



H.E. PROF. JOHN EVANS ATTA MILLS
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA

H. E. Professor John Evans Atta Mills, the President of the Republic of Ghana was born at Tarkwa on July 21st, 1944. He hails from Ekumfi Otum in the Central Region. Prof Mills launched a lifelong learning at Achimota Secondary School, where he completed the Advanced Level Certificate in 1963. To further his education, he attended the University of Ghana, Legon where he received a Bachelor's Degree and Professional Certificate in Law (1967). While earning the Ph.D. in Oriental and African Studies from the University of London at the age of 27, Dr. Mills was selected as a Fulbright Scholar at Stanford Law School (USA).

Prof. Mills's first formal teaching assignment was as a Lecturer at the Faculty of Law at the University of Ghana, Legon. He spent more than twenty five years imparting acquired knowledge to students, and rose in position from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer to Associate Professor. His contribution to the University was remarkable having served on numerous boards, committees, and schemes. Also during those twenty five years, Prof. Mills travelled as a Visiting Lecturer and Professor to Temple University (USA) and Leiden University (Holland), and presented research papers at symposiums and conferences throughout the world.

Prof Mills has more than one dozen publications to his credit. These include: *Taxation of Periodical or Deferred Payments Arising from the Sale of Fixed Capital* (1974), *Exemption of Dividends from Income Taxation: A Critical Appraisal* (1977), *Report of the Tax Review Commission, Ghana, Parts 1, 2 & 3*, (1977) and *Ghana's Income Tax Laws and the Investor*, an inter-faculty lecture published by the University of Ghana.

His expertise goes well beyond the classroom, and is evidenced by the various examiner positions he held with finance related institutions throughout Ghana (i.e. Institute of Chartered Accountants, Institute of Bankers, Ghana Tax Review Commission). As an advocate for recreation, active sportsman and sports fan, Prof. Mills has supported the community through groups such as the Ghana Hockey Association, National Sport Council of Ghana, and Accra Hearts of Oak Sporting Club. The following are a few of his activities and projects: Member of the Ghana Stock Exchange Council, Board of Trustees, Mines Trust, Management Committee of Commonwealth Administration of Tax Experts, United Nations Ad Hoc Group of Experts in International Cooperation in Tax Matters 7 United Nations Law and Population Project, Study on Equipment Leasing in Ghana, Casebook preparation on Ghana's Income Tax, Review of Ghana's Double Tax Agreement with the UK.

A track record of financial knowledge and strong professional credentials led to several important appointments. In 1988, Prof. J.E. Atta Mills became the Acting Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service of Ghana and named Commissioner in September 1996. In 1997, Prof Mills became the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana and served in that capacity with former President J.J. Rawlings till 2000.

On January 3, 2009, Prof. Mills was declared by the Electoral Commission as the President-elect of Ghana after a second presidential run-off of in the 2008 Presidential Elections. Prof. Mills was sworn into office as Executive President of the Republic of Ghana on Wednesday January 7, 2009. He is married to Ernestina Naadu, an educationist and has a son.

The following is a speech by *H.E. Professor John Evans Atta Mills*, President of The Republic Of Ghana on the occasion of the visit of *President Barack Obama* of The United States of America to Ghana – 10th -11th July, 2009.

Your Excellency President Barack Obama,

Your Excellency, John Mahama, Vice President of the Republic of Ghana,

Your Excellency Flt. Jerry John Rawlings, former President of the Republic of Ghana,

Your Excellency Mr. John Agyekum Kufour, former President of the Republic of Ghana,

Rt. Hon. Mrs. Joyce Bamford-Addo, Speaker of Parliament,

Your Lordship Mrs. Georgina Wood, Chief Justice,

Chairman and Members of the Council of State,
Honourable Ministers of State,
Honourable Leaders and other Members of Parliament,
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Traditional Leaders
Fellow Ghanaians
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government, chiefs and people, it gives me great pleasure to extend to you, President Barack Obama and the First lady, Michelle, a very warm welcome to Ghana.

We in Ghana are deeply inspired by your choice of our country for your first visit, as President of the United States of America, to sub-Saharan Africa.

We are indeed encouraged that your choice of our country derives from your recognition of the achievements we have made in building and consolidating multi-party parliamentary democracy.

Mr. President,

Your choice of our country encourages us to remain focused and to sustain the gains of our democratic process and deepen it to the benefit our people as well as our brothers and sisters across the continent of Africa.

Mr. President,

It has not been an easy journey but with tenacity and a firm commitment to move forward in the right direction, we have gotten this far.

52 years ago, not too far away from this venue, the founder and first President of the nation, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah lit the flame that blazed the trail of the struggle for independence and the economic emancipation of the African continent.

In the early hours of 6th March, 1957, Dr. Nkrumah said, the independence of Ghana would be meaningless unless it is linked to the total liberation of the African continent.

These profound words continue to guide Ghana as, Leader, a beacon of hope, and a bastion of democracy in Africa.

Mr. President,

In getting this far, Ghana cannot overlook the contributions of Presidents Jerry John Rawlings and John Agyekum Kufuor for their roles in the growth of Ghana's democracy since 1992.

Of course, the greater credit goes to the people of Ghana, who have resolved to defend this growth path with their will and might.

There is still a lot of journeying to be done, and I am confident we shall build a Better Ghana.

Mr. President,

You and I stand here today because, just over six months ago, our respective compatriots voted for change; a change that they expect will create a better future.

As is the case with you and your Team, we also face the challenge of creating an environment and concrete opportunities to enable our people achieve their dreams.

For Ghanaians, the dream is captured by the government's economic vision, endorsed by Ghanaians in December 2008, and which has as its key goal, the establishment of a resilient economy based on shared growth.

Mr. President,

We cannot afford to fail our people.

Mr. President,

Ghanaians have charged this Government to judiciously utilize Ghana's precious human and material resources (including the recently discovered oil and gas resources) to develop a diversified economy based on increasing agricultural productivity, investments in productive infrastructure, education and skills development to improve the competitiveness of Ghana in the global economy.

Ghanaians also expect the government to pay increased attention to socio-economic policies, provide increased access to health, and develop social safety nets for the disadvantaged.

We are committed to making sure that these expectations become a reality.

Mr. President,

To realize our development agenda, Ghana looks to the world community for shared collaboration and mutual benefit.

Indeed, Africa looks to the world community to fully appreciate that partnership agreements and special initiatives for Africa must pass the test of helping the people of Africa to realize the goals that we have set for ourselves.

Mr. President,

We are living in difficult times.

The world has experienced a global crisis of enormous severity. Its effect on Africa is becoming clearer and more significant.

These are in terms of lower growth, increased unemployment, threats to aid flows, reduced remittances, uncertain commodity prices, as well as the impact on the costs and availability of credit.

Our world is becoming increasingly vulnerable to transnational crime especially drug trafficking and money laundering, which has eroded the concept of sovereignty while globalization has facilitated the easy movement of international criminals from one jurisdiction to another.

The impunity with which organized crime is committed in our societies present to us, another daunting challenge.

We are impressed, Mr. President, with the boldness and innovation with which you are addressing these crises.

We on our part will seek your support and collaboration as we attempt, together with other African countries, to explore imaginative as well as realistic ways to deal with the impact of these crises on us.

Mr. President,

It is with this expectation that I have the distinct pleasure to once again welcome you to Ghana, and hope that the visit marks the beginning of a more lasting relationship between Ghana and the United States of America.

Akwaaba! Akwaaba! Akwaaba!

God bless Ghana; God bless America; and God bless us all.

Thank you.