THE GHANAIAN ENVOY

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OCTOBER 2020 Edition

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INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN TIMES OF GLOBAL TURBULENCE

The post-1945 world order, is generally acknowledged as having been largely characterised by strong international cooperation between and among States. This has manifested in the establishment of institutions such as the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and, more recently, the World Trade Organisation. The plethora of international instruments adopted and implemented by the global community has also been expanded to cover several multilateral and strategic concerns, such us health, trade, the environment, arms control, and peace and security.

Despite the enduring global stability that is anchored on accepted arrangements of international cooperation, emerging global challenges have sadly revealed the fragilities of the international system.

The novel coronavirus pandemic has already exposed fraying international cooperation with global solidarity urgently needed in challenging times such as this. At the beginning of the crisis, individual national responses in the face of medical supply shortages turned, particularly, the dominant economies to turn inward. Export controls were introduced on critical medical supplies and even the traditional strong ties between the United States and its European allies experienced heightened tension as each side of the Atlantic banned the export of essential medical supplies such as masks, face shields, and other protective equipment. The pursuit of the "my country first" approach posed serious threats to global public health and solidarity, making the toll of COVID-19 even worse.

It needs to be recognized, however, that the world is now at a very delicate stage of history that could portend global dysfunction. This is because the impact of the ongoing global pandemic is dire and far-reaching. Already, the IMF has indicated that as at the end of June 2020, more than 11 trillion United States dollars had been spent by governments as fiscal support, with an additional 6 trillion United States dollars in monetary support. Estimates also suggests that the effects of the pandemic on global economic output will lead to a $12.5 trillion downturn by the end of 2021. Aside the several lives lost, many jobs have also been lost with disastrous socio-economic effects on individuals, households and nations.

The pandemic has not only exposed fissures which have developed in the international system with the rise in nationalist and populist politics across Europe and America. It has also brought some hard realities to the fore. Perhaps it is premature to talk of a shift of power and influence from the West to the East, but the slow and sometimes uncoordinated responses in some European capitals and America to the pandemic have already

punctured the aura around the global leadership of the West.

These challenges are compounded by the underlying tensions between a rising and increasingly assertive China and a United States, that appears to have abandoned hegemony as a strategic issue on account of its repudiation of a number of multilateral and security commitments in recent years.

Some analysts are already predicting an inward-looking world that is less open, less prosperous and less free. For instance, Simon Tifford and Hans Kundnan, writing in a July 2020 paper for the 'Foreign Affairs' magazine of the influential Council on Foreign Relations have contemplated an intellectual policy point for the United States abandoning the hegemony of the United States dollar for reasons of national economic interests. That

may appear hasty but the reality is that countries are beginning to look more at their narrow interest, a situation which is not unusual during crises.

The real impact of the pandemic and other global crises could stretch for years. Millions more families are being pushed into poverty with millions of jobs already lost this year. We need international solidarity. We need the United Nations, ably supported by the G-8, G-20 and resourceful individual countries, as well as the multilateral development agencies plus various regional blocs such as the EU, African Union and others.

There is therefore the need for leadership, and the international community has always proved capable of achieving desired

outcomes whenever it is able to work together. The experience of the 2007-2008 global financial crisis, which though beginning in the financial sector of the United States, transmuted into the real economy with dire implications worldwide, especially in developing countries such as Ghana shows that concerted action is always possible.

As a response to the 2007-2008 financial crisis and to avoid a global economic collapse, governments and central banks across the world provided unprecedented bailouts and stimulus to restore faith in the markets and provided funds for banks to lend and allow withdrawals. For instance, at the United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development held in June 2009 at the UN Headquarters in New York, Member States gathered to identify emergency and long-term responses to mitigate the impact of the financial crisis, especially on vulnerable countries and their populations.

Indeed, the United Nations was designed as a rules-based international organisations to help manage the international system made up of independent sovereign states. Throughout its 75 years of existence, the UN has brought the world together to prevent wars between States and end internal conflicts through mediation and peacekeeping operations; it has mobilized global resources to address issues of poverty and underdevelopment through instruments such the MDGs and SDGs; formed coalitions to confront threats like terrorism and climate change; built consensus to address the impact of financial crisis; led a crusade against communicable and non-communicable diseases through worldwide vaccination and immunization.

The United Nations has many times led global efforts to find solutions to a multitude of challenges facing the world and, significantly, true to the words of its own Charter, has saved "succeeding generations from the scourge of another World War" in over seven decades. Despite the challenges the world body might be going through at the moment to bring coherence of actions among the major countries of the world, it is still the best placed institution to forge a solution to the global disruption unleashed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The current coronavirus pandemic has therefore tested the resilience of international cooperation to the limit. While the pandemic was a proof of an interdependent world in the manner of its spread, the reality was that each country acted in its own interests to ensure national survival.

The lesson here, however, particularly for developing countries is NOT to lose faith in the potency of international cooperation even if they have to minimise overdependence on developed countries for their progress. International goodwill and solidarity remain an indispensable instrument for sustainable progress even where individual countries endeavour to assume primary responsibility for their own development.

Rather, to weather the storms of any future global turmoil and the associated economic shocks, individual countries, especially

developing countries including those in Africa, should design forward-looking policies in normal times in order to develop resilience in their economies and among their populations. The vision of 'Ghana Beyond Aid' may hold promise to developing a resilient future. But the vision alone will not be enough. It will require demonstrable commitment, including making available the needed resources to ensure effective implementation. Additionally, it will require building national consensus with noticeably effective citizens' participation and enhanced role by the people's representatives in Parliament.

The call for enhanced international cooperation still remains the most effective mechanism to provide opportunities to achieve global growth, combat extreme poverty and heal the world. The search for vaccine to defeat the coronavirus will require concrete commitments and specific action, including financial resources and sharing of knowledge among states and relevant international institutions.

If the world is to work together again and reclaim its lost lustre, attention will have to be paid to reforming global rules and institutions to ensure effectiveness, legitimacy and regain public trust. The world institutions created after 1945 must be made more accountable, more effective and more representative to reflect the current global realities.

The vulnerabilities suffered by all countries without exception in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrate the imperative of international cooperation and why we need a renewed multilateralism.

An effective international cooperation will keep global commitments to lift people from vulnerability to opportunity and work together to reform international institutions for the 21st century. As the former UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, once said, "this is not charity. It is not a luxury. It is a development imperative. And it is a central ingredient to a coordinated global recovery plan."

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA, NANA ADDO DANKWA AKUFO-ADDO

ON HIS ELECTION AS CHAIRPERSON OF THE AUTHORITY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF ECOWAS AT THE 57TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ECOWAS SUMMIT, IN NIAMEY, REPUBLIC OF NIGER ON MONDAY, 7TH SEPTEMBER 2020.

Your Excellencies, President of the Commission,

Ghana is humbled and honoured by the decision of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to elect me, by unanimous vote, as Chairperson of ECOWAS for the next term of one year. I thank Your Excellencies for this extraordinary privilege, which puts me in the same shoes as my predecessors as Presidents of the Republic of Ghana – specifically, Their Excellencies Jerry John Rawlings, John Agyekum Kufuor, and John Dramani Mahama – who have enjoyed, in times past, a similar privilege. I am aware of the enormity of the task ahead, and I assure you that I will do my utmost not to let the side down, and discharge my duties to the best of my abilities.

I congratulate the outgoing Chairperson, the President of the Republic of Niger, His Excellency Mahamadou Issoufou, for his distinguished stewardship of ECOWAS during these trying times, which, by common consent, has been a successful tenure. The people and government of Niger are also to be commended for their warm hospitality, and for making these excellent facilities available to us, over the course of the year. President Issoufou leaves office to the loud applause of his peers. Mahamadou, *bon ami et cher frère, merci beaucoup pour tout.*

Excellencies, I am fully aware of the challenges which confront West Africa. Past leaders of ECOWAS have demonstrated their collective will and determination to drive the agenda of regional integration, opening up our economic frontiers,

encouraging healthy competition amongst Member States, and ensuring that we adhere to our formative principles.

As much as considerable progress has been made since the establishment of ECOWAS, some forty-five (45) years ago, we all agreed that there is much more to be done to consolidate the socio-economic and political gains made over the years.

Excellencies, five immediate challenges face our regional organisation.

Firstly, the continuing activities of terrorists in our Region concentrated, for the time being, in the Sahelian area, involving Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso and the northern parts of Nigeria. They seek an opportunity to extend their range southwards to the Coastal States of the Community. The activities of these terrorists form the backdrop to the recent coup in Mali.

Secondly, the COVID-19 pandemic, which has attacked the populations and economies of each one of our States. It calls

for concerted action on our part to defeat it, including giving our maximum support to the ECOWAS COVID-19 Champion, His Excellency Muhamadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Thirdly, the imminent coming into force of the African Continental Free Trade Area on 1st January 2021, whose Secretariat is located in our Region in Ghana's capital, Accra. The economies of ECOWAS should be prepared to take full advantage of this seminal development in the life of our

continent, and, indeed, provide the leadership that will enable the AfCFTA to succeed.

Fourthly, the 2020 decision on monetary union within our ECOWAS space. We are required to take a momentous decision on this matter, especially in the light of the courageous move by our sister nations of the UEMOA Community to break their longstanding links with the *Banque de France.*

Fifthly, the consolidation of democratic governance in the turbulent conditions of the Community. We must uphold our constitutive texts, whilst acknowledging the national conditions of each of our States. This is the guidance that will enable us promote a satisfactory resolution of the crisis in Mali.

The challenges, in these critical regional spheres, such as security, economy, trade, currency and health, must be addressed in a spirit of genuine co-operation and solidarity, if we are to succeed in overcoming them, which

we can. In so doing, we must protect, at all costs, our freedom and independence of action, so that the development of our Community responds to the needs and aspirations of our peoples, and not to the goals of external agencies and forces. I am confident that, by the grace of God, I can count on the unstinting support of each one of Your Excellencies in navigating the immediate future of our Community.

It is important for all of us to recognise that the way forward is to implement regional decisions, such as the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme, recognising that, ultimately, the benefits are in everyone's interest. Those of us who believe strongly in integration can do no better than to give our full support to regional decisions. Through this, we will build institutional confidence and integrity in the structural organs of ECOWAS.

Let us collaborate to ensure that we adhere to and maintain common values of governance,

i.e. the principles of democratic accountability, respect for individual liberties and human rights, and the rule of law. Such commonality will facilitate immeasurably the process of bonding amongst the peoples of our Community.

When we think of West Africa together with our individual countries, we are not just being pan-Africanists, we are also being true nationalists, because what makes West Africa more prosperous will make each of our individual countries more prosperous. Let us give enthusiastic support to Community decisions, and build rapidly our Community. Our peoples deserve no less, and the objectives of peace, progress and prosperity will, thus, be within our reach, realising the historic purposes of ECOWAS.

Once again, Excellencies, thank you for this honour.

ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT ON THE OCCASION OF AFRICA DAY 2020

BY THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION, HON. SHIRLEY AYORKOR BOTCHWEY

Hon. Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey (MP)
Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration

Mr. Speaker

I am honoured to address this august House on the occasion of Africa Day, which was commemorated on Monday, 25th May, 2020. As we observe this day, it is important to acknowledge the successes of the African Union, and the progress made in the development of the continent as well as reflect and boldly confront the challenges that lie before us.

We began the year 2020 with confidence and great aspiration, that the Africa we want could be attained if we pursue our objectives strategically and with passion. We, therefore, maintained *"Silencing The Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa's Development" as the theme of the Union.* This is a theme that the Union has maintained for three consecutive years to reflect

Africa's determination to end all wars, civil conflicts, gender-based violence and prevent genocide in the continent by the end of 2020. The object of this is to create a conducive environment for economic growth and prosperity.

We mark the 2020 Africa Day in the shadows of the novel coronavirus pandemic, which has swept across the world including the continent. Even in an era of a challenging pandemic, Africa remains confident and dynamic in the pursuit of its aspirations for a better future for its citizens. African countries are applying technology and innovation to unleash great potentials for its development as well as to address the challenges of climate change. African economies are also becoming integrated with the coming into force of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

One of the cardinal objectives of African leaders in 2020 has been to operationalise the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) by establishing The Secretariat in Accra at the end of March 2020 and to begin

continental trade under the AfCFTA by 1st July 2020. The AfCFTA is expected to bring tremendous benefits to the continent, including enhanced continental trade, factor market integration and to also attract investment for sustained economic growth to facilitate the creation of the badly needed job opportunities for the continent. The enhanced trade relations and growth from this initiative is estimated by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) to be about 52% over current levels and expected to generate a collective GDP of 2.5 trillion for Africa, making the continent the 8th largest economy in the world. Such a tremendous growth in economic activity, if fairly distributed across the continent, will greatly enhance employment and commercial opportunities for the idle youth who ordinarily could be manipulated and used by disgruntled and belligerent individuals for conflict.

The clear and pragmatic roadmap to leapfrog Africa onto a deserving path to Silence the Guns, economic growth and prosperity has regrettably been impacted by the emergence of the incapacitating COVID-19 pandemic. Thus far, almost 96,000 people have been infected with almost 3,000 having lost their lives on the continent. Despite the relatively lower morbidity among Africa's victims, COVID-19 has heightened uncertainty and its impact on African economies has been quite disruptive, having reduced national, regional and continental growth and revenue while undermining the plans and programmes of our continental and regional bodies in every facet of our lives.

It is obvious that COVID-19 will adversely have an impact on our ability to meet the aspiration of the AU Agenda 2063 of a Peaceful, United and Prosperous Continent. Several countries in

Africa - Ghana inclusive - have had their economic targets and ratings revised as the virus has exposed the deep inequalities that continue to exist on the African continent and across the world. Indeed, it has shown how far we are from realizing the development aspirations and our responsibilities to the citizenry. The pandemic has, therefore, put to a great test, the determination and resilience of our continent.

This bleak outlook notwithstanding, Africa is optimistic of riding the storm and coming out successfully from the pandemic. The pervasive negative impact of the pandemic will require, more than ever before, our collective, coordinated, strategic and innovative action in the fight against this pandemic and to save lives, without losing focus on our efforts to advance the course of progress and development on the continent. The most effective way for Africa to reverse the effects of the coronavirus disease and prepare for any future pandemic is to assert our independence in economic, scientific and political terms. The result of self-sufficiency can be achieved by boosting intra-continental trade, strengthening our manufacturing base, departing from resource-dependent economic principles, improving the financial sector, investing more in scientific research and adopting innovative contingency plans to contain any potential economic fallout. This global crisis should enable a new Africa to come to the fore where African countries are able to work together to solve their own problems.

