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### Our Perspective

## One Year after Celebrating Our 50th Birthday: What Is Ghana Doing Differently?



Another 6th March has come and gone. As to be expected, the celebration of independence this year was not as elegant as it was last year. Last year's marked a significant milestone as the Golden Jubilee Year, and so there was no reason to expect the two celebrations to be done on a similar scale. The New Legon Observer would nevertheless like to congratulate the government and people of Ghana for another year of nationhood. Anniversaries are always important, even for individuals. In the case of nations, they are even more important as they provide opportunities for soul-searching and self-assessment for many people who can influence future directions.

This journal used its very first edition, Vol. 1 No. 1 of 29 November 2007), to assess what Ghana had achieved in the first 50

years of independence. We noted the uphill task that the nation had confronted in those years and concluded that the outcome had been far less than expected. The world had expected so much from Ghana as a trailblazer not just in the sub-region but also in the rest of Africa, and yet Ghana had delivered so little.

A year after the celebrations, The New Legon Observer is looking for evidence that Ghana is willing and eager to do things differently. In terms of politics, there are indications that the people and their leaders are quite anxious to preserve the democracy that they managed to restore some 16 years ago. The evidence for it comes largely from the fact that most of the political parties are becoming increasingly democratic and electing their presidential candidates in a more open fashion. All Ghanaians and the world saw

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**The New Legon Observer** creates a platform for the discussion of broad development policy issues and matters of public interest. The articles are expected to be current and on relevant themes. It is owned by the **Ghana Society for Development Dialogue (GSDD)**.

The society is a registered company limited by guarantee and is independent of the management of the University of Ghana, Legon. The members of the society come from diverse professional backgrounds and are motivated solely by the need to develop a vehicle for the articulation of diverse but well-researched views on Ghana's development.

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how the candidates for the National Democratic Congress (NDC), the Convention People's Party (CPP) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) were elected from a respectable field of contenders. The message for any political party that does not believe in openness is that it risks becoming irrelevant in Ghanaian politics.

Another area which provides a measure of how democracy is shaping up has to do with parliament. There are many Ghanaians who have not been impressed with the quality and performance of parliament. Democracy is not about filling parliament with persons who have nothing to say about the things that are most important to the people and their institutions. Many parliamentarians are perceived to be inarticulate; they demonstrate no significant knowledge of the issues that are brought to parliament. While it is true that parliamentarians are not well resourced to do any serious research into issues that matter, they have seldom been seen to show much initiative on important developmental and other issues. There is certainly better informed debate outside of parliament. Evidence of a desire to change the situation may be seen in the readiness of Ghanaians to talk about the poor quality of debates in parliament. The people believe strongly in the need for an effective parliament that will influence the path to long term growth and development. So there are now a lot of capacity-building initiatives for improving the quality of parliament. Examples of these include the support from the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation and the Canadian Parliamentary Centre to improve research into parliamentary matters. If these initiatives work and more knowledgeable people get elected into parliament at the next elections, Ghanaians can become hopeful that things will begin to change for the better.

In terms of the economy, there is no doubt that the situation is much more stable today than it was a few years ago. A number of things have also happened in the last year to make the Ghanaian people see the economy even more positively for the future. They observed a relatively well-managed re-denomination of the Cedi. They saw the world's financial markets eagerly take up various bonds issued by the Ghana Government to raise funds for development purposes. But most important of all, they heard about the discovery of oil in commercial quantities in Ghana. And they have even listened to government officials promise that there will be careful management of the new oil economy.

While all these are happening, Ghanaians are still waiting for a major initiative on how the structure of the economy will be transformed. Interestingly, the National

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Development Planning Commission (NDPC) has been working for over a year on the business of preparing a medium-long term development plan that will lay the foundation for achieving the needed structural transformation. Even though this endeavour has been going on, the various sector ministries, departments and agencies that should have been working closely with the NDPC have busied themselves with their own programmes for the same period, with no clear interest in structural transformation. It is obvious that there are major problems with coordinating Ghana's long term development interests and government must indicate clearly what it wants to do.

It is important for Ghanaian governments to understand that without structural transformation, more rapid development is not likely to occur. It is imperative that the expected oil revenues are used to diversify the economy at a higher level of production and productivity. That is what will make it a lot easier to achieve long-run macroeconomic stability while reducing poverty significantly. In effect, the new oil revenues, if carefully managed, should make it easier to achieve structural transformation. It is essential for the managers of the economy to focus on the medium-long term and not to see short term stability as an end in itself. A developing country cannot afford to do that.

Our perspective is that a number of things have happened in the last year to cheer Ghanaians up. In particular, the successful organisation of the African Cup of Nations football tournament, Ghana 2008, made Ghanaians proud. The pride was prompted by the significant effort

made by the organisers to provide football lovers all over the world a world-class tournament. The facilities were a great improvement on what existed before, and the management was, to a large extent, admirable. Of course, there were some serious hitches, such as the power cut at the Essipong Stadium. The initial problem with accreditation for journalists and other persons from the media was definitely regrettable and avoidable. Embarrassing as these were, they did not take much away from everything else that was achieved. These hitches could not deny Ghanaians and others an opportunity to enjoy a generally well-organised tournament. The New Legon Observer takes this opportunity to congratulate the Local Organising Committee on a job fairly well done. Hopefully, many lessons have been learned about how to organise such tournaments. The joy of Ghanaians would definitely have been greater if the Black Stars had won the trophy. We congratulate the team all the same.

President George Bush's visit to Ghana a couple of weeks ago has been viewed by many people in different ways. There are those who look at the financial resources made available by the current US administration to Ghana in particular, and Africa in general, and suggest that it was appropriate for President Bush to come to Ghana in order to see for himself what American resources are doing for the people. There are others who saw the trip very negatively, and this was driven by a perception that the American President was using the Africa trip to boost his own very poor standing back home while looking for new hosts for American military installations. President Bush dismissed suggestions of any plan to

locate an American military base in Ghana.

The New Legon Observer takes the perspective that what a country like Ghana gains from such a trip is determined largely by what it wishes to achieve. So while President Bush may have had his own reasons for wanting to undertake the trip at the time he did, the bigger question for Ghanaians should have been what the Ghana Government wanted to gain from the trip. Was it additional aid resources? If that was the sole objective, then the trip may have been successful for Ghana. If the idea, however, was to attract more American business to Ghana, then the assessment of the outcome would require deeper analysis.

The lesson from this is that, for such visits in future, it is important for the Government of Ghana to articulate its own expectations. Unnecessary time is wasted in needless arguments when it is not clear what the objectives are, and that is what happens when a government has no clearly expressed foreign policy. Ghanaians nevertheless enjoyed the temporary international media attention that they received even if this was very poorly structured by many of the international news networks. The residents of north-eastern Accra, however, deserve an apology for the inconvenience they had to suffer in order to make this visit a memorable one for President and Mrs Bush; the traffic jams were intolerable.

In this issue of The New Legon Observer many different issues that reflect the continuing debates about the nation's future directions are presented. Yaw Saffu has another article on political party and campaign

finance that should engage the attention of readers in these exciting times of political campaigns. Gobind Nankani has contributed a piece on how the global economic downturn could affect Ghana. This is important for a country that is thinking about how to develop faster.

In the society section, Ivan Addae-Mensah concludes, at least for now, his historical account of Ghana's participation in African football championships. This has become the 'must have' item for those who want to know about the history of football in Ghana.

Ama de Graft Aikins has a very interesting piece on Ghanaian art a piece that should encourage Ghanaians to engage with the subject more seriously than they have so far done.

Kofi Anyidoho provides the international dimension in this issue with his

very exciting piece on the US election campaign. Clearly there is a chance for history to be made, no matter who gets nominated by the Democrats.

Our observer notebook is provided by Ana Samarjian who explains why malaria has been so deadly.

This issue also carries the journal's first book review, written by Thomas Antwi-Boasiako on Ansa Asamoah's *Classes and Tribalism in Ghana*.

## CORRIGENDA

### NLO Volume 2 No 4 of 21 February 2008

In the International Section, the author of the article on Party Financing and Political Corruption, Ama Pokua Fenny should have been designated as a Principle Research Assistant at ISSER at footnote 6. Footnotes 6 and 7 in the text should accordingly have been re-numbered as 7 and 8.

Apologies for technical and production issues such as shifted text at page 21 and some picture quality and alignment issues.

Special Credit for sports photos, already given at Vol. 2 No. 2 of 17 January 2008 was inadvertently omitted from the contents section of the cover page. Black and white pictures accompanying Ivan Addae Mensah's gripping "Down Memory Lane – Past African Cup of Nations (CAN) – Reflections of a Former TV Sports Commentator and Critic - Part Two – 1982" are from "Pride and Glory, Black Stars in Germany '06" – Contributors Atukwei Okai, Joe Aggrey, Ken Bediako, Ebo Quansah, Felix Abayeteeye. Edited by Kwasi Gyan-Apenteng.

# The Current Situation Regarding the Regulation of Political Financing in Ghana

Yaw Saffu<sup>1</sup>

As far as the financing of political parties and election campaigns by parties and candidates is concerned, the Ghanaian political environment is, *in practice*, among the least regulated in the world, as can be gleaned from the International IDEA *Handbook on Funding of Political Parties and Election Campaigns, 2003*. In Ghana, the most relevant document on the matter of political financing or 'money in politics' is the Political Parties Act, 2000 (Act 574).

The Act does not really regulate political financing, beyond prohibiting non-citizens funding political parties and, by extension, election campaigns. At best, it empowers the Electoral Commission to monitor political financing, that is, the funding of political parties and election campaigns. But the Act contains several disclosure provisions that could, in the hands of a proactive monitoring and enforcement agency, provide the legal basis for a regulatory regime

that would, admittedly, be rather inchoate and incomplete. However, the Electoral Commission, the monitoring and enforcement agency, has so far chosen not to be proactive in this matter.

The Act is not explicit about anything that can be interpreted as regulating either the private funding of political parties and election campaigns by citizens, or controlling expenditure by candidates and political parties dur-

<sup>1</sup>Yaw Saffu is a retired Professor of Politics and currently a Consultant in Democratic Governance.

ing an election season. It does not provide for any direct or even indirect public funding of political parties. The then National Democratic Congress (NDC) government had myopically rejected arguments and submissions from the opposition parties and the Electoral Commission on the matter. The National Patriotic Party (NPP) government in turn has not had the courage, since 2000, to rectify what, in opposition, it knew and said was a mistake that had to be rectified.

The primary strength of the Act, and its major contribution towards any effort to deal with the serious challenge that the financing of political parties and election campaigns may present to the legitimacy of our democratic regime, is the clarity and the extensiveness of its disclosure provisions. These provisions should enable the Electoral Commission, if it is so minded to do, to obtain any information it wants, not only about the sources of the funds of political parties but also the destination of the expenditure of their funds. Such information, once obtained by the Commission, is in theory, and so far in practice also, easily available to any citizen who just turns up at the Electoral Commission Head Office in Accra and requests to see the appropriate files.

To discover the current legal situation regarding the regulation, or more accurately, the non-regulation, of political financing in the country, a closer examination of the provisions of Act 574 is necessary.

### **The Political Parties Act, 2000 (Act 574)**

The clearest provision in the Act is its prohibition of funding of political parties by non-citizens. The Act forbids foreigners or non-citizens, presumably as defined by the 1992 Constitution, to aid political parties in

any way. Non-citizens are liable to deportation if they contravene this prohibition. Whatever contribution they make, whether in cash or in kind, shall be forfeited to the State and shall be recoverable from the political party as debt owed to the State.

Several other African states, for understandable fears of foreign domination of their politics, ban funding of political parties by non-citizens. But such a blanket ban, without a pragmatic case-by-case examination of the nature and merits of the particular foreign aid to political parties, could amount to cutting off one's nose to spite one's face. After all, many so-called sovereign governments of these states often survive and function as they do only because of cash injections from the same donor sources.

Corporate citizens, defined by the Act as companies registered in Ghana and whose capital is at least 75 percent Ghanaian-owned, can contribute without any limits or any other regulations. Similarly, private funding of parties and election campaigns by Ghanaian citizens is not regulated in any way.

The one thing that the Act gets absolutely right is its emphasis on disclosure. There is no ambiguity whatsoever about its disclosure provisions. This is important because disclosure provisions are without doubt the fundamental pre-requisite for any effective regulatory regime for the private funding of parties and campaigns and for fighting any grand corruption that might be linked to party or campaign financing. Without disclosure provisions, other regulations concerning the raising and expenditure of funds by political parties and candidates are unworkable, virtually worthless.

