

**SPEECH BY NANA AKUFO-ADDO, 2012 NPP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE,
TO THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE NPP IN
HAMBURG, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, ON 11TH JUNE, 2011.**

I am grateful for the opportunity to address this august gathering of party faithful of our external branches. Two years ago, I had a similar opportunity to address a conference of our external branches in Denver, Colorado, in the United States of America. It is always with excitement that I accept the invitation to be part of any programme of our external branches. And it is good to see that the initiative that was begun in London in 2007 is now an established item on the Party's calendar.

I thank all of you, each and everyone, for coming in your numbers, at considerable financial cost, to Hamburg in Germany for this important conference, the 3rd International Conference of the NPP. This is great! All hands are surely on deck! Let me warmly thank our hosts, Chairman Dwamena Yeboah and his team, for the hospitality and organisation of this conference. I am aware of the good work they continue to do for the Party. In the last two months, the German branch has opened chapters in Bremen, Darmstadt, Hannover, Cologne, Mainz and Munich. Ayekoo! Danke schoen! And at the risk of being mistaken for lunch, dare I say today, in echo of the late John F. Kennedy, ich bin ein Hamburger!

I extend to you the warm greetings and congratulations of the former President of the Republic, HE John Agyekum Kufuor. Much as he wanted to be here, his schedule would not permit it. He has asked me to convey to you his best wishes for a successful conference and to inform you that he, like all others at home, have only one objective in mind- victory for our Party and its candidate in the 2012 election. It is imperative for the Ghanaian nation that we win this election to remove a non-performing government from office and bring back the good governance and strong economic development associated with NPP rule. The Ghanaian people deserve no less. As chairman of the National Campaign Advisory Council, he intends to play a full part in the 2012 campaign so that all hands will be on deck for victory.

For those of us who have been there from the very beginnings of the formation of the NPP, we know that the Party can never thank you, our external branches, enough for the sacrifices that you have made in the past and continue to make for the forward movement of our Party. On behalf of the Party, and on my own behalf, I wish to thank you very much and to encourage you to continue to support the Party, so that together we can win power to

continue with the task of developing our nation in freedom and creating opportunities for lifting the majority of our people out of poverty.

I urge you to feel proud about being members of a party whose ideals have been accepted, not just in Ghana, but in the world at large as the defining principles for the good organization of society. When J.B Danquah spoke about a market economy and private enterprise, about the rule of law, about freedoms, he was derided as a reactionary. His opponents wanted a command economy and state ownership of the means of production, controlled judiciary and a vanguard party to which all citizens must belong. But J.B did not waver. He stood by his principles and eventually died for them. History has vindicated him. We know now who is the progressive, and who is the reactionary. The ideas of his opponents have been consigned to the dustbin of 20th century history as unworkable and unattractive for modern civilisation. But for his and the sacrifices of all the other forebears of our tradition, we would not be here today.

We have come through difficult times and we have prevailed. This gathering is a testimony of the permanence of our commitment and dedication to our noble goal- the development of the Ghanaian, and indeed African nation on the principles of democracy, freedom, justice and the rule of law. Our journey has exacted, is exacting and will exact much sacrifice on the part of all of us. We should bear in mind, though, that we are not the first to traverse this road of sacrifice. J.B. Danquah, Edward Akufo-Addo, William Ofori-Atta, Emmanuel Obetsebi-Lampsey, Solo Odamtten, S.D. Dombo, K.A Busia, Baffour Osei Akoto, Victor Owusu, R.R. Amponsah, B.K Adama, S.G. Antoh, Modesto Apaloo, Attoh Okine, Ashie Nikoi, Henry Thompson, K. Y. Attoh, Kow Richardson, Osei Baidoo, B.J da Rocha, Adu Boahen, Peter Ala Adjetey, Kwame Safo-Adu, Joseph Agyenim Boateng and countless of unheralded others risked their lives to fight against the stifling of our freedoms and to create the space that has enabled multi-party democracy to take root in Ghana today for the benefit of all Ghanaians. We owe them eternal gratitude.

Again, I thank you for the significant inputs that you made towards the Constitutional Amendment Conference of the Party in August 2009. This is what led to the historic expansion of the delegates list that saw the participation of some 107,000 people in the choice of our presidential candidate for the 2012 election. Likewise, on the average, four times as many people as before participated in the just concluded choice of our parliamentary candidates in an exercise that has won the admiration of the nation, and even beyond, including visiting members of the CDU, Germany's ruling party, who

observed the elections. When we signaled our intention to go down this road, our political opponents labeled it as insane. Today, sections of their party are calling on them to emulate the example of the NPP. We shall continue to be the trail-blazers as far as democratic governance in Ghana is concerned. The grassroots have been responsible for the choice of our candidates, presidential and parliamentary, and the grassroots will be responsible for our victory in 2012.

