

**MEDIA BRIEFING BY**  
**HONOURABLE SAMUEL OKUDZETO ABLAKWA (MP)**  
**MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS**  
**ON RECENT CONSULAR DEVELOPMENTS, THE SITUATION OF**  
**GHANAIS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND KEY DIPLOMATIC**  
**ENGAGEMENTS**

Good afternoon, distinguished members of the media.

2. I welcome you all and thank you for responding to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' invitation for this press briefing.

3. The Ministry's briefing today is to provide a comprehensive update on a number of issues and developments that have attracted significant public interest over the past few weeks. While the Ministry has issued periodic updates, there remains considerable public interest in a number of events, the actions being taken by Government, the outcomes achieved so far and the remaining ongoing work.

4. I therefore intend to provide clarity on issues that have been the subject of public interest.

5. I will first address the situation of Ghanaians in the Republic of South Africa where recent developments have required substantial and sustained diplomatic engagement at both bilateral and continental levels.

**Xenophobic Attacks in South Africa**

6. As the media will be very well aware, recent developments in South Africa, characterised by recurring xenophobic violence against African nationals, including Ghanaians, have been a source of great concern to the Government of Ghana.

7. Many of you would recall that since April 2026, there has been a disturbing resurgence of anti-foreigner sentiment and intimidation in parts of the Republic of South Africa, particularly within the Durban Central Business District in KwaZulu-Natal Province. The proximate triggers of the attacks against African nationals are

related to the campaign initiated by civic groups known as "March and March and operation Dudula," which began with the pretext of cleaning up the cities but has evolved into an unruly group whose activities target African nationals without any visible State hindrance.

8. The members of the two groups have been observed stopping individuals in public places, questioning them about their nationality and immigration status, and, in some instances, engage in "citizen's arrests" of suspected undocumented migrants.

9. These confrontations, many of which occurred in busy commercial areas, were widely shared on social media, creating an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty. Some of the viral videos that were circulated included those of a Ghanaian national, Mr. Emmanuel Akowuah Asamoah, who was threatened and intimidated by members of the March and March group. His case attracted widespread attention in Ghana and across the African continent, likewise other videos and reports on traditional and social media that have shown many African migrants being subjected to harassment, intimidation and threats of violence, generating widespread concern among migrant communities and their families.

### **Murder of Mr. Bashiru Issaka**

10. The public statements by anti-immigration groups that called for foreign nationals to leave South Africa by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2026 have had devastating consequences. Besides some of our nationals losing property and assets, a 44-year-old Ghanaian national and father of three, Mr. Bashiru Issaka was brutally murdered on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2026 in Khayelitsha, Cape Town, when violent anti-immigrant demonstrators attacked him.

11. The identity of Mr. Bashiru Issaka was initially disputed by the South African authorities. However, upon the insistence of the Ghana side, his identity was eventually confirmed. The Government, through the High Commission of Ghana in Pretoria, activated the necessary diplomatic and consular response. The High Commission formally lodged Ghana's protest with South Africa's Department of International Relations and Cooperation, filed a complaint with the South African Police Service and commenced close engagement with the relevant investigative authorities to monitor the progress of investigations. At the same time, the Ministry maintained regular contact with Mr. Issaka's family, provided the necessary consular assistance and, with the family's consent, facilitated the repatriation of his mortal remains to Ghana.

12. Mr. Issaka's remains arrived at the Kotoka International Airport on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2026, and were received by senior officials of the Ministry and members of his family before being conveyed to the 37 Military Hospital for an independent autopsy. This became necessary following the inability of both the High Commission and the family to obtain the official post-mortem report from the South African authorities. The coroner's report has been prepared and would be released this week with the autopsy report to enable the Government to consider further processes.

13. The Government has consistently maintained that the circumstances surrounding Mr. Issaka's death must be established through a full, transparent and expeditious investigation and would therefore continue to demand the arrest and prosecution of those responsible for this gruesome murder. This demand has been communicated directly to the South African authorities and reiterated at the highest political level.

