 Introduction

This chapter examines Ghana democratic transition and consolidation under the 1992 constitution. In a bid to thoroughly understand the country’s democratic transitional process, the various institutions and structures including the electoral system have been dealt with. Attention is also paid to the country’s Independent Constitutional Bodies (ICBs) that form the bedrock of Ghana’s democratic transition particularly the country’s Electoral Commission and the six successful elections it has helped organise and supervised with its accompanying electoral reforms.

2.1 Transition to Constitutional Rule in 1992

The move to return to constitutional rule in Ghana began earlier before 1992 and this, according to Boafo-Arthur, could be attributed to unanticipated changes in the international system as well as internal agitations by civil society groups. He recounts some of the following key events;

- The collation of views on the democratic future of the country by the National Commission for Democracy (NCD).
- The promulgation of a law on 17 May, 1991 setting up a nine-member Committee of Experts (Constitution). The mandate of the Committee was to prepare a draft proposal (constitution) taking into cognisance past constitutions of Ghana since
independence and any other relevant constitution(s) as well as other matters that may be referred to it by the PNDC.

- Inauguration in August 1991 of a 260-member Consultative Assembly (CA) to draw a draft constitution (based on the work of the Committee of Experts) for the country.

- Submission to the PNDC on 31 March, 1992 of a draft constitution by the CA and the setting up of an Interim Electoral Commission.²

On 28 April 1992, a total of 8,255,690 registered Ghanaian voters went to the polls in a referendum to decide on the return to constitutional rule after series coups d’états that interrupted Ghana’s constitutional experiments since independence. A total of 3,680,974 valid votes were cast out of which 3,408,119 votes representing 92.59 percent were cast in favour of the need to return to constitutional rule.³ Based on the outcome of 1992 referendum, the 1992 draft constitution was promulgated. Subsequently a ban was lifted on political party activities in May 1992. Ghana had its first democratic presidential elections under the 1992 constitution on 3 November 1992 and parliamentary elections on 28 December 1992. The fourth republic was ushered in and inaugurated on 7 January 1993 with Jerry John Rawlings as the First President of the Fourth Republic.⁴

An assessment of Ghana’s democratic consolidation cannot be complete without a review of the elections the country has witnessed over the period. Robert Dahl identifies frequent free and fair elections as one of the criterion essential in a democracy.⁵ Hence, the 1992 elections marked the beginning of Ghana’s democratic journey. In all, six presidential candidates contested 1992 presidential elections, with former military ruler J.J Rawlings of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) an offshoot of Provisional National Defence
Council (PNDC) emerging as the winner with 58.40 percent of the votes, his close rival Prof. AduBoahen of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) obtaining 30.29 percent. Even though the elections were thought to be severely flawed, it was a giant step. The opposition parties and some international observers believed that the process had been rigged to ensure the self-succession of Rawlings and the erstwhile quasi-military Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) administration, which had rebranded itself as a political party called the National Democratic Congress (NDC). The opposition boycotted the subsequent parliamentary elections, leaving the NDC with 198 of the 200 parliamentary seats with Independent candidates winning two seats. The behaviour of the opposition parties in particular the biggest opposition party the NPP in the aftermath of the 1992 elections was worth noting and very significant in the sense that they never resorted to violence in having their grievances and discontent addressed but rather chose a course that is accepted in a democracy and under the rule of law.

Since elections are important in a functioning democracy, the 1996 elections also came with its challenges but was an improvement of the 1992 elections. This is also evident in increased stakeholder participation and the various reforms that were initiated by the Electoral Commission to enhance the credibility of the elections. In the 1996 presidential election, former president Rawlings had 57.4 percent of the votes cast whiles in 1992 the total votes he obtained was 58.40 percent. The NPP candidate former president Kufuor obtained 39.6 percent in 1996 as compared to 30.29 percent obtained by AduBoahen in 1992 (NPP’s candidate). In the parliamentary election of 1996, the NDC won 133 seats as compared to the 198 seats it won in 1992 whilst the NPP won 60 seats in 1996. The voter turnout was also indicative of growing interest and trust in the electoral system. While in
1992 the voter turnout was 50.2 per cent in the presidential elections, the turnout in 1996 was 77.9 percent.\textsuperscript{9}

The elections of 2000 by most observers became the breaking point for Ghana’s democratic consolidation. The achievements in the previous elections were further strengthened as political power changed hands in the 2000 elections which had been considered as a watershed election in a multi party democracy. The outcome of the 2000 elections was described by Gyimah-Boadi as a historic development, the opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP) and its presidential candidate, John Agyekum Kufuor, won the tightly contested 2000 polls. The NPP secured 102 of the 200 parliamentary seats, and its candidate won 57 percent of the popular vote in the second round presidential elections.\textsuperscript{10} This paved the way for the inauguration of the new government on January 7, 2001 and the beginning of a post-Rawlings phase in Ghanaian politics under the administration of J.A. Kufuor and the NPP.\textsuperscript{11} The achievements of Ghana’s 2000 elections also seem to satisfy David Beetham’s 'two-election' test, or more properly the 'transfer of power' test, democracy is consolidated when a government that has itself been elected in a free and fair contest is defeated at a subsequent election and accepts the result.\textsuperscript{12}

The presidential and parliamentary elections in 2004 were also largely successful and this was no surprise to many. This was as result of the electoral reforms and the lessons learnt over the period from previous elections and these have all played out to the success of the 2004 elections. Kufuor won the presidential vote with 52.4 per cent to that of Mills with 44.6 per cent. The other parties shared the remaining three per cent of the votes cast. In the parliamentary election the NPP maintained its hold with 128 to NDC’s 94 seats.\textsuperscript{13} Another important outcome was the highly impressive voter turnout of 85 per cent.\textsuperscript{14}
their franchise has become part of their political existence and this augurs well for the future of democracy.\textsuperscript{15} It must be noted again that this is a typical characteristic of a democracy that has been consolidated.