The unprecedented effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have also underscored the need for a collective and coordinated global response to assist the world's most vulnerable countries to mitigate the harsh economic and financial effects of the pandemic. The pandemic and its economic fallout has helped to highlight the longer-term efforts needed to strengthen our health systems, diversify economies and broaden domestic revenue sources of African countries. With the benefit of immediate debt relief, developing countries could focus on protecting vulnerable populations, preserve jobs and ultimately, avert consequential political and social instability. Ghana supports the call for debt relief for African countries and a moratorium on the servicing of international loans including private loans.

To conclude, I wish to state that COVID-19 is another major test of the resolve of the AU and its Member States to advance development on the continent. While dealing with the pandemic, and saving lives, Africa cannot defer urgent action on plans and programmes that will advance continental trade and development. We must move ahead with the most ambitious steps towards pan-African Integration with the creation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) ensuring it is operationalised as soon as possible.

It is imperative to continue to keep alive efforts to drive the African agenda of security, peace and stability, democracy and human rights, and of women's emancipation as well as protection of the environment.

The global health emergency should under no circumstances derail the targeted effort to Silence the Guns on the continent. It is, therefore, only through our collective efforts and resilience that we can position Africa in the right place among the comity of nations.

I thank you for your kind attention.

THE QUESTION OF MULTILATERALISM AMID A GLOBAL CRISIS

By
MAAME ABENA GYAMERAH
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In five months, the new coronavirus spread from one case in Wuhan, China to about 199 countries and territories across the globe. Since then, States have been battling the virus and its socio-economic ramifications. The novelty of the virus and the protraction of the pandemic compound the burden on governments and citizens. The disruption of international trade coupled with the contraction of economic activities have caused the Gross Domestic Products (GDPs) of national economies to fall below annual projections. For instance, Ghana's initial 6.8 per cent estimated growth in GDP for 2020 has now been reviewed downwards to 2.6 %. Over the next five years, the World Economic Forum forecasts that the global economy could lose $3.3 trillion in case of rapid recovery and an estimated $82 trillion in a 'worst case scenario'. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has described it as the 'worst economic downturn since the great depression'.

International collaboration and response to the global public health emergency have been led by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The WHO remains a relevant source for global data and technical advice. Before recording cases within their borders some countries deferred to WHO directives and guidelines in order to be informed and equipped for the pandemic. WHO, backed by other United Nations (UN) agencies such as UN Women, UNICEF and UNDP, actively campaigned for testing, isolation and contact tracing to prevent transmission of the virus, boosting global awareness on the management of the pandemic.

Nevertheless, the WHO has faced much criticism regarding its management of the global health emergency. Some Member States have registered their scepticism regarding the neutrality of the Organisation, even to the point of threatening to withdraw much needed funding at this crucial time. The lack of cooperation among some Member States and the doubt cast on the leadership of the WHO is indeed bad press for the Organisation and further undermines the multilateral framework within which it operates.

Multilateralism in Crisis

COVID-19 caused by the novel coronavirus emerged in an already tense global climate. The advent of the so-called 'populist' governments in some parts of the Western world, growing geopolitical tensions among major powers and waning collaboration were perceived as threats to the multilateral order. In the wake of the global health crisis, these challenges have been amplified and have impacted multilateral efforts to address the pandemic.

The WHO, which usually does not get much attention in international politics has become the latest avenue for hegemonic rivalry. The 73rd World Health Assembly held in May 2020, was dominated by political innuendos regarding the origin and subsequent management of the coronavirus as well as the disputed membership of Taiwan. Prior to this, the UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, on 23rd March 2020 had called for a ceasefire to enable humanitarian efforts reach the most vulnerable in such areas and, overall, curtail the spread of the virus. In support of this, Resolution 2532 (2020) was submitted for adoption at the UN Security Council. Unfortunately, the resolution, submitted in April, was held up till July due to a dispute among some permanent members, with reference to the WHO.

The United Nations, at the time of its formation in 1945, was conceived as a global instrument to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Member States were committed to this cause as evidenced in the preamble of the UN Charter. Between the 60's and 70's the UN enjoyed a surge in membership from many States who themselves had fought to end political strife and committed to the cause of peace. Subsequent to that, the UN's work in peace and security, human rights and development have consolidated its position as an agent for global peace and security. The existence of the UN is still reassuring and remains a guarantor for global stability. However, with the passing of time, emerging issues in the international system have proved

complex leaving many to question the capacity of the UN system to address the issues.

As Maria-Helena Andre, a Director at the International Labour Organisation remarked, 'It is the nature of crises to expose new faults in a system or widen existing ones'. The criticisms hurled at the UN and its specialised agencies are but reiterations of existent structural deficits. Prominent among them is the neutrality and independence of the UN. Critics opine that the multilateral order has been established to advance the interest of major contributing States on whom the UN depend for funding. Amid the political blame-game during the height of the crisis a declaration to fill funding gaps in the budget of the WHO is interpreted as a strategic move to manipulate the organisation.

Besides opposition from dis-gruntled Member States, some supporters of the WHO have, equally, placed on record their disappointment with the WHO's unwillingness to 'handle the situation'. At the outset of the pandemic, many States defied the orders of social distancing, reluctantly adhered to WHO directives, and even advocated against the WHO's participation in an investigation of the origin of the virus. Indeed, the WHO was powerless in enforcing its directives simply because it has no right to do so. States make up multilateral institutions and dictate the extent to which these institutions can act. This is translated in terms of its ability to exercise its independence and authority.

In 2019, the WHO had a budget of US$2billion, reportedly lower than that of many university hospitals. 20% of its funding is from assessed contributions of Member States, the remainder is sourced from voluntary payment by States and private institutions are usually tied to specific projects. Unfortunately, most Member States default in their contributions leaving the Organisation at the mercy of the few who 'foot the bill'. It is for this reason that any suggestion by a Member State to pull out funds is not taken lightly.

Multilateral Initiatives

For a virus that knows no geographic boundaries, recognises no national colours, identifies with no race or ethnicity, cooperation is more important than ever to defeat it. For this reason, multilateralism is imperative for an effective global response. Even with its shortcomings, one can only imagine the extent of escalation if the WHO did not exist. The WHO published live updates, public advice and technical guidance on its website. The organisation also provided briefs and papers on purely health-related topics such as testing and transmission of the virus, as well as, other related subjects such as Human Rights and Food Safety.

The UN Women, on their part, increased advocacy against domestic violence, seeing that victims were at a heightened risk due to the stay-at-home policy. At the UN General Assembly, Ghana in partnership with Norway, Switzerland, Singapore, Indonesia and Liechtenstein co-sponsored

the foremost COVID-19 resolution for increased global solidarity and international cooperation against the novel coronavirus outbreak. The resolution titled, "Global solidarity to fight the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)" was sponsored by 188 countries and unanimously adopted by the 193-member General Assembly.

Non-State Actors were not left out of the multilateral initiatives towards the management of the pandemic. The UN 'Solidarity Flight' dispatched Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) and medical supplies to African States; an outcome of the collaborative effort of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia, Ali Baba Foundation's Initiative to Reverse COVID-19 in Africa, and technical support from the AU's Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention.

Beyond the management of the pandemic, multilateral engagement is imperative in finding a vaccine as well as ensuring fair access to it. A collaborative effort is practical due to the technicalities involved and its cost-effectiveness, given the exorbitant amount required to fund such research. Aside freeing mankind from the fatal virus, a vaccine would expedite economic recovery and may reap great returns to its founder.

The Case for Multilateralism

In an anarchic international system as theorised by international relations scholars, States exist in constant threat, whether perceived or real, of each other. Multilateralism thus creates a system of principles, procedures

and norms which guide and shape state interaction. It is important that these institutionalised principles are respected to ensure that States have a predictable basis to confront such threats. However, it does not guarantee that challenges would not emerge. Former Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld in a press release in 1954 stated "It has been said that the United Nations was not created in order to bring us to heaven but in order to save us from hell". The reality is that the UN, and by extension other multilateral institutions, is not as idealistic as it is perceived. Its effectiveness is limited by the conflicting interest of member States with elements of success shown only in instances where their interests converge. It could be argued that many are 'underwhelmed' by the efforts of the United Nations, mainly because the expectations placed on them are lofty.

Furthermore, seeing that States have varied levels of influence and resources across the globe Multilateralism is presented as a remedy to the relatively smaller states who band together and amplify their voices. African countries and other developing states have therefore benefitted immensely from multilateral fora. The Africa Group and the G77 are significant negotiating blocs at the UN General Assembly. The Africa Group is also one of the major partners of the Intergovernmental Negotiations Framework (IGN) working within the United Nations to further reform the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

In essence, multilateralism provides a mechanism by which diverse national interests of States are negotiated. The resolution and decisions are to reflect the collective interest. For instance, the establishment of the Sustainable Development Goals, the successor to the Millennium Development Goals, is now the universally accepted agenda for development for all 193 Member States of the UN.

Multilateralism has been immensely impacted by the pandemic but fortunately, since the end of World War II, monumental crises have occasioned, at best, a reformation rather than a dissolution of multilateralism. As a rules-based system, the rules are not the be-all and end-all, but conditioned to enable the achievement of consensus. The common objective now is to eradicate COVID-19, the common objective after that would be to ensure rapid recovery and attend to other global emergencies like poverty and climate change. The pandemic, though an unfortunate situation should be a catalyst to reinvigorate multilateralism and renew Member States' commitment to ensure that the order is fair and equitable.

PERSPECTIVES OF A GHANAIAN DIPLOMAT ON A CHANGING WORLD ORDER

By
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Tehran

The world's history is characterised by various evolutionary stages that have been occasioned by major events. The current international system for instance could be attributed to the occurrence of World Wars I and II as well as other major events. In a similar manner, the industrial and technological revolutions preceded the current world economic order of globalisation.

Perhaps, one of the reasons every evolutionary stage eventually gives way to another might be due to the fact that every world order has its strengths and weaknesses. With such trends in world history, it is expected that the COVID-19 pandemic could easily serve as a catalyst to usher in a new world order.

Philippe Legrain, writing in Foreign Policy magazine, has noted that the COVID-19 pandemic is not just a temporary shock to the global economic and political system, but could also end globalisation. Rebecca Solnit in The New York Times concurred with this line of argument when she observed that every disaster disrupts the world order.

In this regard, William Burns, a former US diplomat, predicted that pandemics such as COVID-19 would affect globalization and multilateralism. This is because the movement of goods and people across borders will become less free, ushering in a wave of protectionism that may intensify great power competition as well as accelerate regional disorders and worsen humanitarian crisis in parts of the world that are already bedeviled by conflicts. Burns further predicts that international institutions on whose shoulders multilateralism rest will be weakened or torn apart by major power rivalry and starved for resources by these same powers who may undermine the institutional prospects for a coordinated response to other looming global challenges such as climate change and terrorism.

The above predictions appear to have taken into consideration the weaknesses of globalisation and multilateralism which constitute the core character of the current world order. Critics of globalisation for instance, label as unfair, the easy movement of goods, services and technology across national boundaries, as against cross-border movement of people which is closely regulated and restricted, creating a situation of discrimination between two major factors of production, namely; capital and labour. The situation is further

exacerbated by asymmetrical economic interdependence. In this era of globalisation, it is an undeniable fact that there is a high degree of interdependence among countries of the industrial North than between them and their non-industralised Southern counterparts, thereby creating a situation of considerable dependence of the latter on the former.

A situation of interdependence is what Nayyar describes in the Cambridge Journal of Economics (2006), as one where the benefits of linking and the costs of delinking are about the same for both parties; but where both costs and benefits are unequal between parties, it implies a situation of dependence. While the first scenario is characteristic of the relationship among developed countries in the current world order, the second scenario is also a feature of the relationship between developing and developed countries.

Whatever the arguments may be, it is obvious that the world has a pandemic to contain. It is also obvious that there shall be a global economic slowdown as a consequence of the pandemic. Another reality is that the international political and economic system will not be the same after the COVID-19 pandemic. In that connection, nations are likely to hold themselves in readiness to realign their strategies in achieving their respective foreign policy goals in the new world order. The time to plan relevant strategies is now since the signs of a changing

system is palpably written on the wall. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the international political system was witnessing a wave of far right political parties with nationalist ideology grabbing political power in some countries in the global north.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also exposed the fragility of globalisation which relies heavily on global supply chains on just-in-time basis and the practice of crisscrossing goods over international borders has been severely affected due to national lockdowns and flight cancellations across the globe. Consequently, shipment of important medical supplies became almost impossible, thereby creating shortages. The situation compelled many countries, including Ghana, to embark on local production of these essential products they hitherto relied on other countries to obtain.

Maybe our own compatriot, the late Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary General could be labeled as a prophet with honour when he observed in a Channel4.com interview that the world order as we know it is under stress and mainstream political leaders have not stood up to defend it. He concluded that if the world does not give globalisation a human face and share its benefits fairly, all the "isms" will come back, and that the world's order is almost there.

What is not yet clear, however, is the preparedness of the countries of the global South in terms of a

strategic response and reaction to what appears to be an imminently approaching new world order, to enable them remain relevant and become optimal beneficiaries. Conventional wisdom captures this likely situation aptly when it says that 'it takes a wise bird to practice how to escape bullets whenever it observes that the hunter is practicing to shoot accurately'.

In the event that the foregoing really triggers a significant alteration to the architecture of the current international political system, what should be the new strategy of the Ghanaian diplomat vis-à-vis the attainment of the country's foreign policy objectives that largely favour multilateralism as dictated by Chapter Six, Article 40 (d) of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana? Besides, the global change and its anticipated consequences are happening at a time when Ghana is leveraging the international system for its economic diplomacy strategy. The success of this strategy in a new global order would be tested by time.

Ghana's foreign policy goals have not changed significantly since independence in 1957. Perhaps what might be undergoing changes to match the exigencies of time are the strategies to achieve these goals which are shaped by various political regimes. Therefore, if the global architecture is reconstituted after the COVID-19 pandemic, Ghana is likely to be faced with 2 scenarios.