14. The Government is committed to pursuing all appropriate diplomatic and legal avenues to ensure that justice is served. While awaiting the outcome of the investigations and the independent autopsy, Government will continue to keep the bereaved family informed of significant developments and provide the necessary support.

#### **Update on the Case of Mr. Antwi Kwadwo**

15. I will now turn to the case of Mr. Antwi Kwadwo, who was murdered in Prieska in the Northern Cape Province on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2026 in the early hours at 01.30 am. His death has received considerable attention across traditional and social media. The High Commission of Ghana is engaging with the relevant South African authorities to initiate investigations into the case, which will enable us to determine whether the incident was connected to the recent attacks against foreign nationals.

16. The Government, therefore, considers it prudent not to speculate on the motivation for the murder until investigations are completed. I have meanwhile instructed the High Commissioner in South Africa to sustain contact with the South African authorities until investigations are concluded. The Ministry would provide updates on this matter as and when necessary.

17. The Ministry urges the public to rely on verified information issued through official channels, as misinformation and unsubstantiated reports have the potential to undermine ongoing investigations and cause unnecessary distress to affected

families. I would like to assure the public that the Government remains committed to ensuring that every Ghanaian citizen receives the necessary diplomatic and consular protection whenever circumstances require.

### **Evacuation of Ghanaian Nationals**

18. The xenophobic attacks against African nationals in South Africa required the urgent intervention of the Government. At the diplomatic level, the Government has formally conveyed its concerns to the South African Government. I spoke directly with my counterpart the South African Minister for International Relations and Cooperation and summoned the Acting High Commissioner of South Africa in Accra to express Ghana's strong objection to the attacks and sought assurances regarding the safety of Ghanaian nationals.

19. However, following the deterioration of the situation in South Africa, the government had to undertake an evacuation exercise using chartered flights in the first phase. Under the first phase, 926 Ghanaian nationals who sought voluntary evacuation were evacuated from Johannesburg in three batches by chartered flights on 27<sup>th</sup> May, 2026, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2026. The evacuation exercise was coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with Ghana's High Commission in Pretoria, with the support of relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies, as well as international partners.

20. Phase two of the evacuation exercise, which began yesterday, Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> July 2026, is expected to cover 1,000 Ghanaians. So far, 132 (25+37+70) nationals have been safely repatriated to Ghana using commercial flights, and 84 more are expected before the close of day tomorrow, Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> July 2026. We are working closely with South African authorities to ensure that Ghanaian nationals are evacuated in an orderly, dignified, and safe manner. Bilateral channels remain open, and we appreciate the cooperation extended so far.

21. The Government of Ghana would like to convey special heartfelt appreciation to the Ghanaian leadership of the Church of Pentecost in Pretoria and Johannesburg and Global Kingdom Investment Pty. Ltd, for generously allowing their premises to be used as shelters for many weeks, free of charge, for our compatriots who fled their homes awaiting the processing of their departure by the High Commission.

### **Recent Developments**

22. In the face of these unfortunate incidents in South Africa, the Government has initiated continental action to address the recurring xenophobic attacks against Ghanaian and other African nationals in the Republic of South Africa. On 6<sup>th</sup> May 2026, Ghana formally petitioned the Chairperson of the African Union Commission to place on the agenda of the African Union as a matter of urgent continental concern the item of *"Xenophobic Attacks in the Republic of South Africa against African Nationals"*. The petition highlights the recurring loss of lives, attacks on African migrants, destruction of businesses and threats to the principles of African unity, free movement and continental integration. Ghana believes that the best way to address this matter is not to look away and pretend nothing serious is happening, but to bring it into the open and have an honest discussion on this concern and how best to address it, including the root causes of this xenophobic violence.

23. Although the Eighth African Union Mid-Year Coordination Meeting, at which the petition was expected to be considered, was postponed, Government has maintained the petition and obtained the endorsement of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS to pursue this concern within the context of the African Union to ensure that the matter is formally discussed at the next appropriate meeting.