Another significant milestone in Ghana’s democratic consolidation drive was the 2008 elections. By far the most significant recent event in Ghana’s multi party democratic experiment was the 2008 election. It was Ghana’s second transition of power between the two main parties since its return to democracy in 1992. Only two other countries in Africa, Benin and Mauritius, have managed to produce two democratic turnovers of political power.\textsuperscript{16} In the first round of the 2008 presidential election, there was no winner since none of the Presidential candidates secured more than 50 percent of the total valid votes cast.

It therefore becomes imperative for the run-off election to be conducted between the candidates with majority of the valid votes cast consistent with Article 63(3) of the 1992 constitution. The Presidential run-off eventually produced the winner. The NDC candidate John Evans Atta Mills was declared the winner obtaining 50.23 percent of total valid votes cast as against 49.77 percent received by Nana AddoDankwaAkufoAddo.\textsuperscript{17} The 28\textsuperscript{th} December Presidential run-off also recorded a higher turn-out of 72.9 percent nationwide.\textsuperscript{18}

Finally, Ghana went to the polls, for the sixth time in a row, on 7 December 2012 to choose a president and 275 parliamentarians. The adoption of biometric technology in the registration that took place between March and May 2012 culminated in the establishment of a biometric voter registry (database) that contained the personal details: finger-print,
images and photographs of the fourteen million eligible voters that were registered. With the introduction of this technology and the passing of the Constitutional Instrument (CI 75), it means that all eligible voters on the day of election were verified or identified by their biometric details in the voters register.

The elections were largely credible and peaceful despite challenges related to the use of a new biometric voter register and Biometric Verification Devices (BVDs). With voter turnout of 80.15 percent, John Mahama of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) was declared president-elect with 50.70 percent of the vote, as opposed to 47.74 percent for Nana Akufo-Addo of the New Patriotic Party (NPP). Though the largest opposition party NPP is contesting the election results in court, AU and ECOWAS election observers deemed the stance as unnecessary. Leaders of the party insisted there was ‘incontrovertible evidence’ of widespread irregularities which favoured the president and greatly impacted the final outcome of the poll.

According to Ken Ofori-Atta, on 28 December 2012, an election petition was filed before the Supreme Court of Ghana, challenging the Electoral Commission’s declared results of the 7-8 December presidential election. It was filed by Nana AddoDankwaAkufo-Addo, the 2012 presidential candidate of the main opposition party, the NPP, his running mate MahamuduBawumia and Jake Obetsebi-Lamptey, chairman of the NPP. The petitioners are asking the Supreme Court, which has exclusive jurisdiction in presidential election petitions in Ghana, to annul 4,381,145 votes from 11,138 polling stations out of 26,002 polling stations nationwide. They claim those votes were affected by six main categories of constitutional and statutory violations, malpractices, omissions and irregularities in
various combinations. The annulment of these votes, if granted, would lead to the results being overturned in favour of Akufo-Addo.\textsuperscript{21}

The laws of Ghana permit a citizen to challenge the validity of an election of the president in the Supreme Court within twenty-one (21) days after the result has been declared. Additionally, a citizen of Ghana may challenge the validity of the election of Member of Parliament in the High Court, within twenty-one (21) days after the result has been declared, with a right of appeal to the Court of Appeal. Therefore the petition brought against the EC and the president is an important non violent, constitutional approach, worthy of praise, to correct and secure the integrity of elections, thus, the future of democracy, peace and stability in Ghana and on the larger continent.

It is also important that Ghana’s democratic institutions are put to the test as in the argument of Linz and Stepan that, constitutionally, a democratic regime is consolidated when governmental and nongovernmental forces alike become subject to, and habituated to, the resolution of conflict within the bounds of the specific laws, procedures, and institutions sanctioned by the new democratic process.\textsuperscript{22}

\subsection{Ghana’s Electoral System}

It is often said that, Ghana’s electoral system and the various evolutions it has undergone is a contributing factor to its democratic success stories. Indeed the choice of Electoral System is one of the most important institutional decisions for any democracy. An electoral system consists of laws, rights, institutions, processes and formulas relevant to the preparation and conduct of elections and the declaration of results.\textsuperscript{23} In almost all cases the choice of a particular electoral system also has an effect on the future political life of
the country concerned, and electoral systems, once chosen, often remain fairly constant as political interests solidify around and respond to the incentives presented by them.\textsuperscript{24}

Ghana’s 1992 constitution combines a hybrid parliamentary and presidential system of government. The fundamental principle underlying Ghana’s Electoral System as created by the 1992 constitution however is for every adult citizen to participate in the election of his or her representative. Ghana’s electoral system has the following basic characteristics:

- Universal adult suffrage for citizens;
- Official registration of voters;
- Non-compulsory registration or voting;
- Secret ballot;
- Use of Identity Card issued by the Electoral Commission to establish voters identity and to prevent impersonation;
- Registration of political parties as corporate bodies;
- Political parties are not allowed to sponsor candidates for elections to District Assemblies and local government units;
- National and local elections alternate at two year intervals;
- Presidential election where the winner requires more than fifty percent (50\%) of valid votes cast;
- Parliamentary and local elections on the basis of the first-past the post;
- A run-off election in case no winner emerges on the first ballot;
- No minimum voter turn-out required for presidential/parliamentary elections;
- Use of indelible ink (electoral stain) to prevent multiple voting;
- A permanent, independent and non partisan Electoral Commission.\textsuperscript{25}
In addition, prior to the 2012 elections a new Constitutional Instrument - CI (CI 75) was passed which replaces the Public Elections Regulations, 1996 (CI 15) and the Public Elections (Registration of Voters) Regulations, 2012 (CI 72). The CI 75 states that voters should go through a biometric verification process to cast votes.26

2.3 The Electoral Commission (EC)

Considering the crucial role the Electoral Commission plays in Ghana’s democratic process it is important to highlight its functions. Described as the symbol of Ghana’s democratic transition, the mission of the electoral commission is to advance the course of democracy and good governance for enhanced development of Ghana by institutionalizing free, fair and transparent elections to the acceptance of all stakeholders.27

The main functions of the Commission are outlined in the Electoral Commission Act, 1993 (Act 451), as amended by the Electoral Commission (Amendment) Act, 2003 section 2 by the substitution for paragraph (d) of the following “(d) to undertake the preparation of voter identity cards”, and in section 12 subsection (1) by the substitution for paragraph (c) of the following: “ (c) the issue of voter identity cards”, and the repeal of the Identity Cards Decree, 1972 (N.R.C.D 129).28 In addition to the requirements of Article 45 of Ghana’s constitution, the Commission is assigned other statutory functions.