It was the American branch that gave us the theme and the words that have guided the work of the Party since the painful defeat of December 2008. It was in Denver in May 2009 that the theme “Reflect, Rebuild and Recapture” was unveiled. The process of reflection, undertaken in humility and sincerity, but also with courage, led to the decision to expand dramatically the electoral colleges of the Party for the selection of party executives and parliamentary and presidential candidates. It is a decision that has given a strong sense of ownership to the grassroots of the Party, facilitating and galvanising political mobilisation. The process of rebuilding has seen the Party, since October 2009, restructuring its organisation from the selection of its executives at the basic units of the polling station level, through the selection of the newly created level of electoral area coordinators, the constituency executives, the regional executives through to the national executives. It is a process that saw the election of the most ethnically and regionally balanced national executive of any political party in Ghana, to make the point that we are, indeed, the national party of Ghana. We now stand on the threshold of the third and most critical aspect of the theme- RECAPTURE.

This is meant to be the theme of my speech. I intend, however, hopefully with your approval, to take *le droit d’auteur* and make the speech feature more on our philosophy and vision for 2012 and beyond. We shall not have another opportunity to meet like this before the 2012 election. You should have a good idea of how we intend to go about our next chance in government, God willing. The campaign strategy, structure and calendar of operations as to how we shall come back in 2012 are now in place. I am confident that, indeed, we shall be back. The dynamic, highly effective General Secretary of our Party, Kwadwo Owusu Afriyie, aka Sir John, will take you through the campaign strategy in greater detail later today. Let me just make four brief comments on this.

Firstly, the focus of the campaign will be at the polling station level. That is where the vote is. Secondly, we have to send our message to the ground. Thirdly, we have to get out every single vote for us. Fourthly, we have to protect

the vote, and make sure each is counted and declared. If we do these four things efficiently, we shall win the election.

We should all endeavour to take the deliberations of this conference seriously, so that we can collate all the useful ideas that will bring us victory in 2012. The national officers of the Party, under the wise leadership of Otanka Obetsebi Lamptey, have signaled their intention to take into account every segment and every constituency of the Party. They are to be commended for the initiative they have taken to bring the regional chairmen of the Party to this conference for the first time to enable the party overseas and the party at home to bond in an even more coherent manner. You, our external branches, are a critical constituency within the Party and your input to our effort is very crucial. You represent critical voices in your families and towns and villages in Ghana. Our people in Ghana respect your views because they know how hard you work to send remittances home and the tremendous contributions you are making towards the sustenance and survival of your families and the growth and development of our dear nation Ghana.

Today, thanks to the Mills administration, politics and politicians have become discredited phenomena. In 2008, Candidate Mills promised “prosperity for all.” Today, what do we see? More than half a million more people have fallen below the poverty line since 2009. Morale in our country is at an all time low. Everywhere you go in Ghana, the song on the lips of our people is the same- ‘*enkoyie, enkoyie*’. The NDC has broken most of the promises it made to the people of Ghana in 2008. Gabby Otchere-Darko has summed it up well. He says: “Under Mills, the NDC has stumbled from failure to failure, broken promise to broken promise. Soon, cigarettes will carry the warning: Government is dangerous to your health! The President promised to rid our streets of filth in hundred days and ended up giving us cholera after two years. He said 2011 will be action year and ended up delivering a ration year.”

Findings of a recent survey undertaken by world renowned pollsters, Gallup, in 18 African countries, make grim reading. In Ghana, the poll indicates that under President Mills, 12.7 million people, representing 53% of the entire population, cannot afford the cost of food. Those who admit to living comfortably have dropped from 20% in 2007 to 4% of the population in 2010. In 2007, 11% of Ghanaians said they were suffering under severe economic hardships. Two years into the so-called ‘Better Ghana’ agenda of President Mills, the number of Ghanaians who cannot cope at all with the harsh economic realities has shot up by a whopping 210%, from 11% of the population to 34%. To put it bluntly, over 8.2 million Ghanaians are saying

that “*enkoyie kroaaaa!*”. They have been delivered a bitter Ghana, instead of a better Ghana.

