

**THE USE OF SPORTS AS A TOOL FOR  
DIPLOMACY: THE CASE OF GHANA SINCE  
INDEPENDENCE**

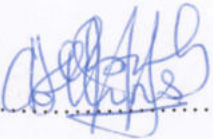


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**THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY  
OF GHANA, LEGON, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF  
THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN  
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

## DECLARATION

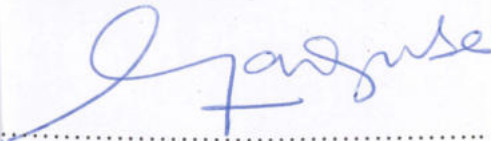
I, Collins Mensah, hereby declare that this dissertation is entirely my work under the guidance of my supervisor, Dr. Boni Yao Gebe, and except for references to other research works, publications and journals which have been duly acknowledged, this study has never been presented in part or whole for the award of any degree elsewhere.



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## DEDICATION

*This study is dedicated to my entire family and to everyone who contributed towards its successful completion.*

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## ABSTRACT

It is often argued that sports and politics should not be mixed. International sporting organizations share this view in some respects, and based on it, Ghana and other countries across the world have been banned on some occasions by organizations such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) on charges of state interference in the affairs of their national sporting associations. Several studies have, however, traced a relationship between politics and sports, with states using sporting activities in some instances to pursue their interests in international politics. Scholars such as Stuart Murray refer to this as sports diplomacy. This study considers how Ghana has practiced sports diplomacy. The objectives of the study are to analyse the potential and actual role sports plays in the pursuit of Ghana's foreign policy goals, find out whether and how Ghanaian governments have deliberately used sports in this direction and assess how Ghana's participation in international sporting competitions has contributed to foreign public knowledge, opinion and perception about the country. Ghana has participated frequently in international sporting events such as the Olympics and FIFA world cups. Among other things, the study, based on a qualitative approach, with interviews of persons from diverse backgrounds in diplomacy and the sports sector finds that participating in international sporting events has enabled the country to be represented in international fora, create and shape a good image for itself across the world and improve its friendly relations with other countries. The study also finds that regardless of the advantages the country derives from sports, there are many challenges that beset the sports sector in Ghana, including funding and inadequate training facilities. Recommendations made include the need for a consistent analysis of changes in the international system by the government, with consideration to how the country's involvement in international sporting events could enable it to deal with new developments on the international stage, formulating policies that would enable the government to appropriate the publicity the country receives from participating in international sports and giving the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration a prominent and active role in promoting and marketing the country through its sportsmen and by facilitating the country's participation in international competitions.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Research Problem

In recent decades, there has been an increase in the number of scholars writing on the use of sports as a means to influencing diplomatic, social, and political relations. This is often referred to as sports diplomacy. According to G.R. Berridge (2010), “diplomacy is essentially a political activity, a vital feature of power, the chief purpose of which is to enable states to secure the objectives of their foreign policies” (p. 1). Diplomacy remains the traditional means of interaction between states, and it is international custom for states to establish resident diplomatic missions in foreign countries for this purpose. The functions assigned to such missions by the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (VCDR) 1963 confirm their pre-eminence in the field of diplomacy. Nonetheless, scholars such as Berridge have noted that the conduct of diplomacy transcends the activities of professional diplomats to include the official engagements of other state and non-state actors on the global stage.

The means to pursuing diplomacy have increased to include summit meetings such as the UN General Assembly, the AU Summits and other global conferences, as well as the activities of global public servants, private individuals and international institutions. Arnd Kruger (2002) and Stuart Murray (2013) among other scholars have identified sports as one of these channels. A. Kruger, in the introduction to *The International Politics of Sports in The Twentieth Century* writes that “the defenders and promoters of sport could hardly have imagined, at the turn of the century, that sports competition would have an impact on public opinion and become an instrument of international policy” (2002: ix).

Particularly, sports is seen as an effective tool for public diplomacy, which is defined by Nicholas J. Cull (2009), as “an international actor’s attempt to manage the international

environment through engagement with a foreign public'' (p. 12). As the wave of democracy spreads across the world, public opinion is becoming increasingly important in the formulation of government policies. In that regard, the prominence of sports, which is gaining more audience across the world due to expanding media coverage in the form of television, radio and the internet, can only be expected to grow further as a tool for conducting diplomacy, especially, when it comes to engendering goodwill among foreign publics. In that regard, this study is intended to analyse the role sports plays in Ghana's international relations.

## **1.2 Statement of the Research Problem**

Sports has played a significant role in Ghana's development since its independence in 1957. It has been identified and used as a means to national unity and development. Besides this, the country's performance, and hence, its influence in some specific sports at the international level, especially, in football and boxing, has been quite significant. Considering the fact that the administration of the country's first president, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, and subsequent governments have given special attention to Ghana's participation in international sporting events over the years, it is only natural to expect that such sporting activities would have had some level of influence on Ghana's relations with other countries in one way or the other.

The problem is that even though there exists many scholarly works on Ghana's foreign relations (i.e., foreign policy), including those of W.S. Thompson (1969), David Rooney (1988), Obed Asamoah (1991) and K.B. Asante (1997), there seems to be no consideration for the role that Ghana's participation in international sports plays in such relations. This study, therefore, is intended to take the lead in filling that gap by assessing the role that Ghana's participation in international sports organizations and events play in achieving the country's diplomatic goals. It is believed that this remains an area which requires extensive research in

order to inform government and other stakeholders in the field so that Ghana could derive the utmost benefits from its membership of international sporting institutions and participation in global sporting events. The study is intended to elicit further contribution towards that purpose.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

1. What are Ghana's foreign policy objectives, and to what extent can sports play a role in achieving them?
2. Have Ghanaian governments deliberately used sports as a tool for pursuing diplomacy?
3. What impact does Ghana's participation in international sporting events have on its relations with other countries and on its image?

### **1.4 Objectives of the Research**

1. To analyse the actual and potential role sports play in the pursuit of Ghana's foreign policy objectives.
2. To find out whether Ghanaian governments have deliberately used sports as a tool to influence Ghana's relations with other countries and, if so, how?
3. To assess how Ghana's participation in international sporting events has influenced its foreign relations and how it has contributed to foreign public knowledge, opinion and perception about the country.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

The study focuses on football, athletics and boxing because these constitute the major sports that are played in Ghana. Also, the research is guided by Ghana's foreign policy objectives, with the view to identifying the extent to which sports has been useful in achieving these goals, since they define the country's approach to its international relations.

## **1.6 Rationale of the Research**

Thompson (1969) makes reference to A.L. Adu's summary of the views of many Ghanaian diplomats in the early years after independence. In their opinion, under President Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana was successful in inspiring a sense of pride among Africans across the world about their identity and in promoting the "African personality" in every international organization of which the country was a member. If any other institution has offered Africans the opportunity to express their identity in recent decades, it must be sports.

As already stated above, the field of sports is a relatively cheaper and highly effective means to affecting the opinions of foreign publics, which in itself, has in recent times become an indispensable factor in every country's diplomacy. Taking into account Ghana's small size as a country, the relatively limited resources at its disposal, and the fact that historically its foreign policy has not been militarily aggressive in nature, it can be argued that its greatest asset is its soft power, and that sports diplomacy constitutes one of the avenues through which it can demonstrate such power. Hence, the rationale of the study is to assess how Ghana utilises sports in the conduct of its foreign relations. The study is intended to make a contribution towards previous and related works on Ghana's foreign relations, with emphasis on the role of sports. It is expected to contribute to existing knowledge on the topic, influence the formulation and implementation of sports policies in Ghana and encourage future research on the subject.

## **1.7 Hypothesis**

Ghana's foreign policy objectives could be achieved through the adoption of a comprehensive public diplomacy of which sports diplomacy forms the fulcrum.

## 1.8 Conceptual Framework

The concept of public diplomacy is employed as the conceptual framework for the study. Cull (2006) and Berridge (2010) have indicated that even though the phrase “public diplomacy” had been used before the twentieth century, it was pressed into service in 1965 by Edmund Gullion, who was then Dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

Cull (2009) defines public diplomacy as an “international actor’s attempt to manage the international environment through engagement with a foreign public” (p. 12). Berridge (2010) distinguishes conventional diplomacy from public diplomacy. In his view, “while one of the aims of conventional diplomacy is to exert direct influence on foreign governments, the aim of propaganda, or public diplomacy, is usually to do this indirectly; that is, by appealing over the heads of those governments to the people with influence upon them” (p. 182)

Scholars, including Nancy Snow (2009) and Joseph Nye (2011) have identified public diplomacy as an expression of “soft power” and an essential complement to conventional diplomacy. Cull (2008:31-36) identifies five constituent parts of public diplomacy. These are listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy and international broadcasting. Perhaps, the importance of the concept is summarized in Nye’s description of “soft power”, which, as stated above, is expressed by public diplomacy. Nye contends that soft power comprises the ability to set the agenda, with the view to determining how others perceive issues. Soft power also relates to initiatives intended to determine the viewpoints and preferences of others in order to avoid using force when situations become difficult.

He argues that in an information age, even though the ability to win wars through the army is still relevant, it is equally essential for governments to develop their capacities with respect to setting the agenda in specific situations and shaping others’ choices. In his view, understanding this critical point would enable states to formulate foreign policies that combine both their hard and soft powers.

Golan G. (2014), however, points out that whilst the exponents of public diplomacy agree on the convenience of soft power strategies, there is often difference of opinion regarding the extent of the impact of such initiatives and the role they should play in any state's diplomacy. He states that whilst soft power schemes are adopted to engender good will amongst people and help to avoid undesirable stereotypes or misleading information, opponents of public diplomacy have expressed doubts about the feasibility of measuring the effectiveness of such initiatives, especially, with respect to acquiring substantive evidence of changes in the viewpoints of foreign publics. This criticism, he asserts, is referred to as the "measurement trap" of public diplomacy.

Nye has also recognised the fact that opponents consider public diplomacy simply as a mild alternative for propaganda. He, however, argues that whereas plain propaganda is usually unconvincing and counterproductive, public diplomacy is employed to disseminate information, portray a desired image and with the view to sustaining relationships that create a conducive environment for the propagation of government policies.

Public diplomacy, therefore, is considered as an appropriate concept for this study because sports have been identified as activities which bring people together, irrespective of the barriers of class, education, language, race, and culture. Also, sports are known to contribute immensely towards the building of a country's image. Thus, they provide an avenue for public diplomacy in terms of influencing public opinion and perception. The evidence for this assertion is provided by the fact that both states, as well as international organizations, led by the United Nations are now using sports as a tool for development and diplomacy.

## 1.9 Literature Review

Five books and journal articles are reviewed in this section. These include G.R. Berridge's (2010) *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice*, Zhang Qingmin's (2013), *Sports Diplomacy: The Chinese Experience and Perspective*, and Stuart Murray and Geoffrey Allen Pigman's (2014) *Mapping the Relationship between International Sport and Diplomacy*. The others are François Carrard's (2011) *Sports and Politics on the International Scene*, and *Sport and Canadian Diplomacy*, by Franks, Hawes and Macintosh (1988).

G.R. Berridge's (2010) *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice*, defines diplomacy as “an essentially political activity and well resourced and skillful, a major ingredient of power” (p. 1). He notes that states engage in diplomatic initiatives in order to secure the goals of their foreign policies without having to use coercion, propaganda or dwell on legalities. The practice of traditional diplomacy is, to a large extent, assigned to Ministries of Foreign Affairs and their diplomatic missions abroad. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs manages all the activities related to country's official interactions with other states, including the diplomats, the country's embassies in other states as well as working with foreign missions at home. Consequently, the functions of traditional diplomacy as enshrined in the Vienna Convention for Diplomatic Relations (VCDR) are assigned to diplomatic missions. The missions represent their governments and citizens in foreign countries, facilitate cordial interactions between states, negotiate issues of concern to their governments with the host authorities, engender goodwill for their countries in the host states, lobby, ensure that the policies of their governments and developments in their countries are well explained to authorities in the host country, provide regular reports on the host state to its country and promote activities that will attract investment for the economic development of their countries.

Whilst highlighting the preeminence of resident missions, Berridge also points out that diplomacy is conducted in various other ways and not only through the work of ambassadors. According to him, even though governments usually set up diplomatic missions in foreign

countries to secure their interests in those states, interaction between nations are also facilitated through consules, global conferences and even telephones. Thus, Berridge alludes to diverse avenues of pursuing diplomacy. Whilst the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and their embassies are recognized as the traditional means to conducting international relations, summitry, and other approaches such as public diplomacy constitute non-traditional diplomacy. In his view, whereas the objective of orthodox diplomacy is to affect the decisions and policies of other states by dealing with the authorities, public diplomacy attempts to achieve the same goal by dealing with non-state actors who have influence in one way or the other over the officials.

Concerning the effectiveness of public diplomacy, he notes that it is accepted, generally, that in some circumstances public diplomacy has facilitated interactions between states. These include the role played by western radio transmission in making communism defunct in Eastern Europe, and the spread of Islam through internet to Western societies. Also, the recognition of the effectiveness of soft power initiatives is the reason why Chinese officials censure internet, and why in 2009 the authorities in Iranian undertook similar actions to minimize the severity of the unrest which broke out in that country. Berridge also makes reference to the assertion made by the Drogheda Committee which was instituted to consider issues related to Britain's Overseas Information Services in 1954 that even though propaganda may make only marginal impact in most situations, there are instances in which it proves to be the deciding factor between diplomatic success and failure. (p. 182)

Even though Berridge provides a relatively balanced argument with respect to the effectiveness of public diplomacy, he seems to agree to the assertion that public diplomacy is just another term for propaganda. Many scholars, however, including Joseph Nye (2011) have come to the conclusion that there is a clear difference between propaganda, which was practiced mostly during the Cold War era, and public diplomacy. The significance of Berridge's work to this study is that it provides a general understanding of some of the concepts used in

this study such as diplomacy in general, public diplomacy and propaganda although it does not deal specifically with the usage of sports diplomacy by Ghana to advance its interests.

In *Sports Diplomacy: The Chinese Experience and Perspective*, Zhang Qingmin (2013), writes on how sports has facilitated China's international relations since the establishment of the China People's Republic (CPR) in 1949. He stipulates that immediate challenge of the new state was to contend with the former administration of the Republic of China (ROC), which had relocated to Taiwan for international recognition under the One-China policy. In his opinion the CPR's involvement in international sports organisations and competitions facilitated its eventual recognition as the legitimate government of China.

Qingmin identifies the connection between sports, politics and diplomacy. He notes that "sport is defined in political science as an institutionalized competitive activity that involves vigorous physical exertion or the use of relatively complex physical skills by individuals whose participation is motivated by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic factors" (p. 212). Politics is "concerned with power and interests," while diplomacy is "the politics among nations" (p. 212). He notes that upon the creation of nation-states, and with the introduction of international sporting competitions, sports were identified as an appropriate avenue for international politics, facilitating diplomacy, the creation and promotion of national identities and changes in policy both at the domestic level and on the global stage.