Below are the core functions of the Electoral Commission:

- The compilation of voters register;
- The demarcation and periodic revision of electoral boundaries for national and local elections;
- The conduct and supervision of all public elections and referenda;
• Voter education;
• Setting the dates of public elections;
• Making regulations for the performance of its functions;
• Appointment of staff in consultation with the Public Services Commission;
• The registration of political parties and supervision of the election of their national and regional executive members;
• Conduct of election of the officers of certain statutory bodies, including: the Trades Union Congress (TUC), the Veterans Association of Ghana (VAG), the Ghana Medical and Dental Association, the House of Chiefs, and the District Assemblies.
• To perform such other functions as may be prescribed by law.²⁹

With the above functions well stipulated in law, the Electoral Commission of Ghana has run elections in Ghana since 1992 and by far has recorded enormous successes; these elections were conducted so well that it is somewhat setting best practice standards for the continent. It must be noted that the EC is able to perform its functions as a result of its independence, the framers of the constitution and in this regard the Act establishing the EC in Article 46 of the 1992 constitution requires that in performing its functions, the Electoral Commission “shall not be subject to the direction or control of any person or authority”. In addition, the Chairman has permanent tenure commensurate with the conditions of service as judges of the Appeal Court, whilst his two deputies enjoy those of High Court judges. The expenses of the Commission are charged directly on the Consolidated Fund of the Republic.

It is important for an Election Management Body (EMB) to satisfy these requirements because as a guiding principle the law must guarantee the independence of an EMB from
the government or any authority or person, the members of EMB must have security of tenure such that they cannot be summarily dismissed, the EMB must have the power to hire its own personnel, and the law must guarantee adequate financial and other resources for the EMB to carry out its functions properly and on time.30

2.4 Independent Constitutional Bodies (ICBs)

Besides the crucial role the Electoral Commission (EC) plays in Ghana democratic process, there are equally important Independent Constitutional Bodies (ICBs) performing such functions that support or compliment the functions of the EC. It was observed in our literature that strong institutions are needed to be in place in consolidating democracy. Ghana’s fourth republican constitution duly established independent constitutional bodies which have contributed since 1992 to its democratic consolidation. The study highlights the discrete set of constitutionally mandated institutions, known as Independent Constitutional Bodies (ICBs).

The National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) is a sister organisation to the EC mandated by the 1992 constitution to provide civic education that builds and consolidates tolerance for democratic practice and good governance through broad-based education. The Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) with three functions: (a) human rights promotion and protection, (b) the Ombudsman Office for public service, and (c) combating public sector corruption.31 The National Media Commission (NMC) regulates and promotes the development of an independent media.32

Again, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) also plays an important role in a democratic dispensation; the EC has worked in collaboration with Civil Society Organisations and
other development partners and think-tanks. Examples of the numerous independent research institutions and think-tanks are Center for Economic Policy Analysis (CEPA), Center for Democracy and Development (CDD), Institute for Economic Affairs (IEA), and the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG), there are also faith-based organizations such as Christian Council of Ghana, and policy oriented NGOs and coalitions like Ghana Legal Literacy Resources Foundation and Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO).

Some of the CSOs also engage in observing elections as well as providing voter education on activities undertaken by the EC. Other think-tanks for example the Institute for Economic Affairs provides a platform for presidential candidates to engage one another in lively debates on how best to steer the affairs of the country. The Ghanaian civil society groups have played a significant role in promoting and helping to consolidate democratic gains since 1992 by demanding greater accountability from government at both the national and local levels.

The mass media is essential to the conduct of local elections. A free and fair election is not only about casting a vote on the day of elections, but also about having adequate information about parties, policies, candidates and the electioneering process as a whole so that voters can make informed choices. Free media is central to the functioning of democratic societies. It helps in strengthening freedom of expression and the free flow of information and ideas. Such a media is also instrumental in building a democratic culture. In this context, media pluralism has been another positive dividend of democracy in Ghana.
The Ghanaian media has been a vibrant force in the country’s democratic dispensation. Again, there has been substantial expansion in the enjoyment of civil liberties and media freedoms especially following the repeal of criminal libel law in 2001.\textsuperscript{35}

Parliament is a vital institution of any democratic state. Ghana’s fourth republican constitution created a hybrid parliamentary and presidential system of government, making parliament an integral part of the democratic and governance systems. Law-making is essentially the primary function of Ghana’s parliament. Under article 93(2) of the Constitution the legislative power of Ghana is vested in Parliament and is exercised in accordance with the Constitution. Parliament keeps a watch over the performance of the Executive, which controls the public services, to ensure that the implementation of public policy conforms to the approved developmental agenda of the state and expenditure incurred is in accordance with parliamentary authorisations.\textsuperscript{36} The Members of Parliament also serve as a link between their constituents and Government.\textsuperscript{37} The Ghanaian parliament since 1992 has passed laws which have enhanced the electoral system. In recent times, in a bid to enhance transparency, freedom and fairness of the country’s election, parliament passed the Public Elections Regulation, 2012 (CI 75) that sought to strengthen Ghana’s electoral system, and give legal backing to the biometric registration and verification system.