On top of that, the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty programme (LEAP), the social welfare benefit system introduced by the NPP to provide some regular financial support for the very poor in our society, is dying under the Mills government of alleged social democrats. Today in Ghana, we are living in a poverty-owning democracy, even as more and more Ghanaians fall below the poverty line of \$1.35 a day. This situation is not acceptable. The very people trumpeting alleged care for you are the very people worsening the plight of the ordinary Ghanaian each succeeding day. Where is the better Ghana that they promised? A vote for change should not mean a vote for less money in people’s pockets. The 2008 vote for change has rather reduced the people of Ghana to an ever-worsening situation of joblessness and hopelessness, with more and more people begging on the streets for small change. We, the NPP, therefore, have a great responsibility to restore the hope, trust and confidence of the Ghanaian people in their government. We will have to introduce urgent policies that will put our young people to work.

We are committed to building a new society of opportunities, where every Ghanaian has the opportunity to better him or her self, and by so doing better the Ghanaian society. That is what we mean when we say we want to build a property owning democracy in Ghana. In 1969, when outlining the goals of the Progress Party, Kofi Abrefa Busia, its leader and one of the three seminal figures of the Danquah-Dombo-Busia political tradition of Ghana, committed to providing for every Ghanaian, a job and to every worker, security; to every family, a decent meal and a decent home. To every person, equal opportunity and social justice. To every individual, the essentials of freedom of speech and expression; freedom of movement and association; freedom of conscience of worship and to all Ghanaians, progress. We still stand by these goals, and, God willing, when we come back to power in 2013, we shall work hard to achieve these and more for the Ghanaian people.

Indeed, we have a record to show. Under the eight year leadership of President John Agyekum Kufuor, we gave Ghana its best economy in our half-a-century of independence. We achieved macro-economic stability for the longest period in our history. We reduced significantly both interest rates and inflation, while expanding by eight fold the size of the national economy from US\$4billion to US\$32 billion in the eight years of the NPP, not to talk about the spirit of hope and optimism which abounded then, as opposed to the spirit of gloom and depression engulfing the nation today. We worked hard to wean ourselves off

financial dependence on the Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Bank and the IMF, so that we could rely on our own ingenuity to design and promote our development. We re-engineered our relationship with these institutions from one of donor dependency to one of co-operation and a more equitable partnership. Regrettably, the NDC has returned us to dependence on those institutions. We had a sovereign credit rating of B+ and the ability to borrow on the open financial markets on our own. Indeed, in 2007, our first sovereign bond issue which was for US\$750 million, was over-subscribed to the tune of US\$3.2 billion- at that time, we had not discovered oil in commercial quantities. These, coupled with the increase in foreign direct investment, our selection for the Millennium Challenge Account, the proceeds of which are currently being used for agricultural development in Ghana and significantly increased remittances from the Ghanaian diaspora are all testament to our successful management of the economy. This we shall replicate and improve upon, when, with your help and that of the Almighty God, we come back in 2013 to inspire once again Ghanaians with the spirit of dynamism, creativity, self-reliance and innovation towards our growth and development; and to bring back hope and opportunity to all Ghanaians, particularly our youth, currently faced with the future of no hope, no opportunity and no employment.

In 2008, in delivering a speech on the platform of the Busia Foundation during the electioneering campaign, I asked a simple question which has, unfortunately, turned out to be prophetic. I asked whether we want to drive ahead and take the highway to greater freedom and prosperity or pull the brakes, turn back, reset the mileage and put back on our development vehicle the 'L' sign for 'Learner Driver'? Today, those in charge of the administration of the state have virtually put the brakes on our development vehicle. We need to take control of the vehicle again, and as quickly as possible. Indeed, even within the circles of the ruling party itself, there appear to be serious divisions of opinion as to the capacity of the current driver of the Yutong bus to take us safely to our destination.

Ghana today is reeling under the needless weight of a leadership crisis. For the first time in the history of our 54-year old motherland, the Speaker of Parliament was compelled by the behaviour of her own side, the Majority, to walk out of a sitting of Parliament. The Executive, instead of steering the affairs of the nation on the highway of stability and progress, is dodging booms about corruption and "*nyafu nyafu*" chopping by "greedy bastards" and Team B players from the founder of their party, and preoccupied with bitter feuds between FONKAR and GAME, OLONKAR and SADAM. While we would be

happy to remain indifferent to this, we cannot, however, sit by unconcerned when the all-important affairs of tackling poverty, creating jobs, providing security, fixing our worsening physical infrastructure, investing in the welfare of the young, old and sick are all being set aside in a never-ending struggle to determine who really is in charge. Surely, our beloved country deserves better.