In his view, in the modern era, international sporting activities have evolved in tandem with global politics. He cites the persistent efforts of the founder of the contemporary Olympic movement, Pierre de Coubertin, to align the substance of the Olympic Games with the political goals of the League of Nations, with the view to use sports as an avenue for preventing another world war. The historic relationship between sports, politics and diplomacy is made even clearer when his reference to the similarities between the aims and objectives of the International Olympic Committee, as stipulated by the original Charter of the Olympic

Committee, and those of the United Nations are taken into consideration. According to him the Olympic Charter states that:

The goal of Olympism is to place sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity. The practice of sport is a human right. Every individual must have the possibility of practicing sport, without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play (Qingmin 2013, p. 214).

He then provides the tenets of the UN, according to its Charter, as follows:

1. Maintain international peace and security . . . ;
2. Develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples;
3. Achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion; and
4. Be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends (Qingmin 2013, p. 214).

Qingmin identifies sports diplomacy as a branch of public diplomacy. He notes that in diplomatic circles sports can be put to use in the following ways: (1) to heighten confrontation between states when relations between them are poor and (2) to create and accelerate diplomatic momentum. With regards to the first instance, boycotting international competitions is seen as taking retributive action against another state or protesting some policies or decisions, either domestic or international. Employing sports in this sense, tends to aggravate unfriendly relations. On the other hand, as in the case of East Germany and CPR, a state's involvement in international tournaments can enable it to gain international recognition.

Whilst he concedes that sports is politicised in each of the above cases, he notes that from the viewpoint of the Chinese, only the latter instance is considered as sports diplomacy. He concludes that sports essentially compliments other measures, and that on its own, it hardly leads to either success or failure in diplomacy. Nonetheless, he asserts that the increasing importance of sports diplomacy is one of the developments which legitimizes the changes

taking place in the diplomatic landscape. The significance of his work to this study is that he writes about China's experience with respect to the subject under consideration. Among other things, his work also indicates that the objectives of intergovernmental organizations such as the United Nations and international sports organizations such as the I.O.C are in some respects closely related. Ghana, like China is a member of the international community and of these organizations. Quingmin's work therefore gives an idea of international environment within which Ghana operates.

In their paper, *Mapping the Relationship between International Sport and Diplomacy*, Stuart Murray and Geoffrey Allen Pigman (2014) attempt an analysis of the nexus between actors and instruments that bring international sports and diplomacy together. They identify two categories of sports diplomacy. The first, which they consider as traditional sports diplomacy, relates to cases in which states directly employ sports as an instrument of diplomacy. It involves states using sporting events and sportsmen to enhance a diplomatic message, improve deteriorating diplomatic relations, or assess the likely outcome of changes in foreign policy. They assert the fact that whenever it is possible governments would seize any opportunity sporting events provide for the achievement of their political goals.

The second category, which they term as international-sport-as-diplomacy, is non-traditional sports diplomacy because it does not involve direct government participation. It encompasses representation, interaction and mediation between non-state actors which is required to sustain the continuity of international sporting competitions. Here, the emphasis is on the diplomatic activities that must necessarily take place in order to ensure the successful organization of international sporting competitions. In their estimation this form of sports diplomacy has a greater impact because it occurs more often, has wider coverage, the propensity to affect the emotions and viewpoints of international publics and to induce spending.

Irrespective of these differences between the two categories mentioned above, Murray et al. identify some similarities on certain occasions, as in the creation of the Olympics with the view to promote peace, mutual recognition by nations and enable states to show their prowess in sporting activities. They, like Berridge (2010), agree that because of its broad scope, traditional diplomacy sometimes employs unorthodox agents and methods to augment its message. They argue that international sports provide states with opportunities to demonstrate their capabilities in various fields of endeavour, such as their prowess in sports and the superiority of their ideologies. They also share the opinion that the conditions of the prevailing international system make sports diplomacy appropriate.

Furthermore, they contend that states embrace sports diplomacy, including those initiated by non-state actors, in situations when it can enable them to accomplish a particular diplomatic mission. In support of this assertion, they make reference to the famous ping pong diplomacy. The entire episode was instigated by unofficial interactions between a US table tennis player, Glenn Cowan and his Chinese counterpart, Zhuang Zedong during the World Championship in 1971. The American authorities took advantage of the meeting and suggested a tour of China by the US team, which occurred later that year. Prudently, the Mao and Nixon administrations of China and the US respectively, used the visit as an opportunity to assess the receptiveness of their respective publics to friendlier diplomatic interactions between the two countries which had been estranged from each other by the Cold War. This event facilitated a visit by Henry Kissinger, the then US National Security Adviser, to China in mid-1971, followed by the much publicized visit by Richard Nixon, the then American president, in 1972. Murray et al. also see the occasional cricket matches organised between India and Pakistan as another illustration of how sporting events provide alternate channels for interaction between rival states.

According to them, one of the advantages of sports diplomacy is that it cuts across

cultures, and provides different avenues for interaction between people from different cultures.

They write that:

Sports diplomacy involves representatives and diplomatic activities undertaken by sportspeople on behalf of and in conjunction with their governments. The practice is facilitated by traditional diplomacy and uses sportspeople and sporting events to engage, inform and create a favourable image among foreign publics and organizations, to shape their perceptions in a way that is conducive to the sending government's foreign policy goals. While traditional diplomacy is the means to a state's foreign policy ends, sports diplomacy is one of the means to the means of those ends. (Murray et. al. 2014:4-5)

Also, as an alternative to traditional diplomacy, which is seen in some quarters to be obsolete, governments which employ sports diplomacy tend to be seen as being innovative in how they relate to foreign publics. They contend that in an information age, methods such as sports diplomacy which improve people-to-people relations enhance the image of a state's diplomacy, and are usually more effective. To clarify this point, they cite Walters (2007), who argues that following the September 11, 2001 disaster, the US Department of State has been more assertive on the use of sports as a diplomatic tool due, among other things, to the fact that:

Only certain cultures or segments of society show strong interest in speaking English, travelling to the United States, attending a classical music event, or participating in a discussion on human rights. On the other hand, virtually all cultures and all citizens have an interest in and appreciation for sport. This makes it one of the best methods for exchange – especially for diplomats operating in an age when the opinions of foreign publics are so crucial for success. (Murray et al. 2014: 5).

The fact that every country seeks to be respected in the comity of nations cannot be overlooked. In that regard, the authors recognize the fact that winning the rights to host global sporting events conveys the international community's endorsement of a state as a credible member of the comity of nations. Hence, Murray and Pigman postulate that if host nations are tactful in adopting appropriate diplomatic attitudes and messages, sporting events could play

significant roles in changing the perceptions of foreign publics about them. In order to support this assertion, they make reference to the publicity host nations received from the international media. For example, close to 4 billion sports enthusiasts viewed the Athens Olympics in 2004 while about one billion fans, representing a quarter of the world's inhabitants watched the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics in 2008. Also, with respect to the 2012 London Olympics, in terms of social media, about 700,000 people were reported to have patronized the IOC's Facebook page in the course of the the competition (IOC website).

Murray and Pigman also identify certain similarities between traditional diplomats and sportsmen: both groups represent their country on the international front; both professions are guided by rules, and involve strategies and opponents; none of the vocations endorses mediocrity and; successful sportsmen such as Lionel Messi and Didier Drogba share the "open, genial and civil' disposition for which traditional diplomats are recognised."

Regardless of the arguments made for the usefulness of sports in diplomacy, it is necessary to concede to the fact that there are many instances in which sporting activities have churned out results that are rather antitheses of diplomacy. National pride, and the honour of defending one's national flag sometimes makes sporting events competitive to the extent that the values of fair play and racial inclusion, for example, are relegated to the background in order to win. Murray and Pigman take note of this challenge, and make reference to the seeming contradiction between the nobility espoused in diplomacy and the competition inherent in sporting events. Thus, they stipulate that the advocates of sports in diplomacy tend to overlook the differences between sporting reality and sporting idealism.

The significance of their work to this study is that they introduce another dimension of sports diplomacy. They identify the practice of international diplomacy on two separate but related levels. On one level, politicians strategically adopt sports as a diplomatic tool. On the other level, diplomacy is played out by non-state actors due to the sheer nature of the

organization of international sports and its inter relations with the international political system.

According to François Carrard (2011), in his *Sports and Politics on the International Scene*, three models, depending on the administrative structure and traditions of any particular country explain the level of interaction between politics and sports. The first concept stipulates that in autocratic countries, due to the extensive control of governments over most issues, the state has total authority over all activities related to sports. The second model describes the situation where, but for recent changes, governments tend to leave all sports related activities to the private sector. This used to be the case mostly in Scandinavian states. The third model, which is most prevalent in the Western world, represents the situation where governments determine the overall regulatory and legal structures that govern all activities in the state but allow independent entities to administer sporting activities. This in his view, is becoming the common practice in most countries. He asserts that the nature of a government's policies and the degree of its involvement in sports may be determined, among other factors, by issues such as the impact of sports related activities on elections and considerations for the education of the youth.

In his effort to draw out the attributes of sports, which makes it attractive to both states and intergovernmental establishments, he mentions the following:

1. The work of international sports federations cover a wide ranges of issues that confront society, including commerce and politics and that makes it critical for the state to engage them.
2. Most of the major non-state actors involved in international sports do not depend on government funding.
3. The far-reaching social networks that are established through international sporting activities make them indispensable tools in critical times.

Carrard also discusses four historical developments which have demonstrated the influence of sports on diplomacy. Even though some of them have been cited in some of the

other works above, he brings out certain dimensions which are worth noting. With respect to the representation of the two Chinas, ROC and PRC, at the IOC, Carrard asserts that the real issue at stake had little to do with sports but who actually had political control over Taiwan. In the end, the final agreement, which has been observed by all parties involved since 1981, saw the Taiwan Olympic organization change its name from the Chinese Olympic Committee to the Chinese Taipei Olympic Committee (CTOC), and embrace a different flag and logo for the CTOC. In return the CTOC earned the right to involve itself in all activities related to the IOC and the Olympic Games, and to enjoy the same status and full rights as all other member national associations. In Carrard's estimation, the agreement is a diplomatic success which has served as an ideal point of reference for other international institutions in finding a way for the concurrent representation and participation of both China and Taiwan. It demonstrates that in some situations, the sporting community enjoys some peculiar privileges which are not accessible to politicians.

He also asserts that the IOC's decision to expel apartheid South Africa from the organization in 1970 contributed significantly to its isolation. It was only after political consultations between representatives of the IOC, President de Klark, Nelson Mandela and other political leaders gave indication that democratic elections were imminent and apartheid most likely to be abolished that South Africa was re-admitted to the IOC. The diplomatic implications of this episode is found in the fact that the US and other countries had to wait for the response of the international media and public to the IOC-South Africa negotiations before lifting sanctions they had imposed on that country. Hence, an international political issue was resolved through a sports organization, just as de Coubertin had purposed.

Another unique example he provides is the United Nations' sanction against Yugoslavia's participation in international sports through Security Council (SC) Resolution 575, which was adopted on May 30 1992. This was just before the 1992 Barcelona Olympics

and the sanction was in response to Yugoslavia's failure to comply with earlier resolutions of the SC. Carrard notes that section 8 of the resolution provided that all states shall "(b) Take the necessary steps to prevent the participation in sporting events on their territory of persons or groups representing the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia" (2011: 31).

He observes that even though Spain as a country and member of the UN was bound by the resolution, the IOC was not. Since the Olympic Games is an IOC event, a solution was mediated where Yugoslavian athletes participated in the Barcelona Olympics, wearing white uniforms and flying the Olympic flag instead of their national flag in order to comply with the UN resolution.

Finally, Carrard notes that the IOC has since 2009 acquired an observer status at the United Nations. While he agrees that it is too early to conclude what the outcome of this partnership may be, he observes that it could take the form of a public private partnership initiative such as that of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). Nonetheless, considering the continuous attempts by governments to acquire greater influence on the IOC and other sports organizations, as demonstrated by the recent corruption investigations and prosecutions initiated by the governments of the US and other countries against FIFA officials, it is the argument of this paper that an approach such as that of WADA will only enable states to achieve their objective. The importance of Carrard's work to this study is that it introduces three concepts which determine the extent to which states get involved in sporting activities, as well as different insights into some of the instances in which states have used sports in diplomacy.

In *Sport and Canadian Diplomacy*, Franks, Hawes and Macintosh (1988) analyse the evolution of Canada's sports foreign policy. In their view, it was instigated by the 1972 Canada-USSR hockey series, but given a real incentive by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. Their work provides an excellent insight into the incentives that propelled Canada to incorporate sports into its foreign policy as well as a narrative on the process.

In brief, even though events such as Germany's use of the 1936 Berlin Olympics to promote its ideology of a superior Aryan race and to boost its image on the international stage provided successive Canadian governments with evidence of the utility of sports in achieving particular foreign policy objectives, Canada made little use of sports in its diplomacy. According to the authors, the Canada-USSR hockey series in September 1972 inspired a sense of nationalism in Canadians. The extensive involvement of the country's Department of External Affairs and its Embassy in Moscow in the games also projected it as a major foreign policy enterprise.

The event engendered public support for state involvement in sporting activities and encouraged further action in the field by the Department of External Affairs. The Department created a Sport Desk in 1972, an International Sports Relations (ISP) section within its Public Affairs Bureau. Among other functions, it had the duty of advising Sport Canada and actors in the sports sector on developments in international sports which had the potential to impact on Canada's foreign policy.

They observe that the Trudeau administration was committed to pursuing a foreign policy that covered more economic and cultural elements. This commitment was demonstrated in 1981 with the movement of the trade division of the former Department for Industry, Trade and Commerce to the Department of External Affairs. Hence, the mandate of the Department was extended from focusing on the traditional political and diplomatic issues to cover issues related to culture, immigration, and the economy.

The authors also note that during the Trudeau administration there were instances where sport was used for propaganda, diplomatic protest, promoting commerce and as an alternate form of conflict. They also assert that activities related to sports could facilitate the promotion of trade, tourism, and for attracting investment. Of particular note to them, however, were Trudeau's adoption of the 1976 Montreal Olympics to express his China policy, Canada's

boycott of the 1986 Moscow Olympics, and the country's policy towards South Africa. While emphasizing that the hosting of the Olympics provided an opportunity for promoting the country's image and commercial activities, they note that a major political issue of the Montreal Olympics was the dispute between Canada and the IOC over China. Whereas Canada supported PRC to represent China, the Olympic committee supported Taiwan instead. Trudeau's decision to not allow Taiwan to represent China was, thus, seen as a major foreign policy stance which conveyed Canada's independence to pursue its own foreign policy initiatives.

With respect to the boycott of the Moscow Olympics, the authors contend that regardless of the pressure from the US for Canada to follow its lead in boycotting the event, the Trudeau administration was reluctant to do so. This was to avoid the insinuation that Canada's foreign policy was being directed by Washington. Canada, however, eventually boycotted the games partly due to the excessive pressure on the Canadian Olympic Committee by its large corporate sponsors, many of which were subsidiaries of US companies.

Finally, Canada joined other commonwealth countries to sanction South Africa by banning it from the 1976 Olympics. Considering that this work is concerned with Ghana's use of sports in its diplomacy, and that Ghana was a key advocate for the expulsion of apartheid South Africa from the Commonwealth, this example is worthy of note. The writers, however, note that Canada was unable to heed the call of mainly African countries to boycott the Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh in 1986, probably due to its relations with Great Britain and the political implications.