24. His Excellency John Dramani Mahama also raised the concern with His Excellency Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2026 in Accra when the Chairperson called on the President. As emphasised by President Mahama, Ghana's petition is not intended to single out South Africa, but to encourage a collective continental response to a challenge that undermines the rights, dignity and security of African citizens and threatens Africa's integration agenda.

25. Government is encouraged by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission's response, which reaffirmed the Union's commitment to protecting the rights and dignity of African citizens and indicated his engagements with President Cyril Ramaphosa and South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Honourable Ronald Lamola on the concern. The Government will continue to engage the African Union in pursuit of a coordinated continental response that promotes accountability, protects African migrants and prevents the recurrence of xenophobic violence.

26. I must clarify that a separate communication submitted to the International Criminal Court by two Ghanaian citizens concerning alleged xenophobic violence in South Africa was a private initiative and is entirely separate from the official petition submitted by the Government of Ghana to the African Union Commission.

### **Visit of South African Special Envoy**

27. In the midst of all these challenges, the government has strived to maintain the country's relations with South Africa. It is in this context that the President received South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, who was designated by President Cyril Ramaphosa as a Special Envoy to deliver a message to His Excellency President John Dramani Mahama on the measures being implemented by the South African Government in response to the incidents and to reaffirm South Africa's commitment to protecting all persons lawfully resident within its territory.

28. During that meeting, the Special Envoy also conveyed President Ramaphosa's condolences to the Government and people of Ghana following the death of Mr. Bashiru Issaka and expressed sympathy to his family. He also assured President Mahama that the South African authorities had been directed to investigate the matter thoroughly and that the country's legal and judicial institutions would deal with the case with the seriousness it deserves.

29. President Mahama reiterated Ghana's expectation that investigations into the death of the two Ghanaian nationals, Mr. Bashiru Issaka and Mr. Antwi Kwadwo and other incidents involving Ghanaian nationals would be conducted thoroughly, transparently and expeditiously.

30. It is indeed regrettable that since South Africa's democratic transition from the Apartheid regime in 1994, intermittent outbreaks of violence and intimidation have been directed at foreign nationals, especially Africans. Over the past three decades, these incidents have resulted in the loss of lives, the destruction of businesses, the displacement of thousands of African migrants and widespread diplomatic concern across the continent. More recently, the heightened hostility towards African nationals by anti-immigration movements has undermined the ideals of Pan-Africanism, African solidarity and regional integration that underpin the African Union and the African Continental Free Trade Area. It is against this background that Government has treated the recent resurgence of anti-foreigner violence in South Africa with the utmost seriousness and urgency.

### **Support Measures for Returning Ghanaians**

31. The Government fully recognises that the evacuation of Ghanaian nationals from South Africa represents only the first phase of our national response and does not in itself conclude our responsibilities towards affected citizens. Accordingly, the Government has put in place a comprehensive reintegration and welfare support package to ensure that all Ghanaian nationals returning home under the evacuation programme are received with dignity, compassion and adequate institutional support. The support provided to evacuees so far has included an emergency cash grant to cover urgent personal expenses, including transport, food, and medication. Psychologists and trauma counsellors have also been deployed for arrival responses and to follow up in community-based sessions. We have also partnered with faith-based organisations and civil society groups to provide additional emotional and spiritual support, recognising that many of these citizens have endured horrors no human should face. In brief, the Government has mobilised the full machinery of government to ensure that these returnees are received and reintegrated with dignity.

32. The packages provided included reintegration grant of GHS5,000, Travel and Transport Allowance of GHS500, relief items provided by NADMO, and free NHIS registration. Airtel Tigo and Telecel have also been generous to provide sim registration services and voice and data for all returnees. This intervention is intended to assist returnees in re-establishing themselves and to reduce the immediate economic hardships associated with their abrupt displacement from South Africa. The High Commission in South Africa also provided temporary accommodation, feeding, welfare and other administrative and logistical assistance prior to their departure.