Not only in the Legislature and the Executive can we sense a crisis. The Judiciary, the defender of our liberties, is under threat as well, facing a constant barrage of intimidation and harassment from agents of Government and the ruling party, a most unwelcome development for Ghanaians, especially when regard is had to the history of judicial assassinations associated with the antecedents of the ruling party. Why should such a serious threat to our democracy occur after the longest period of our nation's democracy and at a time when all three official arms of Government are headed by men and women of law? It does not speak well of our profession. It does not speak well of the ability of the Chief Executive of the State to provide good governance for our nation.

In 2008, we identified four areas of focus which we said were going to engage our attention if we continued in government. We said that we were going to (1) deepen democracy, (2) modernise our society, (3) transform our economy and (4) engage more actively in West Africa and the continent at large in order that our voice shall help shape the future of an integrated, united Africa.

First, in terms of deepening democracy, I believe that a leader should stand for something. A party should stand for something. A leader should have values. A party should have values. We have and I have. Our values are about individual freedom and human dignity. Many people wrongly believe that our values are only about freedom. Yes, we care passionately about freedom from oppression and state control. That is why Danquah and Obetsebi Lamptey were prepared to die without trial in the dungeons of Nsawam prisons. But freedom can too easily turn into the idea that we have the right to do whatever we want, regardless of the effect on others. That is not our belief.

For us, an equally important word is responsibility. We prefer a system of empowerment to the concept of entitlement as the means of developing the individual. A hand up, not a hand out. That is the NPP way. Ghanaians understand this fully, and that is why we are celebrated all over the world as responsible citizens. Personal responsibility; professional responsibility; civic responsibility; corporate responsibility; our responsibility to our family, to our neighbourhood, and to our country; our responsibility to behave in a decent

and civilized manner; our responsibility to help others. That is what this party is all about.

Thus, for every judgment I make, for every decision I take, I ask myself a basic question: does it encourage responsibility and discourage irresponsibility? Does it make us a more or less responsible society? This is because we will only be a strong society if we are a responsible society. But what do we see under the Mills administration? Rampaging NDC activists attacking DCEs, party executives, public officials, especially those perceived to be NPP sympathisers, and recently, attacking and burning down their own party offices in Tamale. And the President makes excuses for them by saying that they are justifiably angry. This cannot be the society that we want to see in the 21st century, a society with a growing culture of impunity. In a modern society, dialogue and law are the means for addressing grievances. In a modern society, the rule of law is respected. The Judiciary and institutions of state set up to combat corruption are adequately resourced and strengthened so that they can do their work without fear or favour and ordinary citizens do not live in fear of arbitrary searches, arrests and seizures.

We are the harbingers of democracy. Democracy is like a planted tree: it cannot take hold if it is not watered, nurtured and protected. Democracy cannot endure if the leaders and the people are not committed to it; if they do not understand it, or if they are not sincere to its principles and values.

Democracies do best when there are strong and vibrant institutions. Let me repeat what I said on May 16th 2008, in delivering the second in the series of the Ferdinand O. Ayim Memorial lectures: “Strong democracies are built by strengthening the institutions of democracy, rather than the power of men.” I went on to say a month later on 26th June, 2008 at the IEA Evening Encounter: “The gains we have made in our democracy due to the sacrifices of great individuals must be protected by great institutions.” When we come back, we shall prioritise our budgetary arrangements to ensure that we have the funds to strengthen Parliament, the Judiciary, CHRAJ, EOCO, Food and Drugs Board, Standards Board and other institutions with more resources and where necessary, better personnel and greater efficiency. Additionally, it is equally vital that we promote the development of a culture whereby these bodies see themselves as independent public entities serving the wider public interest, not the temporary conveniences of the government of the day.

Second, in terms of modernising our society, one of the main tasks of government is to ensure a strong economy, where people’s take home pay really

takes them home. Government's business is to ensure that businesses are up and running and have access to the capital that will keep the wheels of industry moving. These are simple beliefs with profound implications. And here is something else I believe about the economy. I believe that entrepreneurs create jobs, not governments. I understand enterprise. I admire entrepreneurs. The NDC's taxes are unfortunately making life difficult for our entrepreneurs and the citizenry. Under this administration, even sachet water has been heavily taxed, placing a burden on the beleaguered, hot and thirsty Ghanaian, who is not seeing the benefits of his taxes. For example, astronomical increases in highway tolls have not translated into improved road maintenance. Take the Tema Motorway, where not mere potholes, but craters have appeared, endangering life and limb. Government must provide the framework and create an enabling environment and level the playing field for all Ghanaian entrepreneurs to thrive.