Regardless of their focus on diplomacy, the authors also note that sports is useful both for domestic and international purposes. For domestic purposes they stipulate that it has evolved as a profitable business activity, promotes healthy living and national unity. For international and diplomatic purposes, Sports is used, as in the case of the German Democratic Republic, to

create national identity. It has also served as an alternative means to expressing policy, including the ideals of communism and capitalism respectively. The reason why it is so effective is that sports elicit emotions and constitutes intrinsic elements which, even though, are non-rational tend to have a real impact on people. The significance of their study to this study is that they provide an analysis of the circumstances that made it necessary for Canada, another country, to embrace sports diplomacy and the manner in which that country has practiced this form of diplomacy. Since this study is considering the case of Ghana, their work in some respects serves as a guideline on the analysis and assessment of Ghana's situation could be based.

### **1.10 Sources of Data**

The study makes use of both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data sources include official records and documents of organizations and government agencies such as the Ghana football Association (GFA), Ghana Olympic Committee (GOC), National Sports Authority (NSA), FIFA, IOC, and the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF). The study, based on purposeful random sampling, derives information through oral interviews with resource persons from diverse backgrounds which are believed to be relevant to this work. These include former diplomats such as Ambassador Kwabena Baah Duodu, Mr. Magnus Rex Danquah, Chief Operating Officer of the Ghana 2008 Africa Cup of Nations, and Mr. Anthony Baffoe, a former Black Stars player and General Secretary of the Professional Footballers Association of Ghana. Others include Mr. Saka Akwei, the Chief Sports Development officer at the National Sports Authority, and Mr. Otor Plahar, Public Relations Officer at the Ministry of Youth and Sports. In all about six people were engaged in oral interviews. This owes to the difficulty in securing interviews. It is believed, however, that the individuals engaged were suitable representatives of their professions and adequately qualified to have given all the information the study requires for accurate assessment and analysis. Other primary sources

include the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, and statements delivered by former presidents, Kwame Nkrumah and Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings.

With respect to secondary sources, the study makes significant use of data from books and journal articles. Other sources include newspaper articles, documentaries and website data.

### **1.11 Research Methodology**

The study adopts a qualitative approach, and involves an analysis of how Ghana's involvement in international sports organizations and competitions have influenced its external relations. It is based on an assessment of how Ghana's participation in international sports has enabled it to achieve its foreign policy objectives. Limitations to the study include challenges in securing interviews and assessing accurately the extent of the role played by Ghana's participation in international sporting events in the country's diplomatic practice. Whilst there have been specific instances in which the country used its participation in international competitions, such as boycotting the Olympics and FIFA world cup, for example, it is difficult to estimate accurately the actual leverage the country held in bringing about the desired results. This is, especially, the case in situations of group action by African and other countries across the world.

### **1.12 Arrangement of Chapters**

Chapter One constitutes the Research Design

Chapter Two examines Ghana's Status in International Sports

Chapter Three analyses Ghana's Foreign Policy and the Role of Sports in the Country's Diplomatic Efforts.

Chapter Four provides the Summary of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

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## CHAPTER TWO

### GHANA'S STATUS IN INTERNATIONAL SPORTS

#### 2.1 Introduction

Since the main theme of this study borders on how Ghana's government has utilised sports to affect the country's external relations, this chapter takes a look at the role the state plays in the sports sector. The chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section draws out the partnership that has been formed between the government and the private sector as they try to complement each other's efforts in order to achieve their coinciding interests in promoting sports in the country. The second section attempts a description of the extent of Ghana's involvement in international sports and the related accomplishments. This is expected to give an idea of the country's stature in international sporting events and the measure of influence such reputation in the field could have on the country's external relations.

#### 2.2 The Role of Government in Sports Development

The government of Ghana has always played a role in the field of sports. It provides the regulatory framework within which sporting activities are undertaken in the country. Generally, the government oversees the development of sports in the country, and the Ministry of Youth and Sports is entrusted with the overall management of the field. The Ministry's functions are carried out through subsidiary agencies, which include the National Sports Authority (NSA), the National Youth Authority (NYA), the National Sports College (NSC, Winneba), and the Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency (GYEEDA).

The mandate of the Ministry, as provided by the Civil Service Law 1993, Act 327, is:

to formulate Youth and Sports policies; monitor and evaluate policy implementation to achieve national integration and international recognition; promote youth empowerment and self-development; and provide enabling environment for sports development, organization and promotion (moys.gov.gh, 2014).

Thus, through cooperation with other state agencies such as the Ministry of Education, and the private sector, the Ministry bears the responsibility to create an enabling environment for the effective development of the country's youth and sports.

Of the above mentioned subsidiaries, the National Sports Authority plays the most direct and active role in respect of sports development and participation. The Authority is mandated to:

promote and encourage the organization and development of, and mass participation in, amateur and professional sports in Ghana; and co-ordinate and integrate all efforts to raise the standards of performance in amateur and professional sports throughout Ghana. (NSA website, 2014-2016).

The National Sports College is relatively a more recent attempt at honing the country's performance in sports. It was established in 1984 under S.M.C. Decree No.54, 1976 as a response to the decline in sports due to the mass departure of practitioners in the sector for greener pastures. The College is mandated to train and re-train actors in the sector in order to augment their skills and help to reinforce sports development in the country (moys.gov.gh, 2014).

The National Youth Authority (NYA), on the other hand, was established in 1974 by NRC Decree 241, and is responsible for implementing measures intended to ingrain cultural and moral values in the youth. According to the Ministry, "one of the functions of NYA is to develop a strong and disciplined youth imbued with the spirit of nationalism and sense of public service and morality"(moys.gov.gh, 2014). Thus, NYA policies and initiatives are geared towards developing leadership skills in the youth, instilling in them civic responsibility and

appreciation of friendship and collaboration with people from other cultures. The Authority is also responsible for facilitating private investments in youth development.

The government is, however, not alone in administering sports in the country. The private sector plays a very significant role in the field. In an interview with Mr. Saka Akwei, Chief Sports Development Officer at the National Sports Authority,<sup>1</sup> he revealed that almost all the sports disciplines in Ghana have national associations which are managed by non-state officials. These associations are affiliated to international federations such as FIFA and IOC. They are also affiliated to the NSA. As at June 2016, thirty eight national sports associations, which are listed in Appendix II, were affiliated to the NSA. By liaising with these associations, the NSA acts as a very important connection between the government and the private sector. The government also provides funding to the associations, usually, in connection with the national teams that fall under the purview these associations.

With regards to the Ghana Football Association (GFA), which has no affiliation to the NSA, Mr. Tony Baffoe, a former player of the national football team, disclosed in an interview that the Public Interest Committee (PIC), which constitutes representatives of both the government and private individuals is the vital link between the Association and the state. Here too, the government bears the responsibility of expenses that cover the activities of all the national teams. Hence, through the NSA and the PIC government has formed a very useful partnership with the private sector. In this way, the government exerts significant influence on issues related to sporting activities in the country.

Whilst the government wields the power to direct sports development in the country, it can be argued that the participation of private individuals and groups in the organization of sports in Ghana has been the backbone of sports development in the country. Private investment in Ghanaian sports keeps growing, especially when it comes to developing young talents at the

grass-roots level, which, incidentally, is the most critical stage of developing athletes who can compete successfully at the international level. But this is mostly the case with football, which also receives the largest share of government spending. For example, colts clubs and football academies such as the famous Auroras or Hearts Babies, Right to Dream Academy, and West Africa Football Academy (WAFA, previously Fetteh Feyenoord) remain the institutions which develop football talent in Ghana.

Upon retirement, a number of former national football stars have established football clubs and academies, developing their own parks and providing other facilities. The establishment of Nania FC and Yegola FC by former senior national team players, Abedi Ayew Pele and Tony Yeboah are good examples. Serving as feeders to the country's professional football clubs, the academies and colts clubs can be seen as the props on which Ghana football leans. In terms of infrastructure, Marcel Desailly's Lizzy Complex is a sporting facility which attracts teams both from within and outside the country.

Promoting boxing, rugby, badminton, tennis, and other sports has also remained mainly in the hands of private individuals. Much of boxing activity is concentrated in Bukom, which has produced most of Ghana's world champions, including Azumah Nelson. Ghana's national football team captain, Asamoah Gyan, is one of the sportsmen who have invested into boxing in recent years. By establishing Baby Jet Management and Boxing Promotions, the footballer is seeking to contribute to the production of world boxing champions in the country (peacefmonline.com, April 2015). Former boxer Ike Quartey has done same, and others like Azumah Nelson have established boxing gyms to develop the sports. Corporate sponsorship has also played an important role in sports development. For example, the qualification of the national football team, the Black Stars, to the world cup for the first time in 2006 can be attributed in a large measure to the sponsorship the team received from Gold Fields Ghana to the tune of three million dollars (GNA, 2008).

Private individual investment and corporate sponsorship have, however, proven to be inadequate over the past years. For example, in relative terms, the development of athletics, is largely left to government, perhaps, due to the high cost involved in providing the needed facilities. The GOC (January, 2015), in a funding proposal, has noted that a significant challenge with corporate sponsorship of sporting activities is their tendency to invest primarily in “marketable ‘events’, which allow them to brand and market their corporate identities.” Furthermore, the Committee notes that investing in the fundamental needs in sports development, such as the construction and maintenance of facilities like gymnasiums, stadia, courts, playing fields, and tracks, and the funding of training programmes are less appealing to private sponsors. Consequently, government has the greater responsibility in filling the gap if its interests in developing the sector are to be achieved.

Regardless of this critical role played by governments towards the development of sports, the international sports federations, based on the principle that sports should not be mixed with politics, have continued to show their disapproval of government interference in the activities of national sports associations. The Federations find selection of officials of national sports associations by governments as especially abhorrent to the above-mentioned philosophy. For example, according to Cha (2009), Rule 51 of the modern Olympic Charter is “the core principle of sport purism, forbidding any form of political, racial, and political demonstration in any of the sites, events, venues or related areas by the athletes” (p. 3).

Nonetheless, regardless of the extent of private involvement and funding of sporting activities, states usually strive to have adequate influence over all activities that pertain in their jurisdictions, and this includes activities related to sports. This may be explained by the fact that sporting activities have the potential to influence not only a government’s popularity, but its policies in other sectors, both at home and externally (Jarvie, 2006:66). It has also been

mentioned in the previous paragraph that governments make substantial investments in sports, especially with regards to providing infrastructure.

For example, all the major stadia in Ghana are government owned, and even though they generally fend for themselves, almost all the national associations, because of their association with the various national sporting teams, in some ways, receive funding from the state. The inception of national teams and the institution of international competitions, during which national anthems and flags are sung and flown respectively also argue for the involvement of the state. Furthermore, in Ghana, even privately owned football clubs such as Accra Hearts of Oak and Kumasi Asante Kotoko have, on some occasions, justified their right to government sponsorship with the argument that they fly the national flag when they compete in continental inter-club competitions. Thus, it is only natural that the state would demand to have a voice and some amount of influence in sports administration at all levels.

In order to protect its interests, and to ensure that the decisions of the various associations fall in line with its own policies, the government often tries to facilitate the election of persons who are considered to be loyal to it to fill key positions in these associations. This often results in conflict between the government on the one hand, and the national associations and international federations on the other. In consequence, like many other countries across the world, Ghana has been threatened with bans on some occasions, and banned in some instances on charges of state interference in the activities of either the GFA or GOC. The IOC, for example, suspended Ghana in January 2011 citing political interference with the National Olympic Committee. Earlier, in December 2010 FIFA had cautioned the Ghanaian government to stop intruding into the affairs of the Ghana football Association (BBC 13 January 2011).

In conclusion, it must be noted that the public-private partnership that has been formed between the state and private individuals and groups in the sports sector has been very helpful

for sports development in the country. The challenge, however, is finding a way to harmonise the relationship in order to ensure that the interests of each party are secured. Whenever this delicate balance has been achieved the country experiences considerable progress in the sector. It is also obvious that the influence of the government in the field, especially, on the national teams, is so profound that should the government decide to use it as such, sports related activities could be adopted conveniently by the state to facilitate the achievement of its interests both at home and externally.

### **2.2.1 Ghana's Status in International Sports**

This section seeks to identify the extent of Ghana's involvement in international sporting activities, with the view to give an idea of the extent to which the adoption of this platform could aid the country to influence its relations with other countries. As was stated in chapter one, the discussion will be limited extensively to boxing, football and athletics even though the country competes in other sporting disciplines on the international stage.

### **2.2.2 Ghana's Place in World Boxing**

According to Akyeampong (2002), organized boxing was introduced to the Gold Coast during the early years of the immediate past century, mostly in the 1930s. He notes that the introduction of radio in 1935, and the fact that most Gold Coast newspapers reported on international sports incorporated the Gold Coast into the global sports audience, and engendered the participation of the people in sports. In his opinion, the earlier development of a martial art, known as *asafo atwele* (group fighting), among the Ga people, which had evolved by 1910 was a key precursor which facilitated the introduction of formal boxing by the colonial government.

Also, the fact that this indigenous art had assumed a very organized form by the time it came to the attention of the colonial government means that it lent itself as a perfect

foundational system into which western boxing was conveniently integrated and developed. Akyeampong further notes the efforts made by the colonial government to establish boxing clubs at Osu, Bukom and other places in Accra and makes reference to the fact that by the 1950s the country was producing international champions in the sport.

Among the successful boxers of the 1950s and 60s was Roy Ankrah, nicknamed “the Black Flash” Ankrah. He was a professional featherweight, super featherweight and lightweight boxer who won almost every title he competed for in the country. His achievements included winning several titles at the national level ranging from the flyweight through the bantamweight to the welterweight divisions. In 1951 Ankrah won the British Empire super featherweight title, making him the first boxer from the Gold Coast to win an international title.

According to a BBC news article (25 June, 2003), his victory coincided with the release of then political leader, Kwame Nkrumah, from prison and had a very significant impact throughout the country. The article’s further assertion that Ankrah’s victories complimented Nkrumah’s fight for independence fits into Akyeampong’s claim that his victory was a Gold Coast triumph. Ankrah’s success has since inspired other Ghanaian boxers to compete on the international stage with credit.

At the 1960 Rome Olympics, Ike Quartey senior managed to secure a silver medal in boxing, the country’s first ever Olympic medal. Floyd ‘Klutei’ Robertson was another Ghanaian who held the Commonwealth featherweight title in the early 1960s. In 1964 he challenged the World Boxing Council (WBC) featherweight champion Ultiminio “Sugar” Ramos for the title at the Accra Sports Stadium. Ramos, a Cuban boxer, retained the title by a hotly disputed split decision. This was the first ever world championship fight to be staged in Ghana (Youtube, 2015). Other Ghanaian boxers of repute during that era included Oblitey

Commeey, Kimpo Amarfio, Dennis Adjei, 'London Kid', P.J. Cobblah, Sugar Gibiliru, Eboh Danquah and Joe Oke.