The first scenario is likely to be an alliance of states from the global North and South that still favour the current world order and for that matter, are ready to rescue what appears to be a wobbly international system of multilateralism and the discontent unleashed by the current strand of globalisation. Such an alliance may still nurse the hope that these institutions would be strengthened enough over time to accelerate inclusive growth and development.

The second scenario on the other hand, is likely to be made up of a collection of states that regard the current international system as dysfunctional, and are therefore looking forward to a new order.

In the event that the architecture of the current global world order is altered, Ghana's national interest will be best served in working towards the achievement of the first scenario, which is in line with the principles of Ghana's foreign policy and its belief in multilateralism.

MULTILINGUALISM: A STRATEGIC ENABLER IN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

By
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Language is a complex human phenomenon which has defied a coherent synthesis of its meaning. The definition of language over the years remains inadequate despite numerous attempts by various philosophers including Aristotle, Chomsky, Sapir and Bloomfield to explain this phenomenon in various forms. According to Aristotle, language stands for speech that humans produce for exchanging their experiences from which ideas and emotions flow. To Bloomfield, the totality of the utterances that can be made in a speech community is the language of that community. According to Sapir, language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced sounds. In other words, language constitutes a system of sounds produced by humans for communication. The above three definitions appear to limit the application of language by humans to only the spoken. However, the Encyclopedia Britannica expansively includes both spoken (speech or vocal sound), signed, non-verbal and written elements of communication in the definition of language. From the aforesaid, it is clear that language is a means of both verbal and non-verbal communication among humans.

Language is a useful tool for any human discourse. Through it, ideas are shared, views exchanged and great landmarks reached. Words, gestures and tone in unison, make the expression of ideas and emotions possible. It is also a great medium by which queries are put across for resolution and emotions expressed to inform responses. Indeed, it is the most efficient tool for communication among members of any race, creed, religion and region of the world. However, this obvious usefulness of language is severely hampered when communication has to take place across cultures and different languages. This challenge of language is accentuated at the international level where it can become a limiting factor to smooth, efficient and effective international relations and diplomacy.

International Relations, Diplomacy and Multilingualism

International relations represent the overall interaction among countries, supranational organisations and their sub-structures. Diplomacy is the skillful practice of conducting international relations between representatives of states to usually enhance cordial and harmonious coexistence. The combination of international relations and diplomacy is often referred to as diplomatic relations. Obviously,

diplomacy and diplomatic relations may be enhanced by multilingualism.

Multilingualism is the use of a number of languages in one country or community and the ability to speak three or more by an individual is termed individual multilingualism. Multilingualism in diplomacy or diplomatic multilingualism can be defined as the ability to speak three or more different languages that are official, to the extent that the diplomat can meaningfully communicate with his counterparts who speak those different languages. At the very least, the hiring of translators and interpreters can ensure that diplomatic relations are conducted in different languages with minimal difficulty. Needless to say, smooth, efficient and effective diplomatic relations require the masterly use of multiple languages by the diplomat.

The Importance of Multilingualism in Diplomatic Relations

The masterly use of multiple languages by a considerable number of diplomats should be the ideal to which every nation aspires. In other words, a nation's diplomats should have diverse multilingual backgrounds such that all official languages of the world are covered. The ability of diplomats to interact with citizens and diplomats of a receiving country in a common language enhances a country's visibility and appeal. It can also have a blurring effect on cultural and religious boundaries, thereby increasing affinity, which can be hugely successful in the play

and counter play of other areas of international coexistence such as information gathering. According to a report published by the United Kingdom (UK) Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee, the lack of Russian speakers in the Foreign Office had left diplomats ill-equipped to anticipate Russia's military incursions into Ukrainian territory back in 2015.

At the supranational level, Kofi Annan's candidature for the United Nation (UN) Secretary General was opposed by then French President Jacque Chirac ostensibly on account of a perception that he did not speak French. It eventually turned out that Annan was fluent in French, which in no small way hushed the French opposition of his candidature. His French language skill was a key arsenal in his complex diplomatic work during his two terms as the UN Secretary General. At the sub-regional level, President Akufo-Addo has been involved in mediation efforts in countries including Togo and Mali, in 2018 and 2020, respectively between ruling governments and the opposition. His effectiveness in such mediation efforts is in no doubt enhanced by his fluency in the French language.

Research published in 2018 by the Britain-Israel Communication and Research Centre (BICOM) found that just one-third of British diplomats working in Arab countries actually spoke Arabic. A former Foreign Secretary, William Hague, who had anticipated the problem took a personal interest in addressing the language problem within the United Kingdom

(UK) government following the observation that Britain's global business standing and its position in the diplomatic world was at serious risk due to a lack of language skills. At the reopening of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Language Centre in September 2013, Hague had indicated that the ability to speak, read, listen and write in a foreign language was one of the fundamental skills of diplomats, adding that it was impossible without it for diplomats to get "under the skin of a country and really understand its people."

The importance of the multilingual diplomat has in recent times caught the attention of all and sundry. A former Foreign Secretary, Jeremy Hunt, in November 2018, through the help of Arab-speaking UK diplomats in the Middle East successfully persuaded the United Arab Emirates to pardon Matthew Hedges from a life sentence on the grounds of suspicion of espionage by the British academic. In the build up to the intervention, Mr. Hunt was in the news over an entirely different diplomatic feat when he addressed his audience in Tokyo, with an appreciable grasp of Japanese in September 2018. The Foreign Secretary's fluency in languages other than English made headlines.

Indeed, Ghana also recognises the invaluable importance of language in diplomatic relations. For instance, at the 17th La Francophonie Summit of 2018, H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo addressed the summit in impeccable French to the admiration of many and indicated Ghana's intention to

promote the learning of French language in the country. The importance of multilingualism, therefore, cannot be over-emphasised. Good diplomatic relations is the foundation on which cordial and special international relationships are built. Given the innumerable benefits of multilingualism in diplomatic relations, no country is excused of its inability and unintentionality in training and equipping its human capital particularly diplomats, with multilingual skills for negotiations in international relations and diplomacy. Therefore, the knowledge of languages and its optimal, even masterly use, is not simply *a l'art-pour-l'artistic* (nice to have) skill, it is an absolute must, a *conditio sine qua non* of a successful, professional, "complete" diplomat and his responsible approach to his demanding job as asserted by Kurbalija and Slavik in their book Language and Diplomacy which was published in 2001.

Indeed, the attention given to multilingualism pales by comparison to the recognition that it is an invaluable asset for any country. Many countries upon realisation of the benefits of language and its contributions to diplomacy, engage in language exchange training programmes for their mutual benefits. In Ghana for example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration has in place, language training programmes in French and Spanish to equip diplomats for the task ahead. The acquisition of these languages by both Foreign Service Officers and public servants undoubtedly

not only prepares a country's diplomats for the task ahead, but also deepens the bilateral relations between countries. The Ministry's collaboration with the Language Centre of the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana of Colombia is one such effort to improve the proficiency of Ghanaian diplomats and public servants in the Spanish Language. The Ministry's Foreign Service Institute will also provide dedicated language training for Ghanaian diplomats and public servants.

Ghana has also put in place a long-term strategy of equipping tomorrow's leaders and potential diplomats with French language skills. At the opening ceremony of La Francophonie week in Accra in 2019, Hon. Matthew Opoku Prempeh, Minister for Education, explained the initiative of the Ministry of Education in establishing bilingual schools at the basic level of education, where children from class one (1) are taught the French language through games and play. The early bird catches the worm

as the proverb goes. The Hon. Minister for Education affirmed that these deliberate steps towards the acquisition of the French language would facilitate Ghana's full membership into La Francophonie for mutual interest. Recognising the role languages play on the world stage, China has committed to investing more in the development of diplomatic skills such as the learning of other languages among the general population and its diplomats in particular. In a sustained effort to improve international relations with Africa, China has been encouraging its diplomats to learn the local tongues of important 'strategic' areas on the continent.

Language is indeed a strategic enabler in human discourse especially across people and cultures of different languages. It is a must have, *'conditio sine qua non'* for smooth, efficient and effective diplomatic relations.

ENHANCING ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY IN AN ERA OF 'GHANA BEYOND AID'

By
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As a lower middle-income country, the aspiration of many Ghanaians for the creation of a self-reliant nation, with equitable access to the benefits of progress is firmly etched in the nation's collective consciousness. The history of the nation and the various economic models it has pursued towards broad-based development have however only produced mixed results. The structure of the Ghanaian economy remains largely unchanged from the colonial economy, with commodity exports dominating the trading relations of the nation. Since the 1960s, the national development agenda has also relied heavily on international aid support to cover fiscal gaps and, in a number of instances, to finance very important development programmes.

It is in this regard, that President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, since his assumption of office on 7th January 2017, has placed the focus of his government on, among others, the restructuring of the economy, the integrated industrialisation of the country, the deepening of the macro-economic fundamentals and the widening of international market access for Ghanaian goods and services.

Reaffirming his commitment to deliver on his promise for a resilient and prosperous nation, President Akufo-Addo in his address to the nation during the 61st Independence Day celebration of Ghana, at the Black Star Square on Tuesday, 6th March, 2018, evinced that the realization of his vision of a Ghana Beyond Aid "requires a deliberate, qualitative change in all aspects of our lives; especially, in the structure of our economy, the nature of our infrastructure, the education of our young people and acquisition of skills..."

While the agenda for a Ghana Beyond Aid is not a radical 'delink' of the nation's development from external financial assistance it is understood within the policy environment that even a gradual weaning of the country off international aid will cease at some point. Indeed, as stated by President Akufo-Addo, "even if there were no aid fatigue, and with the best will in the world and the most charitable governments in place in the so-called donor countries, there will never be enough aid to develop Ghana to the level we want. Aid was never meant to be what would bring us to the status of a developed nation."

The development agenda of the Government places significant responsibilities on Ghana's diplomacy and requires a strengthening of the orientation and intensity of diplomatic efforts to support the national agenda. This realisation was signalled very early in the tenure of the administration, when speaking to the Appointments Committee

of Parliament on Monday, 23rd January 2017, in connection with her nomination for the post of Ghana's Foreign Minister, Honourable Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, Member of Parliament for Anyaa Sowutuom stated that the foreign policy of this country is more focused on Economic Diplomacy so as to ensure that every relationship Ghana engages in, that relationship ends up in promoting and protecting the economic interest of Ghana and gives the country positive dividends towards its development.

In the aftermath of the Cold War and following the reorientation of the economic paradigm of Ghana towards a more market-driven approach to economic management, the country has rightly placed emphasis on economic diplomacy with the objective of seeking market access for Ghanaian products in the international market, attracting foreign direct investments to enhance the productive capacity of the country and promoting the unique tourism attractions of the country to enhance financial inflows and improve income levels particularly in the provincial areas where most of these tourism assets are located. The component of official economic cooperation which dominated in earlier years has become less pervasive and more targeted.

It is now widely understood, in the era of liberalism, that economic diplomacy constitutes a significant part of diplomacy. The path, therefore, adopted by Ghana's Foreign Ministry is one that almost

all foreign ministries have had to take since the end of the Cold War. Besides helping to promote a State's prosperity, economic diplomacy has also become an important instrument for managing, for most countries, the nexus between power and wealth; manipulating the instrument, on occasion, in foreign commercial and financial relations in support of its foreign policy.

The competitive and dynamic nature of the international economic arena imposes a demand on the modern diplomat to not only be savvy in the matters of traditional diplomacy but to have the skills of a salesman or marketer. It is no wonder that a number of foreign ministries designate their ambassadors as also their chief commercial representatives.

Nana Bema Kumi, a former Ambassador of Ghana to the European Union, Belgium and Luxembourg, recognises this point when in her article on Ghana's challenges in a New Diplomatic Environment she states that, Ghana's envoys, both state and non-state actors, should, as forerunners in the new scheme of diplomacy and development, be spearheading negotiations that could lead to an appreciable level of value-addition and better terms of trade with positive consequences on the country's balance of payments".

Significantly, the national agenda appears to be fortuitously aligned with positive outcomes of Ghana's foreign policy engagements on the African continent, including

the adoption and implementation of the agreement on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), whose Secretariat is hosted in Accra. Among the expected strategic benefits of AfCFTA is that it will increase intra-African trade and coordination within the African continent. In fact, it is estimated that intra-African trade will increase by as much as US$35 billion per annum, or 52 percent by 2022. Other complementary programmes on the continent, contained in the Agenda 2063, such as the Single African Air Transport Market will also play supportive roles to improve the continental economy and provide an expanded market space for Ghanaian industry.

Ghanaian diplomats would therefore need to enhance their capacity in the area of economic diplomacy if the broad vision for a Ghana Beyond Aid is to be effectively realised. There would be the need for the Foreign Service Institute, which is soon to be operationalised, to offer professional programmes in areas such as commercial representation and market analysis.

These diplomatic expertise will be required to bridge the national programmes that are already being implemented such as the 'One District, One Factory (1D1F)' Initiative and the establishment of Strategic Anchor Industries Initiatives, in the automotive, iron and steel industries, with the continental and global markets. Other equally important initiatives like 'One Region, One Park' (Industrial Parks & Special Economic Zones), and development of the Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) sector to enable them tap into the value chain will need to be supported by Ghanaian diplomacy.

The Ghana Beyond Aid agenda is an ambitious but doable programme. Its success may not be immediate. Nonetheless, it speaks to the general aspiration of all Ghanaians and its implementation is one that must be inter-generationally promoted and supported. The Foreign Ministry is also required to provide its support and as the host country for AfCFTA, has a greater role in leveraging Ghana's position to become the new commercial capital of Africa, a regional trade hub and economic epicentre, and the new gateway for the widespread prosperity of the African continent.

BEFORE YOU TRAVEL

Be informed about the regulations pertaining to travel in the country of destination for:
- Testing
- Quarantine
- Associated Costs.