We are a party of business. We understand business. I shall work with all you hard working Ghanaians and Ghanaian businesses, so that, together, we can get the wheels of business running again. This is the only way to create jobs and restore hope to a broken society. As we speak, hundreds, perhaps thousands of Ghanaian youth are still trapped in Libya. Why did they find themselves in that situation in the first place? It is because somehow they came to the conclusion that Ghana did not offer them hope of a better future. We need to restore the hope and confidence of our young people in Ghana. We need to restore their hope and confidence in Ghanaian leadership.

It takes dedication, determination, discipline and a collective sense of responsibility to build a great nation. That sense of responsibility must necessarily involve the growth of a public sector that responds to the needs of its citizens. We need a public service that frowns upon the culture of corruption and provides the people with a quality environment of law and order, physical infrastructure, social services, sensitivity and quick responsiveness to needs, and a regulatory environment that allows free and fair competition. I have stated that I want to come to office with programmes, not promises. It will include a programme for the development of a first class public service that will help administer, at the national, regional and local level, the machinery of state with efficiency, respect for citizens and value for money. A central function of the public service will be the supervision of a humane public healthcare system that is accessible to all, and a quality public education system equally accessible to all. It must ensure that our cities, towns and villages are safe and clean. And above all, it must be a public service that

supports, not hinders, the growth of the private sector, the goose that lays the golden egg of prosperity and progress. We will build such a service.

If we, of the NPP, are to vindicate the principled conviction of our founding fathers over 60 years ago that multiparty democracy is the best vehicle to enhance the dignity of every Ghanaian and the development of our society, then we must fight with all the weapons at our disposal to win the enduring war against poverty. However, we can only win this war by first recognizing that we cannot continue deploying the same ineffective weapons of old and expect victory. Ghana cannot continue the folly of doing the same thing over and over again and expect different results. We need to break our future free from the shackles of the Guggisberg economic model of producing and exporting raw materials. Africa is probably the richest continent in terms of natural resources. Yet, those riches have not translated into prosperity for the African people. On the contrary, the African people are the poorest on earth. We have not been able to use our natural resources to transform the lives of our citizens because we have not prioritized the development of the most important ingredient in any nation's development mix: the mind.

That is why I have made the issue of nurturing the intellectual property of the Ghanaian my highest priority. Education, education, education. Without education we shall sweat and toil in vain. For Ghana to industrialise, we must take a total look at the economic, organisational, administrative, legal, regulatory, technical, financial and even sociological conditions of Ghanaian industry. But beyond that, we must not compromise in our commitment to provide for every Ghanaian child access to quality education, regardless of the circumstances of his or her birth.

The education reforms of the late 1980s, which introduced the Junior Secondary School system as the first point of exit, merely ended up throwing out onto our streets each year an estimated quarter of a million school leavers without any form of basic, employable skills. This represents about half of the numbers that sit for the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and the West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) at the two exit points, failing in their final papers. A recent survey showed that about 64% of JHS pupils cannot read or write. What this means simply is this: we have been banishing about half of our youth to a future of hopelessness and struggle. This is not the way to build a nation and we should work together to put a stop to this phenomenon of failure and hopelessness.

The least that a society can give its youth are education and skills for jobs. Without the foundation of quality education, the other two become a chanced struggle and the quality of tuition a child receives before the age of 16 can make or break his or her future. That is why I am saying that, under my presidency, the Junior High School level would no longer be the first exit point for education. We will introduce a policy that will make Senior High School part of the basic school system and, therefore, the first point of exit for every child in Ghana. Again, we are determined to tackle the critical issue of the kind of education that we offer to our future citizens. The future is for quality education. This means that at the heart of our education policy will be what we have called, 'Teacher First'. We are determined to put the needs of the teacher and hence the quality of tuition for our children first. Quality education will be at the very heart of the next NPP policy on education. We intend to enhance quality of education in every public school in Ghana in our overriding goal of building a new society of opportunities by committing, by legislation, a significant and constant percentage of our GDP to education. The current situation, which has seen the percentage of GDP devoted to education decreasing gradually since 2009 and spending in key social interventions, like the school feeding programme and capitation grant, suffering cuts do not show a nation serious about its future. Education is the key to unleashing the talents of our people. To coin a phrase, the freedom of the Ghanaian is meaningless without a deliberate policy to grow his or her intellectual property. We need to prepare our people and empower them with the confidence and skills to become champions in this new and exciting, competitive Africa.