The Judiciary in Ghana’s democratic dispensation has been a body involved in adjudication of electoral disputes and offences ever since Ghana returned to the path of democratic elections in 1992. It must be noted that electoral disputes have also resulted in electoral violence in some instances. Cote d’Ivoire, Kenya and Liberia are examples of countries that have experienced violence as a result of electoral disputes. Leading up to
Ghana’s 2012 presidential and parliamentary elections, Mrs. Justice Georgina Wood, Chief Justice of Ghana reassured that the courts were more composed to deal decisively with election related disputes that would emanate from the general elections.\textsuperscript{38} This stems from the fact that, the capacities of judges have been upgraded through effective skills-based judicial training and the review of the ‘Manual on Election Adjudication in Ghana,’ first published in 2008.\textsuperscript{39}

### 2.5 Electoral reforms

Any new democracy must choose or inherit an electoral system to elect its legislature or representatives. Similarly, political crisis within an established democracy may lead to momentum for electoral system change, and even without political crisis campaigners for political reform may attempt to put electoral system change onto the political agenda.\textsuperscript{40} Since 1992, when Ghana returned to constitutional rule with the successful conduct of the first general elections, serious effort have been made at every election to improve upon measures design to enhance the transparency, freedom and fairness of the polls in line with the mission statement of its Election Management Body, the Electoral Commission.

It is worth pointing out that from the use of opaque ballot boxes for voting in 1992, through the adoption of the colour photo ID system to the present biometric system, political parties under the auspices of the Inter Party Advisory Committee (IPAC) have cooperated well and been unanimous on some of these measures that have contributed significantly to enhancing the integrity of the electoral process.
The reforms introduced by the EC in the electoral process are categorised into two: (1) reforms in connection with voter registration, and (2) election and election material management. The former includes the issuance of photo ID cards, the use of OMR scanners to minimize human errors, giving of special numbers to voters to avoid impersonation, etc. On the latter, all Returning Officers and their Deputies are interviewed and the objective is to weed out incompetent or biased officials, working in concert with domestic observers and monitors, balloting by political parties for positions on the ballot box, voter’s photos on the register, etc.\textsuperscript{41}

In addition, there were some other reforms such as Development of a code of ethics for political parties in order to regulate inter-party relationships and the behaviour of the parties during political contests. Also, a Media Watch Committee was formed by the Electoral Commission to monitor the reporting of all issues that touch on Elections and the Commission in the local media so as to ensure the accuracy of information on the Electoral process being made available to the public by the media. The objective of this measure was to maintain the integrity of the Commission and to strengthen its relationships with the public.

Constant review of the training and remuneration of poll workers is also undertaken in order to enhance their competence and ensure their commitment to duty.\textsuperscript{42} These other reforms were not statutory but were very much important in enhancing the transparency and the integrity of the electoral process over the period.
ENDNOTES

2 ibid, pp. 18-19.
8 ibid.
11 ibid.
14 ibid, p.40.
15 ibid, p.40.
18 ibid.
23 Association of African Election Authorities (AAEA), Basic Course in Election Administration, Handbook for participants, p.8.
29 ibid.
Association of African Election Authorities (AAEA), Basic Course in Election Administration, Handbook for participants, pp.30-31.


ibid.

ibid.


ibid.


ibid.


CHAPTER THREE
GHANA’S DEMOCRATIC ACHIEVEMENTS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PRACTICE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

3.0 Introduction

In order to assess Ghana’s democratic achievements, this chapter seeks to rely on variables used by various non-partisan organizations and institutions that carefully study countries around the world and determine whether a democracy exists and also to establish its quality and the extent to which it is considered strong. In addition, critical analysis were undertaken to assess the implications of Ghana’s democratic consolidation to its external relations. The promotion of democracy has become a major international relations tool by most governments particularly the United States. Regional groupings such as the European Union, the African Union, ECOWAS and so forth have also adopted various protocols and instruments that encourage the promotion and advancement of democratic standards among member states.

The United Nations has also declared democracy as a universal value based on the freely expressed will of the people to determine their political, economic, social and cultural systems and their full participation in all aspects of their lives. To this end the World Bank and some non-State Actors such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) have drawn a link between democracy, stability and economic development and thus have been involved in funding pro-democratic movements, projects and reforms around the world.
3.1 Ghana’s Democratic Achievements

According to a Freedom House publication in 2011 under the “political rights” and “civil liberties” criteria, freedom of expression is constitutionally guaranteed and generally respected in Ghana. The report acknowledged the establishment and operation of numerous private radio stations and many independent newspapers and magazines published in Accra. They indicated that religious freedom is protected by law and largely respected in practice, while the relationship between Ghana’s Christian majority and Muslim minority is generally peaceful. The rights to peaceful assembly and association are constitutionally guaranteed, and permits are not required for meetings. The report also observed that several demonstrations took place in 2010 over unpaid wages, including those led by university teachers, nurses and midwives, and prison officers. Additionally, citizens protested against increases in electricity and water tariffs in June.\(^1\) Also, Nongovernmental Organizations were generally able to operate freely.

The report further noted that Ghana’s 2003 labour laws (Act 651) conformed to International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions, and as such givesworkers the right to form and join trade unions. The report continued that, Ghanaian courts have also been granted increased autonomy under the 1992 constitution. In the area of gender mainstreaming, women’s enrolment in universities is increasing, and there are a number of high-ranking women participating in the democratic and governance process. The report concluded under civil and liberty rights that, for the first time in 2009, there was a female Speaker of Parliament, Inspector General of Police, and Attorney General.\(^2\)

The position by Freedom House is largely confirmed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark. They stated that, since the introduction of constitutional democracy in 1992,
“Ghana has been a stable democracy”.$^{3}$ They also pointed out that, international organisations have recognised Ghana’s respect for human rights as critical, sustained and that violation do not occur. Ghana has also ratified the UN conventions on human rights, and Press Freedom is also respected. Again with respect to religious rights, the Constitution provides freedom of religion and Ghana is a good example of how Christians and Muslims can live side by side in respect of each other’s religion. Also, the Constitution guarantees freedom of speech and assembly and it forbids the use of torture. Besides there are proscriptions against discrimination based on race, sex, disability, linguistic and social status.$^{4}$

