

# 64TH CELEBRATION OF INDEPENDENCE DAY OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA IN SPAIN

Sixty-four years ago, today, that Ghana's forefathers' dream of independence became a reality. Indeed, Ghana on the 6th of March, 1957 became the first African country, south of the Sahara to gain her freedom from colonial rule and domination from Britain. Such a monumental achievement gave Ghana the added responsibility of demonstrating to the black race and colonial regimes across the continent that, the African was in a position to manage his own affairs.

This early drive for national excellence has guided the path of our leaders since we gained sovereignty more than six decades ago. Today, Ghana is a bastion of democratic governance and the rule of law on the African continent. Following last year's successful general elections, the country remains a haven of peace and stability devoid of the unrest and civil strife that have defined the political reality of other African states.

Ghana is currently into the 28th year of its Fourth Republic, the longest, uninterrupted period of political tranquility and constitutional governance in the nation's history. 6th March every year has become the day when Ghanaians honour the heroes and statesmen whose efforts culminated into the country's independence.

On this day, Ghanaians also remember the valiant efforts of the Big Six: Kwame Nkrumah, Emmanuel Obetsebi Lamprey, Ebenezer Ako-Adjei, William Ofori-Atta, J.B. Danquah and Edward Akufo-Addo. We honor them for the very important role they played in the nation's collective effort towards political freedom from colonial rule. All these great men and women contributed to the Ghana project and are largely responsible for the success story we tell today about this great African state.

In spite of the challenges, Ghana since its independence has grown to become one of the most prosperous nations in Africa. 85% of Ghanaians currently have access to potable water. No child has died from measles in the past seventeen years in Ghana. Senior high school is free for every child in Ghana so there are more children in secondary schools now, especially young girls, than the country has ever had.

It is apparent that the country now has a modern economy, making it one of the most sustainable financial hubs in Africa. The creative arts are also thriving. The Kente cloth, which is treated as a national treasure, has crossed over borders featuring in Hollywood blockbusters such as 'the Black Panther'. It is now the symbol of identity for peoples of African descent in the Diaspora.

The music of Ghanaian artists such as Sarkodie, Stonebwoy and Shatta Wale are now world renowned. The records of talented Ghanaian musicians can be heard in clubs all over Europe and America. The Ghana brand has indeed become highly marketable since 6th March, 1957 when Dr. Kwame Nkrumah declared the nation free and independent of colonial rule.

Ordinarily, the Ghana Embassy in Madrid would have commemorated this momentous occasion with a cocktail that would have brought together public officials as well as members of the Spanish Diplomatic Corps to celebrate the independence of our beloved country. The ongoing pandemic has however rendered it impossible for the staff of the Mission to do so. Nonetheless, we wish to



use the occasion to share Ghana's successful narrative with the people of Spain and call on all Spaniards to look to Ghana for investment and economic opportunities as well as a suitable destination on the African continent for blissful holidays and relaxation.

Ghana's bilateral ties with Spain have been growing since the opening of the Spanish Embassy in Accra in 1989. In 2004, Ghana reciprocated by opening an embassy in Madrid. The two countries, after diplomatic and consular relations were established, have collaborated in various sectors, such as trade, peace and security, agriculture and tourism.

Export commodities from Ghana destined for the Spanish market are predominantly primary and semi-processed products, they are mostly dominated by traditional exports (cocoa) and less diversified goods. It is the hope of the Ghana Government that, the two countries can collaborate extensively in the area of commerce for the sake of mutual growth and prosperity.

Culturally, Spain has been generous enough to host Ghanaian students at the University of Salamanca for Spanish language training courses. The Ghana Government is very happy with the institution's level of commitment to the students and is hoping that other academic institutions in Spain will be willing to offer similar opportunities to Spanish Language students in Ghana. Even though Ghana's senior national team the Black Stars is yet to play Los Rojos in a major football tournament like the World Cup, our juvenile teams have crossed paths in international tournaments and La Liga has proven to be a good hunting ground for Ghanaian footballers such as Thomas Partey whose exploits in Atletico Madrid made him a crowd favorite at the club.

At a time when the world is confronted with a deadly pandemic, Ghana is ever ready to work with Spain and other developmental partners so that together we can find common solutions to a global problem. Spain is already collaborating with Ghana in the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking on the Gulf of Guinea. On this national day, the Ghana Mission in Madrid wishes to use this special occasion to thank the Government and people of Spain for their friendship and partnership which over the years has contributed greatly to the welfare of the people of Ghana.

The Ghana Embassy in Madrid wishes all Ghanaians and friends of Ghana in Spain and across the globe a joyous 64th Independence Anniversary. May God bless us all, and our homeland and make her great and strong.



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