### **Disclosure Provisions of the Act**

Part II of the Act - Operation of Political Parties - spells out what has to be disclosed. Within three months of being issued with a final certificate of registration, or such longer period as the Electoral Commission may allow, a political party is required to submit to the Commission a written declaration giving details of all its assets and expenditure, including contributions or donations in cash or in kind, made to the initial assets of the party by its founding members.

The declaration submitted to the Electoral Commission "shall state the sources of funds and other assets of the political party. The declaration shall also contain such other particulars as the Commission may in writing direct. The declaration shall; be supported by a statutory declaration made by the national treasurer and the general secretary of the political party" (section 13, subsections 2, 3 and 4). Within 30 days after the receipt of the declaration, the Commission shall cause it to be published in the Gazette.

Such a declaration, therefore, becomes a public document. Not only that. Legally, a statutory declaration is required to be true. It follows, therefore, that the National Treasurer and the General Secretary of a political party can be prosecuted for perjury if anybody can show that there are material falsehoods in their sworn party's declaration.

An Electoral Commission that is determined to enforce these disclosure provisions is offered an opportunity to invoke a less drastic sanction than that stipulated in the Act, namely, cancellation of the registration of a political party that "(a) refuses or neglects to comply with this section, or (b) submits a declaration which is false" (section 13, sub-section 6).

It has to be emphasised that the declaration of assets in the preceding paragraph (section 13 of the Act) relates only to the initial assets, contributions and donations made at the time of the founding of the party. But the next section of the Act, section 14, has identical disclosure requirements in relation to election campaigns. Within 21 days before a general election a political party shall submit to the Commission a statement of its assets and liabilities in such a form as the Commission may direct. Within six months after a general election or a by-election in which it has participated, a political party shall submit to the Commission a detailed statement of all expenditure incurred for that election, in such form as the Commission may direct.

Again, the statement is required to be supported by a statutory declaration made by the General Secretary and the National Treasurer. Thus, once more, the Electoral Commission is offered an easier route to enforcement of disclosure provisions than through the unrealistic, obviously politically unthinkable, option of cancellation of the registration of, say, the ruling party, or any of the large opposition parties, for that matter. Section 21, on Returns and Accounts

of Political Parties, is another clear, comprehensive disclosure provision. Within six months from 31 December of each year, every registered political party shall file with the Electoral Commission (i) a return, in the form specified by the Commission, indicating the state of its accounts, the sources of the funds, membership dues paid, contributions or donations in cash or kind, the properties of the party and time of acquisition, and such other particulars as the Commission may reasonably require, and (ii) audited accounts of the party for the year. Apart from these annual returns, the Commission may, at any time, upon reasonable grounds, order the accounts of a political party to be audited by an auditor appointed, and paid for, by the Commission.

Unlike the declaration under section 13, of founding donations and assets of political parties that have to be gazetted, the annual statement and audited accounts do not have to be published in the Gazette. They are thus not in the public domain. However, any person, after the payment of a fee, can inspect, and even obtain copies of, the returns and audited accounts of a political party filed with the Commission. Yours truly can report that the Commission

allows inspection of the accounts without a fee!

Thus, it is clear to me that a legal framework exists for the extraction of information from the political parties about their financing. The disclosure provisions in the Political Parties Act do provide a strong starting point concerning most of the obvious areas that need to be regulated. Some may argue that the disclosure provisions do not go far enough because they do not explicitly require the disclosure of names of donors of what could be described as suspiciously and potentially huge influence-buying amounts of money.

But that would be missing the point about the Commission's vast untapped powers, under section 21 in particular. The Commission can insist on having such information. There is nothing to stop the Commission from insisting that the parties name, in their annual returns, any person or persons who in any particular year donate more than, say, 1000 Ghana Cedis, or whatever amount the Commission decides to use as a threshold. There are obviously several public policy issues that need to be thrashed out in national debates before the Commission could go down this path. There are a number of technical and political problems to do, for instance, with thresholds for disclosure, what else needs to be disclosed apart from monetary donations and, in particular, how not to kill off private funding altogether, particularly for opposition parties.

Parties have enough difficulty, as it is, soliciting funds from straight, honest patriots and idealistic, optimistic democrats who expect no particular favours in return, without having to expose them to all sorts of possible unintended consequences. Financial backers of opposition parties, espe-



Tamale Stadium

cially, may be in genuine fear of a vindictive government backlash, whereby they are blacklisted in the award of contracts and denied access to other government controlled business opportunities.

### Provisions Missing from the Act

Although this paper has argued that the disclosure provisions in the Act do provide an adequate basis for the Electoral Commission to demand to know everything about a political party's revenue and expenditure, the Act does not give the Commission, or any other agency for that matter, the power to regulate or control anything about either a political party's income or expenditure. There is no question that transparency is, or should be, an important attribute of a democratic political system that is well worth insisting on. The information that the disclosure provisions in the Act can make available to the public could be extremely invaluable, for instance, for fighting corruption and for educating the electorate, about the profile of the parties that appeal to them for votes.

But, for the Electoral Commission to obtain the sort of detailed, truthful information that could serve such purpose, it would have to be strengthened, particularly through increased constitutionally guaranteed resources, to enable it to hire experts

to challenge the parties from time to time to get them to file more credible returns.

Incidentally, beyond the Electoral Commission, our independent press and investigative journalists would have to be more assiduous in the use of the legal avenues and opportunities made available by the disclosure provisions and the information these may throw up, to inform their readers about issues that the information highlights.

The power to extract information and make it available to the public is a worthy reform tool which is not to be sniffed at. However, that power, which the Act gives the Electoral Commission, is not the same as the power to regulate, to control, to impose limits, for instance, to order the return or confiscation of disallowed donations, to initiate police investigations or prosecution, and so on.

The Act does not impose any limits on either the amounts citizens may contribute or on the expenditure of political parties and candidates, or on what they can or cannot spend the money on. It omits to say anything about whether, and how, the high cost of waging electoral battles in Ghana should be brought down so that the circle of potential elective

office seekers could be expanded to give more honest but relatively impecunious citizens too a chance.

Finally, the Act says nothing about how serious, sizeable political parties that happen not to have backers with deep pockets can nevertheless be helped to play the necessary democratic roles that they are expected to play. That is to say, there is nothing in the Act on public funding of political parties. This is an omission that needs to be addressed, as part of the necessary political initiatives and measures designed to deepen liberal democracy in the country.

Regulating political party and election campaign financing or 'money in politics' is not, and should not be, only about attempting to reduce or stop the abuse, or potential misuse, of plutocratic or corporate influence acquired through donations to parties. Reform of political financing should also aim at levelling the playing field to ensure more equal, competitive elections, where three or four political parties have all been enabled to have genuinely reasonable opportunity to tell the electorate all over the country why they deserve to have the honour of serving the country and driving it forward into prosperity and equitable sharing of the fruits of development.

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# The Global Economic Downturn: What Challenges for Ghana?

Gobind Nankani<sup>2</sup>

The G7 Finance Ministers have expressed their concerns at the global economic downturn. The US is slipping into recessionary territory, the EU and Japan remain tepid, and China and India are also projecting lower growth. Food and fuel prices continue to rise. The extremely favorable global economic environment that Ghana, and other developing countries, have enjoyed over the last six years is turning around, and greater risks face us: a growth downturn and higher prices for imports. In this article, three questions are addressed: (1) what challenges does the end of the "Goldilocks" global era pose for Ghana? (2) how might these challenges begin to be addressed in an election year? (3) what is the single most important implied action that the new President will have to deal with early in 2009?

## The Challenges

For Ghana, the global downturn comes at a difficult time. Fiscal deficits have risen in 2006/7, breaking a downward trend since 2000. The benefits of the debt reduction schemes have all been fully absorbed. Oil prices are stable or rising as economies slow down. Additional external bond issues are likely to be difficult as global credit markets shrink. Most importantly, we are in an election year. This means there will be expenditure pressures and the scope for economic reforms will be limited.

Offsetting this threat to the relatively high growth and low inflation of the

last few years, is a potential windfall: Ghana's success in finding oil. Though limited at up to 1.3 billion barrels or 4 years of Nigeria's exports, oil - combined with needed structural reforms - may still provide a possible instrument to shore up Ghana's hopes to reach middle income status and double per capita income by 2015.

The immediate challenges of the downturn are the risks it poses for Ghana's growth. In particular, export demand and prices, tax revenues, import prices, foreign investments, access to external resources and possibly remittances are all at risk. The historical peaks for the prices of cocoa, timber, minerals are likely to taper off or decline, especially given the lower growth expected in China and India. There is likely to be little respite in oil prices, given the security and refinery capacity factors that complicate the demand-supply configuration that underlie its high price. The global investment climate has suffered a set back given the credit crunch and the uncertainty of demand. Access to external borrowing such as through the recent bond issue will be greatly diminished. And remittances may also be affected as Ghanaians abroad face difficult times.

A second set of challenges relate to the risks to higher inflation posed by rising oil and food prices. Monetary policy cannot be entirely accommodating, if inflation is to be kept at single digit levels. And the resulting combination of credit restraints

and/or higher interest rates will further thwart growth.

In short, the growth rates of 6 percent we have had over the last few years will, unless other factors come into play, decline, perhaps by 1 percent and possibly by as much as 2 percent. The goal of keeping inflation below 10 percent will be threatened as these difficult conditions interact with an underlying fiscal deficit in the 2 to 4 percent range (after allowing for the recent energy price pass through). And yet, sustaining high growth and low inflation are essential if Ghanaians are to sense that their lives are improving.

## Policy Options in an Election Year

The need to design policy responses to the global downturn is complicated by the electoral timetable. Political business cycles, with expenditure levels rising and reform efforts slacking in election years are now reluctantly acknowledged by politicians and analysts, including the international organisations. All concerned have learnt that the challenge is to manage this cycle to minimise its negative economic fallout, rather than to pretend that it can be completely avoided. In Ghana's case, the political business cycle comes on top of an already tepid economic reform effort over the last few years. It is correct that macroeconomic performance has been strong until 2005; that growth has picked up in 2005-7; and that the investment climate and

<sup>2</sup> Gobind Nankani is former Vice President for Africa at the World Bank and President of the Global Development Network

selected governance dimensions of reform have been strong. Yet, micro economic reforms in sectors such as energy, water and other infrastructure, have been particularly slow. The benign international environment, oil prices notwithstanding, has helped prop up Ghana's growth rate as much as reforms have. Ghana, and other developing countries have reaped great gains from the favourable international



Mass of Ghanaian Workers

environment, while reforming very selectively and gradually. With both now at risk, Ghana needs an election year economic strategy, and more importantly, the new President needs a bold economic strategy for implementation immediately in early 2009.

Three policy areas deserve utmost attention this year. First, fiscal pressures must be managed with discipline, which means that likely revenue shortfalls must not be allowed to raise the fiscal deficit. This is essential for protecting the gains made in reducing inflation. The poor suffer the most when inflation rises. The big risk in an election year is a wage and salary increase that is out of line with underlying fiscal and economic fundamentals. This will be difficult to manage, but there is no choice. A public debate on the global downturn and the risks it poses for Ghana will be essential. Its external source, is in a sense, an easy out for today's politicians.

Second, on the public investment program, the emphasis has to be on completing projects that will increase productivity this year or in the immediate future. The temptation, in an election year, to initiate new projects across the country is particularly ill advised given the risks of a down-

turn. Productivity growth is what ultimately makes an economy grow. In Ghana today, productivity is particularly hindered by poor infrastructure. Every effort must be made to complete infrastructure projects that are nearing completion, and to give priority to maintenance where this is holding back effective operation. This is particularly true for transportation, including rural roads. Further, no effort must be spared to take decisions (currently held up by government procedure) that will facilitate private activity relating to the infrastructural sectors. This is especially the case for the energy and water sectors. The water sector is the next sector at greatest risk, and decisions that are holding back reforms in water need immediate attention.

Third, the Government's focus on improving the investment climate and the costs of doing business has been admirable. Even so, Ghana's investment climate remains inferior to that of many comparable countries. This focus must be sharpened, to offset the higher costs that the downturn will have on exporters and on services. Ghana's benchmark here should be countries like Chile, Singapore, Taiwan etc. and not just other African countries.