According to a World Bank country overview assessment in 2013, Ghana continues to demonstrate good performance on democratic governance, arising from a strong multi-party political system, growing media pluralism and strong civil society activism. They noted that after the untimely death of the fourth president under the fourth Republic (President John Evans Atta Mills) in July 2012, former Vice President John Dramani Mahama was sworn in on July 24$^{th}$ 2012 as the acting President of Ghana and democratically elected and sworn in as the new President of Ghana on January 7, 2013 showing again the country’s maturity in constitutional democratic rule.$^{5}$

The assessment noted that, Ghana moved from 41$^{st}$ to 30$^{th}$ position out of 179 countries and 3$^{rd}$ in Africa on press freedom according to the Reporters Without Borders 2013 Press Freedom Index report. The 2011 report of the World Wide Governance Indicators places Ghana between the 50th and 75th percentile on political stability, government effectiveness, and regulatory quality, rule of law, control of corruption and voice and accountability. This performance reveals the positive effects of an improving environment
for democratic governance, coupled with a gradual improvement in the efficiency of public institutions and continual economic growth, resulting in Ghana attaining a lower middle income status.⁶

As a result of Ghana’s democratic stability, the country’s economy is growing ahead of the average for the Africa region, with gross domestic product (GDP) growth at 8 percent in 2010, 14.4 percent in 2011, and was expected to be around 7 percent for 2012. Finally, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flowed in to the tune of US$3 billion per year in the period between 2009 and 2011.⁷

The Center for Democratic Development (CDD) Ghana, an independent local democratic think-tank, equally praised Ghana’s notable democratic achievements in expanding press freedom and freedom of expression generally, since transition to democratic rule in 1992. They considered the repeal of the Criminal Libel Law as a significant progress in Press freedom. They noted also that, a number of international rankings of media and journalistic freedom rank Ghana’s press as the freest on the African continent. In a 2009 ranking, Ghana’s media was adjudged Africa’s freest by Freedom House, with press freedom in Ghana rated higher than in France, Spain and Italy.⁸ Ghana’s democracy was praised by President Barack Obama and this actually triggered his choice to visit Ghana on his first official visit to sub Saharan Africa and this is also explicitly captured by the Economic Intelligence Unit.⁹

Alasdair Hamilton, the head of UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) Ghana also said, “Ghana is a flag-bearer for Democracy in Africa.”¹⁰ There have been successful free and fair elections in the past 20 years and two peaceful transfers of power, which is enough in itself
to attract substantial investor interest. Without a doubt, many international companies have been looking at Ghana as a regional centre for their activities in West Africa, despite its not being the largest economy in the region, due in large part to its stability.¹¹

According to Gyimah-Boadi, multi-party democratic rule has flourished in Ghana’s Fourth Republic notwithstanding its doubtful initial stages and many challenges. While other newly democratizing African states have suffered democratic breakdowns or stagnated since the continent joined democracy’s “third wave,” Ghana’s democracy has grown in strength.¹² He summarises Ghana’s democratic achievements as follows;

- Five previous multi-party elections have been highly competitive yet reasonably clean and peaceful;
- The country’s two main political parties (National Democratic Congress – NDC and New Patriotic Party – NPP) have taken turns serving in government and opposition;
- Ghana now boasts of a highly vibrant media and active civil society;
- Civil-military relations have been substantially democratized, especially since 2001;
- Parliament has been revived;
- The country remains fairly united despite significant religious and ethno-regional diversity which produces episodic localized conflict;
- Popular support for democracy in Ghana is high and continues to grow, at least according to evidence from Afrobarometer surveys since 1999. (Almost 80 percent of Ghanaians expressed a preference for democracy to other forms of government in the 2008 survey);
- Ghana has maintained a fairly sound and stable macro-economic environment with annual growth rates averaging over 5 percent since 2001 (estimated 14 percent in
2011); become a nominally middle income country with per capita at over $1500 in the period; reduced poverty from more than 50 percent of the population in the early 1990s to 28.5 percent in 2006).\textsuperscript{13}

The adoption of the Constitutive Act by the African Union compels member states to promote human rights, democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance. To ensure implementation of the principles set forth in the Constitutive Act, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) was adopted and subsequently the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) as a monitoring tool to assess progress made. The APRM is a voluntary self assessment tool adopted by the AU to improve governance in member countries and on the continent as a whole. Ghana was among the first six countries to officially declare its intention to accede to the APRM at the 5\textsuperscript{th} Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee in Abuja, Nigeria on November 3, 2002. Ghana was also among the first 12 countries to officially accede to the APRM by signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in March 2003 and the first to declare its intention to implement the APRM and also the first country to be peer reviewed.\textsuperscript{14}

According to S.K.B Asante, a member of the National African Peer Review Mechanism Governing Council, a critical analysis of the APRM implementation in the three pioneer countries i.e. Ghana, Kenya and Rwanda shows that the process has helped to boost the countries’ international image, revived national debates about democracy, governance which arguably will help to attract much needed aid, trade, investment and debt relief.\textsuperscript{15} He mentioned again that the APRM has generated a lot of unprecedented interest and attention from the developed world. The joint presidencies of the Group of 8(G-8) and
European Union in particular Great Britain in 2005 and Germany in 2007, have given the APRM considerable focus. Furthermore, Article 16 of the AU Charter entreats state parties to cooperate at regional and continental levels in building and consolidating democracy through exchange of experiences. Ghana has shared its experiences of the implementation process with a number of African Countries such as Togo, Benin, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Angola.

The above achievements and democratic ratings or indices clearly demonstrate the fact that Ghana is on course to consolidating its democracy, if not consolidated, and also the importance of democratic indices goes far beyond the field of academic research. In fact, democratic ratings by the various rating agencies have made an increasingly significant impact on politics among nations in the international system. Politicians, foreign relations experts and development partners, to a larger extent, rely on academic ideas and theories and factor them in their decision making processes.