Be prepared with the following:
- Valid travel documents
- Travel insurance
- Adequate funds for living expenses
- Other pre-boarding requirements

On arrival at your final destination:
- Register with a Ghana Mission close to you

IN THE EYE OF THE STORM

BY:

GRACE MAAKINYI MBIBA

FSO A5

POEM

When the stranglehold of life chokes you
And doom and gloom stare you in the face
Lose not life's courage
Reach out to the Mighty One
To obtain enduring fortitude
In the eye of the storm

When the agonising path of life unnerves you
And sores and bruises mar your every step
Detest not the narrow path
Hold on to the steadiest Guide
To obtain enduring footing
In the eye of the storm

When the degeneracy of the world beckons you
And vice and sleaze lure you
Breach not life's virtues
Reach out to the Unseen Watcher
To gain enduring perspective
In the eye of the storm

In the eye of the storm, lose not life's focus
 In the eye of the storm, detest not the narrow path
In the eye of storm, breach not life's morals
Stay under the banner of Omnipotence
To secure enduring peace
In the eye of the storm

BOOK REVIEW: HARVESTING DIPLOMACY IN A PATRIOTIC SPIRIT

DIPLOMATIC PROTOCOL
A GUIDE FOR GHANAIAN DIPLOMATS AND SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS OF A GHANAIAN FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER

PRIVILEGED CONVERSATIONS
ADVENTURES OF AN AFRICAN DIPLOMAT
AMBASSADOR D.K. OSEI

BREAKING DOWN DIPLOMACY:
AN INSIDER MANUAL TO THE UNITED NATIONS

AMBASSADOR KWABENA OSEI DANQUAH

AMBASSADOR ALBERT YANKEY

Chief Director
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration

Those of us who have had privileged access to the books on Diplomacy recently authored by four Ghanaian Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) – three retired; one still serving– have been greatly inspired by the talent and intellectual rigour that produced works anchored on the writers' unique experiences in the diplomatic profession at home and abroad.

The significance of these achievements is enhanced by the late Ambassador Benjamin G. Godwyll's observation that "Some of us, senior Ghanaian Foreign Service Officers, particularly the retired Ambassadors, have often wondered why very few of us have ever cared to put down in writing our experiences during or after our service." At the same time, he also felt "There could be various legitimate reasons or excuses for this phenomenon but the regrettable result is that there is a notable paucity of authentic first hand recordings of valuable material in the field."

From their various perspectives, the authors have given depth and meaning to the roles we are obliged to play as diplomats in building our nation. The sort of innovations required in training; individual initiatives and better use of the Ministry's human resources that would enable us play our roles effectively have been addressed in one way or another.

The lessons learnt from those experiences that have been chronicled by the writers in their books ought to

inform and shape the orientation programmes designed for newly-recruited officers as well as those embarking on postings abroad.

In short, we cannot afford to let the works of our illustrious colleagues gather dust on the shelves, at a time when the standards of our profession and the Ghana public services in general could be further enhanced to measure up to the expectations of our principals and nationals.

Now that the Foreign Service Institute is near completion, it might be prudent to draw on the relevant proposals in the various books to enrich the curriculum of the Institute. The potential for regular innovation in training officers is quite huge and must be fully explored.

Ambassador D.K. Osei who was former President Kufuor's Secretary and an Ambassador-at-large was also a highly skilled interpreter at international conferences prior to his retirement from the Foreign Service. His diverse experiences have been chronicled in his book Privileged Conversations: Adventures of an African Diplomat.

The depth of his diplomatic experience captured in the book is astounding.

Ambassador William George Mensah Brandful is the author of Personal Reflections of a Ghanaian Foreign Service Officer. Whither Ghanaian Diplomacy?

Ambassador Kwabena Osei Danquah who worked with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for over 20 years, after serving at the Ghana Embassy in Prague, Czech Republic and Ghana's Permanent Mission in New York has also graced his retirement with a book entitled Breaking down Diplomacy: An Insider's Manual to the United Nations enhances our understanding of the complexities of the diplomatic profession.

In June 2018, Mr. Harold Adlai Agyeman, the Director of Administration, presented me a copy of his book, Diplomatic Protocol (A Guide for Ghanaian Diplomats and Senior Government Officials).

The stated purpose is "to assist young career Foreign Service Officers, new non-career Ambassadors and other senior officials of government within the foreign affairs community who desire to acquire the refined knowledge of diplomatic protocol." Understanding the rules and practices that comprise diplomatic protocol helps build the confidence of persons who must operate in those circles.

I see the work on Diplomatic Protocol as nothing less than another path-breaking product that would inspire his colleagues as well as up and coming FSOs to embrace the knowledge contained therein, build on the lessons learned and possibly enrich their career experiences in future.

A number of critical strategic issues have been raised by the various authors that deserve special attention. Among them are the difference between Foreign Policy and Diplomacy; the essence and significance of diplomatic protocol; negotiation skills in pursuit of interests within bilateral and multilateral structures.

The issue of diplomatic protocol is now an all-embracing public and private service requirement. The nature of contacts between influential political, sports, business as well as religious actors of the various states call for better diffusion of rules and tools of diplomatic protocol. This is to ensure better harmony and fewer surprises when such events do occur.

Some experts such as Chas Freeman have observed that 'Diplomacy is often confused with foreign policy'.

While " Foreign policy establishes goals, prescribes strategies, and sets the broad tactics to be used in their accomplishment", on the other hand, "Diplomacy is the principal substitute for the use of force or underhanded means in statecraft; it is how comprehensive national power is applied to the peaceful adjustment of differences between states." Diplomacy is thus an instrument of foreign policy.

The promotion of 'peaceful adjustment of differences between states' has remained a cornerstone of bilateral and multilateral relations. Indeed, it may not be far-fetched to consider this as one of the reasons why diplomats train in external institutions which provide

an opportunity to build relations and make friends. This practice has long persisted. Indeed, we learn from Ambassador Brandful's book that even the pioneer group of Ghana Foreign Service Officers that was recruited in 1955 was assigned to various foreign missions abroad as part of their training.
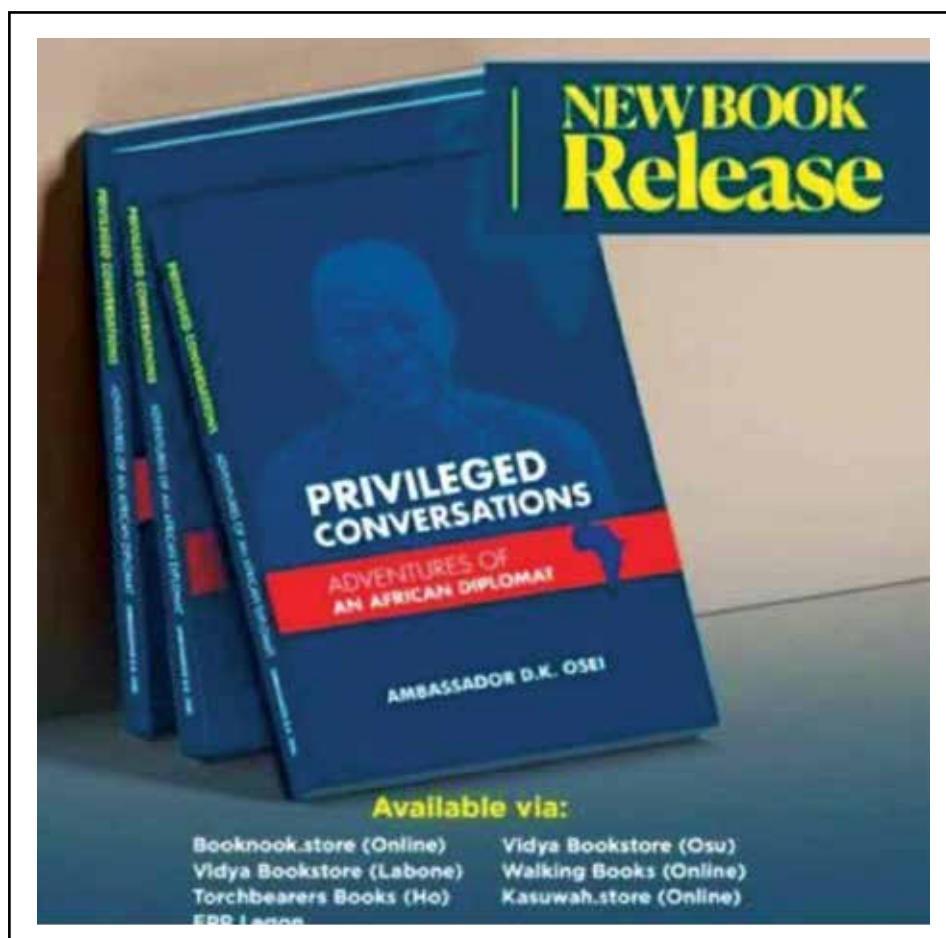
The intensity of the highly productive diplomatic work done by Ambassador D.K. Osei especially in Africa and all over the world, both as a Foreign Service Officer and Secretary to former President J.A. Kufuor, was extraordinary. It had a lot to do with his warm and friendly personality as well as his liberal outlook. His autobiographical notes clearly show that the Ministry

recruited an officer with the right qualities for the profession. There is a lot to learn from such a personality.

Interestingly, Ambassador Kwabena Osei-Danquah who was recruited in April 1986 (almost 10 years after Ambassador D. K. Osei joined the Ministry in 1976) has in his own unique way also undergone particularly intensive diplomatic experience, especially at the UNFPA over the past twenty years. His work was crowned with the position of Chef de Cabinet of the 73rd President of the UN General Assembly, Her Excellency María Fernanda Espinosa, from Ecuador. As an active member of the G77 and China group he had also served as the lead negotiator

for the International Financing for Development at Monterrey. No wonder his book opens with the subject of negotiations as one of the most useful skills of a diplomat, especially in the multilateral world of power dynamics and conflicting interests.

Ambassador Brandful's question "Whither Ghana's Diplomacy?", which is the subtitle of his book, remains a challenge to the Foreign Ministry. The good news is that it is a challenge that can be effectively handled by drawing on the experiences chronicled in the four publications mentioned and their inherent wisdom.

NEW BOOK Release

PRIVILEGED CONVERSATIONS

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COVID-19 PANDEMIC, RACIST ATTACKS AND AFRICA!!!

By
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Ghana High Commission
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The world will not be the same when the dust settles after the COVID-19 pandemic. Projections for a post COVID-19 world are already underway. Will it be an era of new global power configurations? How will the impact of COVID-19 shape the global social landscape?

Coincidentally, the pandemic became more noticeable during the February 2020 Black History Month. Some were drawing attention to critical issues affecting Africa and Africans. The 'black lives matter' chants were then suddenly overshadowed by the unfolding pandemic. In Ghana, plans were underway for a sequel to the successful Year-of-Return programme. How sad! Global tourism is now at a near standstill.

One would have thought the attention of the world would be focused on collective efforts to combat the novel coronavirus pandemic but this was not to be.

By April 2020, all manner of threats were lobbed at the Ethiopian-born Director General of the World Health Organisation, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. In the midst of the global turmoil, reports of attacks on black people living or studying in China began to emerge. What was surprising was the lame attempt to blame another 'hot zone' virus on people of African descent. Admirably, the reaction and condemnation by African governments and the African diplomatic corps in Beijing were swift and to a good effect.

Still, the pandemic has lessons to teach about human vulnerability. We must acknowledge that in the wake of this health crisis, all races (African, Asian, Caucasian, etc.) have not been spared by the non-discriminatory virus. This pandemic has shown how

quickly human society can regress into old patterns of thought and behaviour even with a plethora of international treaties and laws that seek to abolish the last vestiges of human errancy. International treaties may not mean much to panicked populations and when it is a matter of life and death, anything can happen out there on the streets. Scapegoats of every colour can easily be found. It only depends on where you are at any given moment and what street you're walking down.

Then in May 2020, another tragedy struck! George Floyd!!!

All people, regardless of race, can easily become victims - or even victimisers – given the circumstances. But what makes Africans and people of African descent especially vulnerable to racism and xenophobia?

I reflected and groped for answers. I questioned why some of the major religions – Islam, Judaism, Christianity and even to some extent, indigenous African religions - were used to justify the slave trade and colonialism.

A quote in John Wright's book caught my attention: 'What are they made for but to serve us? Go and take them, for they are Kaffirs and we cannot do without them'. (Arab boy, quoted by George Lyon (1820) in John Wright. The Trans-Saharan Slave Trade.) The author proceeded to list the four major types of slavery on the African continent from the Fifth Century up to 1833 namely:

1. Trade in black slaves through the Saharan Desert to North Africa (the Maghreb).
2. Trade in humans from the east coast of Africa across the Indian Ocean or the Red Sea to the Persian Gulf and western India.
3. The Nile Valley trade from the eastern Sudan to Egypt; and
4. 'Modern' Atlantic slave trade from the West coast of Africa to the Americas, the Caribbean – Fifteenth to Nineteenth centuries, ending around 1833.

Could there be deep-seated, sub-conscious attitudes towards Africa and Africans still lingering in our modern era? I thought about the unimaginable impact of nearly a thousand years of servitude and slavery (dark Africans being the dominant victims) and how that might have solidified common stereotypes of African people. I tried to shrug it off, but it wouldn't go away.

There's no silver bullet to fix racist attitudes in our murky world – and racism goes a lot of different ways. Anyone can encounter racism anywhere at any time.

However, as Africans, even though there's little we can do about the past, it's within our innate capacity to change our future. It starts from a strong belief that we can create a better future for ourselves...if we are truly willing to work to that end. There is more to our story, more to our past, present, and future. Some countries in regions of utter aridity have made it. But

it takes collective effort to make it. We must reinforce that winning mindset.

If there is one thing to be gained from the COVID-19 pandemic, it is the realization that we must work together as one indivisible continent with a vibrant diaspora striving for the following:

a. Improved Image

It will require extra hard-work to diffuse or erase the negative images about Africa and Africans. The 'dark continent' label was stamped on Africa by outsiders. This led to the political and economic subjugation as well as the 'Islamisation' and 'Christianisation' of a continent. It's time to embrace science, technology and research to propel our advancement. The continent ought to strategize and skirt around our 'image woes' in mainstream media. For example, the African Union (AU) may help accelerate the implementation of communication and media strategies to ensure balanced reportage on Africa and Africans. Putting the continent's house in order means a rejection of being the face of misery, destitution, and squalor and that also amounts to assuming primary responsibility for our own development.

b. A Stronger Economy

History will judge whether (or not) the international community acted swiftly enough to nip the coronavirus in the bud. The continent must emerge from the pandemic with renewed 'can do spirit' of self-sufficiency. It's a matter of urgency. In times

of crises, people must help themselves first before helping others. This bitter truth should inspire the AU to consider a trade policy with a tinge of autarky to protect the African market.

