

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE AMBASSADOR OF GHANA, H.E. MR.
PARKER-ALLOTEY, AT THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION DAY OF JAPAN,
11 FEBRUARY, 2017**

*Your Excellencies (Heads of Mission),
Members of the House of Councillors &
House of Representatives, City Authorities
Distinguished Organizers
Eminent Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen*

I am honoured that my country and I have been associated with this important event and I thank the organizers for inviting me to make a short statement on behalf of the Diplomatic Corps, to commemorate this Year's "Kenkoku Kinen Bi" or National Foundation Day.

I am informed that this Day was instituted by the First Japanese Emperor Jimmu, to mark the establishment of this great and beautiful nation. Originally celebrated on 29th January each year, it was later moved in 1873, to be marked on 11th February yearly. However, the noble objectives of the celebration have remained valid until today. The model and pacific Japanese Constitution, was also approved on National Foundation Day in 1946, by General Mc Arthur, and it has been at the foundation of modern Japan with all its social, economic, and technological advancement.

Like all nations, Japan celebrates the founding of its State with passion, fervour and pride. When any State celebrates its Foundation or Independence Day, it is as if its citizens are made to drink from a well or spring that renews patriotism and nationalistic spirit to defend the country and make it greater and stronger even at the peril of their lives. So today, we salute Japanese people for rededicating themselves to the unity and building of their great nation. We offer you our felicitations on this festive occasion.

Please allow me to caution that this is a novel and strange world in which we find ourselves today. Nationalism has been overstretched to Xenophobic proportions, whereby while the Japanese people are building bridges to link countries and reach the hearts of peoples as well as embracing other Cultures,

others are busy building walls of division, turning their countries into fortresses and turning back migrants, including refugees from their borders. The world witnessed, a short while ago, refugees and migrants being pushed back on seas, where many lost their lives simply for seeking protection, safety and better lives. The peaceful Japanese people on the other hand have offered generous development assistance and through the TICAD framework, and have been committed to the advancement of developing countries. This is a show of solidarity and belief in our common humanity. It is also a demonstration of the peaceful principles on which this country is based. You have been sharing the results of the advancement in Medicine, Science and Technology, with the whole world and we are most grateful for this.

Many of your volunteers work in remote areas of Africa through Intellectual, Scientific, Arts and Cultural exchange programmes, that help us to confront the challenges of our world together, as true friends. It is noteworthy that you have done all these, while preserving a life of honour and dignity for your own people.

On behalf of my colleagues of the Diplomatic Corps, I congratulate you once again, for all your achievements, for the prosperity of your people, for the peace and harmony you have preserved as a nation and for the wise path chosen by your leadership, even in the most trying times of your history, which have brought you this far in advancement.

On our part, we shall reinforce the foundations of friendship and magnanimity that bind us together, and we wish you many more years of happiness, solidarity and friendship so that together, we can build a more peaceful, humane, better and prosperous world, where poverty, diseases and wars will be banished forever.

I thank you for your kind attention.