33. The Government is considering the long-term economic empowerment of returning nationals. Accordingly, all evacuees shall be enrolled in a special national database through which they may be linked to employment opportunities, entrepreneurship support initiatives, skills development programmes, and startup opportunities, in collaboration with relevant Ministries, Departments, and Agencies, as well as private sector partners. To that end, a multi-agency Presidential Task Force on Reintegration has been established, bringing together the Ministries of Employment and Labour Relations, Education, Trade and Industry, Gender and Social Protection, and Local Government. This task force has already begun skills mapping, which involves detailed interviews with each adult returnee to assess their professional background, entrepreneurial experience, and aspirations.

34. As part of the reintegration initiative, approximately two hundred (200) employment opportunities have so far been secured through partnerships with patriotic Ghanaian businesses and private sector organisations, including a commitment of one hundred (100) positions by Engineers and Planners Limited, with additional opportunities offered by Telecel Ghana, Airtel Tigo and other corporate entities. We would continue the discussions with the private sector to expand employment opportunities for returning Ghanaian nationals.

35. Furthermore, social workers are conducting regular follow-up visits for the first six months after return, and a dedicated helpline has been established for any returnee experiencing ongoing mental health challenges. We also plan to launch a public awareness campaign to combat potential stigmatisation of returnees within Ghanaian communities, emphasising that these citizens are not to blame for what happened to them and that they deserve our collective embrace, not our suspicion.

36. The Government believes strongly that no Ghanaian returning home under distressing circumstances should feel abandoned or excluded from national support systems. These interventions reflect Government's broader commitment to protecting the dignity, welfare and prospects of every Ghanaian citizen, irrespective of where they may be in the world.

37. Let me mention that since a number of the returning nationals were also deprived of their assets and property, the Government is establishing a register of claims that would enable the Ministry to pursue legal and diplomatic processes for compensation on behalf of affected Ghanaians who lost businesses, investments and other property during the xenophobic attacks.

**Assistance by the International Organisation for Migration and Ghana Red Cross Society**

38. I would like to place on record Government's profound appreciation to the International Organisation for Migration for the invaluable support and cooperation extended to Ghana for the first phase of the evacuation exercise. We equally thank the Ghana Red Cross Society for its support during the second phase of the evacuation exercise. The support provided has included medical screening upon arrival, Mental Health and Psycho-social Support Services (MHPSS), and the provision of meals and basic assistance to ensure the safe, orderly, and dignified return of affected Ghanaian nationals. The collaboration has significantly strengthened the effectiveness of the Government's response efforts and has contributed meaningfully to ensuring the safe and orderly return of affected Ghanaian nationals.

### **Addressing Misinformation and Disinformation**

39. Alongside the security and humanitarian challenges arising from the developments in South Africa, the Government also had to contend with the rapid spread of misinformation and disinformation. As events unfolded, numerous false and misleading reports circulated across traditional and social media, creating unnecessary anxiety among Ghanaians, complicating consular operations and risking prejudice to ongoing diplomatic engagements. Government therefore adopted a measured approach to public communication, issuing updates only after information had been verified through the Ghana High Commission and the relevant South African authorities.

40. The Ministry encourages media organisations and the general public to rely on verified information as inaccurate reporting during periods of crisis can undermine crisis management and cause unnecessary distress to affected families.

### **False SABC Ebola Report**

41. Many Ghanaians were legitimately upset when the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) published false claims that Ghana had recorded an outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease, with 2,300 infections and 930 deaths. The public broadcaster's false report was considered serious by the Government, with risks of undermining public trust in health alerts and messaging during public health emergencies. The Ministry of Health responded immediately to the disinformation by categorically indicating in a Press Release that Ghana has no recorded incidence of Ebola, and the High Commissioner-designate of South Africa was also summoned to the Foreign Ministry on Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> July 2026.

42. Following these swift interventions, the SABC withdrew the erroneous report and acknowledged that it had incorrectly attributed Ebola statistics to Ghana. Government welcomes this corrective action. I must state that on issues relating to Ebola, Ghana has always demonstrated leadership for response, including providing logistical support to address this public health concern. You would recall that during the 2013 Ebola outbreak in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, Ghana provided a logistical base and national personnel to support the response in those countries.

