Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. Mr Speaker, I wish to commend the Hon Member for Ningo-Prampram for the Statement made. Mr Speaker, I wish to convey my condolences to the family of the late Francis Tetter Botchway, who was murdered in cold blood in the wake of the disturbances in Ningo Prampram.

Mr Speaker, I am quite familiar with the land tenure system in Ningo-Prampram, because as a legal practitioner, I handled quite a number of cases, so I had the opportunity to read documents like the Jacksons Report, which contains a lot of historical evidence regarding the settlement pattern in Prampram.

It is indeed true that, the land tenure system in Prampram is such that, lands are owned by families and clans, and so it is not surprising that in view of the periurban character of the area, now that Accra is becoming choked, many people have moved to Prampram to acquire lands for purposes of development.

Mr Speaker, the Central University is headquartered in Ningo-Prampram. Other developments are springing up, so land is a hot cake in the area. Once again, that has brought to the fore the unfortunate issue of the nefarious activities of land guards.

Mr Speaker, the Police by law are supposed to protect lives and property. I am quite sure that when the police stormed the area to try to restore peace and order, their original intention was not to unleash brutality on innocent civilians and citizens of this land.

Mr Speaker, however, we have recorded yet another instance of Police brutality. The question then is, how do we deal with the issue of police brutality and assuage the pain and anguish of the deceased’s family involved in this case?

Mr Speaker, I have had occasion to point out before this House, when a similar Statement was made, that although the Police Administration had set up the Police Professional Standards Bureau to deal with issues of misconduct and police brutality, the public is not very confident about that arrangement.

Mr Speaker, at some point, the Ministry of the Interior, with the support of some other civil society organisations, took the initiative to set up an independent police complaint unit, which would be separate from the Police Administration itself, so that when issues of this nature crop up, the public would at least have the confidence that an impartial arbiter sitting somewhere would be able to investigate the issues that come to the fore, without any display of bias.

Mr Speaker, the last time I checked the immediate past Police Council which was chaired by His Excellency the former Vice President Paa Kwesi Ammissah-Arthur, they had actually gone far in their deliberations in the establishment of the independent police complaints commission.
So, Mr Speaker, while supporting the Statement made by Hon Sam George, I would urge the current chairman of the Police Council — I am not sure the Council has been constituted, but by practice and by law, the Vice President of the Republic chairs that Council.

Mr Speaker, when the Police Council is constituted, His Excellency the Vice President, Alhaji (Dr) Mahamudu Bawumia would immediately take up the challenge and set up the independent Police Complaints Commission, so that issues of this nature are dealt with expeditiously.

Mr Speaker, I am not by any stretch of imagination finding fault with the Police Administration, because I am aware that when issues of this nature come up, they have an elaborate procedure which is provided for under the police regulations, which must be followed religiously, and so charges are preferred — it is like a criminal trial. Charges are preferred, the accused police officers involved have the right to be defended before a Service enquiry by a counsel, and so on. So, it is quite an elaborate procedure.

While I am confident that these issues would be dealt with, there is a saying that justice delayed is justice denied, and so the families of Francis Tetteh Botchway are expecting to have the matter dealt with expeditiously.

Mr Speaker, only yesterday I read in the electronic media that over a hundred police officers had been sacked. Reading the piece, it was very evident that those Police officers were sacked and they came from across the country after having committed various degrees of criminal offences, including corruption, bribery, extortion, indiscipline, et cetera.

So cumulatively, in 2016, over a hundred police officers were sacked. If that is anything to go by, one can be assured that issues of this nature would be dealt with, but let us have the Independent Police Commission to engender confidence in whatever is done when the police unleash brutality on our innocent citizens.

Mr Speaker, on that note I thank the Hon Member who made the Statement once again for his effort.

Thank you very much.