Ghana, however, could not boast of a world boxing champion until the ground breaking exploits of David Kotei Poison in California, United States on 20<sup>th</sup> September 1975, when he beat Rubén Olivares after 15 rounds to win the WBC Featherweight title. According to Akyeampong (2002) the boxer was honoured back home with a highlife song composed in his name for helping to put the country on the world map. The following decades would produce more Ghanaian world champions. Azumah Nelson in 1984 beat Wilfredo Gomez of Puerto Rico to win the WBC Featherweight. In his glittering career, Azumah, nicknamed "The Professor", also held the world Super Featherweight/Junior Lightweight titles and contributed to establishing the name of the country in world boxing. Azumah's contribution to world boxing was honoured with his induction into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 2004 in recognition of his long reign as world champion between 1984 and 1996 (Barnett, CNN August, 2012). This makes him the first boxer from Africa to receive that recognition. Nana Yaw Konadu was a contemporary of Azumah Nelson, who also contributed to boosting Ghana's presence in world boxing by winning the WBC Super Flyweight (1989) and WBA Bantamweight (1996/97) titles.

During the mid-1990s Ike 'Bazooka' Quartey, and his compatriot, Alfred 'Cobra' Quartey won the WBC international Super-Bantamweight and the WBC international Bantamweight titles respectively. (Akyeampong 2002). The baton was relayed to Joseph King Kong Abgeko, a 3-time International Boxing Federation (IBF) Bantamweight champion. Joshua Clottey is another Ghanaian boxer who has held the IBF Welterweight title, and thus, helping to cement the country's position in the world of boxing. While noting that these boxers have become national heroes and envoys, Akyeampong reveals that twenty-two Ghanaian boxers were ranked in the March 2002 ratings of the African Boxing Union. In the June 2016

rankings by the World Boxing Association, Patrick Allotey is ranked 14<sup>th</sup> in the Super Welterweight division, Emmanuel Tagoe is ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the Lightweight division, and Rafael Mensah is ranked fourth in the Super Featherweight division (WBA June, 2016).

Whilst the number of world champions produced by Ghana is comparatively less significant when compared to countries like the US, Mexico and Puerto Rico, the recognition gained by Ghanaian boxers such as Azumah Nelson have given the country a very good image in international circles.

### **2.2.3 Ghana's Place in World Football**

Football is arguably Ghana's most popular sport. It has also been mentioned in the previous section that in terms of government support and funding, it is the biggest sport in the country. The game was introduced into the Gold Coast during the latter part of the 19th century by European merchants. The initiative, however, has been largely credited to a group of students of the Cape Coast Government School and their Jamaican headmaster, Mr. Briton (NSA website, June 2016).

According to an article published by Ghanaweb.com on 30 November, 1999 and titled History of Ghana Football, this group constituted themselves into the first ever football club to be established in the country, which they named Excelsior. By the 1910s the game had been embraced in other parts of the Gold Coast, with football clubs sprouting in Accra, Sekondi-Takoradi and Kumasi, including the likes of Accra Hearts of Oak in 1911, Sekondi Eleven Wise in 1919, and Kumasi Asante Kotoko Soccer Club in 1935. In 1958, the national league was launched. It was won by Accra Hearts of Oak. Even though the competition has faced a number of challenges, particularly with respect to gaining sponsorship, it has been accepted and patronised very well across the country, with Hearts and Kotoko dominating the scene.

The 2014/2015 edition was, however, won by Ashanti Gold Football Club, which was its fourth league title.

On the international scene, Ghana is represented by various national teams, constituted on the basis of the age restricted competitions of FIFA. Information from the Ghana Football Association indicate that beside the senior national team, named the Black Stars, there are the national Under 23 team (Black Meteors), Under 20 team (Black Satellites) and the Under 17 team (Black Starlets). A similar structure exists for the national female football teams, starting from the senior team, the Black Queens, through the Under 20 team (Black Princesses) to the Under 17 team (Black Maidens). In order to enable the country to participate in the African Nations Championship, which was introduced by CAF in 2009 the local Black Stars team was also established. (GFA, 2016)

The country joined the Confederation of African Football (CAF) and FIFA in 1958. Since then the presence of Ghana as a state has been felt in every part of the world through the sport. In 1963 Ghana' Black Stars won the African Cup of Nations (CAN), which is the continental football competition instituted by CAF in 1957. The country successfully defended the Cup in 1965, and regained it in 1978. In 1982, Ghana won the Cup for a record fourth time. This feat has only been equalled by Cameroun, and surpassed by only Egypt, thirty four years since Ghana last won the competition. Ghana also remains the country which has reached the most finals of the competition, nine times, and one more than Egypt. Ghana played in the finals against the Egyptians in 2010 and against Cote d'Ivoire in 2015, establishing itself as one of the dominant sides on the continent (Encyclopaedia Britannica)

Various Ghanaian national teams have participated in FIFA world cups organised in several countries across the continents of the world over the years. This has helped to showcase the culture and other attributes of the country to the international community. The Black Stars

have been dominant in African football since the country's independence. However, on the world stage, the team did not qualify for the FIFA World Cup until 2006 when Germany hosted the competition. Since then Ghana has qualified for all successive editions of the competition, in 2010 (South Africa) and 2014 (Brazil). In the 2010 edition, which was hosted for the first time on African soil by South Africa, Ghana was the only African team to have progressed from the group stages, and became only the third African country to have reached the quarter finals of the global event after Cameroun (1990) and Senegal in 2002 (FIFA, 2016).

Ghana's impressive stature in world football is, however, not limited to the exploits of the Black Stars. Long before 2006, beginning in the 1980s, the country's junior national teams, the Under 17s, 20s and 23s, had been painting a beautiful image of Ghana to international publics through their charming display of the beautiful game. Information from the Ghana Olympic Committee and GFA websites confirm that in 1992, at the Barcelona Olympics, Ghana's Black Meteors made history as the first African team to win a medal in football at the Olympics when it won silver. It must be noted, though, that both Nigeria (1996) and Cameroun (2000) have since won gold.

Ghana's triumph over Brazil in October 2009 to win the FIFA U-20 World Cup also makes it the first and still the only African country to have won the FIFA World Youth Championship. The country's Under 17 team has also won the FIFA Under 17 World Cup twice, in 1991 and 1995, and is ranked by FIFA as the third all-time best team in the world in that category as at June, 2016, after Nigeria (5 wins) and Brazil (3 wins). The team has also been runner-up on two occasions, in 1993 and 1997. It also won bronze when the competition was hosted by New Zealand in 1999.

The country's performance in women's football on the African continent and the world stage has been equally remarkable although it is yet to win the Women's African Cup of

Nations. The Black Queens have participated in the FIFA Women's World Cup on three occasions, in 1999, 2003 and 2007. Reporting on Ghana's qualification to the upcoming 2016 Women's Under 17 World Cup, FIFA's website states that:

“Ghana, like Nigeria, have qualified for every FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup to date. .... Azerbaijan 2012 represented the team's big breakthrough, with Ghana becoming the first African team to reach the semi-finals, losing out to eventual winners France before claiming third place with a 1-0 win over Germany” (FIFA, 2016).

Similarly, the Black Princesses will be featuring in their fourth successive FIFA Women's U-20 World Cup when the team participates in the upcoming competition to be hosted by Papua New Guinea in November 2016.

At club level, the country's two dominant sides, Accra Hearts of Oak and Kumasi Asante Kotoko have each won two continental titles, helping to boost the image of the country in that competition. Kotoko secured the African clubs championships in 1970. It won the cup again in 1983. Accra Hearts of Oak on the other hand, won the CAF Champion's League in 2000. Yeboah (2014) has noted that based on the performance of the Hearts of Oak team which enabled them to win the competition that year, and to win the CAF Super Cup against Egypt's Zamalek in February, 2001 CNN sports commentators ranked Hearts of Oak as the world's eighth best football club. Also, according to Darkwah (2015), Hearts won their second major continental trophy by beating their arch rivals Kotoko in the finals of the CAF Confederations Cup in 2005. It was the first time two Ghanaian clubs, and in fact, two clubs from the same country had competed against each other in the finals of any CAF competition, and demonstrated Ghana's dominance at the club level during that year. Currently, for the 2015/16 season, Medeama Football Club is the team representing the country in Club Football on the continent in the CAF Confederations Cup.

In all, football has been the sports that has helped to put Ghana on the world map the most number of times. The country participates in FIFA organised competitions almost on a yearly basis since the late 1980s. Association football is without doubt the most popular sport in the world. It is played and patronized in almost every country in the world, including the US and New Zealand, where other sports such as rugby and basketball are more popular. As shown so far, Ghana is ever-present at international football events. Therefore, with consideration to the fact that a country the size of Ghana could be so successful in the sport on the global stage, and the extent of publicity it receives from participating in these events, it is accurate to argue that the sport presents the country with a credible leverage with which to influence its relations with other countries, especially as a soft power tool for winning the minds and emotions of foreign publics. It represents a convenient avenue through which Ghana could acquaint itself with international audiences with the view to promoting its interests, whether by attracting tourists or investors.

#### **2.2.4 Ghana's Place in World Athletics**

Since the introduction of sports in the Gold Coast, athletics has been one of the popular disciplines practiced in the country. Even though Ghana has not excelled in the sport on the international stage as much as in football and boxing, its performances have been fairly good, mostly on the African continent. Also, the popularity of the sport has waned in recent years as compared to the period between the 1960s and 1980s. During the London 2012 Olympic Games, Erasmus Kwaw, on 23 August, posted a report titled *Ghana should be a force in athletics -Team Leader of Jamaica*, on [ghaathletics.com](http://ghaathletics.com). Commenting on the fact that Ghana's entrie contingent to the Games comprised of about only nine athletes, which he claims surprised many in the sports world, the reporter makes reference to the assertion made by the head of the Jamaican team at the event, Donald Quarrie, that Ghana could become one of the top countries in international athletics if the state should invest adequately in developing the talents of the

youth whilst they are in school. Evidence in support of this assertion abounds. Beyond the fact that the success of countries like the United States, United Kingdom and Jamaica have hinged on college sports, Ghana itself can trace its best moments in the sport to the 1960s and 70s and even beyond, when school athletics, especially at the secondary school level, received the utmost interest and investment from the government.

The Ghana National Sports Festival, which was introduced during that era also boosted the performance of the country's athletes. This was noted by Ghana's Minister of Sports, Clement Kofi Humado, when he launched the revived National Sports Festival in August, 2011 at the Accra Sports Stadium in Accra. He stated that the competition was known to have helped authorities in the sports sector to discover and develop athletes who went on to bring honour to the country through their performances on the international stage. (Myjoyonline.com, August 2011). Erasmus Kwaw, in the aforementioned article, mentions a number of Ghanaian athletes who have made the country proud at global athletics events. These include runners Alice Anum, Ohene Karikari and Leo Myles-Mills and Eric Nkansah. Others are long and high jumpers Francis Dodoo, who is currently the president of the Ghana Olympic Committee, Andrew Owusu and Mike Ahey. For instance, in 1965, at the inaugural All-Africa Games, Ghana's Rose Hart won gold in the women's 80 metres hurdles event. She also won Bronze in the 100-metres race. In the same competition, in 1973, Alice Anum of Ghana secured gold medals in both of the women's 100-metres and 200-metres races.

Tricard (1996) in the book, *American Women's Track and Field: A History, 1895 Through 1980, Volume 1*, writes about Anum's exploits in the US during her days as a student in that country. In Chapter 55 the author states:

Kent State University in Canton, Ohio, hosted the championship on July 1-2. *The New York Times* had small articles for each of the two days of the meet. The first story announced that Wilma Rudolph's twelve-year-old, 200-metre meet record was broken by Alice Anum, a twenty-one-year-old freshman from

Ghana attending the University of Tennessee. The 100-metre record was tied by Alice Anum and Iris Davis (p. 549).

In the immediate past and current decades athletes like Ignisious Gaisah, who won gold in the Long Jump event at the All-Africa Games in 2003, Vida Anim, gold medallist in 100-metres, 200-metres, and 4x100- metres relay events at the Africa Championships in 2006, and Aziz Zakari have been among the recent crop of athletes who have flown the country's flag in international sports (Athletics Weekly 1999-2007).

Compared to the Olympic Games, Ghana's performance at the All-Africa Games as well as the Commonwealth Games has been commendable. Information retrieved from the website of the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) show that Ghana has competed at fifteen Commonwealth Games since 1954, missing only the 1986 Games in Edinburgh. Until now the country's best performance at the Games was achieved during the Jamaica Games in 1986 where it won five gold medals, its highest haul ever. On two occasions, in 1954 and 1982, Ghana failed to win any medals at the event. In total it has won fifty-seven medals at the Games, including fifteen gold, 18 Silver and 24 Bronze (CGF, 2014).

As demonstrated by the information in Appendix III and IV, Ghana's performance at the All-Africa Games has been good, especially between the 1960s and 80s. Similarly Appendix V and VI summarize Ghana's achievements at the Africa championship between 1979 and 2004. Other performances by Ghanaians in international athletics worthy of note include John Myles-Mills winning a silver medal in the men's 60 metres race at the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) World Indoor Championships in 1989. In 1994 Philomena Mensah won bronze in the women's 100m race at the IAAF World Junior Championships. Vida Anim also secured a bronze medal in the women's 200m in the aforementioned competition in 2000. Ignisious Gaisah in 2003 placed third in Long Jump at the IAAF World Athletics Final whilst Aziz Zakari placed second in the men's 100m race in

2005 in the same competition. Gaisah went on to win silver in Long Jump at the IAAF World Championship in Athletics in 2005 and gold in the same discipline in 2006 at the IAAF World Indoor Championships (Athletics Weekly 1999-2007). It is, therefore, understandable when the head of Jamaica's contingent at the London 2012 Olympics opines that Ghana could emerge as a dominant force in global athletics if the level of investment required to develop the discipline would be made by the actors in the sports sector.

## **2.4 Ghana at the Olympics**

Ghana has been a frequent participant in the Olympics Games. In all, the country has participated in 14 Olympic Games since joining the IOC. However, compared to the country's performance in FIFA competitions, and even in professional boxing, Ghana's record at the Olympics lags behind. In the history of the Games Ghana has won only 4 medals at the Summer Olympics. Three of these are silver and the other bronze. (IOC, 2016). At the 2014 Summer Youth Olympic Games, which was hosted by China, Ghana's Martha Bissah placed first in the 800 metres final to win the country's first ever gold medal in any Olympic Games event, setting a personal and national junior record of 2:04.90, and adding a fifth Olympic medal to the country's haul (GOC website, 2016). She was subsequently invited to the Flagstaff House by the country's president, John Dramani Mahama, who gave her a personal cash reward of GH¢10,000 and charged the GOC to pay special attention to the development of her talent (Graphic: September 2, 2014).