### **Clarification on Visa-Free Travel**

43. I also wish to address reports that circulated on traditional and social media alleging that Ghana had been removed from South Africa's visa-free travel arrangement. As the South African authorities have themselves indicated, no such decision has been taken on this matter, which is governed by an agreement applicable on a reciprocal basis. The Government, therefore, wishes to state categorically that the existing reciprocal visa waiver agreement between Ghana and South Africa remains fully in force.

44. The public should therefore disregard reports suggesting that Ghanaian citizens have lost the benefit of visa-free travel to South Africa. Any amendment to bilateral travel arrangements would be communicated formally through diplomatic channels and announced jointly by the two Governments.

45. These incidents serve as a reminder of the growing challenge posed by misinformation and disinformation campaigns during periods of crisis. The Government will continue to respond promptly to false reports that have the potential to undermine Ghana's reputation, affect public confidence, or prejudice the interests of Ghanaian citizens, while encouraging the public to rely on verified information issued through official Government channels.

### **Combating Fraudulent Overseas Recruitment, Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration**

#### ***Ladies and Gentlemen of the Media,***

46. I would now turn my attention to another matter of extreme concern to the Government – the situation of Ghanaians who have become victims of fraudulent overseas recruitment schemes, human trafficking incidents and irregular migration.

47. Even as the Ministry strengthens its response to the growing threat of fraudulent overseas recruitment, human trafficking and irregular migration, criminal networks continue to exploit vulnerable Ghanaians through false promises of employment, education and business opportunities abroad, exposing many to trafficking, forced labour, cyber-enabled criminal activities and other forms of exploitation. In response, the Government has enhanced collaboration among national security agencies, international partners and Ghana's diplomatic Missions to improve prevention, rescue, repatriation and public awareness. I would like to urge prospective migrants to verify overseas opportunities before travelling.

### **Humanitarian Repatriation from Libya**

48. In demonstration of the Government's commitment to protecting vulnerable Ghanaian nationals abroad, the voluntary repatriation programme of nationals from Libya continues.

49. Working closely with the Embassy of Ghana in Tripoli, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the Libyan authorities and other partners, the Government has recently facilitated three humanitarian return operations in the past few months. A total of **638** Ghanaian nationals were safely repatriated, comprising **317** returnees on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2026, **177** on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2026, and a further **144** on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2026. Upon arrival in Ghana, returnees were taken through health screening, psychosocial support and reintegration assistance through a coordinated multi-agency response. The Government remains committed to facilitating additional voluntary returns and supporting sustainable reintegration programmes for returning migrants.

### **Consular Intervention in Cambodia**

50. The Government is also intensifying efforts to assist Ghanaian nationals stranded in Cambodia, many of whom had been deceived by sophisticated cyber-enabled recruitment syndicates promising lucrative employment opportunities before coercing victims into online fraud operations.

51. Through sustained engagement with the Cambodian authorities, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Counter Trafficking in Persons (CTIP) and other partners, the Ministry successfully facilitated the repatriation of **244** Ghanaian nationals, comprising 166 returnees initially and a further 78 by May 2026. Government also secured waivers of immigration overstay penalties for hundreds of stranded Ghanaians and continues to work with all relevant partners to facilitate the return of the remaining nationals.

### **Government's Response to QNET and Trafficking Networks**

52. The Government is deeply concerned about the growing activities of fraudulent recruitment and trafficking syndicates operating within West Africa, particularly those associated with the QNET scam.

53. In respect of the QNET scam, our investigations indicate that victims are lured with false promises of employment and overseas migration opportunities, and made to pay sums of money as high as US\$5,000. The modus operandi of these scammers is to suggest that visa arrangements can only be made from a neighbouring country. However, when the victim arrives, he or she is made to surrender their passports, mobile phones and financial resources to the network operators and subjected to psychological manipulation and pressure to recruit relatives and friends into the same scheme.