Our education system and training institutions must thus be designed in such a way as to encourage and support this process of socio-economic transformation that will also necessarily embrace a strong attachment to technology. It is not for nothing that China mandates 40 percent of her secondary school students to do science. Science, technology, communication and information technology have become the structure of knowledge in the 21st century. The Asians are managing to embrace science and technology without losing the true essence of their culture. Japan is an excellent example of a culture that towers magnificently in technological splendour, yet preserves meticulously her indigenous norms and traditional values.

Our own indigenous respect for hard work and our ingenuity, our attraction to innovation and our sense of initiative, our practical creativity and capacity to adapt, in other words our instinctive technological knowhow and characteristic professionalism, our intelligence, are the only surefire means by which we can

bring a radical, accelerated positive change to our country and to the lives of our people. The ingenuity of our artisans, craftsmen, cash crop producers the length and breadth of Ghana must be harnessed and taken to a higher level: the retrofitters of Suame Magazine in Kumasi, the textile weavers of the Ashanti and Volta regions, the fisherfolk along the coastal belt from Western, through Central, Greater Accra and onwards and eastwards towards Togo, the handicraft producers and horticulturists of the Eastern Region, the cocoa farmers and mineral producers of the Ashanti, Western, Eastern and Brong Ahafo Regions, the animal husbandry, tomato, rice and cotton producers of the Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions could all benefit from technology, technology transfer, training and value addition to their products, to produce to global standards in a globalised world and enhance their livelihoods here in Ghana.

Our future competitiveness as a nation and our quest for advanced status as a nation are fated for a crash-landing without the major impact of science and technology. God willing, when we come back, we shall pursue a vigorous policy of science education that will put us on the path to real development. In the words of academics such as David Landes and Bethwell Ogot, the new 'Wealth of Nations' will not be measured in terms of capital, land and labour, but more in terms of knowledge and in this case, knowledge in science and technology will be key. And in all this, the motivated, well paid, quality teacher will be at the centre of our educational policy.

Third, in terms of transforming our economy, I have dedicated my destiny to making my leadership of Ghana, God willing and the Ghanaian people so consenting, the period during which our economy is transformed from an exporter of raw materials and retailer of cheap imported goods to a modern, self-sufficient, surplus-producing industrialised one. The recent petroleum find offers us the perfect opportunity to create a petrochemical industry in Ghana, including monetising our gas to create a multi-billion dollar gas feedstock industry. We have the opportunity to make Ghana a regional centre for light manufacturing industry for a market of some 350 million people, by weaving together our numerous natural resources, like food produce, bauxite, iron ore, oil and gas, with our talents and energy to turn our nation into an economic powerhouse in Africa, generating full employment for our teeming youth. That is the strategic objective for which I shall be working. That is the road to sustained prosperity for our people. Ghanaian sense of enterprise, initiative and creativity, properly harnessed, can achieve this goal in the next decade.

Towards achieving this goal, regional integration in the West African Region

and Africa as a whole, i.e the unity project, is important for our nation's future. We need to allow free movements of people, goods, services, ideas, cultures, and aspirations across Africa's borders, largely artificially defined at the Berlin Conference of 1884. Germany in the 19th century and Europe today remind us of what we can do as a united front. Once old trade impediments were removed, a unified Germany immediately enjoyed an economic boom, starting with the Zollverein (Toll Union) in 1833. By abolishing tolls between the various German principalities, a common market was created in Germany. With the creation of the German nation in 1871 under the leadership of the great German statesman, Count Otto von Bismarck, the full industrialisation of Germany began.

Unity is not an option for Africa in a global economy controlled by powerful economic bloc: it is a necessity. But, in order to achieve that, the various nations must begin to create economic models to give each other the incentives both to emulate and encourage healthy competition among themselves and must be linked to each other's destiny with an integrated transportation and ICT system, in a similar way that the technology of trains and railroads facilitated the original unification of the German states.

Instructively, the rapid development of the German rail system increased the demand and expansion of the domestic steel and coal industries. With the growth in the rail network, the coal and steel industries in turn significantly developed the banking and capital markets in Germany, thereby building the capital base to fund other industries such as the chemical and electrical industries, all in the latter part of the 19th century. While the Germans had the advantage of using reparations from defeated France in the 1870-71 war to capitalise its railroad construction and other infrastructural projects, the Germans managed to sustain their industrialisation because they invested in the most important ingredient for development, the human mind – the intellectual property of the German. We must deploy our resources to capitalise our railroad and infrastructure projects, and invest in our human capital.