3.2 Implications of Ghana’s Democratic Achievements for International Relations

The study is conducted within the conceptual framework of liberal democracy with traditional proponents such as John Locke and Montesquieu and contemporary proponents like Robert Dahl, Joseph Schumpeter, Samuel P. Huntington and Przeworski. These theorists shared different views on democracy; however, none of their contribution is completely perfect about democracy as it is today. Nonetheless, the idea that democracy is a form of governance based on some degree of popular sovereignty and collective decision-making remains largely unchallenged. Another point of convergence in their
views is that, Liberal democracy places both the individual and the rule of law at the center of politics, and protects individual claims of liberty against all assailants, ranging from the state to the church to the ethnic group and so on. With the ending of the Cold War and the collapse of the soviet bloc, liberal democracy seems to have become the only acceptable form of government by many countries around the world undergoing democratization.

International relations are fundamentally political relations which also include economic, cultural and military relations that affect the interests of states. The term is often used interchangeably with foreign relations which denotes political interaction and links between states or autonomous political relations.

Since the return to democratic rule, the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana has been the basic legal document establishing the fundamental principles of Ghana’s foreign policy. The “Directive principles of State policy” in Chapter 6, Article 40 of the 1992 Constitution talks about “International Relations” and clearly defines Ghana’s role in Africa and beyond. Also Article 73 on “International Relations” “enjoins the Government to conduct its international affairs in consonance with the accepted principles of public international law and diplomacy consistent with the national interest of Ghana.”

With reference to Article 40, Ghana’s foreign relations is therefore ordered around these major goals; playing an active and constructive role in international and regional fora by engaging in peacekeeping and election monitoring missions, attraction of development assistance and investment capital, maintaining friendly and good neighbourliness. The policy of good neighbourliness, for instance, was crafted to promote a climate of peace and stability in the sub-region by building mutual trust and confidence between Ghana and her
neighbours, as the basis for addressing common challenges to development across national frontiers.

In a public lecture, Nana AkufoAddo, former Foreign Minister under President Kufuor explained that the policy of good neighbourliness was:

To ensure that the conflicts in the sub-region do not degenerate to the extent of spilling over into neighbouring countries, since from all indications, Ghana is the most likely to bear the brunt of the problems that will emanate, under whatever circumstances. Our ultimate goal, however is to ensure that conflict is eliminated completely from the region so as to create the right atmosphere for countries within the ECOWAS and beyond to pursue their economic, political and social agenda appropriately.\textsuperscript{21}

The increase in interdependence, regionalism and globalization has also brought about changes in how nations relate in the international system and this also resulted in the growing Western interest in facilitating democratic development in transitional countries. President George W. Bush stated explicitly in his second inaugural address in January 2005 that,\textquoteleft\textquoteleft It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and every culture, with the goal of ending tyranny around the world.\textquoteright\textquoteright\textsuperscript{22}

As such, Western sponsored democratic assistance programs appear to have helped democratic institutions to take root in countries such as Poland and Ghana, but have not had a similar effect in Russia and Nigeria.\textsuperscript{23} In this vein, President Bush in a bid to promote and reward democracy and good governance abroad created the Millennium Challenge Corporation, started the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), and increased the money available for the State Department’s Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour for its discretionary grants program. All of these efforts have greatly
expanded the resources earmarked for promoting good government abroad. The Millennium Challenge Act of 2003 initiated by the Bush Administration was implemented to create a new foreign assistance programme, the objective of the Millennium Challenge Account is to provide economic assistance to developing countries such as Ghana that has demonstrated the commitment to just and democratic governance, economic freedom and improved educational opportunities and health care for its citizenry.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation embraces the belief of deepening democracy and its long term goal clearly recognizes the link between democracy and economic growth hence its mission of pursuing poverty reduction through economic growth in a way that encourages democratic institutions over the long run.

As a result of Ghana’s democratic credentials, it has attracted development assistance from the United States of America. Ghana has benefited and is still benefiting from the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA). AGOA has created market space for Ghanaian exporters in the field of textiles, steel and beverages. Ghana was given a grant of 547 Million US Dollars by the MCA to modernise various sectors of the economy particularly agriculture as well as production, infrastructure and to reduce poverty. The Mallam -TettehQuarshie road (N1 Highway) in Accra is a key example of the benefit of the MCA. Another benefit is the Perishable Cargo Centre (PCC) at the Kotoka International Airport; which is to provide handling and temporary storage of perishable produce (fruits and vegetables) for export. The project cost is $2.5M and is about 1200 sq. meters with a storage and cold room of 200 sq. Meters and is owned by the Government of Ghana through Ghana Airports Company Limited (GACL).
The MCA Ghana Program is also investing US$ 16.5m in the construction of two new ferries for the Volta Lake Transport Limited (VLTC) which will operate at the 2.5 km Adawso -Ekye-Amanfrom crossing in the Afram Plains. The Project intends to facilitate the growth of agriculture in the Afram Basin Zone by improving ferry services that connect Adawso on the southern shore of the Volta Lake and EkyeAmanfrom on the northern shore. The Volta Lake Transport Company also operates river transportation for passengers, bulk haulage of petroleum products and cement, and cross-lake ferry services along the Volta Lake.²⁸