### The Implied Challenge for the Next President

There is a large unfinished economic agenda for the next President. The Presidential debates and rallies will hopefully bring to the fore how each of the aspirants plans to approach this agenda. The next President will have his hands full with issues such as infrastructure, agriculture, exports, educa-

tion, health, information technology, housing, urban policy, crime, drugs, interpersonal and regional equity. It is almost certain that the benign international economic environment of the last six years will be behind us, and the scope for muddling along or muddling through will be limited. In all scenarios, one fundamental issue will need special focus by the new President: the use of Ghana's oil wealth, and the management of the economic and political challenges this opportunity brings along.

It would be ideal indeed if all presidential candidates committed themselves to a Code of Conduct surrounding the use of Ghana's potential oil resources. The code would emphasise three principles.

First, full transparency on all oil contracts, all revenues received and all expenditures made from oil revenues. This means publishing this data on websites, in the media and in all local languages. It means every ministry's, region's and district's share of these resources will be published. It means that any citizen wanting this information has full access to it. It also means that every citizen has access to the analysis that preceded the decision to spend on every public project, and data on how

much is being spent on each public project.

Second, passage of the Law of Fiscal Responsibility, referred to in the 2008 Budget statement, will be essential. This Law binds every government to being fiscally responsible, a problem that needs special attention especially in oil exporting countries. This should be complemented by a Law of Fiscal Crimes, which would make it a criminal offence for the Law of Fiscal Responsibility to be broken. Brazil, for example, has both laws, and the latter has been used to prosecute government officials and politicians who have been fiscally irresponsible. These laws would have to be carefully crafted so as to define fiscal irresponsibility with precision, so that they do not lead to a paralysis of public decision making.

Third, it is essential that a Resource Stabilisation Fund be established even before oil revenues begin to be collected, to capture funds when prices are higher than some predetermined average, and to draw down from in times of lower prices. There is much experience from countries such as Botswana (for diamonds), Norway, Chile, and more recently even Nigeria, to draw from in designing Ghana's own fund.

### Conclusion

The global economy is fast losing its momentum. The emerging economies, including China and India, are also affected. The outlook for Ghana's economy, as indeed for all developing economies, is for lower growth, with downside risks on lower revenues, higher inflation, lower exports, lower access to global

finance and remittances. This requires strong economic management this year. It also requires adherence to a Code of Conduct by the next administration on the management of Ghana's oil resources. The presidential debates must seek to get all presidential aspirants to sign to such a common Code of Conduct on the use of Ghana's oil resources. There are many examples of oil economies that have been left poorer, with weaker governance institutions and higher inequality by the discovery of oil. The next President, with complementary roles by civil society, the media, Parliament and other institutions for the protection of public resources, will need to rise up to the challenge, and render oil a blessing, not a curse, for Ghana. Our children and grandchildren will expect nothing less from us.

## Down Memory Lane - Past African Cup of Nations (CAN) Reflections of a Former TV Sports Commentator and Critic (Part Three – 1984)

Ivan Addae-Mensah<sup>3</sup>

### 1984 -The "Bouaké Debacle"

The second installment of this article was on the 1982 tournament in Libya. In 1978 Ghana won the cup as host only to be kicked out as defending champions in 1980. Then in 1982

a team which had not been given a dog's chance; a team which had been hurriedly assembled in the middle of January; a team which had nearly missed going to Libya for political reasons; a team which had gone to the tournament with its number 3

goalkeeper, and had been drawn in the group of death; through sheer determination, won the cup for an unprecedented fourth time, and made history.<sup>4</sup> Ghana therefore went to Côte d'Ivoire in 1984 as defending champions. This final installment of

<sup>3</sup> Professor Ivan Addae-Mensah was a freelance TV sports commentator and critic for Ghana Television between 1977 and 1982. As mentioned in the first installment of this article, the article was meant to be published before the commencement of the CAN 2008 tournament. Therefore by the time you read this article, the tournament will be over. The article in its present form is however still relevant, and will be relevant for posterity. It is being published in order to add to the scanty published archival material on Ghana's participation in past and current cup of nations tournaments. The author's personal experience in some of these tournaments makes this even more necessary.

<sup>4</sup> That record has since been broken by Egypt and equalled by Cameroun.

CREDIT: Charles Tachie-Menson



Jubilating Crowd at the Ohene Djan Stadium

my reflections on the African Cup of Nations is on the 1984 disastrous performance, again as defending champions.

### Preparations

Coach Osam Duodu was initially put in charge of the team and decided to use his 1982 team as the nucleus, with a number of younger local players invited in. Coach Afranie was made his deputy. But then, just as in the past, strange things began to happen to our preparations towards this tournament. The then Ghana Football Association (GFA) Chairman, Lawton Ackah Yensu suddenly resigned in January 1984 under totally inexplicable circumstances, citing personal reasons for his sudden resignation. He made his announcement on 31st December 1983, to take effect on 3rd January 1984. This was barely two months to the tournament. A new caretaker GFA was announced by Sports Council Chief Executive L.T. Katé Caesar and hurriedly assembled on 3rd January 1984. It was under the Chairmanship of Mr. Stanley Abayaa, with Commander Ofori Yentumi, Nick

Dadzie (elder brother of former Black Stars Captain Kuuku Dadzie), Major George Lamptey and K. Ampim Darko as secretary.

It was rumoured that Ackah Yensu resigned because of the report of the Justice Kingsley Nyinah Committee which investigated the defeat of the Black Stars by the Green Eagles of Nigeria in an Olympic Games qualifying match. But two days later, Mr Abayaa turned down the chairmanship appointment. Mr L. T. K. Caesar, a Government official and employee, personally took over the chairmanship of the GFA. FIFA and CAF would never have tolerated such an action these days, and would have immediately suspended Ghana from the organisations. Katé Caesar's subsequent decisions were to create the conditions that eventually led to the disaster in Bouaké in March 1984. Other committees were set up. These included a Management Committee chaired by Commander Ofori Yentumi, with Nick Dadzie as Vice Chairman, Antwi Gyamfi, Captain George Partington, Nana Yaw Owusu, Mr. Kojo Nunoo, Dr. J. Ofori Atta, Mr. Fred Osam Duodu and Mr. E. K.

Afranie. The Technical Committee had Commander Ofori Yentumi as Chairman, Rex Danquah (is it the same Rex Danquah who is on the current Local Organising Committee?) as Member/Secretary, Mr Osam Duodu as Team Manager, Mr Afranie as his assistant and Mr Victor Anku. The new management committee arranged a series of training matches and programmes for the team. On 25th January they left for the Benin Republic for a training tour. The team was made up of a blend of some old players with some very good young players. Osam Duodu's intentions were clear. He was adopting the 1978 and 1982 strategies. But once again poor planning and unnecessary interference in technical matters bedevilled this tour.

The stars arrived in Benin without the Béninois authorities even knowing that any such tour had been arranged. So who had corresponded with whom before the Stars left Accra? But fortunately, the Béninois authorities hurriedly arranged a match between the Black Stars and a club side, Dragons Ouème, (the team that Abedi Pele first played for in his quest for international experience after leaving Real Tamale United). The Benin team had five relatively average Ghanaians, including Bashiru Gambo, Okoe Kumordjie and George Gormashie. But, as if to confirm our poor preparation, the match ended in a 0-0 draw. On Feb 7th the team played another trial match against the Gambian National Team in Banjul, which the Stars only managed to win by 1-0. This was the team they had walloped 7-1 in the preparations for the 1978 tournament. The only saving grace was that only a fortnight earlier, the Gambians had beaten Guinea by

one goal to nil. On 4th February, Ghana played another trial match against Guinea and won by 2-1.

Three weeks before the tournament, and in spite of all the preparations and trial matches that the Osam Duodu-selected team had gone through, Nii Katé Caesar, the GFA Chairman and CEO of the Sports Council, made another of his inexplicable decisions. He decided to invite some so-called professionals then playing in relatively mediocre clubs in the Middle East, to join the Black Stars. Even though some of these players had been household names in Ghana, it was obvious that most of them were already past their peak. Moreover, at that time, the professional league in these Arab countries of North Africa and the Middle East was no different from our own local league, and could not be compared with the current professional football our players play in Europe. On 8th February, Mohammed Polo flew into Ghana from the United Arab Emirates. The other "professionals" called in were George Alhassan, Abdul Razak and Adolf Armah, who were all playing for clubs in Egypt.

The team trained on Sunday 12th February, beat Hearts of Oak 7-0, went to Togo and played the Togolese national team, but with all the so-called professionals, the team performed very poorly and lost 2-1. On Sunday February 19th they played against Hasaacas and again performed very poorly, Then Coach Osam Duodu was sacked on Monday 20th February, two weeks before the start of the tournament. He was sacked because of certain remarks he allegedly made on a "Sports Digest" programme. To a question from the late Ohene Gyan whether Mr. Kojo



Hectic match between Ghana and Morocco during recent CAN 2008 Tournament

Nunoo, a member of the Management Committee, was only an errand boy for Katé Caesar's Management Committee, Osam Duodu replied in the affirmative. Incidentally Kojo Nunoo had been the Team Manager for the 1978 winning team which had C. K. Gyamfi as coach and Osam Duodu as his assistant. The relationship between Osam and his assistant Afranie had allegedly not been very good, even though they were in the technical team of 1982. Afranie, was put in charge of the team when Osam Duodu was sacked.

Joe Aggrey, then Sports Editor of Daily Graphic, was prompted to call for the reinstatement of Osam Duodu, who should be given the full powers to select his own team. This was not heeded. On 28th February, the team left for Abidjan with the following players:

**Goal:** Joseph Carr, Mohammed Odoom, and Owusu Mensah.

**Defence:** Joe Odoi, Ernest Appau,

Kwasi Appiah, Hesse Odamtten, Papa Arko, Abdul Razak, Isaac Acquaye, Seth Ampadu, Adolf Armah, Isaac Paha, Addae Kyenkyenhene.

**Forwards:** George Alhassan, Mohammed Polo, Opoku Nti, Ben Kayede, Kofi Abbrey, Francis Kumi, John Bannerman, George Lamptey and Albert Asase.

Oddly enough, many of the players were left-footed. A few others were ambidextrous. There was Opoku Nti, Albert Asase, Mohammed Polo, Abdul Razak, Francis Kumi, Papa Arko Adolf Armah and Kofi Abbrey. In one match during the tournament, there was a period when the entire forward line and the central and left midfield positions were occupied by left-footed players. How could the team be said to be balanced?

We were in Group B with Nigeria, Algeria and Malawi. Our first match was against Nigeria. There was utter confusion of roles in the team. Within

CREDIT: Graphic Corporation

ten minutes all our weaknesses were totally exposed by Nigeria. They came close to scoring in the 8th and 10th minute, and by the 14th minute we were down by one goal through a Henry Nwosu strike. Pressure on our team was intense, especially from the Nigerian left flank which was our right flank where the Nigerians knew we would be weak, having so many left-footed players playing in positions that normally are occupied by right-footed players. We managed to equalise before the end of the first half against the run of play. A 20th minute free kick taken by Kofi Abbrey (left footed player) found the head of Opoku Nti (left footed player) to head home the equaliser. The other left footed players who played upfront that day were Mohammed Ahmed Polo, Albert Asase and Abdul Razak. But it was only a matter of time before Nigeria scored their winning goal in the 31st minute through Chibuzor to lead by 2-1. In the 72nd Minute Opoku Nti, the only player who was outstanding in the team that day, got injured and was replaced. Mohammed Polo looked visibly tired and a pale shadow of his former self, obviously indicating that

he was totally unfit and the GFA had no business calling him into the team three weeks to the tournament without assessing his match fitness.

It was not that Nigeria played any wonderful game. Any well drilled team could have made mince-meat of them. But on that day, our own team was totally hopeless. After the match irate Ghanaian fans living in the Ivory Coast nearly beat up Commander Ofori Yentumi and Caesar, but for the timely intervention of the security personnel. They said they had not paid good money from their scanty resources to see such an abysmal performance by the Stars. Group A comprised of Ivory Coast, Cameroun, Togo and Egypt. Ivory Coast beat Togo 3-0 while Egypt beat Cameroun 1-0.

In a post-match analysis, the Daily Graphic wrote that the Stars' chances of advancing into the next round looked very dim. Algeria had beaten Malawi 3-0. The Daily Graphic headline of 8th March 1984 said it all: SELECTION - CAUSE OF OUR DEFEAT. The writer said that our team was selected based on names

instead of form. After the match, when Afranie was interviewed, he said that the technical team thought that the professionals, being professionals, would be match fit and would deliver, that was why he selected them in place of the young local players who had undergone all the training tours before Osam Duodu was sacked. But Abdul Razak countered that "if you are a professional in Europe a club forces you to keep fit. But we are in the Gulf and Egypt where the level is not so high so you must motivate yourself". Obviously the team could not motivate itself against Nigeria, and the players were obviously not match fit.