A resurgent and roaring African Lion would go a long way toward helping to change attitudes towards Africa and Africans. Luckily, a lot is going well in the continent because of the advantage of having a youthful population. Governments taking action to provide accessible and quality education deserve the loudest applause. An educated and skilled populace will help sustain the current tempo of the continent which boasts of having not less than five countries among the fastest growing economies in the world.

c. Data and Impact
The lull in global markets (and a fast-approaching global economic recession) means the continent would have to brace itself with common antidotes to deal with the fallout from shrinking markets for African goods and services. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on people of African descent in some western countries. How will this further impact on the purchasing power and remittances for African economies? The full extent of the pandemic's impact could be part of an evaluation of the incapacitating debt servicing obligations confronting African economies.

As Africa pushes its way forward on these and other issues, the continent must come out of this pandemic with new strategies for

statistical data management of its human and natural resources. It was so remarkable to see the daily counts of patients and confirmed COVID-19 cases from the various countries. The continent should build on that to create reliable data for national planning and decision-making.

d. Implementation
The operationalization of the AfCFTA and implementation of Agenda 2063 are great markers of political will and commitment. The post COVID-19 period should witness the successful implementation of the big regional and global plans not forgetting about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In a nutshell, it doesn't have to be re-stated that Africans are not less endowed (in faculties) than other humans. The study of the rise and loss of influence of civilizations can be our useful guide. During the past 70 years, Asian nations have steadily laid the blocks for strong economies. That remarkable example should serve as a source of motivation for Africa. The Japanese focused on electronics and autos, Indians are into ICT, Thailand, the world's kitchen, Singapore for cleanliness and trust, while China became the world's factory. Was there a time not so long ago, when some of these countries lagged behind some African and European countries in standard of living?

As for those who hate others on grounds of race or ethnicity, we can advise them to go and read John Howard Griffin's Black Like Me.

> "Hating people because of their colour is wrong. And it doesn't matter which colour does the hating. It's just plain wrong."
>
> – Muhammed Ali

If the innumerable people who fought for equal rights, fought against racism, discrimination and xenophobia, etc. were to resurrect today, will they be shocked that in 2020, some human beings have still not shed their ethnic, racist and sectarian bigot-tendencies? I believe Dr. Kwegyir Aggrey, Ottobah Cugoano, Olauda Equiano, Booker T. Washington, Frederick Douglass, Dred Scott, Dr. Martin Luther King Jnr., among others, will be reciting a supplication for racial harmony and peace in our world.

To conclude, Africa and Africans should ask the ultimate question. "What do we wish to be known for in the next 50 years? What ethos do we need to drive our progress?"

The answers are within us during --- and --- after --- COVID-19.

A PERSONAL REFLECTION ON COVID-19

By
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Office of the
Chief Director

In the very first year of my career with the Ministry, a senior colleague gave me this piece of advice: "Cultivate the habit of reading widely; read whatever you lay hands on, be it on politics, drugs, sports, cosmetics, celebrity lifestyle, just anything, because in this career no information is useless." I took his advice and, in course of time, came to appreciate its relevance to my job as a Foreign Service Officer. Indeed, there is no limit to the kinds of subject matter or issues one might encounter or be assigned to cover in the course of one's work as a diplomat. You could be covering or attending a security council meeting on terrorism one week, and an international meeting on cosmetics or climate change the next. No subject matter is off-limits or frivolous or trivial in this business.

As I was getting ready for the first day of work following the lifting of the lockdown in Accra, I picked up my lipstick to apply, then I thought to myself why I needed a lipstick if I was going to cover more than half of my face behind a mask. That's when I started to ponder all the ways in which the Coronavirus pandemic was poised to alter our everyday life and choices. So, yes, what's the point of applying a hypoallergenic lipstick and sweat-proof foundation when half of my face was going to be concealed behind an obligatory COVID-19 mask. I ended up not wearing lipstick or jewelry to work that day. That very practical personal decision got me thinking about how the US$ 532 billion global cosmetic industry would be impacted by COVID-19 and what that meant in terms of livelihoods around the world.

Cosmetics and skin care industry insiders acknowledge that COVID-19 will indeed have a negative impact on their business. However, according to Carrie Mellage, Vice President of Kline & Company's Consumer Products Practice, while the industry will undoubtedly suffer in 2020, it is expected to recover within three to five years. According to her, the cosmetic and beauty industry is fairly recession-proof and has survived every recession. In fact, it is predicted that, while colour cosmetics and fragrance will be hard hit, mood-boosting beauty such as nail polishes and facial skin care and clean beauty products will do well both during and after COVID.

Along with ditching my lipstick and makeup, I also decided against wearing any jewelry to work during the pandemic. I did not want to provide more avenues for the virus to get to me or spread. At an instant, I came to the conclusion that, at this point of our lives, plain simplicity of Muslim women in Burqa, what Boris Johnson called derisively "letterboxes", may be safest for me in terms of public costume and appearance.

Talking about appropriate attire during this period, have we also paused to ponder how the clothing industry is faring when the best advice for the season is "stay at home" and socialize as little as possible? Well, industry researchers also reveal that, there has been, predictably, a big fall in demand for new clothing during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, according to Research and Markets, the world's largest market research, while demand for new clothing has fallen, demand for "personal protective equipment", including new face wear, is at an all-time high. Some apparel manufacturers have adapted accordingly, but with the massive disruption in global supply chains, local small-scale clothing designers and creatives have been some of the biggest beneficiaries.

As the Great Depression brought with it the ethic and motto—of "Reuse and Rehash" in order to curb waste, COVID-19, too, has consumers focusing on what's practical and functional, as opposed to the purely aesthetic. With job losses and financial insecurity facing many individuals and households, practical and cost-effective trends have become the "new normal", with the biggest trend in fashion being the face mask. Designers are, in fact, outcompeting each other to come out with the most fanciful and interesting designs and colours of the poor mask.

Indeed, taking the fashion industry as a whole, the novel coronavirus has been quite devastating. According to Forbes, the fashion industry, with $2.5 trillion in global annual revenues, has been hit hard rather badly, with online sales alone dropping by 30-40%. On the opportunity side, some industry observers also believe that, this is the time to overhaul an industry that is often accused of being wasteful and environmentally-unfriendly, accounting, by some estimates, for 10% of all carbon emissions.

COVID-19's impact on the fashion industry also translates into affected lives and livelihoods. Bloomberg reports that some 1,089 garment factories in Bangladesh alone have had orders cancelled worth $1.5 billion as a result of the virus, leading to large numbers of already low-wage garment workers losing their jobs, most of them with little or no severance pay.

Just as its immediate impact on my personal grooming got me thinking more broadly and globally about the cosmetics and fashion industries, so has COVID-19's effect on my other personal everyday activities and roles as a parent, as a consumer, as a career foreign service officer, et cetera, caused me to think of all the many ways

this virus is rearranging our lives and choices and which aspects of our "new normal" are here to stay? Are handshakes going to become a thing of the past? Is hand washing going to stay as a ritual for all who enter certain public places? What of the hand sanitizer? Are we going to return to our culture of grand funerals and weddings and other socials, or are they going to become more intimate, private affairs? Home schooling? Are more and more parents going to warm up to the idea? And is the pandemic going to make "bush meat" less of a delicacy for those whose habits and tastes sustains the business? Are we going to do anything at all as a country about the proliferation of slums and other forms of informal housing?

As we contemplate the geo-political and other "big" implications of COVID-19 on international relations, we who are in the foreign service establishment must not dismiss discussion of the virus' impact on the mundane aspects of everyday life like lifestyle and fashion. After all, these everyday "micro" level issues are the very issues that often translate into and directly affect the big issues of politics, security, and economics.

THE NEW NORMAL OF CONSULAR DIPLOMACY

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One of my gratifying pursuits on a weekday morning is intellectually sparring with my carpooling partner, a financial analyst, who has the penchant for grounding every-and-anything in economics no matter how disparate. Somehow and true to form, all his COVID-19 arguments found expression in weakening, disintegrating financial systems spiraling into a global economic recession. Unlike many of us who are worried about the loss of lives, his fret is in the loss of jobs and erosion of economic gains that could unleash an incalculable loss on the world's population in a long run. In sync with the economic apologists, countries around the world are beginning to ease their COVID-19 restrictions, allowing businesses, shops, restaurants and even churches and schools to open for business. Governments have woken up to the idea of guarding against the loss of their hard-earned economic gains amidst fears the pandemic may linger on. However, the protocols surrounding the new business operations are different from what we knew prior to COVID-19. You would have to contend with social distancing, enhanced hygienic practices, wearing of masks, etc.- It feels like our reality has changed and perhaps for good. Is this the new normal?

The term 'New Normal' refers to a formerly unfamiliar or atypical situation that has become standard, usual, or expected. The term was used in business and economics to describe the financial conditions in the aftermath of the financial crisis. It has since surfaced in a variety of other contexts to imply that something which was previously abnormal has become commonplace. In the view of my sparring mate, the concept of the new normal under COVID-19 is underpinned by the political recognition and push for social and economic priorities over health issues. The new normal is the bridge to prop up these interests within public health concerns and all professions must find their space in this reality. I could not agree the more with him this time around as I began to examine the daunting consular matters on my desk within the context of the new normal.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, through its Missions abroad, executes one key mandate of the people-centred foreign policy objectives of the government. Expressed in its simplest form, it is to promote and protect the welfare of Ghanaians abroad. In diplomacy, it is codified in the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 1963, which sets forth a number of activities undertaken by a High Commission/Embassy or a Consulate for the benefit of a national of a country. Consular function is the assistance provided by consular officials to citizens of their country who are traveling,

working abroad. Broadly, the functions range from the provision of travel advice and advisories to enable citizens make safe and responsible travel decisions to providing direct service to citizens abroad who require replacement of passport, assistance with the repatriation of the remains of loved ones overseas, evacuation during a crisis event, etc. The Convention informs consular affairs practices and establishes the framework for cooperation between states in consular matters. Since it came into force in 1963, providers of consular services have had to adapt and innovate, developing new business lines, practices and responses to meet contemporary challenges, some of which were inconceivable in the 1960s.

The onset of the 21st Century witnessed a changing form of some of the consular issues and a number of reasons account for that. Although the Convention lists the functions states can exercise in another state's territory, it does not make express provisions on the protection of nationals in times of crisis. Bear in mind that crises are prone to the imposition of ad hoc measures by state authorities which may hinder the full exercise of civil liberties.

Earlier this year, in response to the raging infection of the coronavirus pandemic, many countries across the world instituted travel restrictions mainly aimed at limiting travel from the identified hotspots to their territories. Ghana

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joined in this action by closing its borders, leading to stranded Ghanaian nationals who had travelled out of the jurisdiction before the restrictions were imposed. As experts revealed that the virus was spreading by person-to-person contact, governments applied other measures including ban on social gatherings, public engagements and lockdowns. Ghana Missions abroad suspended their services in line with jurisdictional government directives causing disruptions in services such as issuance of visas and passports and even responding to the critical needs of our compatriots like prison visits, death of a national, health or any such assistance that required movement from one place to the other.

Ghana Missions have used different approaches to announce the varied emergency protocols introduced to ensure they continue to respond to the needs of their constituencies in somewhat minimal forms, knowing that for the most part, it is only when there is some difficulty or dissatisfaction with the service rendered that public attention and outcry is drawn. Nobody

hears of service providers when they discharge their duties flawlessly and this is not peculiar to consular services, it is simply human nature. Some Missions have communicated their inability to discharge their duties in the usual routine and circulated other forms of contact including hotlines and emails for nationals requiring assistance. Many of the requests that have come in so far have been those of nationals stranded and requiring assistance to return home.

The Ministry's response has been that of crisis management under pressure. Like many other agencies, local and global, this COVID thing was unforeseen and our institutional preparedness has shown to be not too efficient and telling on the circumstances of the people who depend on our services. But when there is a raging fire in the house, all efforts are directed at salvaging whatever can be salvaged – the time for analysis and graphs depicting what caused the fire would be reserved for another day.

So the Ministry, together with other state agencies, took the painstaking effort to bring about some relief to stranded nationals including evacuations and granting of special landing passes for charter flights. As easy as this may sound, the average person cannot easily comprehend how complex and arduous it is to organise and execute an evacuation plan for stranded nationals from one territory to another. More so

when it is done under global emergency situations where territorial borders are closed and transport systems are shut down. The gathering and categorization of data on the people requiring the intervention is enough nightmare for the staff deployed on the schedule, most of whom would spend sleepless nights pondering over what information to send out, the form of communication channels to achieve a wider reach, internal controls governing data verification and so on. And you surely would get a 'special call' once in a while from a 'special' member of the society at the odd hours of the day to tell you about his/her lone relative stranded on a remote island and how it is very important that this relative is brought home on the first flight.

As stated earlier, the evacuation exercise is only a stopgap measure to contain the current crisis in consular service provision. However, it brought to the fore the ever important need to keep a register of all Ghanaians resident abroad, effective, real–time transmission of information, and inter-ministerial collaboration among others. Many other aspects of the service have grounded to a complete halt. For that matter, and if for nothing at all, this pandemic must kindle our collective desire to start looking into how to operationalize a Business Continuity Plan (BCP) in times of crisis. BCP is the process involved in creating a system of prevention and recovery from potential threats to an entity. It involves defining any and all risks that can affect the entity's operations,

making it an important part of the risk management strategy. The BCP must be a concept which permeates the whole structure of service delivery in every aspect of our lives and define the way we conduct our business in the new normal.

It is in this context that this article seeks to draw lessons from other countries for Ghana, particularly the Ministry, to enhance its consular crisis preparedness and management structure to respond effectively to the current pandemic and for future ones as it is generally known that the world will witness similar incidents or other forms of crisis such as conflicts and natural disasters from time to time. This is essential, given that we generally have a limited consular coverage and actions such as physical distancing, travel bans and border closures pose grievous challenges in responding to the limited needs of our compatriots, some of which are dire. It is hoped that the conversation on designing round-the-clock consular service policies and procedures in a manner that address business continuity in the midst of crisis will commence in earnest. This would take a complete overhaul of our current state of affairs including placing some civic responsibilities on our nationals who travel and live abroad.

