

**52nd ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE
INDEPENDENCE OF GHANA ANNIVERSARY ADDRESS**

BY

H.E. JOHN EVANS ATTAH MILLS,

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA

Rt. Honourable Speaker of Parliament,

Her Ladyship Chief Justice,

Ministers of State,

Members of Parliament,

Your Excellencies, Dean and Members of the Diplomatic Corp,

Traditional Leaders,

Fellow Ghanaians,

This is a day on which we pay homage to the daughters and sons of Ghana whose vision and tenacity of purpose won us our independence.

Foremost amongst them was Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah who has left an indelible impression on world history and was rightly chosen as the topmost African Personality of the 20th Century at the last millennium.

I congratulate the parade commander, officers and men of the security agencies, students, and all identifiable groups who formed this parade.

You have put up a splendid performance befitting the occasion and the nation is proud of you.

Fellow Ghanaians, our nation is blessed with so much even if things do not always go the way we want.

The qualities of our human resources alone exemplify the country's huge potential.

Everywhere in the world the creativity, talent and the professional expertise of the Ghanaian is not in doubt.

The world reveres our sports team especially the Black Stars.

Across the world when it comes to Democracy and Political Stability, we stand tall and we must be proud of such an enviable feat.

The theme for this year's celebration "Unity and Peace; Pillars For National Development" could not be more apt considering the extent to which a wrong step during the last election could have moved us forward in the wrong direction.

Indeed, yesterday I presented awards to deserving students, the message of the youth to us leaders, is, nothing but a cry for a peaceful and united Ghana.

And my solemn pledge to the youth of Ghana is that Atta Mills and his government will do everything possible to make sure that Ghana remains a haven of peace and unity.

The rich talents and rich human qualities given to us by God will enable us overcome the challenges posed by the global economic downturn and our inadequacies in the management of the nation's economy.

This administration does not intent to parade scapegoats or seek refuge in excuses.

We will focus on the things that matter and which will enable the economy recover some degree of stability.

We will do this in collaboration with organised labour, the business community and with industry.

We count on the good will and understanding of all Ghanaians as we engage each other in a more civil and collaborative manner to build the kind of Better Ghana we all want.

Our goal as government is to strengthen Ghana's position as a magnet for investment in productive ventures to create jobs for our youth.

We aim for efficiency in our governance process for creating a business climate that will rank very high; investing in infrastructure to open up the country; a health care system that provides for all; providing quality teachers in a highly improved schools system; providing good drinking water for the people; and in making Ghana a much safer place for the citizenry.

My brothers and sisters I have assured you in the past that an Atta Mills Government will not engage in political vendetta.

No amount of organised detraction or political barnstorming will break my resolve to chart a new course in the politics of this dear nation of ours.

It may take time for some to wake up to this new political reality but I hope eventually they will.

And those who know they are in the wrong must recognise that a contrite heart is more valued and better example than arrogance, bluster and confrontation.

As political leaders, we must also recognise that what we say or fail to say to our followers makes a lot of difference in how followers conduct themselves in national discourse.

I will not condone actions that will pitch one citizen against the other as a way of settling political scores.

That is unacceptable and will not be the Ghanaian way of doing things.

The Ghanaian way should be that, under the Rule of Law, and with the benchmark of due process, any violations of the laws of Ghana will be addressed in the manner that is fair, balanced, and right in the sight of God.

As a people, our greatest achievements have come when we have lived up to the ideals that unite rather than divide us and have attached ourselves to a common sense purpose. Let this day not just see us enjoying just the holiday part of it; let us find time to reflect on the way forward as we strive to build a Better Ghana.

We must reflect on the legacies that our forebears bequeathed to us; consider what we have added to that legacy, and commit ourselves to leaving a solid legacy for the generations after us.

And for the school children who have taken part in today's parade as well as their colleagues all over the country, it is the commitment of the a NDC government to make sure that our term in office will see us restoring hope and confidence in the future.

On behalf of the government, I congratulate all of us for being part of the 52nd Independence Day Celebration and my prayer is that we will all resolve to commit ourselves to building Better Ghana.

Fellow Ghanaians, I thank you for your attention and may God continue to make our nation grater and stronger.