

# Ghana independence day

## Developing in peace and democracy

Edmond Kofi Deh  
AMBASSADOR OF GHANA

Today, March 6, 2014, marks the 57th anniversary of Ghana's Independence. The celebration of this auspicious occasion undoubtedly offers an appropriate platform for some reflections on contemporary developments in Ghana as well as prospects for the future, with particular reference to Ghana-Japan relations from the perspective of the Embassy of Ghana in Japan.



Let me avail myself of this opportunity to, on behalf of the Government and People of Ghana, especially the Ghanaian Community in Japan, convey my heartfelt greetings and profound gratitude to their Imperial Majesties, Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the entire Imperial family as well as the government and people of Japan for the warmth of their hospitality extended to Ghana in Japan over the past year. The legendary goodwill of the Japanese people, which bears a resemblance to that of Ghanaians, was indeed, manifestly demonstrated during the period to complement Ghana's efforts at national development through her citizens living in Japan.

Ghana, during the past year, continued on the path of national development through an effective mobilization of its human and material resources. As a result of the government's holistic strategy of combining rational economic policies with prudent management and appropriate interventions, Ghana's GDP growth in nominal terms more than doubled between 2009 and 2013. The country's real GDP growth rate which has averaged 7 percent in recent

years, is much higher than the sub-Saharan African average of 4.9 percent and the average global rate of 3.2 percent.

Ghana's medium- to long-term prospects are widely acknowledged, especially as the country becomes a significant hydrocarbon and power producer in the West African region, while maintaining a diversified economy with a solid agricultural and service base. Indeed the service sector has, over the past year, surpassed the agriculture and manufacturing sectors of the economy in terms of contribution to the Gross Domestic Product.

The phenomenal growth of the service sector comes on the back of an enhancement in oil production in the country, with oil outstripping cocoa as Ghana's second biggest export earner with shipments worth over \$3 billion in 2013. With new developments and discoveries of oil coming on stream as well as expansion of current projects, oil production is expected to double from the present 115,000 barrels to about 230,000 barrels per day by 2021.

The past year also witnessed a challenge and a test of Ghana's democratic credentials, which she successfully overcame. When the current President, H. E. John Dramani Mahama, won the general election held in December 2012, the opposition party challenged the results of the election in court in a democratic spirit. The Supreme Court gave its verdict upholding the results of the election, a decision overwhelmingly accepted by the citizenry, underscoring the country's commitment to democracy and the rule of law.

Ghana maintained its visibility on the international scene with appropriate contributions to the work of the African Union, the United Nations, the Commonwealth and other Interna-



The black star on the Independence Arch in the capital of Accra and Ghana's national flag symbolizes African freedom.

EMBASSY OF GHANA

tional Organizations to which she belongs. The country also continued to play its part as a responsible member of the international community committed to the maintenance of international peace and security. Ghana engaged in peace keeping operations not only within the ambit of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) but also across Africa and other parts of the World.

In the particular context of Ghana-Japan relations, 2013 witnessed further development and enhancement of the already strong bonds of friendship and cooperation between the two countries on all fronts. At the highest level of government, President Mahama, led Ghana's delegation to effectively and constructively participate in the 5th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) held in Yokohama from June 1 to 3, 2013. During the Sum-

mit, he was selected to deliver a speech on behalf of his African colleagues on the occasion of the Award of the Noguchi Prize for Medical Research. Dr. Hideyo Noguchi's life, exemplifying sacrifice for humanity as well as his death in Ghana in 1928, remains a lasting testament to Ghana-Japan relations.

Ghanaian institutions and their Japanese counterparts are working to implement plans, programs and projects that would enable Ghana, one of the largest recipients of Japanese official development assistance in Africa, to access a share of the ¥3.2 trillion pledged by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe as an assistance package to Africa at TICAD V. The long-standing cooperation between the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and Ghanaian institutions would be invaluable in this process.

The Japan External Trade Organization, (JETRO), took a lead in this direction when it organized a successful trade promotional mission to Ghana in July 2013. Japan Oil Gas and Metals National Corporation (JOGMEG) was, for its part, supportive of the official visit to Japan last year of Ghana's Minister for Energy. With the energy sector overtaking cocoa in Ghana, it is expected that the popular Ghana brand chocolate in Japan will be complemented with increased cooperation between the two countries in the energy sector.

Cooperation between Ghana and Japan extended to cultural exchanges as well during the past year. Once again, Ghanaian children came to Japan to join their Japanese counterparts to learn and perform Ghanaian and Japanese dances under the Yosakoi program. Reflecting on a visit to the Accra Sports Stadium fitted with Japan-donated physical training equipment brings home the fact that the athletes there are getting ready to participate in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games. The facilities may also be used by the Ghana Black Stars players, pending a possible encounter with the Japanese national team in the final stages of the World Cup in Brazil!

On this momentous occasion, Ghana wishes to invite Japanese companies to take due cognizance of the stable political and attractive investment climate prevailing in the country to either invest directly in the Ghanaian economy or engage in strategic partnerships with Ghanaian companies in furtherance of a mutually beneficial cooperation.

Finally, I wish to express profound gratitude to the various friends of Ghana and the companies through whose sponsorship, together with the professionalism of the staff of The Japan Times, this message has reached the reading public.

Long live Ghana-Japan relations.

### Ghana an attractive investment destination

Ghana's wealth of resources, democratic political system and dynamic economy, makes it undoubtedly one of Africa's leading lights. Gaining the world's confidence with a peaceful political transition and a grounded and firm commitment to democracy has helped in expediting Ghana's growth in foreign direct investment (FDI) in recent years.

Ghana has attracted the attention of well-known international businesses, investing in all sectors of our economy. All these investors have come to Ghana because they know we have a wonderful conducive social, political and economic environment in which they can invest, grow and be successful.

Building on significant natural resources, our dear nation is committed to improving its physical infrastructure. Moreover, Ghana has recently embarked on an ambitious but achievable reform program to improve the investment climate for both local and international investors. These efforts have paid off tremendously with Ghana being recognized by the World Bank Doing Business Report 2014 as the "Best Place for Doing Business in the ECOWAS Region." Also with the difficult times over the past year, where most countries did not show good growth levels due to the global economic downturn, Ghana had a provisional economic growth rate of 7.4 percent.

As happy as we are to receive such recognition, we are even happier to see increased investments and reinvestments in Ghana as a result of these ongoing reforms.

Ghana has a solid tradition of investment in agriculture and agro-processing. The financial services and telecommunications sectors are fast gaining ground, providing dynamic and innovative services to the most diverse customers in the world. Further opportunities exist in manufacturing, ICT, and tourism. Mineral deposits including gold and diamonds abound and with the discovery of oil, Ghana's famous black star has never shone brighter.

The Ghana Investment Promotion Centre wishes to welcome you all to our beautiful country. We trust you will find our reputation for unparalleled hospitality well-deserved, and our ability to triumph in challenging circumstances as steadfast as ever. We reaffirm our commitment to moving our continent forward and look forward to very beneficial engagements with you.

Located 60 km offshore between the Deepwater Tano and West Cape Three Points blocks in Ghana, the Jubilee Field has been producing oil since December 2010. EMBASSY OF GHANA



Ghana is the second-largest bulk producer of cacao in the world. EMBASSY OF GHANA



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Information provided by Ghana Investment Promotion Centre.

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to the People of the Republic of Ghana  
on the 57th Anniversary of Their Independence



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