As a first step and considering that the Ministry and its Missions abroad may not always be in a position to provide immediate assistance depending on the circumstances, particularly in the event of a crisis, there is a need to promote and sensitize Ghanaians to

be self-reliant and empowered to lessen their vulnerable status. This can be done through publications, educating and imparting travel knowledge and taking adequate precautions prior to travel.

Also, the implementation of any successful BCP must be anchored in the maintenance of a robust updated database infrastructure which supports real time decision making. With increasing use of internet tools and other communication and social media resources, there is a good opportunity to implement this now. Some of the areas to prioritize may include:

- Gathering information on nationals abroad in crisis-prone or crisis-affected areas or countries (e.g. number of individuals, their family composition, legal status, living and health conditions, any specific needs);

- Understanding the context in which our compatriots live, work and travel (i.e. their exact location, the hazards they face, the resources they can count on or lack thereof – including operating roads and transportation networks, availability of services and assistance, transportation options); and

- Increasing their awareness of local hazards, risks, resources, as well as their rights and entitlements in normal times and in crisis situations.

By the above, some of the critical consular functions such as providing information and advice on potential risks, issuing documentation

including passports, visas, laissez-passers and letters of facilitation and providing direct assistance to those who find themselves in distress situations would not suffer in crisis situation.

Furthermore, efficient dissemination of information to nationals is crucial under the new normal. Conveying information on protocols instituted by host governments, relevant local actors and institutions that would be of assistance and vice versa is necessary especially to support in assisted departures, evacuations and emergency repatriations to Ghana.

These cannot be achieved without our compatriots doing business with our Missions abroad. Some of our nationals do not contact their national representatives in their countries of residence until they get into serious situations that require urgent assistance. In this way, the consular intervention is delayed because officers have to go through the process of identification and verification of their Ghanaian nationality, and understanding the circumstances surrounding the requests among others before assistance can be administered. This administrative bureaucracy can be avoided when they keep the Missions updated of their circumstances from when they first arrive in a foreign country by registering with them and keeping their information updated at all times.

Perhaps Ghana may lead the conversation on establishing an AU or ECOWAS Civil Protection Mechanism or a similar body with such objective as the EU Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM). For instance, France, a member of the European Union (EU) with the widest diplomatic coverage activated the UCPM to repatriate citizens from Wuhan, China. This mechanism is designed to get EU countries to pool their resources and different specialisms in a civil emergency and to date over 600, 000 EU citizens have been returned to their home countries. Many other assistance requests have followed. Since its creation in 2001, the UCPM steps in to support practical coordination of special transport assets and co-finance repatriations when commercial or national options are exhausted.

Considering the increasing number of citizens moving around the globe, we may need to enhance our partnerships with international organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) that could be key service providers in crisis contexts, often acting as a bridge between migrant communities and state actors. During the 2006 war in Lebanon, for instance, CSOs supported migrant domestic workers, forming a consortium to work with the Lebanese Government to address the needs of this group. Forging public/private partnerships with corporate organisations can be another collaborative example we can look into.

Finally, the establishment of a Consular Emergency Centre at the Ministry in collaboration with other Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to receive distress calls and to provide direct assistance is quite remarkable. The work of this Centre can be enhanced with the use of social media tools /internet and online portals to migrate some consular services online in order to bring person-to-person interaction to a minimum.

Over the past few months, I have actively played the role of a liaison for evacuations, working closely with border agents, National Security, airline companies and airport ground staff, the experience giving me a rich insight into issues never seen in my over a decade career path in diplomacy and in the process, I have learnt a lot about the airline business and how crucial forging inter-agency partnerships can translate into efficient delivery of consular services.

I will end with my thought on how I see the new face of consular diplomacy in the coming years. Surely we must now regard the execution of the consular mandate in contemporary times as one that requires a coordinated and collaborative approach, working with friendly countries, organisations and other entities to provide round-the-clock consular services to citizens reasonably at all times. This also requires the active participation of our people in doing business with service providers and holding them accountable with the objective of improving the system to deliver one of the best consular services in the world. We do not have to rest until this objective is fully achieved.

HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION UNDER THE ECOWAS MECHANISM

FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION, MANAGEMENT, RESOLUTION, PEACE-KEEPING AND SECURITY: ASPECTS OF NORMATIVE INCOMPATIBILITY WITH THE UN CHARTER

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Introduction

Generally, under the United Nations (UN) Charter, enforcement actions by regional organisations not in collective self-defence ought to be authorised by the UN Security Council (UNSC), and any provision in a regional agreement that permits the organisation to take enforcement action against a Member State without UNSC's authorisation is inconsistent with Article 53 of the Charter. Against this background, it has been argued that unilateral humanitarian intervention enshrined in the ECOWAS' Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-keeping and Security (MCPMRPS) is incompatible with the Charter of the UN and thus invalid. This article takes a brief look at the foregoing assertion of incompatibility.

Implementing The MCPMRPS Under The Revised Treaty of ECOWAS

In order to implement Article 58 of the Revised Treaty of ECOWAS, Article 25 of the MCPMRPS provides that the Protocol is to be invoked under the following circumstances: (a) in cases of aggression or conflict in any Member State or threat thereof; (b) in case of conflict between two or several Member States; (c) in cases of internal conflict; (i) that threatens to trigger a humanitarian disaster; or (ii) that poses a serious threat to peace and security in the sub-region; (d) in the event of serious and massive violation of human rights and the rule of law. (e) in the event of an overthrow or attempted overthrow of a democratically-elected government; and (f) Any other situation as may be decided by the Mediation and Security Council (MSC).

By the same token, Article 10 of the MCPMRPS vests the MSC with the powers to: (a) decide on all matters relating to peace and security; (b) decide and implement all policies for conflict prevention, management and resolution, peace-keeping and security; (c) authorise all forms of intervention and decide particularly on the deployment of political and military missions; (d) approve mandates and terms of reference for such missions; (e) review the mandates and terms of reference periodically, on the basis of evolving situations.

Essentially, sub-regional mechanisms such as those of ECOWAS are considered as 'part of the overall peace and security architecture of

the African Union, which has the primary responsibility for promoting peace, security and stability in Africa'. Moreover, the relationship between sub-regional groups such as ECOWAS and the AU underlined in the AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) Protocol reflects a new collective security arrangement under the AU regime which is tightly knit and cohesive at all levels.

Similarly, guided by the lessons of the catastrophic lapses of the erstwhile OAU on its policy of non-interference in the domestic affairs of Member States of the Organisation, resulting in preventable mass-slaughters in several theatres of conflicts on the Continent, the Protocol of the AUPSC provides that in discharging its duties, the AUPSC shall, inter alia, be guided by 'the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely, war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity in accordance with Article 4(h) of the Constitutive Act of the AU(2000). However, these provisions have serious implications for the UN Charter system and state practice in international law.

Normative Incompatibility With The UN Charter

The first area of normative incompatibility with the UN Charter is the right of the unilateral use of force. Article 2(4) of the Charter clearly prohibits the use of force in inter-state relations except for enforcement action by the Security

Council under the provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter, and the inherent right of states to individual and collective self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter. However, any measure taken by a state or a group of states in self-defence is to be reported to the UN Security Council. It is widely accepted that the Art. 2(4) provision constitutes a *jus cogens* under international law from which no derogation is permissible. Consequently, Article 25 of the MCPMRPS providing for the right of the ECOWAS to use force within Member States and article 4(h) of the AU's Constitutive Act which allows similar act of intervention in Member States of the Union on grounds not provided for in the Charter of the UN violate Article 2(4) of the Charter on the unilateral use of force. Particularly, whenever such forcible actions are authorised under regional arrangements without the authorisation of the Security Council, they are often regarded as unilateral and thus unlawful under international law.

Furthermore, the above regional provisions appears to have codified new grounds for exceptions to the rule on the use of force besides those of self-defence and Chapter VII enforcement actions under the Charter and thus pose a 'fundamental challenge' to the UN system as they seek to supervene upon the provisions in Article 2(4) and Chapter VII of the Charter (J. Allain, 2004).

As indicated supra, a regional organisation would be violating international law if it uses force

against any state without UN Security Council's authorisation except in collective self-defence. The same rule also applies where a treaty gives a regional organisation a "right" of unilateral intervention in a state without requiring the 'contemporaneous consent' of the target state. Such treaty is void for violating Articles 2(4) and 103 of the Charter. Thus the codification of the right of humanitarian intervention by ECOWAS and the AU introduces a new dimension to the debate of the use of force since it seeks to protect individuals from atrocities of a grave kind which are usually the result of conflicts. Irrespective of the purpose of the use of force, even to halt mass atrocities in the territory of a state by a third state or a group of states, some international law scholars still insist on the permanency of the UN Charter.(R.B. Heidelberg, 2002).

However, an opposing argument which seeks to justify the normative evolution of a right of regional bodies to intervene in Member States has emanated. It proceeds on the premise that given the changes that have taken place since the end of the Cold War, the efficacy of the UN Charter in particular and international law in general can only be achieved if they are 'interpreted and applied in a manner commensurate with the requirements of an evolving international community'(D.E. Acevedo, 1984). It is argued that the trends in the development of international law norms in relation to the international protection of human rights, including the

evolution of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) norm, support the view that the use of force by external actors to prevent or halt massive human rights violations does not fall under Article 2(4) (F.R. Teson, 2007). Perhaps, the drafters of the Charter could not have anticipated the degeneration of global security in the aftermath of the Cold War, which was in itself devastating to humanity. As D. Kuwali pointed out in his seminal article, the much more realistic option would be that the principle of non-use of force should be juxtaposed with the community needs for collective intervention deployed in defence of human rights to halt mass atrocities (D. Kuwali, 2012).

The second aspect of normative incompatibility between the ECOWAS security regime and the UN Charter system rests on the primacy of the UN Security Council as the watchdog of international peace and security. Article 10(a) of the MCPMRPS which gives authoritative agency to the MSC and Article 16(1) of the AUPSC which vests sole authority in the AU on the preservation of peace and security in Africa clearly clash with Article 24(1) of the UN Charter which confers the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security on the UN Security Council, pursuant to the specific powers granted to the Council for the discharge of these duties, as contained in Chapters VI, VII, VIII, and XII of the Charter. In effect, the MCPMRPS and the AUPSC protocols seek to dislodge the UNSC as the authoritative agency having primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security in Africa..

The AU on its part recognises its status as a Chapter VIII regional organisation under the Charter in relation to the maintenance of peace and security. But that is where the conformity with the Charter stops. Even though Article 17(1) of the AUPSC Protocol recognises the primary responsibility of the UNSC in the maintenance of peace and security, Article 16(1) of that Protocol curiously accords the same role to the AUPSC. On this point, Kwesi Aning argues that "the AU has alluded to the primacy of the UN in maintenance of international peace and security, but reserves the right of unilateral action in Africa which only 'reverts to the UN where necessary" (see Kwesi Aning on UN and AU's Security Architecture, 2008, p17)'.

For its part, the ECOWAS' MCPRMPS is mute on this matter. The Protocol is unclear about its relationship with the United

Nations in this respect, so reaching a conclusion in this regard may be inaccurate. The Mechanism clearly fails to recognise or adhere to the underlying principles of Article 53 of the UN Charter on enforcement action. However, by virtue of the powers conferred on the MSC in Article 10 of the Protocol, to perform the role reserved for the UNSC under the Charter, it is plausible to surmise that the MCPMRPS has the same effect as the continental framework. It may be recalled that ECOWAS had launched humanitarian interventions in the past without the backing of any legal instrument in its peace and security or human rights corpus, necessitating the adoption of a robust, tightly-knitted security framework.

Considering the UN Security Council's failure and slowness to respond to devastating conflicts in Africa, notably the 1994 Rwandan genocide, it is understandable if ECOWAS and the AU insist on a right to intervention in African States without the Council's authorisation in exceptional cases. Thus regional security mechanisms suitable to the African continent are a necessity. In effect, the AU Act and AUPSC Protocol both reveal the determination of African states to take control of the use of force and humanitarian intervention in Africa in finding African solutions for African problems and in order not to allow history to repeat itself. For that same reason, notwith-standing the numerous criticisms which the legal inconsistencies of both frameworks (regional and the UN) have generated,

to dismiss the practical salience of these provisions ignores the circumstances and context in which they have been adopted. As one scholar aptly puts it: "it is the peripheral role of Africa in the international system and the reluctance to commit troops and resources to Africa that is leading African leaders down the path of unilateral action, without concern for international endorsement"(Iyi 2013).

That said, under normal circumstances, the AU and regional organisations are prepared to obtain UN Security Council's authorisation for the use of force where possible, but in the event of practical impossibility, they are able to act without it (Aning, 2008). It should however be underscored that although the vesting of authority to intervene in the UN Security Council has created problems in the past, that is not sufficient justification for the ECOWAS/AU right of intervention without UNSC approval or to suggest that such authorisation could be obtained after the fact. Commenting on the relevance of prior Security Council's authorisation, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) held in 1991 that "such consistency ensures the effectiveness of international legal order by providing stability to the inherently fragile international system". The UN Charter is however silent on whether authorisation should be prior or post. It has been argued that to circumvent UNSC delays and politics of veto, ex post facto ratification by the UNSC can legalize regional humanitarian

interventions as the case with the Council's retroactive seal of approval of ECOWAS' interventions in the Liberian and Sierra Leonean Civil Wars.

Conclusion

In brief, however normatively illegitimate the ECOWAS and AU mechanisms might appear under international law, its importance to maintaining human security in a continually volatile continent is clear for even the worst sceptic to see. Globally, there has been a movement towards regional security arrangements, with regional organisations expected to play a more active role in the maintenance of peace and security within their regions. Such is the case with the African context, with a shift towards regional security alignments within the framework of a comprehensive peace and security architecture on the continent as the Regional Economic Communities (RECS) in Africa are increasingly willing to replace "hard/absolute sovereignty" in terms of which interference in other Member States' affairs is expressly forbidden, with regimes that allow for foreign interventions under defined circumstances.

THE RETURN OF THE "DEMOCRACY OR DEVELOPMENT" DEBATE: A PERSPECTIVE

LECTURE DELIVERED ON TUESDAY, APRIL 30, 2019, AT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION, ACCRA.