Ghana’s democratic and good governance achievements have impacted her relationship with other members in NEPAD. A vital component of NEPAD is the improvement of information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure improvement, which is considered crucial to the realization of long-term, sustainable socio-economic development of the Africa. The coordinating organization responsible for developing and implementing NEPAD ICT projects is the NEPAD e-Africa Commission (eAC). NEPAD e-Schools is a multi-country, multi-stakeholder, continental initiative to teach ICT skills to students in primary and secondary schools, to improve the provision of education in schools through ICT applications and the use of the internet. Ghana’s adherence and implementation of NEPAD’s principles has resulted in six schools; Walewale Senior High School, Acherensua Senior High School, Ola Girls Senior High School, St Augustine’s Senior High School, Wa Senior High School and Akomadan Senior High School; benefitting from the first phase of the NEPAD e-school project which aimed at ensuring youth participation in the global ICT evolution.²⁹
The impact of Ghana’s democratic achievements has also reflected in the World Bank’s debt cancellation to Ghana. According to the World Bank, Ghana after two peaceful democratic transitions continues to demonstrate great potential to become an important player on the Continent. The World Bank granted Ghana debt relief under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative in 2004; these debt relief initiatives have brought great benefits to Ghana. Further debt cancellations under the multi-donor debt relief initiative (MDRI) led to a substantial share of Ghana’s external debt of about US$6 billion as at 2006, to be written off. The International Development Association (IDA) share of debt relief under the two initiatives was US$4,429 million (US$1,446 million for HIPC and US$2,983 million for MDRI).30

The mid 1990s also saw a change in the structural foreign policy model of the European Union’s (EU) relations with African countries. According to Stephan Keukeleire and Simon Schunz, characteristic features of EU’s foreign policy are long term, often very comprehensive economic and financial instruments that link incentives to duties on the side of the influence object, and allow thus for the creation of structures.31 These instruments may have a direct impact through the support of economic reforms and economic development, or through making financial means available for political or organizational change, e.g. for free elections or for structural reforms of the judicial system.32

The EU promotes democracy through the influence of political dialogue, trade and external assistance. For example, human rights and democracy clauses are included in cooperation and trade agreements like the Lomé and Cotonou conventions with African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries or in the provisions of the European Neighbourhood Policy.33 EU
democracy promotion, at its highest level, is based on three pillars, the use of incentives to reward countries that improve their democratic standards, the use of sanctions in those cases of Democratic abuses and setbacks, and the funding of democracy programmes including electoral assistance. The third pillar goes under the name of “democracy assistance.”

Democracy promotion is pursued both at EU and member state levels. With regard to the former, democracy related programmes are financed through the chapter of community budget called European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR).

Some Ghanaian civil society groups, for example, received some EIDHR support for local level elections in the year 2010. While only 8 percent of candidates were female, the support boosted the participation of women in politics. Women who planned on running for a seat in the Ghanaian Parliament were trained by the Institute for Economic Affairs (IEA) on fundraising and political communication.

Many African countries, including Ghana, have also signed on to regional or global instruments that promote democratic principles either in their states, the regional or continental levels. Some of these include the AU Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance and ECOWAS’ Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, among others. One of these institutions responsible for the enforcement of these principles of free and fair elections is the Election Management Bodies of member states. However, there are often poor implementations of these protocols because of inadequate finance, lack of political will or poor and weak democratic institutions. As a result, the EMBs in some African states have failed in this regard. The EC of Ghana has conducted six (6) successive
elections since the promulgation of the 1992 republic constitution by employing the best practices in election administration.

Using the Ghanaian experience as an example, leaders from Election Management Bodies, political parties, security services, civil society and media from 25 sub-Saharan countries met in Accra in 2009, and after reviewing the successes and challenges of Ghana’s elections and that of Zimbabwe, Kenya and some other countries adopted a communiqué recommending what each stakeholder should do i.e. African governments, Election Management Bodies, Political Parties, Security services, Civil Society, Domestic and International Observer Groups, and the Media. In an address to the UN General Assembly in September 2010, President Obama made an appeal to rising democracies such as Ghana, declaring that “we need your voices to speak out”.

The Association of African Election Authorities (AAEA) is a professional Organization of African Electoral Management Bodies. The organization is dedicated to the professionalization of election administration. A large focus of the association activities is information exchange, technical assistance and participation in pre-election assessment and election observation. The secretariat of AAEA is presently located in Ghana and since its formation has trained Election Administrators in Diploma and Certificate programmes and this has also been one of the platforms by which Ghana’s Electoral Commission has collaborated and share experiences with counterparts on the continent. It is important to note that collaborations go beyond sharing of experiences, but also as tools for conflict resolution efforts in electoral disputes and this shows how Ghana’s democratic consolidation can be used as an international relations tool within the framework of her foreign policy objectives.
Ghana, through the work of its Electoral Commission has developed cordial relations with a number of countries. Ghana's Electoral Commission and the International Foundation for Election System (IFES) has in the past, assisted the Electoral Commission of Malawi to do its voters' registration in 1995.\textsuperscript{42} They also supported Sierra Leone, Liberia and Swaziland in different areas of their elections management.\textsuperscript{43} The Electoral Commission is therefore an important institution within which Ghana’s foreign policy regarding its democratic credentials is pursued. It must be noted that, EMBs, in other jurisdiction, have not conducted themselves creditably by supervising free and fair elections. This, among other reasons, is why Ghana’s Electoral Commission and other democratic institutions should be considered vehicles capable of playing important role in Ghana’s international relations.
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CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses and summarises the findings of the study on the assessment of Ghana’s democratic consolidation since 1992 and its implications for international relations. The chapter concludes with appropriate recommendations made which could serve as an input for the various institutions involved in promoting Ghana’s foreign relations to factor into decision making processes.

4.1 Summary of Findings

The study identified the various means by which democracy is measured and what is considered to be a consolidated democracy. It also showed how academics and scholars define consolidated democracy. The three main characteristics of democracy in the Ghanaian context under the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana was also offered. The study again looked at democracy in the context of international law, norms and values. Since the inception of Ghana’s democratic rule in 1992, the country’s democratic credentials has grown from a nascent democratic transition to consolidation and this without a doubt has been recognised by established democracies and pro-democratic institutions as well. Elections are considered essential in any democratic experiment and, Ghana since 1992 has gone through six successful elections with two major transitions.

