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3 February 2011

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Ghana: The military identification card, including whether simple soldiers receive a different card than that of higher-ranking military personnel; whether the length of military service is defined by contract; the procedure for resigning without being accused of deserting (1999 - 2003)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

During a 28 January 2011 telephone interview with the Research Directorate, the military attaché at the Embassy of Ghana in Washington explained that within the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF), military personnel do not receive a different identification card based on their rank. During a 1 February 2011 telephone interview with the Research Directorate, an administrative officer from the office of the military attaché from the Embassy of Ghana in Washington also stated that the army identification card is the same for all military personnel. It contains information such as the name, service number, rank, date of birth, religion, blood group, gender, height and photo of the holder (Ghana 1 Feb. 2011). The administrative officer added that the rank information determines whether the card holder is a simple soldier or not (ibid.).

According to the military attaché from the Embassy of Ghana in Washington, military service is not mandatory in Ghana (28 Jan. 2011). A soldier may withdraw at any point as long as it is indicated to the authorities in writing, to avoid being considered a deserter (Ghana 28 Jan. 2011). Deserters who are arrested are court-martialled (ibid.). Corroborating information and information on the length of military service could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Ghana. 1 February 2011. Embassy of Ghana in Washington. Telephone interview with an administrative officer from the office of the military attaché.

_____. 28 January 2011. Embassy of Ghana in Washington. Telephone interview with the military attaché.

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: Attempts to contact representatives at the Embassy of Ghana in Berne and in Ottawa, the African Human Right Heritage (AHRH), a United Nations Information Centre (UNIC), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF), the Ghana National Service Scheme (NSS), the Commission africaine des promoteurs de la santé et des droits de l'homme (CAPSDH) and the High Commission of Canada in Accra were unsuccessful.

Internet sites, including: Africa Governance, Monitoring and Advocacy Project (AfriMAP); African Human Right Heritage (AHRH); Afrik.com; Agence France-Presse

(AFP); British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC); Education International (EI); Fédération internationale des ligues des droits de l'homme (FIDH); Ghana Armed Forces (GAF); GhanaWeb; The Heritage Foundation; Keesing Reference Systems; Migration Policy Institute (MPI); Minority Rights Group International (MRG); Modern Ghana (MG); PANAPress (PANA); Radio France internationale (RFI); Reporters sans frontières (RSF); United Nations Development Program (UNDP); United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); United Nations - Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN); United States - Department of State; War Resisters' International (WRI).