By
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When I received the invitation to deliver a lecture before this audience and was asked to propose a suitable topic, I thought it would be most fitting, given my current position as Executive Director of the Center for Democratic Development (CDD) and the fact that this would be my first appearance before this audience, that I select a topic that would afford me the opportunity to explain or justify why the organization I lead calls itself the Center for Democratic Development and, for that matter, why we believe in what we do at CDD. The "democracy or development" debate suggested itself quite readily as the most appropriate topic, both because it is a familiar one--and seemingly never out of date--and because it implicitly questions or challenges the idea of "democratic development"--the very thing we are committed to at CDD-- and, therefore, makes for a good conversation or debate.

"Democracy or development" implies, of course, that there is an inherent tension between the two; that, one can have democracy or development, but presumably not both; that, the choice of one precludes the other.

It should be immediately clear from the name of my organization, Center for Democratic Development, that I do not subscribe to the notion that democracy and development are binary or oppositional propositions, or that one must make a choice between democracy and development. To the contrary, "democratic development" means that, in my view, development can be democratic and, further, that democracy can produce development. While "democratic development" also admits,

implicitly, that development can occur without democracy, coupling the two, as we have done, does indicate a clear preference for pursuing development through democratic means. This, then, is the perspective I will seek to defend in my remarks.

As the title of this lecture indicates, the "democracy or development" debate is not new. Its origins in Africa date back to the early years after independence. Credit for initiating this debate and for framing it this way goes to the first generation of African leaders; the founding fathers, so to speak, who ushered us into independence.

Having succeeded to the "political kingdom" and taken stock of the inheritance from colonialism, Africa's founding leaders were quick to define their immediate and urgent task as the speedy liberation of their long-suffering peoples from the scourge of "poverty, ignorance, hunger, and disease". The obviousness and scale of the deficit in human, social and economic development at the time independence was considered so self-evident that the priority of "accelerated development", as it was called, was said to require no debate. (To illustrate the scale of the problem: In the area of education, for example, as the colonial project drew to a close and independence neared, the colonies in the entire sub-Saharan Africa region, with a combined population of roughly 200 million people, could boast only some 8,000 secondary school graduates. Ghana was far better than most in this regard. When Congo--now DRC--gained independence from Belgium in 1960, it had only 16 postsecondary school graduates--this, for a country slightly less than a quarter of the size of the United States, with a population at the time of 13 million. The priority of "accelerated development" was therefore largely uncontested. In fact, the UN declared the 1960s, the first decade of African independence, the First UN Development Decade.

Where there was debate or a difference of opinion, including within the nationalist class, was over the choice of means or form of government to adopt. On this, the view and ideological preference of the triumphant faction of the nationalist class prevailed. Democracy, with its insistence on freedom of speech, free media, and freedom of political association, including the right to form and belong to different political parties and to contest for power against rival parties, was considered a Western "luxury" that poor, pre-industrial Africa and its "nations in a hurry" could ill afford. Africa's underdevelopment challenge was deemed an emergency that needed to be confronted and fought like a war. In fact, the metaphor of war was frequently invoked--a war on poverty; war on ignorance, war on disease. And as wars require all hands on deck, democracy, especially the idea of an opposition party, was said to be inherently divisive and wasteful in both time and scarce human resources and, therefore, not compatible with the uncontested objective of accelerated development. Democracy was seen as a brake; what African states needed was not brakes but accelerators. Africa's founding leaders thus jettisoned democracy in favour of single-party rule under the leadership of a unitary president whose supremacy was uncontested.

In choosing authoritarianism over democracy, Africa's founding leaders essentially made a bargain with their people: give up your so-called democratic freedoms and, in return, we shall deliver you from poverty, disease, and ignorance, and take you to the promised land of development.

The authoritarian model held sway in independent Africa, in one form or another, for another three decades, until it was disrupted by the wave of democratization that toppled nondemocratic regime after regime, including founding leaders like Kaunda and Kamuzu Banda and old time strongmen like Kerekou and Mobutu, in the early 1990s. The fall of these regimes was a manifestation of the failure of African authoritarianism to deliver its end of the "development" bargain that had been its original source of legitimacy.

As the 1980s drew to a close, African states had little in the way of developmental progress to show for three decades of authoritarianism: little to no growth in GDP per capita (compared to their Asian peers); decline in agricultural productivity; bankruptcy of SOEs; breakdown in public services and infrastructure; severe balance of payment deficits; worsening inequality; widespread absolute poverty; and a brain

drain of professionals. The dismal economic record was compounded by equally bad outcomes on the social and political side of the balance sheet: more, not less, social division; political instability, including a harvest of coups d'etat; in some cases, civil wars; and general institutional decay. Feeling betrayed and disillusioned, Africans demanded a voice and a vote, in effect, a repudiation of the authoritarian bargain in favour of democracy.

The 1990s democratic transitions have themselves entered their third decade, and it appears that, having experienced life under democracy, a new generation of Africans would like to revive and re-litigate the so-called "democracy vs development" debate. It is not clear that this represents a majority opinion. Our Afrobarometer surveys show consistently strong support and a preference among ordinary Africans for democracy over all of its authoritarian alternatives. If anything, Africans say they are getting less "democracy" than they would like. In other words, the supply of democracy, including democracy's expected dividends, lags behind and falls short of its demand. But what appears to be fuelling the revival of the "democracy or development" debate is the apparent emergence over the course of the last two decades of African "developmental" regimes that are ideologically sceptical of, if not hostile to, democracy and have showed positive development strides under authoritarianism. The fact that Kagame's Rwanda and Ethiopia, have recorded high

economic growth rates and are outperforming their democratic counterparts on the continent, is largely responsible for causing some contemporary Africans to rethink and resurrect the old democracy vs development.

Let us then revisit the debate on its merits.

First, the binary framing of the issue--democracy or development--is inherently rigged against democracy. Democracy is a form of political ordering; a way of organizing power and politics in a polity. Development is an outcome; it is a desirable end product. So when we say democracy or development; we are comparing means with ends; not means with means or ends with ends. And by posing the issue as democracy or development, we are basically setting up a false dichotomy that is designed to make democracy fail the test at the very outset. What we really mean to say, when we ask "democracy or development" is "democracy or dictatorship/authoritarianism". That is a fairer framing because it compares two alternative ways of organizing power and politics. And it is fair to ask then which of the two, democracy or authoritarianism, is best suited to deliver development?

That, of course, is an empirical question; one that cannot be answered in the abstract or as a matter of theory. It can only be answered on the basis of evidence. Economists and economic historians who have examined the evidence, including Atul Kohl, who has done

some influential comparative studies of developmental states, both authoritarian and democratic, have found no conclusive evidence to suggest that regime type per se, or the choice of political system, impacts economic outcomes in some systematic way. As Kohl notes, "there is considerable variation within both categories and it is these variations that can be economically consequential." What this means is that, when we examine and compare political systems, both democratic and authoritarian, we see that they do not all behave the same way; and it is the differences among and between them, rather than the fact that they are a democratic or authoritarian that best explains their economic or developmental performance.

Let's take, say, China, a single-party regime that has become a poster child for the "democracy or development" debate on account of its impressive economic and development over the course of the last 40 years. Does China's economic miracle vindicate the position that dictatorships are better at development than democracies? Not necessarily. Let us not forget that China was a much more repressive dictatorship under Chairman Mao. And during that period its economic and development record was abysmal. The turning point in the China story came with the change in course after Mao by Deng Tsao Peng. And that change included economic reforms that made China more open to the world and international business but also relaxed internal restrictions on private property

ownership and private enterprise by Chinese people. It is these reforms that began the economic transformation of China, not the fact that it's a one-party state. After all, it was always the same one party state under Mao, yet produced no economic miracle until Deng injected more economic freedom into the system. Indeed, the Chinese experience provides empirical support for this observation by Indian Nobel laureate in economics Amartya Sen, in his influential book "Development as Freedom": "There is little evidence that authoritarian politics actually supports economic growth. Indeed, the empirical evidence very strongly suggests that economic growth is more a matter of a friendlier economic climate than of a harsher political system."

In relation to Rwanda, for example, what this means is that, in trying to explain its relatively impressive developmental strides in the course of the last two decades or so, we must look at the content of its policies and other things like the efficiency and effectiveness of its civil service and technocrats, rather than draw a wholesale conclusion that it is doing better economically or developmentally because it is authoritarian. After all, its neighbours, including Uganda, belong in roughly the same authoritarian category yet have no comparable developmental transformation to show for it.

This argument applies with equal force to the popular debate about why Kigali and Rwanda's towns are so clean and green. Outside of

Rwanda the popular theory, again, is that it's because Rwanda is not a democracy. But how could that be? What is it about democracy per se that says you can't have it and have clean cities? Does democracy include or imply the right to litter or a right to open defecation. Of course not. To the contrary, democracy embraces as an integral part of its working the rule of law. Every democratic constitution recognises both rights and such limitations and restrictions to those rights as are necessarily to realise super ordinate public or collective goals. Thus, democracy cannot be the reason why Accra's sanitation is as it is. Neither is Kigali what it is because Rwanda isn't a democracy in the fashion of Ghana. For answers to why Kigali is clean and green we must examine how the city organizes its sanitation function, how it deploys its sanitation resources, including police and municipal by-law enforcers, the city's zoning and land use planning, and the investment that has been made to date in transforming norms and public habits around sanitation and hygiene, and the overall climate of law abidingness in the society.

The same applies to Singapore. The city-state's squeaky clean image-- and reality--is often attributed to Lee Kuan Yew's "authoritarianism". But we forget, or perhaps do not quite know about, the sheer amount of persistent effort and investment that has gone into making Singapore look the way it does since the country introduced its Clean and Green Policy as far back as the late 1960s. In addition to adverts, there were public

education activities, lectures by health officials, spot checks by government inspectors, and numerous tree planting initiatives. There were also competitions which highlighted both the cleanest and the dirtiest offices, shops, factories, government buildings, schools, etc. In short, Singapore invested, and continues to invest, in changing social norms and habits around personal hygiene and public cleanliness, and respect for the environment. With our Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), local by-laws, police, (National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), and even a Sanitation Ministry, why, if we mean to make our cities green and clean, can we not do the same? If our towns and cities are not clean or green, it surely cannot be because we are nominally democratic. We simply haven't made the kinds of committed investments, including in civic education, social norming, and law enforcement, that the Rwandas and Singapores have been willing to make and sustain. Democracy does not mean we can reap where we have not sown.

One other aspect of the "democracy or development" debate that inherently undervalues democracy is in the very limited or narrow sense in which we have generally defined development--which is almost entirely in material, economic terms. But development must mean more than brick and mortar and, indeed, more than material wellbeing. We must reckon in the definition and understanding of development all of the conditions and opportunities

for human flourishing, including the intellectual, political, spiritual, civic development of society and individuals. The human being, homo sapiens, that is, is, after all, not a homo economicus whose value or essence is to be reckoned only in economic or material terms. Man must not--and does not-- live by bread alone. Once we think of development in its rightfully broad sense, it becomes clear that democracy, insofar as it embraces and respects a larger conception of human wellbeing, has inherent superiority over dictatorship--in a developmental sense.

Furthermore, while democracy, like dictatorship or authoritarianism, is not an economic institution, there are certain built-in aspects of democracy that have been shown to have important economic impact. Notably, the work of Amartya Sen has demonstrated that, in the history of the world, no famine has occurred in any sovereign democracy with a relatively free press. Famines have been associated with regimes where the absence of institutions such as a free press, an opposition party, and elections, enabled a series of faulty government policies to persist uncriticised and uncorrected until they led to famine with tragic consequences. This was the case of the largest recorded famine in human history, which occurred in China in 1958–61 and claimed 30 million lives.

Not only does a free press help to avert or contain looming disasters, there is also a positive economic outcome associated with a free media. Has anyone imagined what

the difference might be between the size of the economy of Ghana with all of the free media outlets we now have and the size of the economy if we still had only the state-controlled GBC TV and radio controlling the airwaves? We take these things for granted. Yet it is obvious that having the kind of free and expansive media we have in the 4th Republic, in contrast to the state monopoly we had before 1993, has contributed significantly and in diverse ways to the growth of our GDP, including in the innumerable jobs and careers and artistic talent created in the media sector and by extension in the entertainment and arts industry. One common mistake we often make, and which is the source of a great deal of the everyday frustration and disenchantment with democracy, is our failure to separate democracy from practices in a particular democratic system that are, in fact, not an inherent part of democracy or democratic practice but are instead a perversion or abuse of it. In the Ghanaian context, examples would be practices like vote buying, political vigilantism, and corruption. While these practices diminish the quality and distort the outcomes of democracy, they are not definitional to or part and parcel of democracy and, therefore, should not be blamed on democracy. Because democracy must operate, of necessity, within a specific national and cultural context, it often becomes associated and conflated with certain perverse local characteristics. As I have stated elsewhere, what we see and practice as democracy in Ghana is necessarily "democracy

with Ghanaian characteristics". And often democracy takes the blame for things that should more appropriately and fairly be blamed on the gloss that our own Ghanaian character and characteristics have put on the idea of democracy.

I would like to conclude by addressing the question of citizenship and its relationship to democracy. Often when a democratic system is not working for the people, we again blame the failure on democracy. Yet the burden and responsibility of ensuring that democracy or a democratic government works for the people rests with the people themselves or the governed; not with the governors or the political class and leadership. This is almost a definitional distinction between democracy and dictatorship. Democracy depends on civic minded and engaged citizens to sustain it. It does not work well— and certainly not well for the people-- when citizens decide to be spectators, to free ride, leaving it to their governors, the politicians, to do what's best for the people. Democracy is not a spectator sport; it requires the active and vigilant participation of citizens. And not just on election day, but especially in the period in between elections.

Thus, when we are dissatisfied with the outcomes in a democratic system and we express a wish for a "benevolent dictator", as many do, what we are doing, in effect, is admitting failure on our part and shirking our responsibility to do our duty as citizens to make democracy work for us. The notion

with

that, we can make our lives easier and better by trusting our fate to a so-called benevolent dictator is based on a naive or fanciful view of power. Power, whether acquired democratically or by self-imposition, is not inherently benevolent; if anything, power is inherently self-serving, first and foremost. The burden of ensuring that power is turned to beneficent uses, as opposed to self-service, lies with the people, not with the holders of power. This is what makes the notion of benevolent dictator almost an oxymoron.