Fourth, in terms of engaging more actively in West Africa and the continent at large, Ghana used to be the leader as far as providing vision and direction for Africa is concerned. Today, we have been reduced to a mere appendage in African affairs. Indeed, we are now being told to mind our own business. The new mantra of Ghanaian diplomacy is “dzi wo fie asem.”

After leading sub-Saharan Africa to break free from colonial rule, successive Ghanaian leaders earned and maintained our nation's leadership role in Africa, from the struggles for independence, through the resolutions of conflicts to the consolidation of democracy. What caused this sudden embarrassing change in foreign policy under the Mills administration? It certainly was not the protection of the Ghanaian public interest. This narrow, selfish policy cannot be the sort of policy for Ghana that our forebears dreamt about and fought for. Ghana has always believed in the biblical notion of being her brother's keeper. This is because regional peace and stability are critical ultimately to both our own national development and the greater integration project. In spite of our Government's counteractive stance of vacillation and confusion during the Ivorian crisis, Ghanaians are relieved today that, after the use of legitimate force to remove the defeated Laurent Gbagbo from office, the new President, Alassane Ouattara, has chosen the superior path of mature, pro-active diplomatic engagement with neighbouring Ghana. This reaffirms the fact that Ghana has an important geopolitical role to play in ongoing efforts to secure peace and stability in democratic Cote d'Ivoire. It gives us another chance to restore our nation's international integrity and esteem. I intend to be a leader that will re-assert Ghana's constructive influence in West Africa and Africa, generally.

Now to the role that you, our external branches, can play in recapturing power and revitalising our dear nation Ghana. Your contribution to this enterprise is vital. Fortunately, you don't have to be physically present in Ghana to make a contribution to the nation's political discourse. Today, thanks to information technology, the world, as we say, has become a global village. Online radio, for example, has become interactive which allows you to call in to make contributions on subjects under discussion back home. I encourage you to do so. Your voices add freshness, new insights and decency into our public discourse. Unfortunately, insults and outright fabrications have become the currency of value in political discourse in the Mills era. There appears to be a consensus that, if there is an area of politics in which we of the NPP seem not to be doing well, it is the area of propaganda. While we are a tradition that abhors lies and deceit in politics, we, nonetheless, need to tell our story more forcefully and expose the deception of our opponents with more punch and vim. I believe that under the leadership of Nana Akomea and his communications team, we have begun that more forceful approach. And I am sure that in the end they will succeed and thereby spare the Ghanaian people, especially her youth, the unbalanced diet of cheap propaganda, false piety,

double standards, hypocrisy, corruption and ineptitude that passes for statecraft in the Mills era.

There are many fora on the internet to which you could make a contribution. I encourage you to do so. Let everybody muster the skill at their disposal to tell the NPP story. This is because the NPP story is a success story. The NPP story is a story of struggle. The NPP story is a story of hope. The NPP story is a story of development. We have a record. We have a record of being a liberal democratic party that implemented, arguably, the best social intervention policies in the history of Ghana. While our opponents would want to sow seeds of division amongst the Ghanaian people, we must continue to preach unity. Ghanaians share hopes and goals and values far more important than any political disagreements. Together, guided by a spirit of common sense, common courtesy and common goals, we can unite and inspire the Ghanaian people. We have a vision that is meant to transform the Ghanaian economy and create opportunities for people to realize their potential and create wealth for themselves and the society at large.

In 2008, whilst conducting the Party's presidential campaign, I made it part of my programme to visit our external branches, not just to interact with our party people, but, more importantly, to meet with Ghanaians in the diaspora and to solicit their support. Some people criticised this decision, arguing that the campaign is restricted to the geographical territory called Ghana. I disagreed. I still disagree. I consider your contribution to the development of Ghana as equally important. The taxes that you pay at the ports when you ship things home form a big part of government revenue. You remit annually over \$1.5billion (1.04billion Euros). In the first quarter of this year alone, the Bank of Ghana puts the value of private remittances at \$674.8million (470million Euros). Your contributions in the Ghanaian retail, tourism, internet, computer, second-hand vehicles, spare parts and textile industries and in the development of our new oil industry are remarkable. This is why accountability by government should extend to you as well, not just to the people living within the geographical territory.

