

GHANAWEB, DID THE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR TELL THE ATTORNEY GENERAL THAT HE INHERITED NINE EMPLOYEES FROM MARTIN AMIDU? – BY MARTIN A. B. K. AMIDU

On Wednesday, 1st September 2021, I read three news items on GhanaWeb about a meeting between the Special Prosecutor, Mr. Kissi Agyebeng, and the Attorney General. The Special Prosecutor is reported to have stated that he has a total of nine employees including drivers, cleaners, a prosecutor on secondment from the Attorney General's office and an investigator on secondment from the police service. My handing over notes to the Acting Special Prosecutor who took over from me shows that I left behind more police investigators and other staff for the Office. Any attrition in numbers occurred during the tenure of the Acting Special Prosecutor who is now Mr. Agyebeng's deputy and available to explain to Mr. Agyebeng what happened between 16th November 2020 and 9th August 2021 when he reported for duty. I was therefore surprised to have read on 2nd September 2021, the following statement from GhanaWeb with the source as GhanaWeb attributing to the Special Prosecutor the following:

“[Kissi Agyebeng](#), the second occupant of the Office of the Special Prosecutor has disclosed he inherited a total of nine employees from his predecessor, [Martin Amidu](#) when he took office on August 5, 2021.

According to him, the staff inherited included drivers, cleaners, a prosecutor on secondment from the Attorney General's office and an investigator on secondment from the Ghana Police Service.”

I resigned as the Special Prosecutor on 16th November 2020 and by operation of law the Deputy Special Prosecutor became the Acting Special Prosecutor until a substantive Special Prosecutor was appointed on 5th August 2021. The Special Prosecutor formally reported for duty at the Office on 9th August 2021. I do not know when the Acting Special Prosecutor formally handed over the administration of the office to him. Whatever handing over notes the substantive Special Prosecutor might have received on his formal assumption of office, my handing over notes to the Acting Special Prosecutor are official records of the Office and should have been made available to the Special Prosecutor. I would have asked for them, as the new and substantive Special Prosecutor, even if they were not made available to me, and I wish to assume that the Special Prosecutor was given those notes or that he asked for and has read them. Consequently, I find the categorical statement by GhanaWeb stating that: “Kissi Agyebeng, the second occupant of the Office of the Special Prosecutor has disclosed he inherited a total of nine employees from his predecessor, Martin Amidu when he took office on August 5, 2021” very strange and disturbing.

Did Mr. Kissi Agyebeng say that he inherited nine employees from me, Martin Amidu, when he knows so well from the official records contained in my handing over notes and my budget submissions to the Ministry of Finance for the 2021 Budget that the Office had more staff working in it as at the time I resigned from the Office? I do not want to think that GhanaWeb deliberately reframed what Mr. Agyebeng said and brought my name in to bate me into a response to the statements attributed to him as the Special Prosecutor. That of course will be unethical journalism, mischievous, and will not be helping the fight against corruption.

I have read attributions to the Special Prosecutor about the efficacy of fighting corruption with seconded staff and his determination to employ 250 staff by January 2022. All the issues allegedly raised by him are dealt with in my handing over notes and may be of some use to him if he has not seen or read them already. I also left behind good conditions of service endorsed by the Minister of Finance, approved by Parliament, and appropriated by law in the 2019 and 2020 budget years for employees of the Office. My proposals for the 2021 budget repeated those emoluments in the calculations for the compensation budget. The compensation budget of the Office show clearly the levels for each category of staff as provided for in the Regulations of the Office as were appropriated by law for the previous budget years.

Any variation in the emoluments and conditions of service of officers of the Office as previously endorsed by the Ministry of Finance, approved by Parliament and appropriated by law after my resignation must have been the handy work of the Acting Special Prosecutor, and the seconded Chief Accountant to the Office. While I was the Special Prosecutor, I had hammered it home to my deputy, and the Chief Accountant, a seconded staff who thought otherwise, that one cannot fight corruption with poorly paid staff. I gave them several examples to support why I had ensured that provision was made in the Regulations for reasonable conditions of service for the employees of the Office. I have also said several times to the press that the Office cannot fight corruption with seconded staff. Hong Kong failed when it first tried with seconded staff. Any changes to the statutory determined and budgetary approved conditions of service for the substantive employees of the Office after my resignation and before the assumption of duty of the substantive officeholder of the office gives an indication of how helpful they can be to the Special Prosecutor in fighting corruption. I do not envy Mr. Kissi Agyebeng's situation because I have been through similar situations with the same detractors who always pulled the Office down as an independent anti-corruption entity.

I am concerned that words might have been put into the mouth of Mr. Agyebeng as the Special Prosecutor when he is reported to have stated that: "... he inherited nine employees from his predecessor, Martin Amidu when he took office on August 5, 2021." The Special Prosecutor needs the support of every genuine anti-corruption crusader if corruption is to be made a high-risk venture for all public office holders and their collaborators. The Special Prosecutor has a lot of overt and covert challenges to overcome if he must succeed in his office. I went through similar overt challenges as amplified in my handing over notes. I am, therefore, requesting Ghanaweb through this article to confirm whether Mr. Kissi Agyebeng made any reference to inheriting nine employees from me, by name, during the meeting referred to in its publication of 2nd September 2021 with the heading: "I inherited nine staff from Martin Amidu – Special Prosecutor tells A-G." This will enable me to make a fitting detailed and factual rejoinder to the publication attributed to Mr. Kissi Agyebeng in exercise of my constitutional right to a rejoinder. In the fight against corruption, it is important that every Ghanaian citizen puts Ghana First before self and politics.

Martin A. B. K. Amidu