In 2010 Ghana competed in the Winter Olympics for the first time. Kwame Nkrumah-Acheampong, nicknamed the 'Snow Leopard' represented Ghana at the Games and finished in 53<sup>rd</sup> position out of 102 participants. This makes Ghana one of only eight African countries to have participated in the competition as at the Sochi 2014 edition. In the build up to the 2010 event, the United Kingdom's news outfit, The Telegraph, published an article online with the

caption: “Winter Olympics 2010: Ghana's one-man ski team ready to capture public's imagination”(Chadband, 2010). If the assertion made by the writer of the article, Ian Chadband, with respect to the fact that Akyeampong's participation in the Games could capture the imagination of the public, is right, then the fact that Ghana's government has the option of using the country's involvement in international sporting events as a soft power tool for public diplomacy is fairly settled.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

The discussions in this chapter have shown that the government of Ghana plays a very significant role in sports development, essentially as the main provider of sports infrastructure and sponsor of the national teams. The latter sections of the chapter also demonstrate the fact that the country performs creditably well in international sporting competitions, especially in association football. Hence, with consideration to the control government has over the national teams, and the significant influence that could be brought to bear on the emotions and viewpoints of foreign publics through the involvement of these teams in international sporting events, Ghana could make use of such platforms as a soft power tool for public diplomacy. Whether the government of Ghana recognises this fact, and whether it makes use of sports in that direction is the main theme of this study, and constitutes the focus of chapter three.

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## CHAPTER THREE

# GHANA'S FOREIGN POLICY AND THE ROLE OF SPORTS IN THE COUNTRY'S DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS

### 3.1 Introduction

This study argues that some of Ghana's foreign policy objectives are attainable through the country's participation in international sporting activities. In that regard, it would be appropriate to consider what Ghana's foreign policy entails. This will facilitate an analysis of how the country's involvement in such events has affected the outcomes of its international relations across time. Thus, this chapter introduces the objectives which have guided Ghana's foreign policy since its independence, and considers how sports have been identified and used in combination with other tools to achieve some of these goals.

### 3.2 Ghana's Foreign Policy

The foundation of Ghana's foreign policy was laid under the leadership of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the country's first president, perhaps, even before the country gained independence in 1957. His foreign policy objectives, in a very profound manner, set the agenda and direction of the policies that have guided the country's foreign relations ever since. Thus, in order to appreciate Ghana's foreign policy fully, one needs a comprehension of Nkrumah's. It may be noted that most of his foreign policy objectives were revealed in his speech on Independence Day, 6<sup>th</sup> March, 1957. He stated as follows:

"At long last, the battle has ended! ..... We must realise that from now on, we are no more a colonial but a free and independent people... ..help me to reshape the destiny of this country. ....make it a nation that will be respected by every nation in the world. ....stand firm behind us so that we can prove to the world that when the African is given a chance he can show the world that he is somebody! ....., there is a new African in the world!

That new African is ready to fight his own battles and show that after all, the black man is capable of managing his own affairs.....We are going to demonstrate to the world, to the other nations, that we are prepared to lay our own foundation..... we are going to create our own African personality and identity. It's the only way that we can show the world that we are ready for own battles. ... Our independence is meaningless unless it is linked up with the total liberation of Africa."(graphic.com.gh, 7 March 2016 )

Dr. Obed Asamoah (1991), the longest serving minister of foreign affairs in the history of Ghana, is of the opinion that it is only through consideration of the conditions that fashioned Nkrumah's philosophy that a full comprehension of Ghana's Foreign Policy under his watch can be achieved. Among other factors, Asamoah makes reference to the fact that Ghana gained independence during the Cold War, a time when the world, based on the opposing ideologies of communism and capitalism, was divided into two blocks, East and West. As a newly independent state, Ghana sought to portray itself not to be aligned to any of these blocs.

Also, Nkrumah had been an active member of the Pan-African Movement in Britain and the US. He was, therefore, well informed about the racial prejudice against black people during that era. Besides, all the other territories in sub-Saharan Africa were still under colonial rule. Asamoah states that in consequence the core issues which Ghana, under Nkrumah, considered in its dealings with the rest of the world were to free the continent of Africa from colonialism and to promote the Pan-African Movement and African unity. Other goals included creating and promoting the personality of the African and contributing to the achievement of the goals of international organisations such as the United Nations, the Commonwealth and the Organisation of African Unity. He notes that Ghana also sought to pursue a policy of positive neutrality and non-alignment.

Writing on the *Lessons from Ghana's Foreign Policy since Independence*, E.M. Debrah (2002), a retired Ghanaian ambassador, also notes that Nkrumah's foreign policy had five main themes. These included securing the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of

Ghana and promoting its prosperity; freeing the continent of Africa entirely from colonial domination; promoting political unity of all the independent African nations; encouraging collaboration among the states of the non-aligned movement; and supporting international peace and advancement of smaller states through collaboration with intergovernmental organisations such as the United Nations.

There has not been much changes in Ghana's foreign policy objectives since Kwame Nkrumah. The guidelines provided by the country's current constitution with respect to foreign policy attests to this submission. Article 40 (a) of the 1992 Constitution provides that:

In its dealings with other nations, the Government shall:

- a) Promote and protect the interests of Ghana;
  - b) Seek the establishment of a just and equitable international economic and social order;
  - c) Promote respect for international law, treaty obligations and the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means;
  - d) Adhere to the principles enshrined in or as the case may be, the aims and ideals of: i) the Charter of the United Nations, ii) the Charter of the Organization of African Unity, iii) the Commonwealth iv) the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States; and v) any other international organization of which Ghana is a member.
- (Ghana's 1992 Constitution)

Whilst making reference to these guidelines, Debrah (ibid: 29) has asserted that they replicate the substance of the country's foreign policy since independence. Kwame Boafo Arthur (1993) has also noted the continuity in Ghana's foreign policy over the decades.

Writing on Ghana's foreign relations under the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP), the two main political parties that have governed the country since 1992, he emphasises that neither the reversion to democratic governance in 1992, nor the change in administration from the NDC to the NPP in 2000 could bring about any significant changes in the country's foreign policy goals.

The principles stated above indicate that Ghana believes in good neighbourliness, multilateralism, Pan-Africanism, and regional integration. Thus, supporting and defending the interest of Ghanaians everywhere in the world, pursuing economic diplomacy, promoting the interests of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union are all objectives which determine the kind of policy options Ghana adopts in its dealings in the international community.

The issue to consider now is how participating in international sports has enabled Ghana to achieve some of the above-mentioned policy objectives. It has been mentioned in the introduction to this study that, generally, foreign policies are implemented through diplomacy. Ernest Satow (1957) defines it as:

The application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of official relations between the governments of independent states, extending sometimes also to their relations with vassal states; or, more briefly still, the conduct of business between states by peaceful means (p. 1).

With respect to being tactful, Debrah opines that because small states do not possess sufficient military and economic influence with which to affect the behaviour of other states, it is pertinent for them to be prudent in the use of diplomacy if they are to secure their national interests. Also, while noting that there has been more focus on economic diplomacy in Ghana, Bofo Arthur (2007 : 227)) also recognises the fact that for a country that relies on other states for economic support and harbours "no known hegemonic pretensions," it is critical for Ghana

to be shrewd in the pursuit of its external relations. This study, therefore, argues that sports has been and remains one of the means through which Ghana can tactfully conduct its foreign relations in order to achieve its foreign policy objectives. It contends that even though sports have in some instances been used by the government, especially during the Nkrumah era, latter governments have, perhaps as a result of adverse economic circumstances, in some cases lost sight of how effective sports could be used in achieving the country's interests on the international stage, and thus, relented on using them for such purposes.

### **3.3 Achieving Pan-Africanism, Creating an African Identity and Eliminating racism through Sports**

In addition to circumstances surrounding Ghana's independence, the fact that Ghanaians in general have historically shared Nkrumah's idea of liberating Africa and people of African descent from domination by other groups of people, has made Pan- Africanism an inherent constituent of Ghana's foreign policy. Again, from his Independence Day speech, Nkrumah revealed his intention to demonstrate to the rest of the world that when given the opportunity, the performance of the African in any field of endeavour would be comparable to that of a person of any other race. Nkrumah also focused on portraying an African identity which would command the respect of the other nations. His reference to "a new African in the world" shows that he desired to create a new and different image of the African continent and its people. The integrity of the African had been denigrated such a long time and it was Nkrumah's quest to pursue policies that would help change the situation.

The fact that Ghana's involvement in international sports could help Nkrumah to achieve his goals was not lost on him. By the time Ghana gained independence, there were several examples of the use of sports, both in diplomacy, and as a means for minorities in the

western world to improve their economic status and gain respect in society. There was already evidence that sports could be used to boost the image of African Americans in the US. For example, during the 1950s and 60s, an era when ethnic laws in the US placed African Americans on the periphery of society, the success of African American sportsmen such as Jack Jonson, Wilma Rudolf and Mohammed Ali served as a source of encouragement and showed that sports was an avenue through which the minorities in that country could liberate themselves from poverty and command respect in American society (Bajek, Feb 28, 2012).

Similarly, by his achievements at the 1936 Olympic Games, where he surpassed five world records in athletics and levelled one more within forty-five minutes (IOC website), Jesse Owens, did not only assume individual greatness but helped to discredit the notion that people of African descent, and for that matter, African Americans, were inferior to whites. In an interview with Mr. Rex Danquah, he notes that what makes Owen's triumph more pertinent is the fact that it was during the same Games that Hitler's government made efforts to demonstrate the superiority of the Aryan race. With the advent of television coverage in sports, Owens performance helped to project a positive image of Africans and people of African descent to the entire world.

With Nkrumah's experience in the US as a student, of how sports was impacting on the lives of African Americans, it was not strange, therefore, that he utilised sports, especially, football as one of the tools to achieve his goals in Ghana's external relations. Thompson (1969: 422) notes that the concept of African Personality was officially introduced to the international community during the first Conference of Independent African States in 1958 in Accra. The All-African Peoples Conference which followed in the same year and city also inspired sentiments of nationalism across the continent. It was during the same year that Ghana joined CAF and FIFA. Earlier, the country had gained recognition from IOC in January 1951, and had participated in the Olympic Games in 1952.

### 3.3.1 The Black Stars as Ambassadors for Promoting an African Identity

There is no doubt that Ghana's participation in international football events has helped in forming the country's identity on the international stage. Nkrumah's intention to create an African identity through sports is revealed in how Ghana's national sporting teams have been named. After attaining membership of CAF the country gained fame on the African continent through the success of its national football team, which bears the name "Black Stars". The name is symbolic of the mission the team was created to accomplish. "Black Stars" in itself was emblematic, a show of pride in being African.

The symbolism of the "Black Stars" team and its mission as ambassadors for achieving African emancipation can be traced to the Ghana national flag. The flag consists of the colours of red, gold, and green, that are aligned horizontally. In the centre of the gold band is situated the black star with five prongs. According to the designer of the flag, Mrs. Theodosia Okoh, the gold colour represents Ghana's mineral wealth, the green depicts the lush vegetation and forest resources of the land, and the red commemorates those who sacrificed their lives in order to achieve political freedom for the country from Britain. The Black Star which is embedded within the gold band is the emblem of African emancipation and unification in the fight to free the continent from colonial rule (ghana.gov.gh, 2016). This is the name Nkrumah chose for the national football team, the "Black Stars." In order to accentuate this symbolism, and to instil a sense of national pride in the people, almost all of Ghana's other national sporting teams have the prefix 'black' attached to their names. This can be referenced from chapter two.

Hence, it is evident that right from its inception, there was the intention to use the team for promoting African unity, emancipation and identity. The fact that Nkrumah also deliberately established a football club, Real Republicans, to serve as a platform for enhancing the performance of the Black Stars in international competitions lends support to this

submission. The Real Republicans assembled the best players in the country for the purpose of integrating them into the Black Stars. By playing in the national football league with teams like Hearts of Oak and Kotoko, Real Republicans became a means to giving players of the Black Stars enough time to play together as a unit, and thus, were almost unstoppable when they were unleashed onto the African continent (Alegi et al.2013)

Mr. Magnus Rex Danquah has noted that “Nkrumah recognised at the formative stage of Ghana that sports put all countries on an equal footing, and that performing well makes a statement if you have an identity of play.” In his view, the invitation of major European Clubs to play against the Black Stars in Ghana during the 1960s went a long way to create a positive image of Ghana and Africa. He argues that the impressive results the Black Stars’ achieved against European teams, such as drawing (3-3) against Real Madrid, who were then European Champions, and beating the English side, Blackpool, by five goals to one (5-1) were feats that showed that Africans were capable of competing at par with their European friends. This was an attribute of the African, Nkrumah wanted to demonstrate to the rest of the world.

At this time the Black Stars were held in high regard on the African continent and they received invitations from other countries of the continent to play their national teams. In this way they had become Ghana’s soccer ambassadors, and they were considered as such by the country’s first president. In a documentary titled *Kwame Nkrumah and Ghana's Black Stars*, Rev. Osei Kofi, a former Black Stars player, recounts that when the Black stars were invited to play Kenya’s national team in commemoration of that country’s independence in 1965, the team was directed to display Ghana’s brand of football. Through its beautiful brand of football, Ghana sought to win the affection of people all over the continent and build a positive image of itself as Nkrumah had said, make it “a nation that will be respected by every nation in the world.”

The fact that Nkrumah purposed the Black stars as Ghana's ambassadors for promoting its foreign policy objectives cannot be denied. In the above-mentioned documentary, Wilberforce Mfum, another former Black Stars player, states that as part of the privileges of being a member of the team, he had unrestricted access to President Nkrumah, whom he could see without booking an appointment. In 1965 Nkrumah is said to have promised the players new houses if they were able to defend the African Cup they had won in Ghana in 1963. This motivated them to win the competition for the second time. Such commitment by the President to sports only proves that he was convinced that some of his foreign policy objectives, especially those that related to international public perceptions about the African and the continent could be achieved through success in global sporting events.

Waite (2013) makes reference to the assertion made by Ohene Djan, Ghana's first Director of Sports, that the Black Stars' tour of Europe in the early 1960s as ambassadors of the country had helped to erode the negative perceptions and poor image Europeans had formed about Africans. This is an assertion which alludes to the creation of a new African identity, "a new African in the world." as Nkrumah had stated in his inaugural speech in 1957. Hence, it can be argued that Nkrumah pursued public diplomacy through the national team.

### **3.3.2 Proving that the African can manage his own Affairs through Sports**

From his statement, "our independence is meaningless unless it is linked to the total liberation of the African continent," Nkrumah revealed his conviction that Ghana needed to pursue a foreign policy that would lead to the elimination of colonialism from the continent. He understood that Ghana's independence and statehood presented both an opportunity and a challenge. It was an opportunity in the sense that if Ghanaians could demonstrate self-reliance in governing themselves, it presented a strong argument in the fight against white rule. On the

other hand, continuing to depend on Europeans and other nations would imply that Africans were not yet ready for independence. Herein lay the challenge, proving his statement at his inaugural speech, that “the black man is capable of managing his own affairs” to the rest of the international community.

In order to do this, Nkrumah wanted all sectors of the economy, as much as it was possible, to be managed by Ghanaians. However, prior to the early 1960s the Black Stars had been trained by Europeans. In an attempt to change the situation, the state made arrangements for Charles Kumi Gyamfi, a Ghanaian footballer, and one-time captain of the Black Stars, who was then playing in Germany for Fortuna Düsseldorf to be trained as a coach in the latter country. In 1962 Gyamfi was also enrolled on a course in Brazil with the view to hone his coaching skills. When he later returned to Ghana he was entrusted with the coaching of the Black Stars (Anaman, Aug. 16, 2013).