Of course, there are instances where one might call a dictator benevolent. These would be those dictators who, though authoritarian or unelected, are not particularly repressive or murderous. But these must be the exceptional cases, and the product of circumstances or chance or other idiosyncratic factors that are not replicable or exportable. There is as yet no patent for making or cloning a Lee Kuan Yew. Many dictators have risen to power on a promise of doing good for the people. We know far too many of that kind in Africa. Yet the power to do good goes hand in hand with the power to do bad, and experience has taught us that in the end dictators, including those who ride to power in the name of liberation or reform, more often than not disappoint—

disastrous consequences for the people.

The clamour for a benevolent dictator is, thus, simply an abdication of the responsibility of citizenship. Democracy is a system of government in which the people get what they deserve and deserve what they get. What the people demand, they tend to get; what they do not demand, they rarely get offered. That is how a democracy works—or does not work--for the people; no demand, no supply.

If, then, we are disappointed or frustrated with what we are getting from democracy, we must ask ourselves what it is that we are putting into it. We cannot abdicate our role as citizens and expect to get from democracy a government of the people by the people for the people.

COMMISSIONING OF ENVOYS

President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo swore in two Ambassadors and a High Commissioner on Wednesday, 23rd September 2020. The three Envoys are all career diplomats. President Akufo-Addo administered the oaths of allegiance, office and secrecy and also presented the scrolls of office to the three envoys. The envoys are H.E. Damptey Bediako Asare, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative to the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), H.E. Samuel Yao Kumah, Ambassador In situ and H.E. Dr. Joseph Nii Sai Coffie-Agoe, High Commissioner to Australia.

President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo presenting the scroll of office to H.E. Damptey Bediako Asare, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative to the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)

President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo presenting the scroll of office to His Excellency Samuel Yao Kumah, Ambassador In situ

President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo presenting the scroll of office to His Excellency, Dr. Joseph Nii Sai Coffie-Agoe, High Commissioner to Australia.

President Akufo-Addo (third from left), Hon. Mohammad Habibu Tijani, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration (left) H.E. Damptey Bediako Asare, H.E. Dr. Joseph Nii Sai Coffie-Agoe, H.E. Samuel Yao Kumah, Hon. Charles Owiredu, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration

2ND EDITION OF BACK-TO-SCHOOL CAMPAIGN

By
RITA ENYONAM DAKUDZIE
Senior Information Officer Information and Public Affairs Bureau

As part of its corporate social responsibility (CSR) and to demonstrate the determination to give practical meaning to Ghana's people-centered foreign policy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration held the 2nd Edition of the Back-to-School Campaign in Yendi, in the Northern Region of the country, on Wednesday, 15th January, 2020, under the theme "Transforming Ghana: Equipping the Youth".

The objective of the campaign is to complement Government's effort at ensuring that all Ghanaians of school-going age have access to quality education in every part of the country. This is part of efforts to attain the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) four (4) on quality education, which has been mainstreamed into Government's education policy of ensuring inclusive and quality education in Ghana. It is this determination that has led the Government of Ghana to, among other initiatives, roll out the Free Senior High School policy. The Back-to-School Campaign is therefore aimed at contributing to the attainment of this objective.

The Ministry donated educational supplies to five beneficiary schools in the Yendi Municipality. The donation included different categories of books; dictionaries; stationery; school bags; school uniforms; sports kits among others. In addition to the items, the Ministry also donated sums of money to each of the selected schools to enable them take care of their minor expenditures.

The five beneficiary schools were Dagbon State Secondary Technical School, Abartey Junior High School, Roman Catholic Primary School, Yendi Jubilee Complex and Yendi Primary Block B.

Speaking at the presentation ceremony, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Hon. Mohammad Habibu Tijani (MP),

indicated that the Ministry shares in the belief that the education of the youth of Ghana is critical to the transformation agenda being pursued by Government, and the best way to empower the youth to play that role is to support their educational development. "By this initiative, the Ministry is contributing to the holistic development of the country's human resource by leveraging the tools of the nation's foreign policy", he added.

Hon. Tijani disclosed that the beneficiary schools were carefully chosen to reflect the culture, history, diversity and dynamism of educational institutions in Yendi and the role they have played and continue to play in the development of the country's human resource. He added that, in choosing the schools, the Ministry sought to give attention to schools in other regions of the country that need equal attention, and intends to replicate the campaign in other communities as it is one of the ways of supporting the development of communities and

bringing the practice of diplomacy to the doorsteps of Ghanaians.

The overlord of Dagbon, Yaa-Naa Abukari II, in an address read on his behalf, underscored the importance of education in the country's development and commended the Ministry for supporting government's effort at providing quality education for the youth. He expressed his gratitude to the Ministry for selecting schools from the Yendi Municipality to also benefit from the Back-to-School Campaign and urged the students to take their studies seriously.

The headmaster of the Dagbon State Senior High Technical School, Mr. Alhassan Adam Mubarak, on behalf of the beneficiary schools thanked the Ministry for the donation and added that it would go a long way to enhance teaching and learning in the schools.

The presentation ceremony was attended by local government officials, officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, traditional and

religious leaders, teachers, parents, students and other stakeholders.

The Ministry collaborated with the Diplomatic Missions, Consulates and International Organisations accredited to Ghana, the private sector and other stakeholders to implement the initiative. Staff of the Ministry both at base and in Ghana's diplomatic Missions abroad also made financial and material contributions towards the success of the 2nd Edition of the Back-to-School Campaign. It afforded them the opportunity to be involved in developmental efforts at the community level.

It may be recalled that some schools from the Greater Accra Region received educational items when the Back-to School Campaign was launched by the Ministry on 5th February, 2018 under the theme "Foreign Policy Mirrors Domestic Policy".

DONATIONS TOWARDS THE FIGHT AGAINST THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In support of the national effort against the COVID-19 pandemic, officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration made several donations.

A. Ghana Missions Abroad donated One hundred thousand United States Dollars (US$ 100,000.00) to the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research (NMIMR) for the purchase of tests kits.

Hon. Mohammad Habibu Tijani, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration(left) presenting a cheque from Ghana Missions Abroad to Prof. Abraham Kwabena Annan, Director of the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research (NMIMR) (second from right). Looking on are officials from the Ministry and NMIMR.

B. H.E. Edward Boateng, Ambassador to China made a personal donation of One thousand eight hundred and eighty (1,880) test kits to the NMIMR

C. Officials of the Ministry after a donation to the National COVID-19 Trust Fund.

THE ENDANGERED HOMO SAPIENS IN A GROWING TECH WORLD

By
GEORGE MILLS
Assistant System Analyst
ICT Unit

Wikipedia defines endangered species as a species that is very likely to become extinct soon, either worldwide or in a political jurisdiction. Endangered species may be at risk due to factors such as habitat loss, poaching and invasive species. In this article, we will focus on a species called man who lives in a growing technological world.

The *Homo sapiens* has progressed significantly from using its own energy, those of animals and natural resources to mind blowing inventions that are almost fictional. The information age is giving rise to so many tools and inventions like Artificial Intelligence that might require little to no energy from the *Homo sapiens* to execute his work like Google's self-driving cars. There is no doubt that tech is growing and evolving. Will technology invade the workplace and cause millions of *Homo Sapiens* to lose their jobs and become defunct in the job market? Will it favour those who will learn its ways so that they can control and adapt to improve their way of living?

The world is running on the wheels of technology and if we want to survive in the corporate world, we need to know the direction in which the world is heading; we need to adapt; we need to learn the new ways and we need to develop solutions that will help us navigate this growing tech world. The spotlight on the world's technological advancements is so clear that one cannot ignore.

The advancements are making the impossible seem possible. In telecommunications, you can speak to and see another person in another country in real time. Augmented Reality (AR) adds digital elements like cartoon characters to a live view often by using the camera on a smartphone. Some Augmented Reality experiences include Snapchat lenses, Jurassic World Live and the game Pokémon Go. Virtual reality (VR) implies a complete immersion experience that shuts out the physical world like the Samsung gear VR with controller. Cryptocurrency, a digital or virtual currency, is designed to work as a medium of exchange and can potentially wipe out the use of physical currency in the future. In the transportation sector, we see Google's self-driving cars that can drive you to your destination while you read a book, eat a snack, put on your make up, surf the web or take a nap. In agriculture, precision farming management makes use of specialized sensors on a wide range of drones that measure, observe, and respond to variability found

in crops such as crop health mapping, water stress analysis, fertilizer management and disease identification.

Google and Apple are two popular tech giants in the smartphone industry who have come together to work and set smartphones to play significant roles that will help in combating the coronavirus pandemic. The phones are set to talk to each other to enable them build a track-and-trace system and might help manage the rate of infections.

Now, let us come home. We see technology being used in the service delivery as well to enhance services such as passports and driver's license issuance in Ghana; no more queuing in the hot sun but a proper appointment-booking system that gives the public

the comfort of applying for these services on their mobile phones and patiently waiting for their appointment dates. Also, drones have been introduced by the Government for carrying medical supplies to people in hard-to-reach places. The SmartWorkplace introduced by National Information Technology Agency (NITA) has incredible tools that can make you chat, meet, call and collaborate from anywhere around the world and also create interactive data visualizations.

One ubiquitous technology we cannot ignore is the computer and internet technologies which have changed the world in every sector - transportation, agriculture, medicine, tourism, trade, entertainment, education, government, etc. They have made life easier and better in every aspect for those who

understand and know how to use them and have made life a bit difficult and confusing for those who do not have a fair understanding of how it works and how to use it.

A measure of technological progress is productivity. We have seen a lot of businesses adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic but fortunately, *Homo Sapiens* in the Information Technology field have been able to turn things around by using technology to boost production. Some examples include the use of virtual meetings and conferences that break the barriers to travel and make it possible for world leaders to collaborate and find solutions to problems; e-commerce that makes every store accessible and doesn't limit it to one location but makes it possible for people to make purchases and delivery all around the world.

According to "How many jobs will be lost to technology?", an article by

ENDANGERED SPECIES
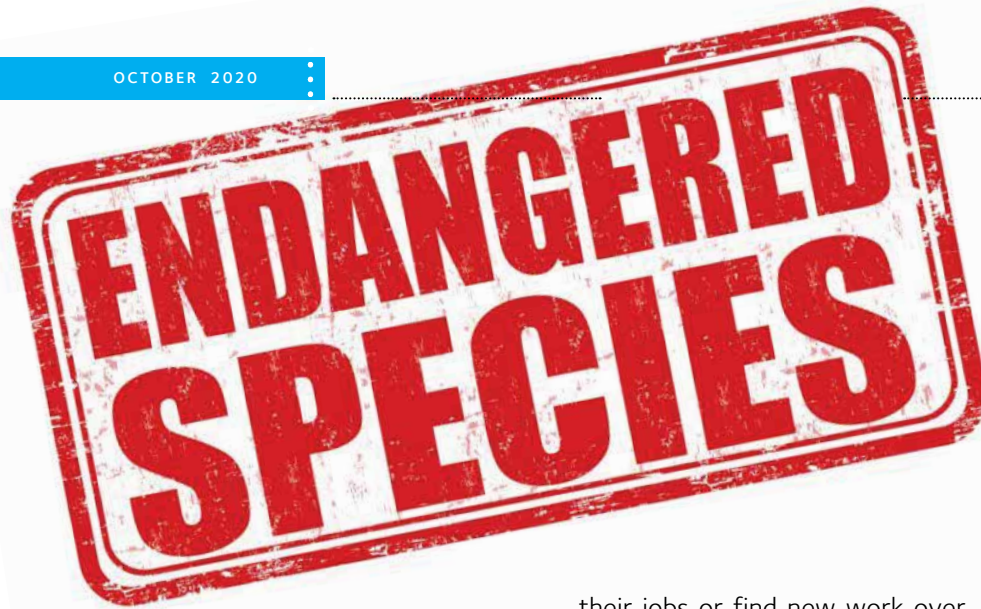
Richard Firth (March, 27 2018), 'Digital transformation is a reality and is having a major impact on organizations of every size, and across all industries. The benefits of innovation and agility are numerous but many fear that this transformation is threatening jobs. The rise of disruptive technologies is seeing total transformation within the job market. Automation of manual tasks is the most obvious change, but Artificial Intelligence (AI), big data, the Internet of Things (IoT), blockchains and crowd funding are also highly disruptive, allowing established players and new incumbents to circumvent current infrastructure, and even replace man with machine'. This statement by Richard Firth might seem like a big scare to those *Homo Sapiens* who don't have the knowledge of using the computer and the internet to their advantage especially the so-called "Born Before Computers" (BBC). But there is always a solution to every problem and there is hope for not becoming an endangered species.

How to Survive and Not Become Extinct

Training and 'upskilling' will be vital for individuals looking to hang on to their jobs or find new work over the next few years. Information Technology areas such as Artificial Intelligence will have to be deeply embedded in our educational syllabus, especially in our part of the world.

Machines are competing for jobs out there while population growth is causing the job market to become seriously competitive. Government and labour unions will also have to pay attention to this angle of technology transformation and implement new policies and strategies that will transform the labour force into a tech-savvy community. Government can also introduce policies that will help the youth create their own jobs or start a business. These policies could help avoid or at least reduce the problems automation may bring.

But "there is hope", says Burton-Cartledge, "that people who choose careers, such as in the creative, technology, or health care industries, in which the building of or decision making about relationships are central, will thrive during the next wave of automation". This does not mean that these careers or business owners will be free from using technology to execute their tasks. As a matter of fact, they will need it to work efficiently, like using analytic tools such as Power BI to visualize and make data interactive.

The *Homo Sapiens* created technology and therefore we have all the power and the ability to use it to our advantage. That means we cannot allow computers to take our place in this life, we cannot let computers become our masters, we cannot let computers take our livelihoods leaving us clueless of what we need to do in order to survive. We need to control computers, we need to make them work for us and generate income for us. We need to control the power of technology; the first step is by renewing our mindsets and killing the phobia associated with using computers and the internet, especially in the older generation. We must understand the way they work; without this knowledge, we will surely perish in this growing world of technology. The world cannot wait for another pandemic like COVID-19 to strike us before we realize that we need to learn how to use the tools of technology to improve our lives.

There is hope for the endangered *Homo Sapiens* once he or she understands technology, embraces the change that technology is bringing to this world and harnesses the power of technology to become insusceptible and remain relevant!

NEW PASSPORTS HEAD OFFICE
AT RIDGE, ACCRA

President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo commissions and hands over the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat building to the African Union Commission (AUC)