Nigeria's second match against Malawi ended in a 2-2 draw. If anything was an indication that our loss to Nigeria was because we were hopeless and ill-prepared, not that Nigeria was very good, it was this match between Nigeria and Malawi. Ghana's second match was to be against Algeria, which would be a repeat of our 1982 epic semi-final. Algeria was determined to have their own back on us as revenge for their painful defeat in 1982. Coach Afranie made seven changes to his team which played against Nigeria, obviously now aware that he had selected a totally unbalanced, physically and mentally weak team to play against Nigeria in the first match. In that first match Nigeria had players like Nwosu, Stephen Keshi, Etuegbu, Chibuzor, Rashid Yekini and Ali Baba, all of them very tough and fit customers. Notwithstanding these changes, Ghana lost the match 2-0. Ghana, the defending champions, had been kicked out of the tournament in the first round, just as had happened in Ibadan in 1980. This was the match which the GNA report-



Ohene Djan Stadium in Accra

ed with the headline "The Bouaké Debacle".

We only managed a face-saving 1-0 win against Malawi in our final group match in which coach Afranie eventually decided to do away with all the so-called professionals of the Middle East and field a team dominated by local players.

The second group A matches ended Cameroun 4 - Togo 1 and Egypt 2 - Ivory Coast 1. The third group matches ended Egypt 0 - Togo 0 and Cameroun 2 - Ivory Coast 0. The host nation was therefore eliminated in the first round with Egypt and Cameroun advancing into the semi-finals from Group A and Algeria and Nigeria advancing from group B. Fearing that the elimination of the host nation might result in the total collapse of the tournament, the then President, Felix Houphouët Boigny, decided to buy all the tickets and distribute them free of charge to fans to enable them attend the matches.

Since 1984, I have always wondered how Ghana could go into a match with 7 out of the 11 players on the field at a given time all being left-footed. I am not a coach, but one did not need an expert coach to tell one that such a team would be totally unbalanced and confused on the field of play, especially if most of them are also not match fit and were brought in because of their "big names". To me 1984 still stands out as Ghana's worst ever performance both at the team and at the management level since she started participating in the Nations Cup. Even though we also went out in 1980 and 2006 in the first round, albeit on goal difference, our performance in 1984, before and during the tournament, should serve as

a classic textbook case history of how not to prepare and participate in a sports tournament such as the Cup of Nations.

In the 1984 tournament Egypt beat Cameroun in the opening match, but Cameroun went on to win the cup after beating Nigeria in the finals. The two teams are again in the same group in 2008. What is going to happen this time?

We are all hoping for a repeat of 1978 in 2008. 30 years is a long time to wait to host a tournament and win it. In 1978 we won as hosts. In 1982 we won as underdogs against the mighty petro-dollars of Gaddafi's Libya. We are hungry for a repeat performance of these two golden years. I wish the Black Stars THE VERY BEST OF LUCK IN 2008.

### Epilogue

I have had to add this epilogue because, as already mentioned, this article, which is the third and final in a series on past African Cup of Nations tournaments, was meant to be published before the commencement of the CAN 2008 tournament. Unfortunately, several factors prevented this from being done. But the editorial committee decided that the article's archival usefulness makes it still relevant even if it is coming out after the tournament is over.

The tournament is now over. Egypt beat Cameroun in the first match of the first round. The two teams met again in the final, a repeat of what happened in 1984. But this time round Egypt has had the upper hand and has won the cup for an unprecedented 6th time. Ghana has not been able to achieve her dream of hosting and winning as she did in 1978. But for the first time in our history, we have won a third place trophy.

In all our previous participations, anytime we have gone up to the semi-final stage, we have gone on to win either the gold or silver, or lost the third place match as happened in South Africa in 1996. This is the first time that we have won a third place playoff. We hope we shall go two steps better in 2010 in Angola and South Africa. Bravo, Black Stars. You have made us proud in 2008, even though our dream did not become a reality.



Match between Guinea and Egypt during recent CAN 2008 Tournament

# Reflections on Ghanaian Art in Ghana's Jubilee Year

Ama de-Graft Aikins<sup>5</sup>



Sign paintings of Azuma Nelson, Kwame Nkrumah, Steven Appiah and Otumfuo Osei Tutu II (courtesy Kofi Setordji)

Art is all around us. Drive through any major town in Ghana. You are bound to see, at some point, a row of signboards bearing the faces of Kwame Nkrumah, John Agyekum Kufour, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, Jerry John Rawlings, Nelson Mandela, Bill Clinton and other national and world leaders in uncanny likeness or dismal

caricature. Navigate a major roundabout and you might spot a monument – J. B. Danquah at Osu, Accra, Komfo Anokye at Bantama, Kumasi, Monica Amekoafia, the first Miss Ghana at the town centre, Hohoe. Stop for a moment and take in what is around you. The stalls selling multi-coloured batik and tie-dye, the pot-

tery shops, the makeshift galleries for wood carvings and woven baskets, the sculptured vegetable and fruit stands, the mass produced framed portraits of icons, symbols of everyday life and wise sayings. Visit any plush hotel with one or more stars and you cannot fail to notice rows of paintings by local artists, lining the lobby walls, positioned to be appreciated or purchased. In your own home there might be variants of these artefacts: a Gye Nyame (Akan adinkra symbol proclaiming the omnipotence of God) wood carving, a generic portrait of Jesus Christ, or an abstract oil painting on the wall; batik fabric transformed into a table cloth, cushion covers or curtains; a leather rug or footrest from Tamale on the living room floor; the old Asante asesegua (carved wooden stool) sitting in the kitchen corner.

Art means different things to different people: a fundamental source of visual stimulation, the highest form of aesthetic pleasure, a source of income, a form of therapy, a political tool, a resource for development. "Art is about life. Artists are a precious human resource"<sup>6</sup>. But the complex significance of art is often undervalued and the future prospects of those who produce it in various forms are under increasing threat.

The arts - music, theatre, visual - are generally marginalised in Ghana's

<sup>5</sup> Ama de-Graft Aikins is a social psychologist based at the University of Cambridge and the Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS), University of Ghana.

<sup>6</sup> Virginia Ryan and Prof. Joe Nkrumah, Foundation for Contemporary Arts (FCA), Ghana: <http://www.fcaghana.org>



Vandalised statue of Kwame Nkrumah, National Museum  
(courtesy Ama de-Graft Aikins)

development agenda. But the visual arts face particularly tough challenges. Over the last few years numerous media articles have highlighted the neglect of the theatre arts and the music industry. Theatre artists bemoan severe lack of funding to create and produce quality work; musicians castigate a growing counterfeiting culture that denies them the benefit of full sales and a weak administrative body that fails to ensure appropriate payment of royalties. The government has begun to take note. The most recent Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy document (GPRS II)<sup>7</sup> observed:

"The music and film industry is fast-growing with unlimited potential. As

one of Ghana's most significant pioneer industries, the industry is a powerful means of enhancing the country's identity and distinctiveness, while simultaneously creating employment, developing human skills and generating social capital and cohesion. However, it is infused with the perennial problems of lack of access to finance, limited application of modern technology, lack of effective laws and regulations to protect intellectual property rights, low level of awareness on intellectual property rights, lack of enforcement and supervision of laws and regulations, and inadequate ex-

port promotion services. One of the most devastating aspects of this legacy is that the local music and film industry is not developing as fast as it should."

The visual arts too constitute "a powerful means of enhancing the country's identity and distinctiveness, while simultaneously creating employment, developing human skills and generating social capital and cohesion". Visual artists also face the range of "perennial problems" attributed to the music and film industries. Yet in media and official accounts their public significance and role rarely feature. This discursive absence works its way into the arena of practical commitment.

Our year-long celebration of Ghana@50 highlighted the discrepancy most acutely. The history and contributions of the music industry and the theatre arts to Ghana's national identity and development were woven into official celebrations. Business sponsorship ensured that major cities were treated to a 'From Highlife to Hiplife' concert featuring iconic highlife and hiplife artists such as Koo Nimo, Nana Ampadu, C. K. Mann, Kojo Antwi, Amandzaba and Reggie Rockstone. The Ghana@50 secretariat funded Ghana@50 Theatre Classics – an impressive monthly line-up of 12 classic plays from Ama Ata Aidoo, J.B Danquah, Martin Owusu, Kobina Sekyi, Efu Sutherland and other Ghanaian playwrights showcased at Accra's National Theatre.

Compared to these solid public investments, the visual arts fared badly. Old monuments were revamped and new ones commissioned in Accra and other major cities and historic towns. There was official acknowledgement of artists who played specific roles in Ghana's independence – for example Madame Theodosia Okoh, who designed the nation's flag. There was a small exhibition at the National Museum featuring local painters. But these were minor gestures. Their impact on public consciousness was not as hard hitting as the musical and theatrical events. At times they appeared as after-thoughts or as by-products of commercial activities. The branding of public monuments with commercial products is a case in point. Driving around revamped circles in Accra one often wonders whether their monuments exist to serve the financial fortunes of Nestle, Unilever, Guinness and other multinational

<sup>7</sup> Republic of Ghana (2005) Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II) (2006-2009); National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) Page 29.

companies or the memories of our national heroes.<sup>8</sup> The editorial of a recent issue of ArtFOCUS, a local art magazine, criticised the official neglect of the visual arts in the Ghana@50 celebrations:

"Officials have used art in a functional sense: celebratory monuments, statues, busts and rockeries have been commissioned ... visibly sponsored by the business community ... Beyond this vivid commercialisation of 'public art' official engagement with art has been nil. Many may have noted how the passing of two Ghanaian Art greats - Mrs Grace Kwami last year, Saka Acquaye this year - went unnoticed in official circles. This and other forms of apathy towards Ghana's art scene compelled the art community to celebrate itself ... There was a clear difference between official and art community celebrations: the former tended towards inflicting mass produced mediocrity on the public, the latter towards collective self-reflection of the meaning of independence for artists and the public."

Art was not always marginalised in Ghana. Its low status in official and public consciousness is a product of complex factors. Ghana has a rich art history. Its roots in antiquity have been traced to ninth century West African wall paintings and sculptures. Its 18th century Asante and Ewe ceremonial kente were inspired by centuries - old cultural customs. Indigenous Ghanaian art forms have evolved by incorporating external artistic influences from other parts of



Arthaus workshops on batik making and painting (courtesy Kofi Setordji)

Africa, Asia and the West into their repertoire; for example kente evolved into a public ceremonial cloth while taking on foreign elements, specifically the weaving of silk threads imported from Asia into the traditional cotton. Ghanaian art and artistic expression, like that elsewhere, has evolved through a dynamic exchange between internal artistic vision and the external demand from changing times and public tastes. Similarly, the livelihoods of Ghanaian artists, like others elsewhere, have always

depended on the patronage of local or foreign art lovers and collectors.

At Independence a new phase of Ghanaian artistic expression was born when art schools and colleges were established in Accra (Achimota School), Kumasi (College of Art at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology), and Winneba. Heavily supported by the Nkrumah administration - which used art and artists systematically to forge its project of national unity and

<sup>8</sup> A letter to NLO (Vol 1 No. 2, 13 December 2007) by Emmanuel Y. Ablo described the heavy commercialisation of public monuments thus: "When I drive or walk by these statues I am incensed and deeply offended by the sight of all the billboards that clutter...the statues of our heroes. There are billboards advertising this or that alcoholic or non-alcoholic beverage; or promoting one or the other product or service. In all my travels in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Great Britain, the United States of America and other countries I have never encountered this kind of display of gross disrespect for a nation's heroes. It just would not be tolerated in other countries. So why are we tolerating this?"

