SUPPORTING STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT ON THE THREAT OF HUMAN ACTIVITY ON HIGH TENSION CABLES AND POLES IN GHANA BY HONOURABLE RICHARD M. K. QUASHIGAH, MP FOR KETA - 5 JULY, 2017

Mr Speaker, thank you so much. Mr Speaker, I would want to associate myself with the Statement ably made by the former Hon Deputy Minister for Power. Mr Speaker, it is a very apt Statement and it is a crusade that we must all join, because these are matters when raised, do not irk the necessary momentum, as it were, to really embark on the kind of crusade that he is championing. Apart from its impact on human activity as in habitation under high tension poles, it is a threat and danger to human life because large volumes of power run through these lines and over a period that could affect human life.

Mr Speaker, the other aspect, which is destruction of poles and pylons is very critical because of the financial implications. Often times, Hon Members of Parliament are under pressure by their constituents to ensure that poles are extended to their communities whereas when we do our checks, we would realise that these are communities that have previously benefitted from electric poles. Mr Speaker, but as a result of especially bush fires, these poles are burnt down and the same people expect government or the State to make provision for them again. This is an indication that people do not see or value these things. They do not recognise that moneys are spent in the provision of these things.

Mr Speaker, as I speak, I am under serious pressure from some communities in the Keta Constituency for poles. This morning I was in a discussion with Hon Jinapor over this same issue. Mr Speaker, I did a quick check on graphiconline.com on 9th June, 2017, and it was reported by a certain man, Mr Coleman, who works with the ECG, that government spent GH¢94,000 to replace burnt poles in some areas in the Central Region. Mr Speaker, the article talks about 78 high tension poles and 49 low tension poles in 10 operational districts in the Central Region; Saltpond, Cape Coast, Assin Fosu, Kasoa districts.

Mr Speaker, if only in 10 operational districts, GH¢94,000 had been spent on replacement of burnt poles, then what would be the situation if we take the whole country into consideration? Obviously, all these things are not boding well for an economy that is so much in distress for resources and we are always moving around the world with a cup in hand. We go to China and look for money — US$19 billion, US$15 billion, US$2 billion, US$3 billion, US$2.5 billion. Mr Speaker, it is very important that we get the media to be very interested in public education. Awareness creation is very critical and I believe that the crusade by Hon Jinapor is very much in place and we must all be part of it. We should all become crusaders.

I believe that silently, we are all crusaders but we must really activate it so that we could go to our constituents and preach this gospel. Mr Speaker, they are always asking for electricity, poles, meters, et cetera. But when these things are provided, do they take good care of them? So, Mr Speaker, I believe it is a very apt, well researched and deep Statement, and I associate myself with it. I know all Hon Members in this House are also like me in that direction. We all associate
ourselves with the Statement and we would do all we could to ensure that the awareness creation is heightened. Especially, the media should help us, and I am sure we would get somewhere. Mr Speaker, if we were to save GH₵94 million from replacing burnt poles, I am sure those ten operational districts could have benefited from some other developmental projects from the GH₵94 million.

I am sure if it cuts across the whole country, we would be looking at hundreds and thousands of Ghana cedis, which could do a lot for this nation, and that could also reduce our going round and begging and borrowing money from China and other places. I thank you, Mr Speaker.