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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ghana Skills Development Initiative supports Ghana's maiden National Skills Competition

Accra, Ghana, 6th November, 2018:

With the support of the Ghana Skills Development Initiative (GSDI), Ghana's first National Skills Competitions have been officially opened at the Ghana International Trade Fair Centre on 6th November, 2018. The competition is in line with GSDI's support to the Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (COTVET) to participate in the World Skills Competition and to contribute to an improved image of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Ghana.

The event was attended by H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana, H.E. Christoph Retzlaff, the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Ghana, H.E. Diana Acconcia, the Ambassador of the European Union to Ghana, H.E. Markus N.P. Dutly, Swiss Ambassador in Ghana, Hon. Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh, Minister of Education, Hon. Barbara Ayisi Asher, Deputy Minister of Education, Dr. Fred Kyei Asamoah, Executive Director of COTVET, and other high-ranking officials and representatives from governmental institutions and the private sector.

GSDI III and their partners actively participated in the opening by addressing the more than 200 guests and participants of the event:

After the welcome address from COTVET, in which Dr. Asamoah stated his pride of presenting Ghana's first National Skills Competition organised by his council, H. E. Christoph Retzlaff highlighted the importance of the private sector in achieving a high competence in trade skills: "The holistic approach of competency-based training (CBT) is the key to developing professional excellence. It involves not only training in schools but also practical experiences and trainings at a supportive workplace. This is also the essence of a dual TVET system" he stressed. H.E. Diana Acconcia emphasized the variety of skills displayed by the competitors: "Ghanaian youth is competing on a high level in various trades and professions. We can all be proud to witness these proficiencies and competences and we must continue to empower young people in Ghana to keep pursuing outstanding performance in their trades. Supporting skills development for youth in Ghana is essential." Supporting this view, H.E. Markus N.P. Dutly referred to the ability of young Ghanaians to compete internationally: "We are sure that the young participants of the National Skills Competition are not only up to face the competition with their fellow contestants. They should also be ready to compete on an international level. The World Skills Competitions will provide the platform to represent their country outstandingly".

The 71 participants of the National Skills Competition have successfully demonstrated their skills at the Zonal Skills Competition between 18th-21st September, 2018. They are enrolled in different TVET training providers across the country and developing their practical skills in one of the following six skill categories: Information Technology, Construction and

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Building Technology, Fashion and Creative Arts, Social and Personal Service, Transport and Logistics as well as Manufacturing and Engineering Technology.

6 winners of the National Skills Competition will represent Ghana in the World Skills Africa Competition in Kigali between 20th-24th November, 2018. The World Skills Competition is an international event where people not older than 25-years of age represent their countries and compete with each other in various artisanal trades and skills categories.

Notes to the Editor

About Ghana Skills Development Initiative

The Ghana Skills Development Initiative (GSDI) III is a project commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development under the Programme for Sustainable Economic Development (PSED) and co-funded by the European Union (EU) under the Ghana Employment and Social Programme (GESP) and the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) under its Ghana Private Sector Competitiveness Program (GPSCP). It is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH in cooperation with the Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (COTVET) and other public and private stakeholders. Its current phase (GSDI III) started in April 2016 and is planned to run until September 2019.

GSDI supports COTVET's innovative approach to introduce competency-based training (CBT) standards and collaborative training models which combine both workplace-based training and school-based training modules at selected TVET providers. The project particularly seeks to improve the quality of the traditional apprenticeship system and enhance skills and qualifications. It has been working in eight trade areas (electronics, garment making, welding, cosmetology, automotive, electrical installation, furniture works, and block laying + tiling) and six regions (Greater Accra, Volta, Northern, Ashanti, Western, and Eastern). Furthermore, GSDI III develops demand-oriented TVET offers for the agricultural sector (ATVET) along three selected agricultural value chains (cashew, mango, oil palm).

About German Cooperation

Germany has been an important and reliable partner for Ghana since its independence in 1957. The goal of the German-Ghanaian development cooperation is to consolidate Ghana's status as a lower middle-income country by promoting sustainable, poverty-oriented, and inclusive economic growth.

Development Cooperation between Ghana and Germany has a long and trustful tradition. Since the start of bilateral relations with Ghana in 1957, Germany has allocated over EUR 1.5 billion to sustainable development in the country. From 2015 to 2017, bilateral support for Ghana amounts to EUR 241.1 million. Against the background of Ghana's status as a "lower middle income country" and in line with the priorities of the Ghanaian government,

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the German bilateral development cooperation focuses on the following four priorities: Good Governance, Agriculture, Sustainable Economic Development, and Renewable Energy. In the sector of Sustainable Economic Development, German Cooperation is supporting Ghana through the Programme for Sustainable Economic Development (PSED) with an actual budget of EUR 26.6 million. The German support to TVET in Ghana also encompasses the Ghana TVET Voucher Program (GTVP) amounting to EUR 10 million.

German-Ghanaian Technical Cooperation projects are mostly implemented by GIZ, whilst projects of Financial Cooperation are implemented by the KfW Development Bank. Germany also contributes approx. 21 % to the EU budget.

About the EU

The European Union is the world's biggest development aid donor. Through the external cooperation, the EU is working around the world in order to reduce poverty, to ensure sustainable economic, social and environmental development and to promote democracy, the rule of law, good governance and the respect of human rights. In the field of education and vocational training, in the current financial framework 2014-2020 the European Union has committed nearly EUR 2 billion to Africa.

In Ghana, under the framework of the Cotonou Agreement, for the period of 2014 to 2020, the European Union is supporting development programmes in three focal areas, Governance, Agriculture and Employment and Social Protection, for a total amount of EUR 323 million. The Ghana Employment and Social Protection (GESP) Programme with a budget of EUR 31.6 million is contributing to inclusive growth in Ghana by strengthening social protection and employment systems in the country.

GESP aims at enhancing social protection services notably for vulnerable population groups and generating decent employment opportunities with a particular attention to the youth. GSDI III is the component of the programme which covers Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) opportunities for the informal sector and in agricultural value chains.

About SECO

SECO is the Swiss government's center of expertise for all core issues relating to economic policy. SECO's Economic Cooperation and Development Division is responsible for the planning and implementation of economic cooperation and development activities with middle income developing countries, with transition countries as well as the new Member States of the European Union. It coordinates Switzerland's relations with the World Bank Group, the regional development banks and the economic organizations of the United Nations.

In Ghana, SECO's development cooperation program focuses on promoting good economic governance and strong institutions and strengthening competitiveness and inclusiveness. Switzerland provides assistance in the areas of economic and financial management, private sector development and entrepreneurship, sustainable trade and urban infrastructure. For more information, visit SECO's website.

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About GIZ

As a provider of international cooperation services for sustainable development and international education work, GIZ is dedicated to building a future worth living around the world. GIZ has over 50 years of experience in a wide variety of areas, including economic development and employment, energy and the environment, and peace and security. The diverse expertise of our federal enterprise is in demand around the globe, with the German Government, European Union institutions, the United Nations, the private sector and governments of other countries all benefiting from our services. We work with businesses, civil society actors and research institutions, fostering successful interaction between development policy and other policy fields and areas of activity. The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is our main commissioning party.

Currently, GIZ promotes sustainable development in Ghana via more than 50 programmes and projects. Our activities cover currently three priority areas: Agriculture, Governance and Sustainable Economic Development. Additionally, our portfolio extends to other areas such as peace and security, renewable energy and climate and environment. Another focus of GIZ's work is linking business interests with development-policy goals. Most of the programmes and projects we support in Ghana have successfully brought together national and international private companies, the public sector, and civil society groups to collaborate on development initiatives.

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