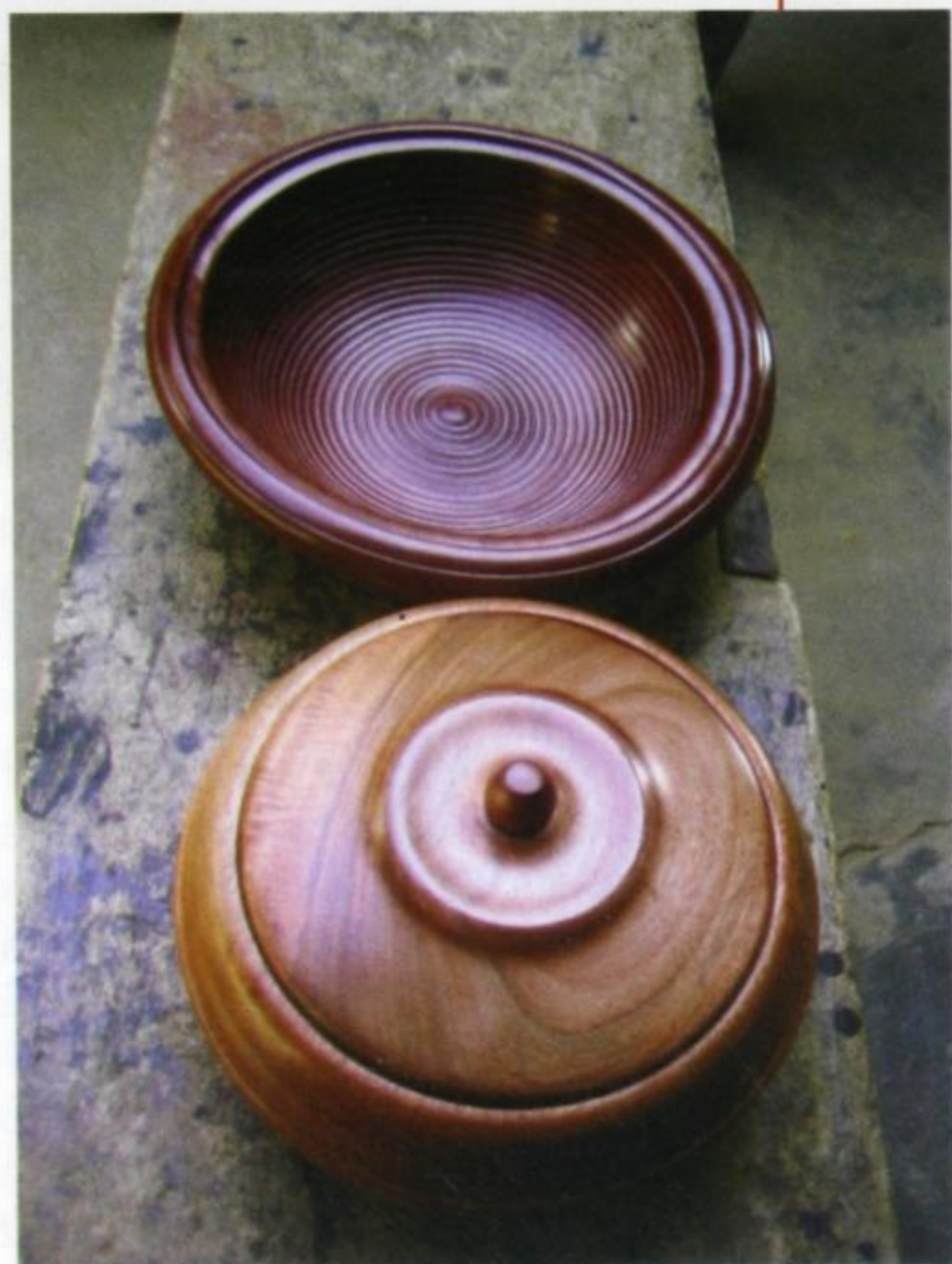
enforce the image of Nkrumah as a pan-African leader par excellence - these art institutions were run in the first decade or so by British artists and art theorists. This period nurtured a new vibrant community of Ghanaian artists - for example Kofi Antubam, Oku Ampofo, Vincent Kofi and Ablade Glover - who produced 'formal art' with Afro-European sensibilities. The art community, like several cultural and administrative institutions, was stifled during the 1970s and 1980s era of coups, successive military government rule and structural adjustment. Many prominent formal artists, like doctors, lawyers, and university lecturers, migrated to countries that allowed them to pro-

duce art without fear or restrictions. Other artists stayed: some made bold political statements with their art (e.g. the Akwapim Six), some struggled to make a living underground, while others abandoned art for more viable careers and vocations. Indigenous art production stalled.

The current situation for Ghanaian art and artists is mixed. There was a resurgence of formal artistic expression in the 1990s led by visionary painters and sculptors who have since fashioned international careers locally (e.g. Wiz Kudowor, Kofi Setordji), in other parts of Africa (e.g. El Anatsui in Nigeria) or in the West (e.g. Kwesi Owusu-Ankomah in Europe). These Ghanaian artists count among renowned African artists often featured in African-centred exhibitions, collections and anthologies, produced on or outside the continent.<sup>9</sup> But such success belongs to a tiny minority of artists. Many artists - whether self or formally trained - cannot make a living purely from their art. Kobina Nyarko, a promising young artist with an Industrial Arts degree from KNUST's College of Art observes: "Industrial art students end up not using their degrees; there is no finance to set up studios or businesses".<sup>10</sup> Similarly while some indigenous arts have flourished in the last 50 years (e.g. kente weaving, wood carving, bead making<sup>11</sup>), others are dying (e.g.

the pottery industry in the Eastern region, a predominantly female domain). Sign painting, the vibrant and most visible genre of commercial art in Ghana and the premier training ground for many young artists, faces imminent demise with the arrival of graphic design technology. And we cannot ignore the power of cheap goods from China and India - portraits, ornaments, soft furnishings - to undermine the livelihoods of local artists financially (by offering cheaper alternatives to a buying public) and symbolically (by transforming lay representations and legitimation of functional art).

The Nkrumah administration's strategy of ring-fenced funding for the arts has not been adopted by subsequent governments. Local artists are more likely to be supported by foreign governments, institutions or individuals. Alliance Française, Goethe Institut and the British Council regularly hold exhibitions featuring different genres of Ghanaian art. These foreign institutions are also actively involved in development projects that utilise local art and push its functional boundaries. For example British Council's recent hosting of a conference in February 2008 on Art and Climate Change has led to collaborative projects between local artists and foreign NGOs on waste management in Ghana. But foreign support is a double-edged sword. Over the years the politics of funding and patronage has transformed the very nature of artistic expression and the accessibility of artistic products. Because foreigners support and buy more Ghanaian art than Ghanaians do<sup>12</sup>



Indigenous art - wooden bowls from the Ashanti Region (courtesy Ama de-Graft Aikins)

<sup>9</sup> See for example UK's Africa '95, '05; Contemporary African Art (1999), A History of Art in Africa (2001); African Art Now (2005).

<sup>10</sup> Kobina Nyarko Profile: [www.africanencounters.com](http://www.africanencounters.com)

<sup>11</sup> In 2007 for example Ghanaian bead makers from the Krobo area were flown to Tanzania by a Tanzanian gallerist to teach and train local beadmakers. The rise of kente as an iconic cloth for pan-African expression and emancipation supports local kente weavers.

<sup>12</sup> For example the manager of the Artists Alliance Gallery, Lily Sefa-Boakye, notes that 80 percent of buyers are foreigners (mainly Euro-American).



Independence In Dependence Exhibition by Nubuke Foundation, Accra's Artists Alliance Gallery, April 2007 (courtesy Kofi Setordji)

artists produce for foreign – and predominantly Euro-American - sensibilities. In the afore-mentioned issue of ArtFOCUS a Canadian fine artist observed of her Ghanaian counterparts during a working visit to Accra:

"I was surprised at how preoccupied artists were with developing, not ideas, but a marketable style. They were not as concerned with ideas and styles that were being developed by artists in my hometown of Toronto, as they were with whether the artists there were selling well. To me, there were many more questions to ask about art or through art, in Ghana or elsewhere, beyond: 'Do you think they would buy this in America?'"

Even in the realm of indigenous art - from arts centre stalls in Accra and Tamale to self-styled galleries and museums springing up across the country – there is a new wave of

deliberate 'antiquing' of traditional artefacts to satisfy the western aesthetic palate.

Ghanaian art patrons do exist and own formidable collections. But they do not receive the credit and support due them. In March 2007, Mr Seth Dei, a powerful local art collector with an extensive collection of Ghanaian paintings dating back to the early 1960s signed a deal with New York University to have his collection stored. Mr Dei's decision was influenced in part by a lack of appropriate institutional space in Ghana to hold and maintain his collection. The loss of the Dei family collection to a foreign institution was sad. But even sadder was the absolute silence that met the deal: there was no public discourse on the merits or demerits of Seth Dei's decision. Kwamina Ewusie, co-founder of African Encounters, a San Diego-based art agency that represents Ghanaian and other African

artists, captured sentiment in the art community:

"In addition to the lack of institutions in Ghana to care for and maintain the artwork, I think [Seth Dei] understands that value in the art world is sadly determined by the west. Putting his collection in the trust of NYU in that regards is actually a positive thing for Ghanaian art, in that the western art world will lend Ghanaian art the legitimacy and value it deserves by featuring the work in exhibitions they curate. Overall, I think it was a good move, but I do agree that the move did not trigger discussion in the media, which is another symptom of the media's (and society's) lack of reverence for the arts."

What does the future hold for Ghanaian art? Saka Acquaye, the late great Ghanaian sculptor, playwright and musician argued:



African Encounters Exhibition – MoM 2007-8. Exhibition of Ghanaian paintings by African Encounters, San Diego's Museum of Man, 2007 - Present (courtesy Kwamina Ewusie)

"We do not take our own art and culture seriously – that is why Ghanaian and African artists are not encouraged by our own people. We must place our art and culture in a more modern perspective. People must be made aware of these values – because it is from them that we can rediscover ourselves and draw the inspiration to face our national responsibilities."<sup>13</sup>

Many might merely echo this critical observation and recommendation. But a growing number of local artists, art collaborators and patrons are actually doing something. During Ghana's jubilee year it is this community which made the presence of Ghana's art community felt in Ghana and abroad. In Accra in April 2007,

"Independence In Dependence" - an exhibition of paintings, sculpture and installations reflecting on Ghana's 50 years of independence - was curated at the Artists Alliance Gallery by Odile Agyare who co-founded and manages Nubuke Foundation.<sup>14</sup> The work of women artists, a marginalised subgroup, was showcased by The Loom, Ghana's oldest gallery, and through the Women Artists Institute's (WAI) art competition titled "Engraving the Achievements of Women; 50 years of Ghana's Development". In San Diego a year-long exhibition of Ghanaian paintings was curated at the Museum of Man by Kwamina Ewusie's African Encounters.<sup>15</sup> Institutions run by artists, such as Professor Ablade Glover's Artists Alliance Gallery and Kofi Setordji's ArTHAUS, carried on

their work of training, nurturing and representing local artists. These groups, like Virginia Ryan and Joe Nkrumah of the Foundation for Contemporary Artists, believe that 'art is about life' and 'artists are a precious human resource'. They are working to ensure that the art that surrounds us in our everyday lives, and the artists who produce it, flourish. They are nurturing that important minority of visionary artists who imagine beyond culture and produce innovative work that transforms the meanings we ascribe to art and to ourselves through art. They are lobbying to push forward progressive policies for the visual arts. The future of Ghanaian art needs all these elements.

<sup>13</sup> James Gibbs (2007). Saka Acquaye: A talent is gone. Daily Graphic, March 31.

<sup>14</sup> [www.nubukefoundation.org](http://www.nubukefoundation.org)

<sup>15</sup> [www.africanencounters.com](http://www.africanencounters.com)

## A Postcard from America A Chance to Make History, Either Way

Kofi Anyidoho<sup>16</sup>

The United States of America has a date with History. A chance to make History. Or merely repeat it, as always. America has a gift to offer the White House and the world at large: the first ever Woman president or the first ever Black president. Either way, History would have been made.

The world has always known of the American Dream, a dream built upon the great example of Abraham Lincoln, that it is indeed possible in America for a man to step out of an ancestral log cabin in the backwoods of Illinois and walk straight into the White House in Washington D.C. Great as the dream comes, somehow, it has always been a man's dream, a white man's dream. Until a few months ago, any white woman and especially any black man or black woman dreaming of the White House, would have had to have his or her head re-examined by a combined team of diviners and psychiatrists. Such an idea has, until now, belonged only to the imagination of the poet or novelist as a certified divine dreamer.

Ghanaian poet and novelist Kwadwo Abaidoo (of blessed memory), in his 1995 novel *Black Fury*, offers us the unlikely dream of America's first woman president - President Ethel Pinkerton. But Abaidoo's dream is set far beyond our own time, deep into the 21st century - 2027. So far, in the history of real politics in the USA, the



The White House

White House has been "a man's world".