54. In response, the Government is strengthening collaboration with neighbouring countries including the Ivorian Anti-Human Trafficking Agency and other security institutions. Since January 2026, **61** Ghanaian nationals have been rescued from various locations in Côte d'Ivoire, with **45** already repatriated, while an additional **315** Ghanaians were assisted to return home following enforcement operations in Port Bouët and surrounding communities. Government also welcomes Côte d'Ivoire's decision to criminalise QNET-related activities and strengthen its anti-human trafficking framework.

55. Government has also intervened and repatriated Ghanaians from Togo and Liberia who were also lured to those countries through the fraudulent QNET recruitment schemes. The Ministry continues to educate and create awareness within the public to verify overseas opportunities before travelling.

### **Fraudulent Recruitment of Ghanaian Youth into the Russia–Ukraine Conflict**

56. The Government is seriously concerned by reports of Ghanaian youth who are lured through deceptive employment schemes and subsequently deployed to participate in the ongoing Russia–Ukraine conflict. Information received during my visit to Kyiv indicated that approximately **272** Ghanaian nationals are believed to have been recruited into the conflict since 2022, with an estimated **55** reported dead and two currently being held as prisoners of war. It is estimated that about **1,780** African nationals from 36 countries have joined Russian forces.

57. Many such victims were recruited through false promises of employment in construction, hospitality, logistics and security services before being compelled to undergo military training and deployment to combat zones. The Government has initiated diplomatic engagements with the relevant authorities to establish the identities and welfare of affected Ghanaians, while working with domestic security agencies to investigate recruitment networks targeting Ghanaian youth. Public

education campaigns are also being undertaken to encourage prospective migrants to verify overseas employment opportunities before travelling and to remain vigilant against fraudulent recruitment schemes.

### **Monitoring the Security Situation in Jordan and Iraq**

58. Arising out of the conflict situation in the Middle East and in recognition of the potential implications for Ghanaian nationals, the Ministry has activated precautionary consular measures for nationals in the region through Ghana's diplomatic Missions. We are presently following some distressed incidents in Jordan and Iraq closely and are in consultation with the relevant Jordanian and Iraqi authorities, diplomatic partners, and international organisations to address the concerns of the distressed nationals.

59. As part of these engagements, some Ghanaian nationals in Jordan have expressed interest in returning home, while many others have also indicated that they wish to remain and continue their lawful employment. Government respects the individual decisions of nationals and will maintain an updated contact list of Ghanaian nationals, who will be regularly contacted to ensure readiness for emergency response at short notice should that be required. At this stage, no large-scale evacuation is planned for Jordan or Iraq.

60. The recent consular experiences underscore the importance of all Ghanaian citizens who travel abroad registering with the respective Ghana Embassies or High Commissions as contained in the passport. When we maintain accurate registers of Ghanaian citizens abroad, crisis response is strengthened, and Ghana Missions are equipped to respond rapidly and effectively to any humanitarian or security emergency. Government will continue to enhance the emergency preparedness of Ghana Missions through improved communication systems, regular contingency planning, and closer cooperation with international partners.

### **Public Education on Safe and Regular Migration**

61. I would like to use this opportunity to advise Ghanaians travelling abroad to do so with the necessary precautions. Many of the trafficking and rescue cases that we have worked on originate from fraudulent job advertisements, unlicensed recruitment agencies and deceptive offers circulated on social media platforms. Protecting the prospective Ghanaian traveller therefore begins long before they travel abroad. Public education should become an essential component of the migration management strategy.

62. To address this challenge, the Ministry is strengthening collaboration with the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), the Ghana Immigration Service, the Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO), the Cyber Security Authority, educational institutions, civil society organisations, faith-based organisations and traditional authorities to educate prospective migrants on safe and regular migration pathways.

63. The public awareness campaigns the Ministry has undertaken so far focus on verifying overseas employment opportunities and identifying licensed recruitment agencies. These initiatives are particularly targeted at young people and communities where irregular migration remains prevalent. They complement enforcement efforts by reducing the number of Ghanaians who become victims of trafficking and fraudulent recruitment schemes. The Government will expand these public education campaigns, recognising that prevention remains the most effective means of protecting citizens from exploitation abroad.