In addition to the publicity and all other advantages Ghana gained as host nation, Gyamfi's role as the coach of the Black Stars when they won the 1963 African Cup of Nations in Accra, the country's first triumph in the competition, meant that Nkrumah had succeeded in conveying his message of the African's ability to manage his own affairs to the rest of the world. In an interview with the BBC, former Black Stars player, Joseph Agyeman Gyau stated that "One of the purposes of (Ghana's first president) Kwame Nkrumah was to tell the whole world that we can do things for ourselves and achieve positive results" (BBC, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2007).

Gyamfi also led Ghana to retain the Cup in 1965, and won it again in 1982 to become the first coach to win the competition three times. It is also useful to emphasise that following Nkrumah's overthrow, between 1966 and 1978, four foreign coaches, two from Germany and the others from Brazil were employed to manage the team without any success. Another fact is that since the country's independence, about thirty nine coaches have managed the team.

Twenty three (59%) of them, including the current coach, Avram Grant from Israel, have been foreign nationals (Ampofo-Ankrah, April, 2007). However, none of them has ever won any title with the team. All of the team's four major trophies, have been won by Ghanaians, three by C.K Gyamfi and the other by Osam Duodu in 1982.

It can also be argued that Nkrumah pursued his objective of achieving African unity through sports. He knew that uniting African publics and giving them a sense of belongingness was vital in his quest for a political union. Waite (2013:101) notes that the invitation of the Black Stars to participate in ceremonies that commemorated the independence of most African countries, including Uganda, was due not only to the proven pedigree of the team on the African continent but also to the fact that Ghana symbolised Pan-African unity and freedom on the African continent. Nkrumah's efforts to unite the continent through football has also been noted by CAF. During the 2014 Glo-CAF Awards, he was honoured by CAF for his relentless efforts to develop football on the continent. On 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2015 Tony Bebli published an article on the event on myjoyonline.com, sections of which states as follows:

Dr. Nkrumah held sports, especially football, in high esteem and successfully applied it as a potent tool for national identity and also for marketing his pan-African vision. In 1964, Osagyefo donated money to put up the Osagyefo Cup which was used to launch the African Clubs Championship, charging the then Confederation of African Football (CAF) to organize an enviable African version of the European Cup for club championship with that trophy (Bebli, 2015).

Nkrumah recognised that in addition to the African Cup of Nations, a competition along the fashion of the European Cup, would make football more impactful on the African continent by helping to build a sense of community among the heterogeneous societies of Africa.

### 3.4 Participating in International Sports to Boost Ghana's Image

In chapter two it was shown that Ghana has been an active participant in major international sporting events, including the Olympic Games and FIFA World Cups. Its boxers have also flown the national flag high across the globe. Mr. Rex Danquah stipulates that the presence of the country's national teams and sometimes individual athletes at international sporting events, by itself, makes a statement of who the country is, a good way for branding the nation.

Mr. Otor Plahar, the public relations officer at the Ministry of Youth and Sports has also asserted that Ghana belongs to the comity of nations, and like every other state, always makes the effort to excel. In his view, sports provide an opportunity to build relationships and represent one of the various ways to promote the interests of the country. He opines that it was through the participation of the Black Stars in the Germany 2006 FIFA World Cup that some audiences around the world got acquainted with Ghana as a country. Even though the Black Stars have not won any major trophy since 1982, their performance continues to inspire not only Ghanaians but the entire continent, helping to enhance the country's image on the international stage. For example, being the only African team to progress beyond the group stages of the FIFA World cup in Germany and in South Africa 2010, Ghana's Black Stars helped to bring joy to the hearts of many Africans.

As the only African side to reach the quarterfinals of the competition in South Africa, the first time the event was hosted by African country, the team won approbation and praise from most Africans, and the South Africans in their euphoria, and in showing the pride they felt through the performance of the team, named them "BaGhana BaGhana" akin to the South African national team, Bafana Bafana. Following their elimination from the competition, the team paid a visit to former South African president, Nelson Mandela. The Nelson Mandela

Foundation, in a report on the visit indicated that it had joined with South Africans to support Ghana as the African team to have progressed furthest in the competition. This performance at the world cup boosted Ghana's image tremendously.

Discussions in chapter two also indicate that most of Ghana's laurels in international football in recent years have been achieved by the junior national teams, due to which Ghana remains the only African country to have won the FIFA under 20 World Cup and the first to win a medal in football at the Olympic Games. Hence they have helped to maintain the country's positive image on the international front.

On the other hand, one major incident in the country's sporting history, which many Ghanaians consider to have dented the country's image occurred during the 2014 FIFA world Cup in Brazil. In the build up to the team's third match against Portugal, the players demanded payment of their outstanding allowances before they played the game. The government in its efforts to avoid the embarrassment associated with the likely boycott of the match by the team, and which could have attracted sanctions from FIFA, sent cash amounting to about three million dollars by chartered flight to Brazil in order to settle the matter. The extensive reporting on the issue by the international media, with photos of some of the players flourishing their share of the money, became an embarrassment to many Ghanaians.

In an interview with former Black Stars player, Mr. Tony Baffoe, he notes that the incident gave the country a bad reputation. He believes that platforms such as the world cup present the country with the opportunity to pursue diplomacy at the highest level, and that such incidents could be avoided if the right people who understand the game and command respect from the players are part of the management team. Ambassador Baah-Duodu, a former Ghanaian diplomat, in an interview, also notes that the response of the government shows the

importance the state places on sports diplomacy, although it did not adopt acceptable means to remit the team.

With regards to boxing, the exploits of Roy Ankrah, D.K. Poison, Ike Quartey senior and junior, Joseph Agbeko and Joshua Clottey on the international stage have already been mentioned in chapter two. All helped to build Ghana's image across the world from the 1950s throughout the 1980s and 90s to the 2010s. Azumah Nelson, who is without doubt the greatest boxer to have been produced by Africa until now, was also mentioned.

In a statement at the Launching of the book *The Professor: The Life Story of Azumah Nelson* on 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2014 former president, J.J. Rawlings, singles out the impact of Azumah's reign as world boxing champion on Ghana's image during the time of the revolution in the 1980s. The former president notes that he developed sustained interest in the development of the boxer's career during his term as Head of State. This is not surprising because he believed that his government and the country as a whole benefited from the boxer's achievements. Rawlings holds the view that when the state affairs in Ghana degenerated to critical levels due to severe economic hardships in the early 1990s and called for image boosting measures on the international stage, Azumah's triumphs in world boxing during that era was the singular endeavour that promoted Ghana's image internationally, prompting international publics to search for the country's geographical bearing on the globe (Rawlings, 2014).

Gamal Nkrumah, the son of Ghana's first president, Kwame Nkrumah, is also of the opinion that Muhammad Ali's trip to Ghana in 1964 had an impact on Ghana's role in the pan-African movement. He draws a parallel between Ali's visit and invitations granted by Nkrumah to other African Americans such as Martin Luther King, W.E.B. Dubois, and Malcom X, who were then leading the pan-African movement in the US. In Gamal's opinion, his father received

Ali in Ghana because “he was a symbol of the struggle for liberation, the emancipation of the African American” (BBC, June 2016).

The visit brought the attention of the western media to Ghana for about two weeks and gave Nkrumah an opportunity to promote the African identity, adorning Ali in the royal Kente cloth for the whole world to see. Randy Roberts and Johnny Smith (June 4 2016) wrote an article on the visit, which indicates that President Nkrumah had directed the national broadcasting channels to promote Ali as an African hero who inspired confidence in the youth of the world. The article also quotes a writer of Ghana’s *Daily Graphic* as follows:

If there is one man who can assist positively to bring about [Nkrumah’s] cherished aims of projecting the African personality”—an Africa freed from the vestiges of colonialism—and disprove “the superiority complex of the white man, he is Mohammed Ali, Cassius Clay (Roberts and Smith; June 4 2016)

Perhaps the statement made by Ali himself regarding the level of development he witnessed in Ghana at that time conveyed to the international community the positive image of Africa Nkrumah wanted to show to the rest of the world. Ali, discrediting the negative picture painted of Africa as a backward continent stated, "I am glad to tell our people that there are more things to be seen in Africa than lions and elephants. They never told us about your beautiful flowers, magnificent hotels, beautiful houses, beaches, great hospitals, schools, and universities" (Roberts and Smith, June 4, 2016). Thus, even though it was not a Ghanaian boxer being sent out on a diplomatic mission, Nkrumah appropriated an American boxer who shared his interests to achieve his goal of building a positive image of the African and the African continent.

### **3.5 Boycotting International Sporting Events to achieve Foreign Policy Goals**

Quingmin and Murray have been referenced in the introduction to this study to have all noted that countries sometimes employ boycotts to demonstrate their disapproval of certain policies pursued by other states or ideologies they espouse. Also, mention can be made of how several countries either threatened or actually boycotted the Berlin Olympics in 1936 in protest of how Hitler's government was treating Jews. Ghana has had its own boycotts too, which were undertaken to enable it achieve some of its foreign policy objectives.

One issue that engaged the attention and efforts of African governments during the early years after independence in the 1960s until the early 1990s was the system of apartheid in South Africa. Right from its inception in 1957, Ghana's foreign policy was fashioned to fight against racism and colonial rule on the African continent. It has been observed that among the goals of Ghana's foreign policy is to support the implementation of a just and equitable international economic and social order, and to promote respect for international law and treaties. Since the racist system of apartheid clearly violated these principles, Nkrumah persistently attacked South Africa at the UN, Commonwealth, and the Non-aligned Movement, and since it which were also germane to the organisation.

Apartheid became a major concern for every Ghanaian leader until it was finally abolished. The issue was approached from two angles, through negotiation and the application of injunctions. (Daily Graphic 27 Nov. 2013). This is reflected in a statement made by Nkrumah in London on 22nd March 1961, following that years Commonwealth Leaders' Conference. Due to pressure from other member states of the organization to abolish the apartheid system, South Africa announced its decision to withdraw from the Commonwealth during the conference. Even though Nkrumah played a major role in calling for the end of apartheid, he preferred that South Africa stayed with the organisation since he believed it was

an union of the Commonwealth peoples rather than their governments. To demonstrate his determination to continue fighting the injustice of the apartheid system he emphasised,

Now that South Africa has decided to continue her apartheid system and has decided to withdraw from the Commonwealth it is incumbent on all the members of the commonwealth and the duty of all nations in the world to bring pressure to bear on South Africa to abandon her apartheid system, imposing total economic and political sanctions on South Africa.” (Nkrumah’s statement, London 1961).

Nkrumah’s Ghana was not a major power in international politics and he understood that. Ghana was not in the position to impose any economic sanctions that could hurt the South African government. But Nkrumah knew that he could influence the major powers politically. As mentioned above, he did so on the platforms provided by the UN, the Commonwealth and the Non-Aligned Movement. He pressurised the UN to give serious consideration to dealing with the issue and contributed to the organization instituting an arms embargo on South Africa in 1963. The UN also endorsed injunctions on oil supply to the country which was issued by the Organisation of Oil Producing Countries (OPEC), and banned all states from sustaining educational, cultural and sporting relations with South Africa in 1968. With the increasing condemnation of apartheid by the international community, South Africa was also suspended from the UN in November 1974 and was re-instated only after the demise of apartheid in 1994 (UN, 2016). Ghana’s efforts against apartheid went beyond Nkrumah. For example, Bofo-Arthur (1993:141) notes that the PNDC, which ruled Ghana from 1981 to 1992, continued Ghana’s tradition of assisting the liberation movements in Southern Africa, including the African National Congress (ANC) and South West People’s Organisation (SWAPO).

Whilst Ghana was fighting apartheid through the aforementioned avenues, it was, at the same time, pushing against the system in the field of international sports. In order to make the Commonwealth and UN sports related sanctions effective, Ghana and its allies boycotted the involvement of all states which continued to relate with South Africa in the area of sports.

In that regard, in 1976 Ghana joined other African countries to boycott the Olympics Games held in Montreal, Canada. This was in protest to the IOC's refusal to exclude New Zealand, whose rugby team was then touring South Africa, from participating in the Games. Eventually, over thirty nations, including non-African countries, refused to partake in the Games which led to losses in proceeds of about about one million Canadian dollars (BBC, 1976 Olympics).

Through this channel, Ghana, by cooperating with other countries, helped in isolating apartheid South Africa from several international sporting organisations and competitions on several occasions. It can be argued that the ensuing suspension of South Africa from international sporting organisations had a far reaching impact on that country and contributed to its decision to end the apartheid system. For example, pressure from Ghana and other African countries compelled FIFA to ban South Africa in 1961 and again in 1963 for its insistence to send an all-white team to the 1966 world cup in England. South Africa was also banned by I.O.C. in 1970 due to its apartheid system. Ghana also joined other states in efforts that helped to prevent South Africa from partaking in the Olympic Games in 1964 and 1968.

Koonyaditse (2010:30-32), for example, notes that following the decision by Ghana, Mali, and other African and non-African countries to join Ethiopia in boycotting the Mexico Olympics if South Africa was allowed to participate, both the Council of Ministers of OAU and the Supreme Council for Sports in Africa agreed to the entire African continent's protest of the Olympics Games in February 1968. He emphasises that the expulsion of South Africa from several international sporting organizations left it without any friends in the world of sports.

In John Campbell's view (2016) even though it is easy to consider economic sanctions as the main contributors to the demise of apartheid, isolating South Africa from being involved in international sporting events could have been more impactful on the ruling white minorities

in that country. Considering the fact that South Africa decided to leave the Commonwealth on its own, and that it continued to practice apartheid even under UN and other economic sanctions, the emphasis by (Ibrahim, 1991) that the sports ban represented the most enduring avenue for isolating south Africa from rest of the world gives an idea of the impact of each of the economic and sporting sanctions. However, regardless of the effectiveness of any of these measures in isolation, their potency when combined proved most useful.

Thus, in partnership with other states which lent support to the fight against apartheid, Ghana was able to achieve a number of its foreign policy objectives through sports. By helping to end apartheid, Ghana demonstrated its commitment to the welfare of humanity and the international community and achieved its foreign policy goals of cooperating with other countries in the world to establish a just and equitable international, economic, political and social order. Equally, it was fulfilling its quest to promote respect for international law and treaty obligations.

### **3.6 Boycotting the FIFA World Cup to Demand Fair Treatment**

African countries also boycotted the 1966 World Cup which was hosted by England. The decision was in protest to a decision by FIFA in 1964 which required three continents, Africa, Asia and Oceania to contest for a single space out of sixteen for the world cup. On the other hand Europe and Latin America were apportioned ten, and four places, respectively. Ghana's Director of Sports, Ohene Djan, who was also served on the FIFA Executive Committee, contested the decision and requested FIFA to cede one of the slots for Europe to Africa. The request was not granted.

According to publications by BBC (11<sup>th</sup> July, 2016) and Graphic (13<sup>th</sup> July, 2016), Ohene Djan's appeal, which also bore the threat of Africa's withdrawal, emanated from

President Nkrumah, who had instructed Djan "to do whatever was necessary to put African football on the world map." It can be argued that Djan had this agenda in mind, when, together with Tessema Yidnekatchew from Ethiopia, they tried to convince the Federation to grant Africa at least one place for itself on the basis that football had improved tremendously in Africa and that the costs involved in playing matches across the continents were excessive. Tessema is said to have described the FIFA decision as "a mockery of economics, politics and geography."