Not that America has not had women in public life who could have made outstanding occupiers of the White House. I still recall the excitement with which I first read the autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt. As I put the book down, I couldn't help wondering what she couldn't have done with and for America if she had been the president, rather than the president's wife. America, of course, had a great president in Franklin D. Roosevelt, but America missed out on another, perhaps an even greater president, in Eleanor Roosevelt. History was just not on her side. At the time of her birth in October 1884,

it was not possible for a woman, even a white woman, to vote in America's federal elections. The State of Colorado took the lead in 1893 with legislation that gave women the right to vote. Illinois followed in 1921. It was not till 1920 that congress passed the 14th Amendment to the federal constitution granting women the right to vote.

Much of the credit for this major breakthrough goes to a long campaign led, among others, by Susan B. Anthony, who, unfortunately, did not live to see her dream come true, having died in 1906. Ida B. Wells, the tireless black civil rights campaigner, on the other hand, may have been a bit more fortunate and indeed was

<sup>16</sup> Professor Kofi Anyidoho teaches in the Department of English, the University of Ghana, Legon. He wrote this article during a recent visit to America, before President George Bush's African tour, which included Ghana (19-21 February 2008).



Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton, presidential hopefuls for the Democrats

able to offer herself in 1930 as a candidate for the Illinois legislature, perhaps the first black woman to do so. Thanks to the civil and women's rights campaigns of Anthony, Wells and others, Eleanor Roosevelt was lucky enough to have the right to vote. Becoming a president, however, was clearly out of the question for women in her time and well beyond the time of her death in 1962.

Today, America has, once more, had a great president in Bill Clinton. America is now being offered the chance to have another, perhaps an even greater president, in Hillary Clinton, who, are told, seems to have drawn much inspiration from Eleanor Roosevelt in her role as America's First Lady. For a brief moment, it all seemed likely, almost certain, that the dream of America's first woman

president would finally become a reality, come January 1, 2009. But that was before an even more daring dreamer stepped into the political arena, the unlikely phenomenon of the first black man in the White House - Barack Obama.

To many of us, it began as an extravagant joke - a certain African-American Illinois Senator Barack Obama as a candidate in the Democratic Party's primaries for America's next president. Yes, it is true that Obama had already made some history by following in Abe Lincoln's footsteps from Illinois into the Senate in Washington. But someone needed to remind Obama of the fate of the Rev. Dr. Jesse Jackson and his two abortive attempts to offer himself as a presidential candidate. Maybe Obama is too young to know

of a similar dream by Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois early in the 20th century.

At age 82 in 1959, Du Bois must have offered himself for the US Senate on the ticket of the American Labor Party in New York, merely to prove a point, a point already captured in his now proverbial statement that "the problem of the 20th century is the problem of the colour line". For well over a century, America seems to have been cursed with Du Bois's famous statement. Significantly, Du Bois was born on February 23, 1868, the very year the US Congress gave black men the right to vote. They couldn't have voted earlier, since the right to vote was open only to men who owned property. The black man or woman in America was, for a long time, not only property but indeed computed to be no more than three-fifths of a human being. Du Bois the realist was also a great dreamer. He just could not give up on Black people, not even on America. His poem "Children of the Moon" ended with the following prophetic dream:

*I rose upon the Mountain of the Moon ...  
I felt the blazing glory of the Sun;  
I heard the Songs of Children crying,  
"Free!"  
I saw the face of Freedom ...  
And I died.*

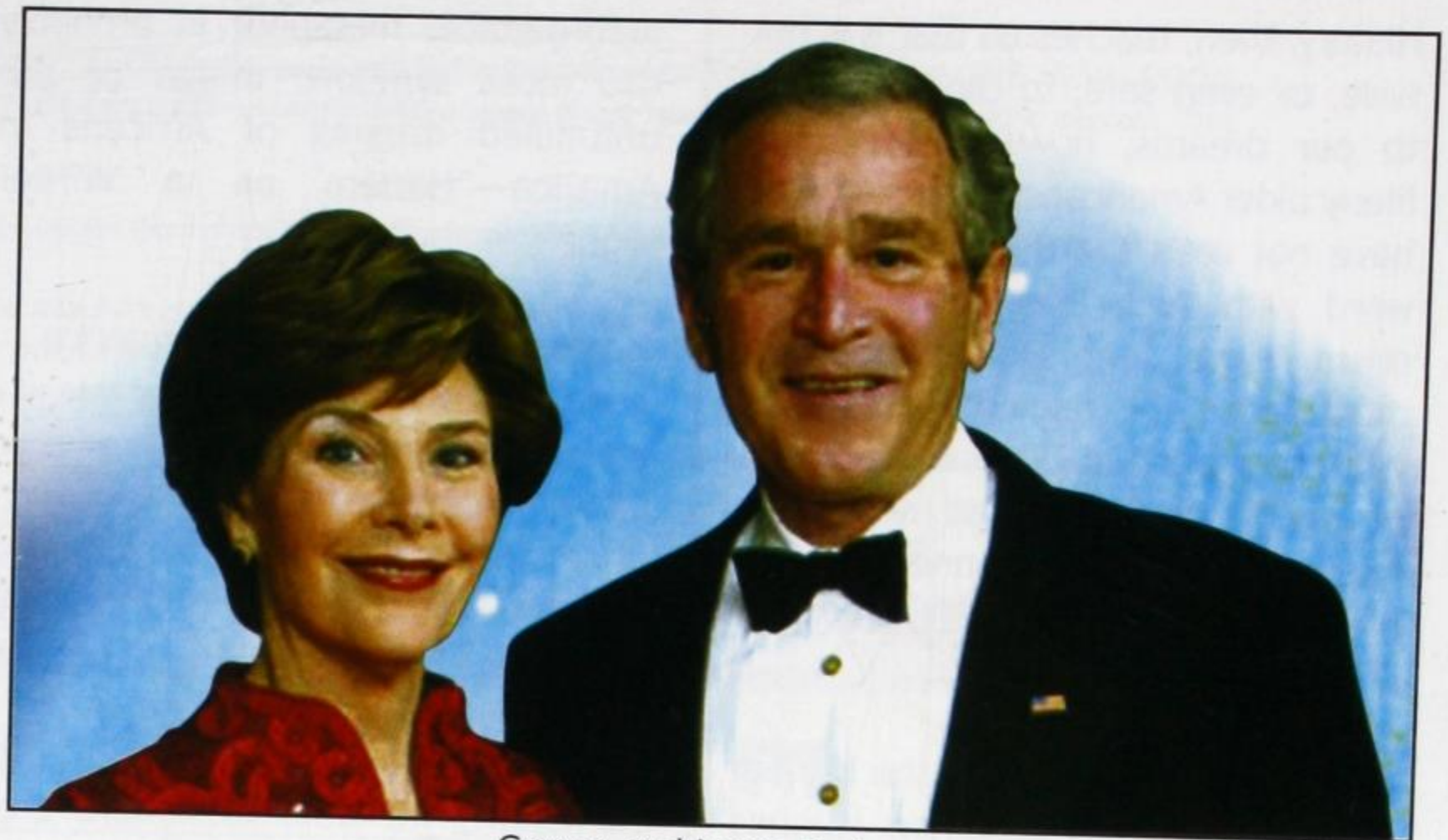
These lines were published in 1920. The night Du Bois died in Ghana, on August 27, 1963, a quarter of a million Americans representing every race, every colour, every class, every religion, and both sexes, had already gathered at the foot of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC, patiently waiting for a new dawn in the history of America, a dawn that was to be launched with Rev. Dr. Martin

Luther King's most memorable call to America to rise up to the truth of her own declared convictions: "I have a dream ... a dream deeply rooted in the American Dream". Clearly, Du Bois had seen the face of Freedom. And he died, knowing very well that the lonely struggle he and a handful of other freedom fighters had waged all his life, was about to break into a full scale battle - the Civil Rights Movement.

My last memory of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King was when I watched him on Ghana Television leading yet another march on the long walk to freedom, daring the world to remember that "Freedom is like life, you cannot have your life in installments; you must have it all, or ...." America did not allow him to live long enough to bring his dream to a closure. In doing so, America denied herself a great chance to be on the good side of history.

"History does not repeat itself", writes the poet Kwadwo Opoku-Agyemang. "It merely quotes us when we have not been wise enough." That is why it has come to pass in our time that almost half a century after Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King and the March on Washington, we wake up one day to find a certain black Senator Barack Obama standing at the foot of the Lincoln Memorial, daring America with the launch of his March on the White House.

Tomorrow, Monday, February 18, 2008, is a public holiday in the United States of America - The President's Day. I have been wondering which of America's many presidents the day is being observed for. The current president, George W. Bush, is at this very



George and Laura Bush

moment on a valedictory five-nation tour of Africa, right in the middle of Black History Month, and will actually be spending the President's Holiday heading to my own country, Ghana. In the meantime, here I am on a cold windy morning sitting at Hotel Newton's Key West Diner Café on Broadway at 95th Street, New York, having a hot breakfast and eavesdropping on a most revealing conversation on the table just behind me. An elderly man in the group asks one of the young white women in the party who she expects as the next president in the White House. "Barack Obama", she answered, without the slightest hesitation. I hold my breath, expecting the older man to raise an objection, at least a doubt. Instead, he observes, "the greatest change Barack Obama will bring to the White House will be in the way the rest of the world thinks of America." I relax, even as the thought crosses my mind, "but what does America think of the rest of the world? What does America do with and to the rest of the world?"

Two days ago at the University of Maryland at College Park, my host,

Professor Merle Collins, recalled with a sense of guarded optimism how she had, a few weeks earlier, walked into a 17,000 capacity auditorium to catch a glimpse of Barack Obama and found that she could barely find enough standing room for herself. As she listened to this miracle of a young man and watched the awe on the faces of the countless younger people in the auditorium, she wondered whether she had strayed into a dream that belonged in a different world. Then she became afraid, afraid of what could happen to dreams that are too beautiful to belong to their time and place.

Merle was herself a young student in her native Grenada when the little island was caught in the transforming glory of its dreamer leader Maurice Bishop. For a moment, it all seemed likely, almost certain, that the world was about to change, and in her time. Then came one dawn, and with it, the American marines and their swift fighter planes. The rest of Grenada's story is now part of the repeated history of shattered dreams.

History, then, teaches us that it is not wise, or even safe, to cling too tight to our dreams, however beautiful. Many older Americans recall that they have not seen the nation surge forward with such energy, such optimism, since John F. Kennedy. We must pause and remind ourselves of what happened to JFK and his dream of a new world. We must recall what happened to Robert Kennedy before he could pick up the shattered pieces of his brother's dream.

Early in the 20th century, the Harlem Renaissance poet Langston Hughes told us about "what happens to a dream deferred", and deferred too often too long: "Does it dry up /like a raisin in the sun?.../Or does it explode?" Decades later, Ghanaian poet Kofi Awoonor gave the world an

unforgettable metaphor in probably the most symbolic image of the unfulfilled dreams of Africans in America—"Harlem on a Winter Night":

*Harlem, the dark dirge of America  
heard at evening  
mean alleyways of poverty  
dispossession, early death  
in jammed doorways and creaking  
elevators  
glaring defeat in the morning  
of this beautiful beautiful America.*

Somehow, we want to believe that there is indeed a new spirit stirring America up from five centuries of hide-and-seek with her true destiny, the destiny of a great nation whose most precious gift to the world is Liberty, not as in the frozen beauty of

a statue, but in the living testimony of either the first Woman in the White House or the first Black man in the White House. Either way, America would have made history. In the meantime, then, we must:

*Hold fast to dreams.  
For if dreams die  
Life is a broken-winged  
Bird that cannot fly.*

*Hold fast to dreams.  
For when dreams go  
Life is a barren field  
Frozen with snow.*

**"Dreams", by Langston Hughes.**

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Dear Editor,

I refer to your NLO issue of 7 February, 2008 Vol 2 No. 3. In Joseph R. A. Ayee's article, there were captions of the NPP flagbearer, Nana Akufo-Addo, alone with his party symbol, the NDC flagbearer, John Evans Atta Mills, alone with his party symbol and the CPP flagbearer Kwesi Nduom, alone with his party symbol. However, I was surprised to realise that for the PNC and Edward Mahama you again brought the other three flagbearers together with President Kufuor and put the PNC party symbol in between them.

In his article, Prof Ayee seeks to advise the powers that be that in

2008 we must ensure we have a level playing field and come out of the election proud that our democracy is growing and has the necessary resilience and robustness required to develop. However, if in the very article and in a journal like the NLO, we are unable to play it fair, then do we have any basis to criticise the politically biased private newspapers? Are we not also fanning the notion that in Ghana, we are unable to analyse issues devoid of our political lenses?

I do not think the NLO was fair to the PNC in this case. Prof Ayee chose those four parties because they have seats in parliament. That was fair and indeed, the PNC even has more

seats than the CPP, yet they could not get a caption of their own?