The elections of the year 2000, which saw former President Kufuor of the NPP winning power over NDC, was considered a breakthrough in Ghana’s democratic transition since
that represented the first time power alternated hands between two political parties. The elections of 2008 were also regarded as an event which brought Ghana’s democratic experiment to its consolidation as a result of the peaceful transfer of power from the incumbent NPP to the opposition NDC. The margin of victory has narrowed and voter turn-out increased in each election since 1992 indicating the high level of competition and political awareness among political parties and electorates as well.

The principal objective of the study was to assess the implications of Ghana’s democratic consolidation to its international relations. It however focused on three specific objectives; the first objective highlighted the significant achievements of Ghana’s democratic consolidation since 1992. The second assessed contributions of Ghana’s democratic consolidation to international relations. The third showed how Ghana’s democratic consolidation can be used as international relations tool in consonance with her foreign policy objectives.

The conceptual framework serving as the basis of the study was Liberal Democracy which seems to support the viewpoint of democratic consolidation and the implication for international relations. A democratic form of governance is based on some degree of popular sovereignty and collective decision-making. In addition, liberal democracy places both the individual and the rule of law at the center of politics, and protects individual claims of liberty against all assailants, ranging from the state to the church to the ethnic group and so on. Ghana’s democratic credentials and achievements since 1992 has inured to its benefit and the international support it receives has been the hypothesis under which the study was conducted.
The findings of the study also showed that Ghana is a democratic state and since 1992 has exhibited in all forms and practiced the features of a consolidated democracy. These features include a meaningful and extensive political competition among individuals and organized groups, the existence of an inclusive level of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies through regular free and fair elections, the existence of a level of civil and political liberties, sufficient to ensure the integrity of meaningful competition and political participation.¹

The political system in Ghana is dominated by two major parties, the NPP and the NDC and both political parties have taken turns to serve in government. Popular support for democracy in Ghana is also high and continues to grow. The fundamental principle underlying Ghana’s Electoral System as created by the 1992 constitution however is for every adult citizen to participate in the election of his or her representative. The study again brought to the fore the electoral reforms Ghana’s electoral system has gone through resulting in it attaining its credibility and integrity.

The study also revealed that Ghana’s free media, and respect for civil liberties and political rights serves to ensure that elections are generally free, fair, and transparent. The vibrant media covers elections intensely and information flows freely, although not always accurately. Religious freedom is protected by law and largely respected in practice, while relations between Ghana’s Christian majority and Muslim minority are generally peaceful. The study shows that, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), development partners and think-tanks also plays an important role in a democratic dispensation and these groups have collaborated with other stakeholders in consolidating Ghana’s democracy over the period.
Again, the study revealed that, Ghana’s democratic consolidation has generally been acknowledged by creditable non-partisan democratic ranking agencies and institutions and this is considered to be one of the positive dividends of the country’s democracy because politicians, foreign relations experts and development partners, to a larger extent, rely on these rankings and factor them in their decision making processes.

The study also found that Ghana’s foreign relations assets include its status as a role model and a beacon of democracy in the sub region. Ghana’s role model status arises out of the country’s position on the implementation of the principles set forth in the Constitutive Act and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). Ghana was among the first six countries to officially declare its intention to accede to the APRM. Ghana was also among the first 12 countries to officially accede to the APRM by signing the Memorandum of Understanding and the first to declare its intention to implement the APRM.

The study revealed that by virtue of Ghana’s democratic credentials, it has attracted development assistance from the United States of America, the European Union, the World Bank and other development partners and agencies. Ghana has benefited and is still benefiting from the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA).

**4.2 Conclusions**

Ghana’s democratic consolidation and the implications for international relations have been analysed in this study. The study sought to assess and highlight the significant achievements of Ghana’s democratic consolidation since 1992 and its implications for
international relations. Ghana is one country which has embarked on democratic and constitutional reforms. It is also argued that, establishing democratic electoral arrangements are one thing, sustaining them over time without reversal are quite another and not all who make the transition will be able to sustain it. Again, the factors making for the consolidation of democracy are not necessarily the same as those contributing to its inauguration.²

Ghana’s remarkable achievement in building the foundations for democratic governance has also generated international confidence in the country’s economic development prospects. Ghana cannot be said to have arrived at its destination as a fully fledged democratic state because democracy is a process and always an unfinished business. The country witnessed the sixth democratic elections in 2012 since democracy was restored in 1992. The indispensable role played by the Electoral Commission and other Independent Constitutional Bodies (ICBs) in this development cannot be over emphasised. This achievement however has had an impact on the international scene and has also shaped Ghana’s relationship with other actors in the international system.

The above analysis based on the findings and conclusions, confirms the hypothesis that, Ghana’s democratic credentials and achievements since 1992 has inured to her benefits and the international support she receives.

4.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, the following policy recommendations are proposed:
As noted in the study, the Electoral Commission and other Independent Constitutional Bodies (ICBs) are important institutions with which Ghana’s Foreign Policy regarding its democratic credentials is pursued. Their contributions to change of government, rule of law and good governance in the country means that, it indirectly affects how the international community views and formulates its policies towards Ghana. Therefore Ghana’s democratic institutions should be protected and resourced adequately.

Article 16 of the AU Charter entreats state parties to cooperate at regional and continental levels in building and consolidating democracy through exchange of experiences. International relations experts and practitioners have agreed that institutions or groups within a sovereign state can have international relations with similar bodies in other countries or states. Ghana’s democratic institutions can be used as an international relations tool in promoting its best democratic practices in consonance with her foreign policy objectives. Ghana must also increase her role in election monitoring and observation in several more countries as a policy tool for defending the principle of free and fair elections.

Many international companies have been looking at Ghana as a regional hub for their activities in West Africa, despite its not being the largest economy in the region, but due in large part to its democratic achievements. The President and key actors of the foreign policy environment such as Parliament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning as well as established private sector and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have the enormous task to market Ghana’s democratic achievements in order to attract the needed development assistance and investment capital.
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