The BBC report also cites the assertion made by football historian Alan Tomlinson that the whole issue was about "cultural politics in the post-colonial period." Even though the Black Stars had won the African Cup in 1965 and the level of their performance at that time made them favourites to win the single slot provided to the three continents, Ohene Djan considered it more dignifying and respectable for Africa to have at least one slot for itself. Hence, Ghana cooperated with the rest of the African continent, sacrificing the opportunity to play in the competition for the first time and thus, foregoing the chance to project the Ghana's brand of football, Nkrumah's African identity and prove to the entire world that the African could compete favourably against other nations of the world.

This would have been one of the best platforms for the Black Stars to be shown to the entire global football public. But Ghana, and Africa chose to use the occasion to demonstrate to the rest of the world that it was prepared to fight for its rightful place in the comity of nations; that it would fight against all manner of discrimination against the continent and its people. In the end, it proved to be a good decision. Africa received its own place after the 1966 World Cup. Currently, with the increase in the number of participants in the competition to thirty-two, Africa has five places. In the view of Tomlinson the fact that Africa and Asia were each given their own places after the 1966 event indicates the success of the boycott (BBC, 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2016).

### 3.5 Sports and Ghana's Economic Relations

Economic diplomacy is one of the key areas of concern to the government of Ghana. According to Mr. Otor Plahar, the country's participation in international sporting events also makes significant contributions to the economy. He makes reference to the mass exodus of Ghanaian football players to Europe and other parts of the world in search of greener pastures. In his view, participating in international events through the national teams help Ghanaian players to market themselves to foreign sporting clubs such as those in the European football leagues. This enables them to secure lucrative contracts. Mr. Plahar asserts that the remittances received by Ghana from these sportsmen help to sustain some households and make appreciable contributions to the foreign exchange of the country.

The fact that sports promotes friendly relations between countries also means that it has the capacity to facilitate cooperation in other sectors including economic relations. It is believed that this could have been the situation between Ghana and Libya in the early 1980s. In December, 1981 the PNDC took over power from the Limann government through a coup. By that time Ghana had decided to withdraw from another international sporting event, the African Cup of Nations which was then to be hosted by Libya in March 1982. Immediately after assuming office, the Chairman of the PNDC, Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings rescinded the decision. This should not be surprising because it is natural to expect that after undertaking the coup the PNDC would pursue policies that were contrary to those followed by the previous government, and that its international allies would probably be different as well. It is also natural to expect that the new government would have wanted to whip up nationalistic sentiments through the sporting event. With respect to allies, whilst the Limann government had a leaning towards Western countries, the PNDC in its early days was socialist inclined (Boafo-Arthur, 1993)

In any case, the coup had to be justified. This meant that the country's precarious economic situation, which was one of the key reasons for undertaking the revolution, had to be fixed. In order to achieve economic success, the new government sought economic cooperation with other states. However, Bofo Arthur (1993) has noted that due to their disapproval of the coup, relations between Ghana and the West, as well as some of its West African neighbours had deteriorated, and this led Nigeria, for example, to cut its oil supplies to Ghana. Consequently, the Ghanaian government sought economic collaboration with socialist countries including the Soviet Union and Libya, which at the time, was faced with similar hostility from some quarters of the continent and from Western countries. Ghana's participation in the African Cup of Nations in Libya, was, therefore, a good opportunity for public diplomacy, which, if harnessed well, could improve its relations with the host country.

Ghana did not only participate, but went on to win the competition, a record fourth time. It can be argued that if the Libyan government placed any significance on the rescindment of the decision by the Limann administration, and the fact that the presence of the Black Stars, with their proven pedigree on the continent, might have contributed to the success of the competition, then, Ghana's participation should have endeared the Rawlings administration to the hearts of at least, the government of Libya, if not its ordinary citizens. The importance of this point may be explained by the fact that nationalism is a key consideration for socialist governments, and given the ability of sports to enhance a sense of national pride in people, the success of the tournament would have been useful in justifying the legitimacy of the Gaddafi administration. It can, therefore, be expected that Ghana's participation in the African Nations Cup would have helped to improve diplomatic relations between the two governments, which were already engaging each other through other avenues.

Bofo-Arthur (1993) has also noted that the exchange of visits by officials of the two governments resulted in the signing of agreements for economic cooperation, as a result of

which Libya supplied Ghana with petroleum products amounting to about US\$20 million for free in March 1982, the same month in which the African Cup of Nations was held. In addition to this, oil was made available to Ghana on concessionary terms. Libya also donated relief items to Ghanaians who had been affected by severe drought during that time as well as those who had been repatriated from Nigeria. It cannot be argued that Ghana's participation in the competition on its own led to the assistance received from Libya. But it can be expected that the country's participation in the event, at the time when the two governments were exchanging diplomatic visits contributed to improving relations between the two countries, and that it might have influenced the economic relations that were established between them.

Some of Ghana's development partners such as China and Japan have also used sports related initiatives in their relations with the country. China was mentioned in Chapter one as one country that makes use of sports diplomacy, and it has employed this measure several times in its relations with Ghana. Recognising the impact of sports, especially football, on African publics, China has emerged as a country which is using the provision of sports facilities as grant to secure its economic interests on the continent. The practice is now popularly described as China's "stadium diplomacy." Countries which have hosted the African Cup of Nations, in recent years, including Angola, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon are among the recipients of such Chinese assistance (Will, 2012).

In May 2016 President Mahama commissioned a 16,000 capacity stadium valued at \$30 million. In his statement at the event, the President noted that the stadium was built to commemorate the 50 years of diplomatic relations between Ghana and China with a grant facility from the government of the latter country (Gabah, 2016). But this is not China's first gesture of influencing its economic relations with Ghana through sports. On 29 April 2013 the Guardian newspaper published a news article online which reported that in 2011 China, through its state-run company, Poly Technologies Inc. (PTI), from which Ghana had procured

two 46-metre patrol vessels which cost about \$40m, donated a sporting facility to the Ghana Armed Forces (Hirsch, April 2013).

Rachel Will (ibid) also makes reference to David Shinn, a professor and co-author of *China and Africa: A Century of Engagement*, who has noted that China is known to lend on concessionary basis, loans that require repayment through commodities. Such loans also come with the provision of various kinds of infrastructure including stadia and official buildings as grants to the borrowing state, and are intended to engender goodwill for China among the citizens of the countries that benefit from these projects.

In this way, China also uses such projects to facilitate the employment of its nationals in recipient countries since most of the projects are tied to conditions that allow the use of Chinese labour in the construction of the facilities. Mr. Rex Danquah for example, indicates that besides the new stadium built in Cape Coast, the Chinese were also involved in the building of the Tamale and Sekondi-Takoradi stadia for CAN 2008. Thus, China's "stadium diplomacy," a form of public diplomacy, is facilitating its economic relations with Ghana.

Japan is another country which has shown interest in cooperating with Ghana in the area of sports. As part of its cultural diplomacy the Japan Embassy has been organising an annual Judo competition dubbed, "Japanese Ambassador Judo Championship" in Ghana over the past years. Through this competition the Embassy is able to engage Ghanaians who participate in the sport, and promote Japanese culture in the hope of engendering affinity for it among Ghanaians. Also, the Secretary in charge of Sports and Culture at the Japanese Embassy, Masa Iida has indicated that Japan is impressed with Ghana's performance in international football, especially at the world cup, and as such, would like to collaborate with Ghana in order to achieve similar feats (Ghanasoccernet.com March, 2016)

The importance of sports to the relations between the two countries was also revealed when President Mahama visited Japan in May, 2016. In a Joint Statement, the leaders of both countries expressed their willingness to continue engage in cultural exchanges through a variety of programmes. Among these were the African Business Education Initiative for Youth (ABE Initiative), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) training programmes and the “Sport for Tomorrow” Programme, an initiative by the government of Japan to cooperate with the rest of the world through sports. (Yoshimura, May 2016)

Sports could, however, play a more significant role in Ghana’s diplomatic relations. For instance, Ambassador D.K. Osei, a retired Ghanaian diplomat has noted that sports have the potential to break barriers and facilitate interaction between sides with ideological differences. He has indicated in an interview that former Ghanaian president, J.A. Kuffour, utilised the services of Abedi Ayew Pele, a retired Black Stars player, as a Ghanaian envoy in interactions between Ghana and Burkina Faso during his presidency. He attributes this development to the fact that the then president of Burkina Faso, Blaise Compaoré, was a keen admirer of the former Black Stars player who also pursued his club football career in France with Olympique de Marseille. In the estimation of the retired diplomat, this was an undertaking which was hugely successful even in times when relations between the two states were not cordial.

Furthermore, Ambassador Osei has noted that during that time, because the former Black Stars and Marseille player was known to be endeared to the hearts of the French public, Ghana’s diplomatic mission in France also employed his services to facilitate the embassy’s work in that country. According to Ambassador Osei the renowned former footballer, by being involved in most of the mission’s activities, played a significant role in engendering goodwill between the two countries during the presidency of J.A Kuffour. With such influence on global publics, Abedi Pele and other Ghanaian sportsmen and women who have achieved fame across the globe could be employed to bolster the country’s efforts to attract foreign investors.

### 3.6 Hosting International Sporting Events

Discussions in the previous sections indicate that Ghana has had some experience of hosting international competitions. For example, Ghana has hosted the African Cup of Nations four times, in 1963, 1978, 2000 (co-host with Nigeria) and 2008. Currently, Egypt remains the only other African country to have hosted the event that number of times. With respect to boxing, Ghanaian boxers have often fought outside the country. The first ever boxing championship to be staged in Ghana was between Ultiminio Sugar Ramos and Floyd Robertson in Accra in 1964 (Youtube, October 2010). Azumah Nelson's fight against Sidnei Dal Rovere of Brazil in Accra on 10<sup>th</sup> December, 1988, in which he retained his WBC World Super Featherweight title was another world event which brought international attention to the country (GNA, August 2012).

These occasions have given Ghana the opportunity to market itself to the rest of the international community. It has already been said that winning the rights to host such competitions implies recognition of the host country by the international community as a credible member of the community.

According to Mr. Rex Danquah, in the past, states generally bid for hosting rights for the sake of the prestige it brought to their countries. He also observes that in recent times economic benefits have become very important considerations for bids. In his opinion, whether a country profits from hosting an international sporting competition depends on what the country generally sought to achieve by hosting the event. He contends that the economic value of the publicity a host country receives from international media coverage during the competition is substantial. Ghana has benefited considerably from international sporting events, both as host and as a participant. For example, as host of the CAN 2008 most of the

international media groups such as CNN, BBC, and Canal France reported on the country for the entire two week duration of the event. Interestingly, the country enjoyed such publicity and exposure due to its position as host and did not have to incur any extra cost.

Also, sports audience across the world got to know about Ghana, some for the first time, and this had the potential of attracting investors and tourists. Sports also facilitate interactions between people, especially at sporting grounds. Mr. Danquah asserts that it is easy to do business in the stadia than in the office. There is no need to book an appointment, go through any bureaucratic processes or a secretary in order to secure a meeting. V.I.P tickets are designed with the intention to promote networking during games. Such interactions are informal and thus facilitate discussions which can lead to business proposals. It also affords the opportunity for the initiation of deals by private persons which can be taken over by government officials later. He notes, for example, that Arab Contractors, an Egyptian Company, started its operations in Ghana through a Ghanaian footballer, who became its country representative. Hence, besides being a tool for public diplomacy, Ghana's involvement in international sports also provides opportunities for improving economic relations.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

It is observed from the discussions in this chapter that the country's involvement in international tournaments has influenced its foreign relations. It has facilitated friendly relations with other countries, enabled Ghana to be represented as a recognised member of the international community at such global meetings and to create and shape a credible image for itself. Senior Ghanaian government officials, for example, like the sports minister, and in some situations even the President, as in the case of President Kuffour's travel to Germany in 2006, usually pay visits to countries hosting international sporting events in which Ghana

participates. Thus, with respect to the hypothesis of this study, it can be proffered that in some instances, especially under the leadership of President Nkrumah, the country deliberately used its engagement in sporting events with other countries to achieve some of its foreign policy objectives. Such occasions include Nkrumah's sponsorship of the African Clubs Championship with the intention to fostering unity among African countries and the use of international sports federations as platforms for fighting racism across the world in general and particularly, apartheid in South Africa.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 4.1 Summary of Findings

This chapter seeks to bring out some of the salient issues that have been observed in the course of the assessment and analysis which were undertaken in chapter three. The objectives of the study include finding out what Ghana's foreign policy objectives are, and whether these goals are attainable through the country's involvement in international sports organisations and competitions respectively. The study also seeks to verify whether Ghanaian governments have deliberately used sports diplomacy as a tool for achieving the country's interests as a member of the international community. Finally, it is intended to find out the role sports has played in shaping the country's image on the international front.

With regards to Ghana's foreign policy objectives, it is observed that the country has no hegemonic pretensions. Most of its interests such as the elimination of colonialism and racism; promoting an African identity; a just and equitable international economic, political social and social order; and respect for international law, are attainable through public diplomacy, in which sporting activities can play a significant role.

It is also observed that sports as a tool for diplomacy is most effective when it is complemented by other measures. For example, recognising the limited resources at Ghana's disposal with which to coerce western countries to tackle the issue of apartheid, Ghana adopted a three-pronged approach. First, it pressurised intergovernmental organisations such as the UN and Commonwealth to use all appropriate means to compel South Africa to abolish the system. The second approach was through international sporting organisations such as the Olympic Committee and FIFA. When these organisations seemed not to be committed to applying the

necessary sanctions, Ghana adopted a third approach where it cooperated with other countries which shared its goals to boycott international sporting events in which South Africa or its sporting allies were involved. The isolation of South Africa that resulted from the combined effects of the actions taken through these avenues largely contributed to the abolishing of the apartheid system. It is also noted that Ghana's leadership in the pan-African movement on the African continent, its contribution to the abolition of apartheid in South Africa and the promotion of African unity has earned it immense respect in international circles.

Furthermore, it is noted that during the Cold War era when countries like the US and UK were investing in propaganda through institutions like the United States Information Agency (UDIA) and the Overseas Information Services respectively, as noted by Berridge (2010), Nkrumah was convinced that employing sports as a public diplomacy tool could enable Ghana to send its message of African emancipation across to the rest of the world. He was thus able to pursue a foreign policy that helped to bring dignity to the person of the African and to fight for an honourable place for him in the comity of nations.

With regards to whether Ghanaian governments deliberately use international sporting engagements to pursue foreign policy objectives, it is observed that the state has always recognised the usefulness of sports for promoting the image of the country. However, it seems that Nkrumah used it more deliberately to influence Ghana's relations with the rest of the world. Without doubt, the examples provided in chapter three indicate that as Ghanaian ambassadors, Nkrumah's Black Stars had at least three tasks: to demonstrate to the entire world what the African was capable of achieving when given the opportunity; promote an African identity; and to facilitate his goal for a united Africa.