Regards,  
Kojo Addae-Mensah  
P.O Box 768  
Accra

### Editors' Note

Thank you for your letter. The comments are well noted. The omission was inadvertent and unintentional. Efforts are being made to obtain clearer pictures of all candidates and symbols for future reference. We appeal to our readers and members of the public to send us digital images or photographs relevant to Ghana and Africa, towards building up a picture archive.

The Ghana Society for Development Dialogue (GSDD) is happy to announce the sale of its fortnightly journal, THE NEW LEGON OBSERVER. The journal creates a platform for discussion of broad development policy issues and matters of public interest. The unit price is two Ghana cedis (GH¢2.00).

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## Classes and Tribalism in Ghana<sup>17</sup>

Reviewer: Thomas Antwi Bosiakoh<sup>18</sup>

Classes and Tribalism in Ghana, authored by no less a person than Ansa K. Asamoah, takes a critical look at the issues of class and tribalism as they exist in contemporary Ghana in the author's view. It is undoubtedly a great addition to locally produced introductory books on Sociology such as Assimmeng's *Understanding Society: An Introduction to Sociology for African Students* (2006), and Nugunya's *Tradition and Change in Ghana* (2003).

In 1969, C. A. Ackah suggested that there was no social stratification in Ghana. He submitted that Ghanaian society was essentially communitarian in nature and that the bourgeois / proletariat distinctions characterised in Marxist terms by competition, antagonism, conflicts, etc were nonexistent. This observation was rebuffed by Max Assimeng in 1981. Assimeng suggested in one instance that one only had to visit such areas as Sukura, Nima, Bukom, Sodom and Gomorrah and contrast with similar visits to Osu, Airport, East Legon, Ringway Estates etc to observe what he described as the 'incipient stages of class consciousness' in the country.

This book makes no attempt at discussing the various positions of scholars on the issue of class and tribalism. What Ansa Asamoah seeks to do in his *Classes and Tribalism in Ghana* is to expose 'the neo-liberal vulgarisation of the class issue' in Ghana. Grounding his arguments in Marxist ideology (with clear awareness of the collapse of socialism in the former Soviet Union

and Eastern Europe), the author contends that the forces of reaction in Ghana 'are currently having a field day' and so 'peripheral capitalism (backed by empty slogans like 'rule of law', 'the private sector as engine of growth', 'enabling investment environment', 'freedom and democracy', 'good governance') is being nurtured zealously, while covert tribalism informs politics'.

The book discusses essentially the class situation in Ghana and how various forms of class struggle are manifest. The author begins with brief statements on whether or not classes exist in Africa, and goes on to examine the two most influential non-Marxist sociological schools of thought on classes – the consensus school represented by K. Davis and W. E. Moore and the conflict school as argued by Ralph Dahrendorf. He examines these schools of thought with sentiments of Political Economy and Economic Anthropology, bringing out key arguments and criticism that underlie them. He then explores the general economic background of the class situation in Ghana. The structural framework of Ghana's economy is informed by foreign-capital dominated extractive industries (mining, timber and cash crop sectors) and undeveloped manufacturing industries made up of a virtual absence of heavy industry and a caricature of Western capitalist light industry. Other characteristics of Ghana's economy include weak and foreign dominated (Lebanese, Chinese, Indian etc) domestic trade, weak purchasing power which stands in the way of capital formation for

industrial development and unsophisticated financial institutions. One feature of Ghana's economy which often fails to catch the attention of observers is the large peasant sector (about 65% of the country's population). Apart from its labour intensive nature, it is also nourished by primitive implements. Entry into this sector is easy but growth is glaringly absent.

In Chapter 3, Ansa Asamoah discusses the class types found in Ghana. First, he identifies the Ghanaian bourgeoisie or the corporate community. Four classifications of Ghanaian 'bourgeoisism' are observed – the comprador, national, rural and petty bourgeoisie. The comprador bourgeoisie 'either represent or are partners of foreign firms, companies and monopolies in Ghana' (page 30). They include managers and individual shareholders of these establishments as well as joint Ghana/foreign enterprises. Characteristic of the comprador bourgeoisie are obdurate guarding of foreign interests, investment of illegally acquired capital abroad, and conscious partnership with imperialist and neo-colonial elements in anti-national activities. The national bourgeoisie is constituted by indigenous Ghanaian entrepreneurs, who, even though independent of foreign capital, are supported by the state capitalist credit system and therefore gain from foreign capital. They run local enterprises that have both internal and external dimensions. They are mostly in trade and commerce, transport and industry as well as social services. Essentially, the national bourgeoisie are more progres-

<sup>17</sup> *Classes and Tribalism in Ghana*, Author: Ansa K. Asamoah, Publisher: Woeli Publishing Services (2007), 91 pages.

<sup>18</sup> Thomas Antwi Bosiakoh is a graduate student in the Sociology Department, University of Ghana, Legon.

sive than the comprador bourgeoisie because they direct their energies to internal capital accumulation. The third category of the Ghanaian bourgeoisie is the rural bourgeoisie, consisting of rich capitalist farmers who hire other people's labour on their farms and plantations. What is characteristic of this category of Ghanaian bourgeoisie is its parasitic nature, exploiting and feeding on the surplus of the labour they employ. The last category of the Ghanaian bourgeoisie is the petty bourgeoisie, comprising private artisans, small shop keepers, retail traders, money lenders, middlemen and other business owners who depend on their own labour. Petty bourgeoisie is differentiated from the other types on the basis that it depends on its own labour. A petty bourgeois is ambitious by nature and occupies an intermediate position between bourgeoisie and proletarianism. He is not satisfied with his position and aspires to be a comprador or national bourgeoisie. Only when all hopes to achieve this aspiration fail does he clutches tightly to petty bourgeoisie. 'What he fears most is eventual downward social mobility' (page 35).

After identifying the bourgeoisie types, the author turns to the issues of proletarianism and peasantry. The proletariat class, according to the author, comprises 'all workers skilled or unskilled, who in one way or the other, sell their labour to the bourgeoisie or the state in the urban and rural areas'. Their material and social conditions are poor. By far the largest social class with the basic force and most important social base for national liberation and development in Ghana is the peasantry. The peasant sector not only feeds the country but serves as the source of the greater percentage of the national income. The author identifies two

strands of the peasantry – middle and lower strata. These aside, white-collar workers - elites, middle and lower strata of the white-collar workers - are also identified as separate social categories. Ansa Asamoah argues that the various classes in Ghana are involved in inter and intra class struggles. He mentions class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the exploited classes, struggle between the ruling classes, conflicts within each of the bourgeoisie classes, conflicts between exploited classes and conflicts within an exploited class. Other dimensions of class struggle are found in the areas of politics, ideology and economy. There is also a section devoted to the struggle of classes and political parties.

After discussing the class situation and the various struggles (intra and inter) in Ghana, the book turns to the analysis of tribalism in the country. First, the book traces the root of tribalism (ethnic sentiments) to times before colonialism. Mention is made of the Mamprusi and Dagomba Kingdoms, creations of splinter Mossi groups which invaded pre-colonial Northern Ghana as well as the incessant attempts by the Ashantis to break Fante monopoly over trade with Europe, which led to the Ashanti-Denkyira wars. The book also examines ethnicity during colonial times and the anti-colonial struggle period. There is detailed discussion of ethnicity, classes and politics in post-colonial Ghana. It provides a table indicating occupants of very strategic positions in Ghana between 1965-1979 (page 73) and another table indicating the relationship between president Kufuor and some high office holders in Ghana (page 75).

A major advantage of this book is the very detailed information it provides on

Ghana's economy, class structure and the ethnic dimension of politics in the country. The book also displays mastery of theoretical sophistications underlying class issues. The author is extremely passionate about the issues. The ideas expressed on class are especially inventive and stimulating. They put the reader face to face with important facts. Ideas are well organised and chapters cohere or flow logically into others. The style of presentation is generally devoid of extreme 'word-play' and therefore makes it appealing. Technical jargon and unfamiliar words are reduced to the level of understanding of the general reader.

The relevance of the book cannot be underestimated. With our march towards a full-fledged democratic state, understanding the various dimensions of class issues and tribalism, especially as they relate to the Ghanaian situation is essential. The book will enhance understanding of our country a great deal. Students, lecturers, politicians, development experts, policy makers, parents etc will find the book tremendously useful.

The book however contains a few 'difficult-to-believe' arguments e.g. in the first form of human economic activity (early hunting and gathering period) 'division of labour by sex scarcely existed' (p. 12). Anthropological evidence suggests that, in hunting and gathering times, division of labour existed not only by sex but also by age. Whereas men hunted game, women collected fruits, vegetables, etc. And whilst daughters followed mothers in line with the labour division, sons trailed adult men in the hunting expeditions. But this shortcoming notwithstanding the book will remain one of the most challenging on class and tribalism, and the interplay of classes, tribalism and politics in Ghana.

# Why Malaria is Still Killing Us: Barriers to Disease Control

Ana Samarjian<sup>19</sup>

The statistics are mind-boggling. Malaria is responsible for over one million deaths and 500 million cases of sickness each year. Two-fifths of the world's population lives at constant risk of malaria. In Africa, malaria is responsible for one out of every five cases of children's mortality. Perhaps the most staggering statistic is found in the sentence often used by international and non-governmental health organisations to impel donors to dig deep in their wallets: By the time you finish reading this paragraph, another child will have died of malaria.

Though the disease has infected and killed countless millions of people for thousands of years, there is arguably more interest in malaria now than at any other time in human history. Successful malaria eradication efforts in many countries in the 1950s and 1960s ignited hope for global eradication, but the subsequent loss of interest, funding, and new research until the 1990s, and the difficulty of eradicating the disease in hyper-endemic countries headline the list of reasons why the global focus is now on malaria control instead of eradication. Multilateral initiatives such as the Roll Back Malaria campaign, the Global Fund, and international organisations like UNICEF and the World Health Organisation are part of the worldwide effort to combat malaria. In Ghana, malaria is endemic,



accounting for 44 percent of all outpatient cases and 22 percent of under-five mortality. Ghana reports over 3.5 million cases of the disease each year, resulting in thousands of deaths.<sup>20</sup> The cost of treating malaria in Ghana in 2007 was \$772.4 million, the country's entire health budget for 2008.<sup>21</sup> Ghana is one of the recipient countries of funding by the President's Malaria Initiative, a programme sponsored by the United States Government that will give Ghana \$51 million over the next three years specifically to tackle malaria<sup>22</sup>. Ghana also receives money from the Global Fund and several donor countries. The National Malaria Control Programme and Ministry of Health devote funds and other resources to prevention and treatment efforts and new research is constantly being

undertaken to find new drugs, potential vaccines, and create effective public health policy.

This article seeks to explain why, despite the efforts mentioned above, malaria control is still just a dream instead of a reality in Ghana. The barriers to malaria control will be examined from the points of view of the organisation/government, the researcher/scientist, and the individual, all of whom are stakeholders in the fight against the disease.

## Barriers to Malaria Control

### *Governments and Organisations*

Malaria is a huge public health crisis in Ghana and in much of Africa. National governments and international organisations have realised

<sup>19</sup> Ana Samarjian is Director of the Non-profit Organisation Netting Nations.

<sup>20</sup> World Health Organisation, World Malaria Report: Ghana, 2005 (Geneva: WHO, 2005).

<sup>21</sup> Edward Turkson, "Malaria Crippling Health Fund," Daily Graphic, November 22, 2007.

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Department of State, President's Malaria Initiative, 2008. <http://www.pmi.gov>.

that they must play a role in alleviating the burden of disease because it not only affects the citizenry, but also the economies and stability of the countries themselves. Malaria is both a disease of poverty and a cause of poverty.<sup>23</sup> While the scientific community has created the medicines, treated nets, and insecticides to help combat malaria, it is up to governments and organisations to provide the financial backing and political will to get these tools to the people affected by malaria. The cruel feedback cycle between malaria and poverty strains government efforts to appropriate funds for malaria.

Developing countries, which bear the brunt of the malaria burden, often have inadequate healthcare infrastructure – hospitals, clinics, trained healthcare workers – to reach victims of disease, particularly in rural areas. Grassroots efforts by local NGOs like the Infanta Malaria Prevention Foundation<sup>24</sup> and international NGOs like the California-based Netting Nations<sup>25</sup> offer an alternative method of getting nets and insecticides to people, but these organisations cannot operate on the scale of national governments. Governments and regulatory commissions must also solve the problem of counterfeit drugs and the difficulty faced by people in developing nations of identifying them.

