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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Date: December 29, 2025.**

## **“No Father Christmas in Customs” Traders Advocacy Group Ghana (TAGG) Raises Red Flags Over GRA–TRUEDARE Tracking Agreement Deal.**

The Traders Advocacy Group Ghana (TAGG) notes with grave concern Parliament’s recent approval of an agreement between the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) and TRUEDARE INVESTMENTS LIMITED for the introduction of a “digital customs tracking” and AI audit system. The agreement, reportedly intended to supplement the Integrated Customs Management System (ICUMS) “at no additional cost to the state,” demands urgent scrutiny in the interests of transparency, value for money, and long-term impacts on traders and consumers.

### **A New Deal, Old Questions**

As outlined in the Finance Committee’s report and various media sources, the TRUEDARE agreement aims to:

- Introduce a digital inspection system for tracking imported cargo containers,
- Supplement ICUMS, Ghana’s single-window e-customs platform,
- Address perceived weaknesses in tracking and documentation, and
- Improve revenue mobilisation, allegedly at no additional cost to the state.

It is pertinent to note that the ICUMS, implemented in 2020, already provides end-to-end customs data management including risk assessment, post-clearance audit, and cargo tracking explicitly to reduce costs and systemic leakages (ref: gra.gov.gh). If government now asserts material gaps exist in ICUMS requiring a new system, TAGG believes that all technical analyses and justifications must be openly accessible, not shrouded in secrecy.

### **TAGG’s Investigation: Concerns Over TRUEDARE Investments Limited**

TAGG has sourced and reviewed official corporate records for TRUEDARE INVESTMENTS LIMITED in Cyprus:

- Incorporated on 28 December 2024 (Reg. No. HE 469406), business objects listed as general trade not customs IT, AI, or digital inspection specialisation.
- Issued share capital totals EUR 1,545, with two EU-resident individual shareholders and one previous corporate shareholder.
- Registry shows no major assets or encumbrances.

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*...Voice of the Traders*

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No public evidence was found of TRUEDARE having designed or operated large-scale customs systems, AI audits, or container tracking solutions elsewhere. In the absence of verifiable expertise and a track record, TAGG deems it risky for Parliament to entrust a critical national digital mandate to a newly incorporated, minimally capitalised offshore entity without full public disclosure of:

- Technical capacity and credible references,
- Ownership structure and beneficial control, and
- Selection rationale versus other providers.

### **No Cost to the State? Who Pays?**

The assertion that this programme will operate “at no additional cost to the state” is misleading. In trade facilitation, costs must be borne by someone:

- Will there be new fees on consignments, containers, or transactions?
- Will these fees be passed on to traders and importers, transporters and ultimately consumers, resulting in higher prices?
- Is there a revenue-sharing model with the contractor?
- What is the timeline and projected total exposure over the contract lifespan?

Describing this as “no cost to the state” obscures the true economic burden, which almost certainly falls on Ghanaian businesses and households.

### **Why Duplicate the Existing ICUMS System?**

ICUMS is:

- Ghana’s single-window e-customs system,
- Recognised locally and internationally for reducing leakages and improving efficiency,
- Equipped with modules for risk management, audit, cargo tracking, and valuation.

Rather than transparently strengthening ICUMS with additional AI/analytics modules as needed the Government has:

- Publicly declared “limitations” in ICUMS without publishing independent technical reviews,
- Rushed to introduce a parallel system and vendor, and
- Provided no clear answers on data sovereignty, cybersecurity, integration, or accountability across platforms.

These risks introducing complexity, additional fees, and confusion for traders, contrary to the goals of genuine trade facilitation.

### **TAGG’s Demands:**

Given the above, TAGG calls for the following actions:

1. Full Disclosure of the TRUEDARE Contract
  - The Government must publish the entire agreement, financial model, and technical annexes of the GRA–TRUEDARE deal, subject only to justified security redactions.

2. Independent Technical & Value-for-Money Review
  - Parliament must commission an independent audit of ICUMS and the proposed TRUEDARE system to determine:
    - a. Any real “gaps” in ICUMS,
    - b. If said gaps could be addressed within the current architecture,
    - c. Whether TRUEDARE represents value for money compared to alternatives.
3. Clarification of Who Ultimately Pays
  - The Ministry of Finance and GRA must clearly state:
    - a. The remuneration model for TRUEDARE,
    - b. Any new or altered fees imposed on trade,
    - c. Projected impact on the cost of doing business and living throughout the contract.
4. Moratorium on Implementation Until Transparency Is Achieved
  - Suspend TRUEDARE implementation until the contract, due-diligence process, and long-term implications are reviewed by Parliament, the private sector, stakeholders and civil society.

## Conclusion

The transition to ICUMS Ghana’s unified single-window solution was justified by promises of reduced costs and increased revenue. GRA’s own data shows ICUMS has contributed to significant revenue growth (over 150% since inception). Barely five years later, the solution is threatened with redundancy by a contract with a newly registered offshore company, ostensibly to address unspecified problems, at “no cost to the state”.

TAGG is not opposed to technology advancement or the use of AI in customs. We oppose opaque contracts, weak due diligence, and mechanisms that transfer hidden costs onto traders and consumers, eroding hard-won reforms.

There is no “Father Christmas” in customs; someone always pays. Ghanaian traders and importers deserve full transparency and accountability over costs, risks, and impacts. We urge the Government to heed the voice of industry before proceeding further unrest will not contribute to the NDC’s success story.

Long live TAGG.

Long live Ghana.

**Signed,**

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