However, as noted by Ambassador Baah-Duodu, it seems successive governments, due to the country's economic difficulties have not been able to take full advantage of the

opportunities presented by international sporting events. It is also noted that the potential of sports as a tool for attracting foreign investment into the country has not been utilised adequately by subsequent Ghanaian governments.

Participation in international sporting activities has also given Ghana wide publicity across the globe, providing it with an avenue to promote its image to the rest of the world. For example, it is obvious that Ghana's membership and participation in FIFA activities have helped to build a good image abroad. It has been mentioned in earlier chapters that the country probably participates in FIFA world cups annually. For example, starting from 2006, Ghana participated in the FIFA World Cup in 2006, 2010 and 2014. Ghana played in the men's Under 17 FIFA World Cup in 2007, played in the Women's Under 17 World Cup in 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, and will again participate in the 2016 event.

In terms of the publicity such events offer to participating countries via television, radio, internet, and newspapers, Ghana is advertised almost on a yearly basis to some international publics by FIFA. The country's presence at the roll-calls during the opening ceremony of the Olympics Games, with Ghanaian athletes clad in their beautiful Kente offers an even bigger audience. It is, however, recognised that the opportunities which are available to the country through sports diplomacy have been used sparingly. Making use of them, especially after the achievement of independence by most African countries and the demise of the Cold War and Apartheid has been inadequate and restricted largely to boosting the image of the country, even though they present an incredible avenue for developing economic relations.

Another observation is that it seems there is a difference between Nkrumah's perception of the Black Stars as Ghana's ambassadors, and that of the leaders who have followed him. This may be seen in the fact that the privileges the team enjoyed and the degree to which their services were employed under the first president differs considerably under his successors.

Furthermore, it is observed that the achievement of independence by most African countries in the 1960s and early 1970s, and the end of the cold war and apartheid in the early 1990s, might have affected the pace and intensity at which Ghana has adopted sports diplomacy, especially, as the succeeding governments might not have immediately recognised the need to adjust their approach to using sports in that manner. Thus, besides performing well to boost the country's image and the rhetoric of sports being business, it would seem that Ghanaian governments have lost interest in providing the required level of investment that would enable the sector to contribute adequately to economic development.

It is also noted that football, at the level of the national teams, receives greater financial support from both the government and the private sector than the other sports. Even though its contribution to boosting the country's image is obvious, it may be noted that the skewed government support tends to obscure the important contribution that other sporting disciplines such as boxing, athletics, hockey and tennis could make to the country's development.

Finally, it is observed that appointing or electing the right people to manage the various departments of the sports sector has been one of the major challenges facing sports development in Ghana. For instance, most actors in the industry have argued that the management of the national stadia should be handed over to private businesses instead of leaving them in the care of the National Sports Authority, which does not seem to have the expertise required to manage the facilities on profitable basis. Consequently, most of the facilities which were built for the CAN 2008 have been underutilised and keep deteriorating.

## 4.2 Conclusions

The hypothesis of this study is that Ghana's foreign policy objectives could be achieved through the adoption of a comprehensive public diplomacy in which the country's participation in international sporting activities forms a key component.

The discussions in chapter two and three show that Ghana performs creditably well in sports at the global level, especially, with regards to football. For instance, it is the second most successful national team in Africa with regards to the continent's foremost football competition, the African Cup of Nations. The country is also known globally to be an effective representative of the African continent at international events. With regards to the country's foreign policy goals the analysis in chapter three reveal the fact that as a country without hegemonic pretensions, most of Ghana's foreign interests could be achieved through the exercise of public diplomacy.

The analysis also show that the state recognises this fact, and has, in some instances, used its leverage in international sports in the form of soft power initiatives to facilitate the achievement of its interests in international affairs. This includes creating and promoting an African identity through the Black Stars and cooperating with the international community through sports to establish a just and equitable international, economic, political and social order; and promoting respect for international law and treaty obligations, as in the case of ending apartheid and racism. Therefore, it can be argued that the hypothesis of the study is justified.

### 4.3 Recommendations

Considering the significant role Ghana's government plays in the development of sports in the country, it is obvious that it has the opportunity to use sports as a tool to achieve its foreign policy objectives. In that regard, it is observed that analysis of the changes that occur in the international system by government via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration on a consistent basis could facilitate appropriate changes in the country's approach to the use of sports in its relations with other states.

Secondly, there is the need for the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration to cooperate in formulating policies that will enable the country to appropriate the publicity it receives through international sporting events by attracting tourists, for example. In this regard, it is necessary for government to strengthen cooperation between the above-mentioned ministries, the various sports associations, the Ministry of Tourism, and the Ghana Investment Promotion Council in order to coordinate their activities towards the common goal of developing the sports sector to attract investment into the country.

Also, in order to encourage the government to increase investment in the sports sector, there is the need for private investors in the sector, including retired sportsmen and managers of football academies and boxing gyms to conduct regular and comprehensive research into the extent to which the sector contributes to the economy, both qualitatively and quantitatively. Major actors in the sector like those mentioned above should present government with up-to-date cost-benefit analysis on the sectors contribution to the economy. This will justify the call for increased government spending in the sector. For example, it is a fact that foreign remittances have become an important component of Ghana's GDP. Hence, being able to demonstrate the extent to which the numerous traveling Ghanaian sportsmen contribute to such

earnings could present a strong argument in convincing government that investments made in the sector could be recovered. Besides, government could be encouraged to provide special incentives for private businesses who invest in the sector.

It also recommended that the government places emphasis on branding Ghana sports. This can be achieved through collaboration government and the private sector to institute policies that would ensure the availability of modern facilities, stem unnecessary exodus of talented sportsmen abroad and provide guidelines that will ensure the adoption of uniform practices and styles within each sporting fraternity in Ghana. This will help to develop sporting talents in the country, and deliberately carve a niche for the country on the international front as Nkrumah did with the Black Stars in the early 1960s.

Furthermore, considering the achievement of the country's football teams, there is the need for government to give equal attention to the other sports disciplines by providing required facilities and funding in order to avoid overdependence on football. Some Ghanaians have argued that even though football is the most popular sport in the country, it is a team sport, which, at any point in time, fetches the country only one medal at international competitions if the team is successful. On the other hand, disciplines such as boxing and athletics which are individual sports, have the potential to bring more medals and glory to the country.

Finally, it is believed that besides facilitating the travels and accommodation of the national teams occasionally, the government could mandate the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration to search for investment opportunities abroad and assist Ghanaian investors in the sector such as Mr. Rex Danquah, who has over the years organised international sporting events across the continent to win contracts in other countries. The involvement of the ministry and missions, which have the capacity to provide credible information about investment opportunities in foreign countries and on Ghanaian businesses will give Ghanaian

investors the credibility and trust they need to demonstrate to foreign governments and publics. Similarly, by playing such a proactive role, the ministry would ensure that foreign investors who pass through it to the country are credible.

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#### **E. Documents/Reports**

1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana



## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I: List of Oral Interviews

Ambassador Kwabena Baah-Duodu, retired Ghanaian diplomat, interview author, 4<sup>th</sup> July, 2016.

Ambassador D.K. Osei, retired Ghanaian diplomat, interview by Ivy Suglo, 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2016.

Mr. Anthony Baffoe, General Secretary, Professional Footballers Association of Ghana, interview by author, 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2016.

Mr. Rex Danquah, Chief Executive Officer, Ghana 2008 Cup of African Nations, interview by author, 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2016.

Mr. Otor Plahar, Public Relations Officer, Ministry of Youth and Sports, interview by author, 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2016.

Mr. Saka Akwei, Chief Sports Development Officer, National Sports Authority, interview by author, 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2016.

### APPENDIX II

Sports Disciplines and Associations affiliated to the National Sports Authority

Basketball	Athletics	Badminton	Shooting
Swimming	Beach Soccer	Golf	Handball
Volleyball	Weightlifting	Chess	Cricket
Wospag	Cycling	Hockey	Judo
Karate-Do	Kick Boxing	Netball	Fencing
Powerlifting	Rugby	Scrabble	Taekwondo
Professional Boxing	Table Tennis	Baseball/Softball	Amateur Boxing
Special Olympics	Traditional Wrestling	Rowing and Canoeing	Bodybuilding
National Sports for All Association	Association for Disabled Sports		Dragon Boat and Rafting
Tennis			

Table created by author. Information sourced from the National Sports Authority.

APPENDIX IV

APPENDIX III

Appendix II Ghana's performance at the All-Africa Games in the Men's events from 1965 to 2003.

Year	Event	Athlete	Medal
1965	400m	James Addy	Silver
	4 x 100 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Bronze
	4 x 400 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Bronze
1973	100 Metres	Ohene Karikari	Gold
	200 Metres	Ohene Karikari	Gold
	4 x 100 Metres Relay	George Daniels	Silver
	Triple Jump	Team Ghana	Silver
	Long Jump	Moise Pomaney	Bronze
1978	100 Metres	Joshua Owusu	Gold
	4 x 100 Metres Relay	Ohene Karikari	Bronze
	Long Jump	Team Ghana	Gold
1987	100 Metres	Emmanuel Mifetu	Bronze
	200	Eric Akogyiram	Silver
	Triple Jump	John Myles-Mills	Silver
1991	100 Metres	Francis Dodoo	Gold
	200 Metres	Emmanuel Tuffour	Bronze
	4 x 400 Metres Relay	Emmanuel Tuffour	Silver
	800 Metres	Team Ghana	Bronze
1995	100 Metres	Kennedy Osei	Bronze
	2000 Metres	Emmanuel Tuffour	Silver
	4 x 100 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Gold
	Long Jump	Andrew Owusu	Silver
1999	100 Metres	Leonard Myles-Mills	Gold
	20 Kilometres Road Walk	Vincent Asumang	Bronze
	Triple Jump	Andrew Owusu	Gold
	Long Jump	Mark Anthony Awere	Bronze
2003	100 Metres	Leonard Myles-Mills	Bronze
	200 Metres	Abdul Aziz Zakari	Bronze
	4 x 100 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Gold
	Triple Jump	Andrew Owusu	Gold
	Long Jump	Ignasious Gaisah	Gold

Table created by author with information derived from Athletics Weekly at gbrathletics.com

## APPENDIX IV

Appendix III Ghana's performance at the All-Africa Games in the Women's events from 1965 to 2003.

Year	Event	Athlete	Medal
1965	100-metres	Rose Hart	Bronze
	80 Metres Hurdles	Rose Hart	Gold
	4 x 100 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Silver
	Long Jump	Alice Annum	Gold
	High Jump	Habibah Atta	Silver
1973	100 Metres	Alice Annum	Gold
		Rose Asiedua	Silver
	200 Metres	Alice Annum	Gold
		Josephine Ocran	Bronze
	400 Metres	Grace Bakari	Silver
	800 Metres	Helena Opoku	Bronze
	Discus	Rose Hart	Gold
4 x 100 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Gold	
1500 Metres	Ruth Yeboah	Bronze	
1978	100 Metres	Hannah Afriyie	Gold
	200 Metres	Hannah Afriyie	Gold
	400 Metres	Georgina Aidou	Bronze
	4 x 400 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Gold
	4 x 100 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Silver
	Long Jump	Jeanette Yawson	Silver
	High Jump	Emilia Blavo	Bronze
1987	100 Metres Hurdles	Dinah Yankey	Silver
	400 Metres	Mercy Addy	Bronze
	4 x 100 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Silver
1991			
1995	4 x 100 Metres Relay		Silver
	4 x 400 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Bronze
1999	200 Metres	Monica Twum	Bronze
	4 x 100 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Bronze
2003	100 Metres	Vida Anim	Bronze
	200 Metres	Vida Anim	Silver
	800m	Akosua Serwah	Silver
	Heptathlon	Margaret Simpson	Gold

Table created by author with information derived from Athletics Weekly at [gbrathletics.com](http://gbrathletics.com)

## APPENDIX V

Appendix IV Ghana's performance at the African Championships in the Men's events from 1979 to 2004.

Year	Event	Athlete	Medal
1979	100m	Ernest Obeng	Gold
1982	100m	Ernest Obeng	Gold
1984			
1985			
1988	100m 200m 4 x 100 Metres Relay	John Myles-Mills Emmanuel Tuffour Team Ghana	Gold Silver Silver
1989	100m 200m 110Metres Hurdles Triple Jump	Salaam Gariba Nelson Boateng Akwas Abrefa Eugene Koranteng	Silver Bronze Bronze Gold
1990			
1992	200m  Triple Jump	Emmanuel Tuffour John Myles-Mills Francis Doodoo	Silver Bronze Silver
1993	100m 200m 400m 4 x 100 Metres Relay	Nelson Boateng Nelson Boateng Ibrahim Hassan Ghana	Bronze Bronze Silver Gold
1996			
1998	100m Long Jump Triple Jump	Leonard Myles-Mills Mark Anthony Awere Andrew Owusu	Bronze Bronze Gold
2000	100m  200m Triple Jump  4 x 100 Metres Relay	Abdul Aziz Zakari Kenneth Andam Abdul Aziz Zakari Andrew Owusu Samuel Okantey Ghana	Gold Bronze Gold Gold Silver Gold
2002	200m Triple Jump	Abdul Aziz Zakari Andrew Owusu	Silver Silver
2004			

Table created by author with information derived from Athletics Weekly at [gbrathletics.com](http://gbrathletics.com)

## APPENDIX VI

Appendix V Ghana's performance at the African Championships in the Women's events from 1979 to 2004.

year	Event	Athlete	medal
1979	100m	Hannah Afriyie	Silver
	200m	Hannah Afriyie	Gold
	400m	Grace Bakari	Gold
	Women's Long Jump	Jeanette Yawson	Bronze
	4 x 100 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Gold
	4 x 400 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Gold
1982			
1984	100m	Doris Wiredu	Gold
		Grace Armah	Bronze
	200m	Mercy Addy	Silver
	400m	Mercy Addy	Bronze
	4 x 100 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Silver
	4 x 400 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Silver
1985	100m	Doris Wiredu	Silver
	400m	Doris Wiredu	Silver
	400m	Grace Bakari	Bronze
	Long Jump	Grace Armah	Silver
	4 x 400 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Bronze
	4 x 100 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Gold
1988	200m	Martha Appiah	Silver
		Veronica Bawuah	Bronze
	400m	Mercy Addy	Bronze
	100 Metres Hurdles	Dinah Yankey	Silver
	Long Jump	Juliana Yendork	Gold
	4 x 100 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Gold
1989	100 Metres Hurdles	Dinah Yankey	Gold
	4 x 100 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Silver
1990	200m	Helena Amoako	Bronze
	100 Metres Hurdles	Dinah Yankey	Gold
	4 x 100 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Silver
1992			
1993	4 x 400 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Bronze
1996			
1998	4 x 100 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Bronze
2000	Women's 100m	Monica Twum	Bronze
	w4 x 100 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Gold
2002	w4 x 100 Metres Relay	Team Ghana	Bronze
	Heptathlon	Margaret Simpson	Gold
2004	Heptathlon	Margaret Simpson	Gold

Table created by author with information derived from Athletics Weekly at [gbrathletics.com](http://gbrathletics.com)