Governments also face a stiff challenge in getting their populace to take attitude change seriously; where malaria is endemic, it is accepted as a fact of life. Creating changes in behavior becomes a matter of social

marketing and creative alternatives to traditional distribution networks and advertising strategies. Successful lobbying by organisations such as NetMark have convinced many governments to do away with taxes and tariffs on the import of treated mosquito nets, but the fact remains that officials at ports and country entrance points often still require these fees to allow companies and groups to bring nets into the countries. This highlights the problem of translating promises and ideas into concrete results.

Malaria is a disease that requires national-level planning but local-level execution. In Ghana, the National Malaria Control Programme and the Ministry of Health determine broad national policies, but daily treatment and prevention efforts must happen locally, managed by Regional and District leaders, and implemented by pharmacists, doctors, and community health workers. This requires informed and timely intra-country cooperation. Countries must also work with each other, because mosquitoes don't recognise national boundaries, and eradicating malaria in Ghana is meaningless if infected mosquitoes from neighbouring countries fly over the border to infect Ghanaians once again.

### **Scientists and Researchers**

While national governments and local and international organisations focus on malaria prevention and treatment, scientists and researchers are at the forefront of the battle, undertaking advanced research to create a vac-

cine against the disease, to get rid of the parasite-carrying mosquitoes, or to make the mosquitoes themselves unable to carry the parasite to their human hosts. These scientists are in a battle not only against the disease, but against time, because home treatment and overuse of medications leads to resistance against the drugs currently used against the disease. Chloroquine, once one of the cheapest and most effective anti-malarial drugs, is now ineffectual against many strains of the parasite in many countries, including in Ghana.

A malaria vaccine is a very difficult vaccine to create, due to the complex life cycle stages of the parasite, and due to the fact that a short-term vaccine would result in the loss of immunity people build up after repeated bouts of the disease. A promising new malaria vaccine has just been put into a second-phase trial in Mali, though it will take several years to hit the market even if it is eventually deemed effective.<sup>26</sup>

While some success has been had in eradicating malaria from various countries, scientists and researchers must also contend with the fact that certain climates breed the parasite-carrying *Anopheles* mosquitoes year-round, raising the level of difficulty of controlling the vector.

### **Individual**

As complicated and taxing as the barriers are faced by governments, international organisations, and scientists, malaria is a disease contracted one at a time, and the impact is

<sup>23</sup> Jeffrey Sachs and Pia Malaney, "The Economic and Social Burden of Malaria," *Nature* 415 (February 2002): 680.

<sup>24</sup> Infanta Malaria Prevention Foundation, 2008, <http://www.infantamalaria.org>.

<sup>25</sup> Netting Nations, 2008, <http://www.nettingnations.org>.

<sup>26</sup> Robert Preidt, "Malaria Vaccine Shows Promise in Small Trial," *HealthDay News*, January 24, 2008.

greatest on the person, especially the child, who contracts the disease. Fever, anaemia, developmental problems, coma, and even death are the potential consequences of malarial infection. Due to the familiarity and frequency of the disease, most cases are treated at home. In urban areas, this usually involves medicine purchased from a local pharmacy and taken at home. In rural areas with little or no access to health facilities, treatment often consists of home remedies and expired or counterfeit medicines, taken at dosages too low to cure the disease but high enough to encourage resistance development in mosquitoes. Drug resistance also tends to increase when the disease is not properly diagnosed by a doctor, since people often take antimalarial drugs even when malaria is not the cause of illness, just in case.

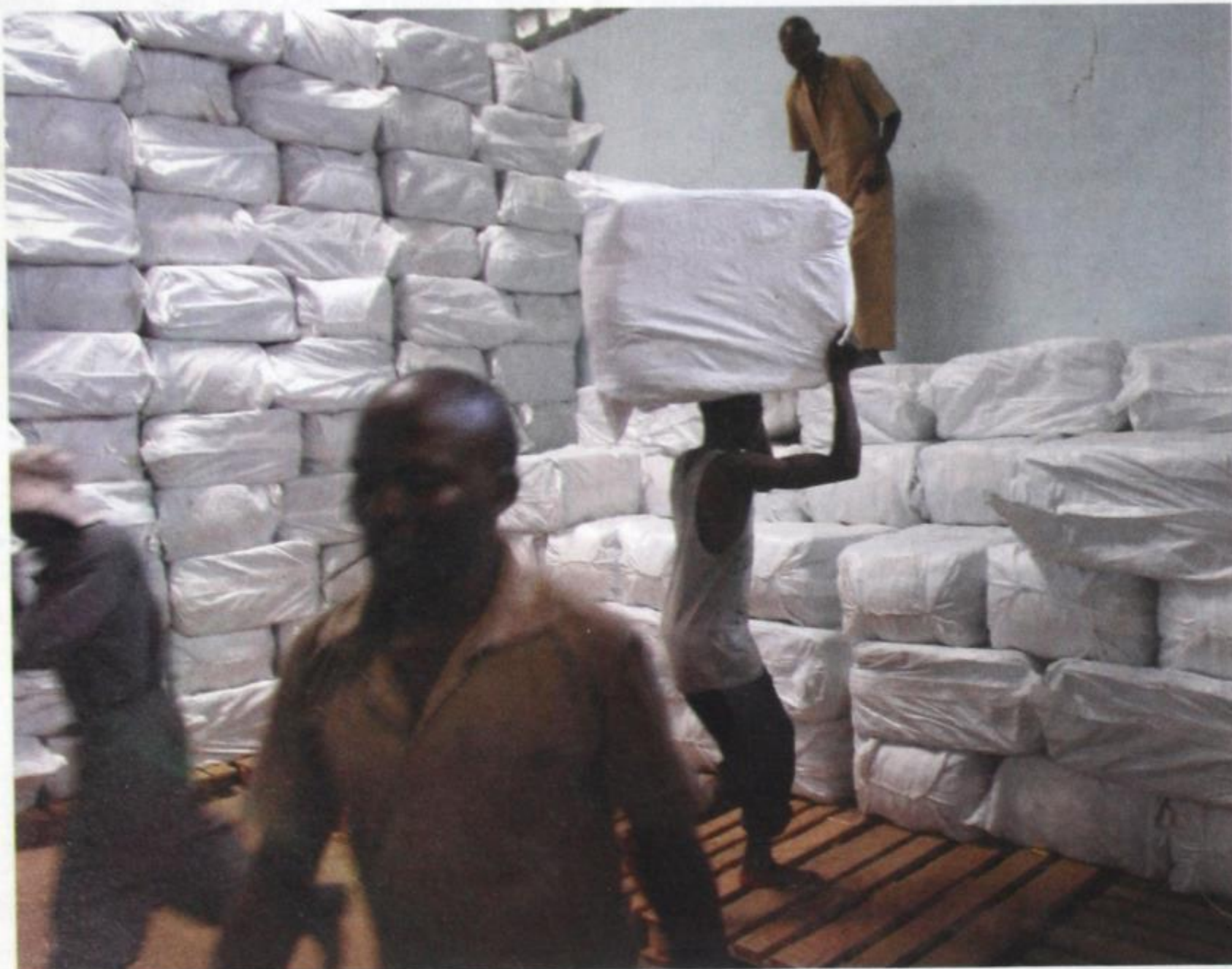
Malaria prevention is even more difficult than malaria treatment for the average individual living in a malaria-endemic zone. Prophylactic drugs are only practical for short-term travellers in malarial areas due to high cost and concern for long-term side effects. The best, and often only, method of malaria prevention in endemic areas is to avoid getting bitten by mosquitoes. The most widely advertised method is the use of mosquito nets, particularly insecticide-treated nets, to prevent bites at night while a person sleeps, since the malaria-carrying female mosquitoes that transmit the disease prefer to feed on human hosts between dusk and dawn. However, even when people have access to nets, either through direct commercial purchases, subsidised purchases, or free net distributions through the health sector, they do not always use the nets properly.

Despite their effectiveness in preventing malaria and the nuisance of insects at night, mosquito nets restrain air flow when it is hot, making sleeping uncomfortable, and are impractical to use when people sleep outside, on roofs, or in homes with clay or mud walls. These logistical problems explain why many people do not use nets even when they have them. At the same time, these problems have presented the opportunity to develop new technologies and designs to make nets as appealing to use as they are effective.

It is well documented that education does not always result in behavior change, and this explains why, after efforts to educate the masses about malaria prevention, some people have learned to cover or drain areas of standing water, use mosquito nets, and keep their surroundings clean, while others continue to ignore these and other suggestions.

### Conclusion

Malaria is a disease that is both preventable and treatable. In an age of unprecedented interest in the worldwide fight against disease, it is an ailment that continues to decimate the lives of millions of people across the world. As this paper has outlined, obstacles are faced by every level of stakeholder. The most important message conveyed by this list of obstacles is that each problem has a clear, workable solution. It is simply up to each individual, researcher, organisation, and government to create and undertake a determined path of action to eliminate, once and for all, the scourge of malaria in our world.



Bales of Mosquito Nets at a Warehouse



# UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

Applications are invited for the post of

## VICE-CHANCELLOR

### 1. QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

Candidates must be of professorial status with an outstanding academic record. They must be individuals of stature and integrity with exemplary leadership, interpersonal and communication skills, zeal, energy and the capacity for marshalling the resources needed to carry out the University's vision in the 21st Century. Candidates must also show evidence of the following qualities:

- a) demonstrated ability or potential to manage a University;
- b) ability to foster and promote good internal and external relations of the University;
- c) ability to project effectively the image of the University internally and externally;
- d) proven ability to provide strong, visionary leadership and innovation for the University.

### 2. TENURE OF OFFICE

Candidates must be eligible to hold office for a minimum of 4 four (4) years from the date of appointment before retirement.

### 3. FUNCTIONS

The Vice-Chancellor is, under the direction of the University Council, the Academic and Administrative Head as well as Chief Disciplinary Officer of the University. He/She is also responsible to the University Council for maintaining and promoting the good order and efficiency of the University. His/Her other functions are prescribed by the Statutes of the University.

### 4. CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Very attractive terms and conditions of office will be specified in the instrument of appointment.

### 5. MODE OF APPLICATION

- a) Interested candidates should send two (2) copies of their curriculum vitae, with qualifications, working experience, list of publications with dates etc.
- b) Candidates should send in, a minimum of two (2) pages and a maximum of eight (8) pages of A4 paper in 1.5 line spacing, a succinct statement of their vision for the University of Cape Coast and the strategies for achieving this.
- c) Applications should be addressed to:

The Chairman,  
Search Committee (Post of Vice-Chancellor)  
Council Secretariat,  
University of Cape Coast,  
Cape Coast, Ghana.

OR

The Chairman,  
Search Committee (Post of Vice-Chancellor),  
University of Cape Coast,  
c/o Universities of Ghana  
Overseas Office,  
321 City Road,  
London EC1V 1LJ,  
U.K.

- d) Candidates should request three (3) referees to submit reports on them directly to the above address.
- e) The closing date for submission of application for this position is 31 March, 2008.

**CHAIRMAN**  
**Search Committee**

The **3**

# BENEFITS of the SSNIT PENSION SCHEME

1. OLD AGE / RETIREMENT PENSION
2. INVALIDITY PENSION
3. SURVIVORS' LUMP SUM

## WHAT ARE THE QUALIFYING CONDITIONS?

**1**

### OLD AGE / RETIREMENT PENSION

- Must have attained the age of 60
- A reduced pension could be paid between the ages of 55-59 and
- Must have contributed for a minimum period of 240 months.

**2**

### INVALIDITY PENSION

- Must have been a member for a minimum period of 36 months
- Must have made at least 12 monthly contributions in aggregate within the last 36 months
- Must be certified invalid by the SSNIT Medical Board.

**3**

### SURVIVORS' LUMP SUM

- When a member dies before retirement
- Should not have attained 72 years at the time of death if member is a pensioner.

## FOR FURTHER ENQUIRIES CONTACT:

THE HEAD OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT,  
SSNIT PENSION HOUSE,  
P.O. BOX MB 149, MINISTRIES, ACCRA  
TEL: 021-667731/4-9,668663-5 EXT. 7207 • 7209 • 7210 • 7212  
TEL/FAX: 021-667742 • 686373 • TELFAX: 7011367 or any SSNIT Branch  
E-mail: [public@ssnit.org.gh](mailto:public@ssnit.org.gh) • Website: [www.ssnit.com](http://www.ssnit.com)  
Toll-Free No.: 0-800-333-33



*We deliver on our promise!*