To show our commitment to the Ghanaian diaspora, we passed the Representation of the Peoples Amendment Law (ROPAL), whose aim is to involve you in the decision as to who governs Ghana. To date that law has not been given effect. Indeed, the NDC raised serious opposition to the passage of that law and even organised series of street protests to show their objection to the law. God willing, when we come back, we shall take steps to ensure that

the law is given effect. Nearly all the countries in the West African region have their citizens abroad voting. I don't see why Ghana cannot do same.

I would also encourage the growing number of second generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs abroad to extend the benefits of their education, professional skills, contacts and abilities to Ghana. Today, the transnational nature of ICT allows us to act productively as citizens-without-borders.

There are other specific things I want to bring to your attention. Those of you who are minded to contribute to the Party should, as much as possible, do so at your constituency and home town level either in cash or kind. That is where it is most needed. Further, those who are minded to make inputs into our manifesto should do so within the next month as we want to bring finality to the making of our manifesto this year, to enable us campaign on it all next year. Furthermore, many of you hear things and gather intelligence about what is happening at home, sometimes even more than those of us there. We shall provide a central mechanism for harnessing this intelligence. Moreover, it is also clear that we need to introduce new cultures and habits into our governance systems. To do so we shall have to use many of you, who have been exposed to them abroad, at the appropriate time.

We have a sacred duty to the people of Ghana to make a quick come back in order to build on the gains of the Kufuor era. I do not need to recount the gains of those eight years as you are familiar with them. Our record is an open book. And I am sure that at the end of four years in 2012, when Ghanaians will have another opportunity to look at the balance sheets of 12 years of our opponents and 8 years of ourselves, they will conclude that, indeed, we should naturally be Ghana's party of government. We cannot fail the Ghanaian people, and we will not. On my part, I am prepared to do anything I can to ensure that we come back next year. I want to be an instrument for the realisation of our common goal. We haven't reached our destination, so we cannot tire.

All sections of the Party are upset about the 2008 loss. This set back has fired an unprecedented zeal and enthusiasm in our people. When I go around the country and observe this development, it further convinces me that, God willing, we shall be back. We have learnt our lessons and are determined that we shall be back in 2012 with a campaign that is focussed on the grassroots. We remain a formidable political force, and, according to neutral observers, the biggest political party in our country. We can make it. It was the wise old German leader, Bismarck, who said that "politics is the art of the possible". A

come back is an absolute possibility. Indeed, it is an imperative for the orderly progress of our nation.

But there is a condition. We must be united. We cannot desire otherwise. The Psalmist says in Psalm 133:1-2: "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" We should more especially be wary of vile propaganda from our opponents whose aim is to divide us and sow seeds of discord amongst us. We are herein gathered in Germany because we are bound by common values, the values of liberty and individual freedoms that underpin the amazing development of this great country. These are the values that unite us. Let us stick together, work together and win together.

Dear colleagues, before I take my seat, I want to assure you that, I, together with the national executives and campaign officers of the Party, will leave no stone unturned to prosecute an effective campaign that will win us power in 2012. The Ghanaian people are extremely disappointed with the performance of the NDC and are crying for our return to office. We have their support. As I have said, we need to protect the ballot and ensure that every vote counts and every accountable voter votes. We shall do so.

Finally, fellow kukrudites, I shall be guided by a sense of purpose to stand for principle, to be reasonable in manner and above all, to do great good for the cause of our Party, for the cause of freedom and for the benefit of mother Ghana. I shall lead by example, through a hands-on approach, working around the clock to restore and nurture the culture of hard work. I have a strong desire to serve Ghana with a clear conscience, pure motives and a solid character and to that end, I will offer a leadership of competence, courage, compassion and commitment, guided at all times by faith in God.

Like all of you, I am deeply patriotic about Ghana. I have always believed in Ghana. I believe that we Ghanaians have both a remarkable history and a potentially extraordinary future. I will never do anything that puts Ghana and her people at risk. Given the opportunity, I shall endeavour to build bridges between our people and create a society of dialogue, peace, reconciliation, law and order.

From Pusiga to Axim, from Hamile to Keta, we are all by fate Ghanaians first. We have to emphasise the many things that bring us together. I believe we have the opportunity, and more than that, the responsibility to bring our country together. Together in the face of the current despondency and hopelessness, united in our conviction that the NPP is the best party to restore hope to the Ghanaian people. Together in determination, we will come through. Together in

hope, in the belief, in the knowledge that, God willing, better times will come to Ghana. I believe in Ghana.

Thank you.

God bless you.

God bless the NPP.

God bless Ghana.