64. The Government will also continue to strengthen cooperation with Ghana's diplomatic Missions, the International Organisation for Migration, Interpol, host Governments and domestic security agencies to improve intelligence-sharing, rescue operations, victim protection and the prosecution of traffickers. Government remains committed to protecting Ghanaian nationals wherever they may be and to pursuing every appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and law enforcement measures to combat trafficking and exploitation.

#### **Strengthening Consular Assistance Through the Consular Assistance Fund**

66. The scale of humanitarian interventions undertaken since the beginning of 2025 has reinforced the need for a sustainable financing mechanism to support Ghanaian nationals facing genuine emergencies abroad. These interventions demonstrate that effective consular protection often requires immediate financial resources to provide emergency travel assistance such as temporary accommodation, medical assistance, welfare support and, where necessary, repatriation or evacuation.

67. It is against this background that we would soon be launching a public-private partnership for the Consular Fund to strengthen the Ministry's capacity to provide timely assistance to Ghanaian nationals confronted with genuine emergencies abroad. The Fund will complement existing consular services by enabling the Ministry and Ghana's diplomatic Missions to respond more rapidly to exceptional humanitarian situations while ensuring that assistance is provided transparently,

equitably and in accordance with clearly defined eligibility and accountability arrangements.

68. The establishment of the Fund would mark an important step in strengthening Ghana's consular architecture and ensuring that the Government can move swiftly from diplomatic engagement to practical assistance whenever citizens face conflict, trafficking, detention, displacement or other emergencies beyond their control.

### **Detention of Hon. Ohene Kwame Frimpong**

69. As you are all aware, the Member of Parliament for Asante Akim North, Hon. Ohene Kwame Frimpong, was detained on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at the Schiphol Airport in Amsterdam by Dutch immigration authorities under a United States extradition order. Following his detention, our Mission in the Hague has taken up the matter and is offering consular assistance to the Honourable Member. They are coordinating with his family and his legal representatives as well as relevant Dutch authorities to ensure that he is treated in accordance with internationally recognized standards and that his rights are not violated. I can confirm that on 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2026, I personally paid the Hon. MP a consular visit in the Hague. I also note that he was doing quite well when I engaged him and I had the opportunity of interacting with his lawyer during the visit. In addition, during the visit of the Dutch Minister for Justice and Security, H.E. David Van Weel, on 21<sup>st</sup> July, 2026, he stated that the Dutch government commits to due process and will ensure that his rights are respected.

### **ADVANCING GHANA'S BILATERAL RELATIONS**

70. There are some important visits that are coming up, and I would like to brief the media about them.

### **Official Visit of the President of the Gabonese Republic, 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> July 2026**

71. The Official Visit of His Excellency General Brice Clotaire Oligui Nguema, President of the Gabonese Republic, will take place from 28<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> July 2026. The visit will mark an important milestone in Ghana-Gabon relations and provide the opportunity to reaffirm the commitment of both countries to political dialogue and deepen cooperation in trade, investment, agriculture, fisheries, energy, tourism, education and maritime security. The two Heads of State will use the opportunity

during their bilateral talks to review the current state of bilateral relations and identify new areas of cooperation.

72. A major outcome of the visit will be the signing of two Memoranda of Understanding. One on Political Consultations between the two Foreign Ministries and the other between the Foreign Service Institute of Ghana and the Diplomatic Academy of the Gabonese Republic. The Government will continue to work closely with the Gabonese authorities to ensure the timely implementation of these agreements and translate the strong political goodwill between the two countries into tangible economic and developmental outcomes.

### **State Visit of His Excellency President John Dramani Mahama to Jamaica**

73. Also, from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> August 2026, His Excellency President John Dramani Mahama will be undertaking a Visit to Jamaica, at the invitation of Dr. the Most Honourable Andrew Holness, Prime Minister of Jamaica. He will participate as a Special Guest at Jamaica's 64<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary Celebrations. The visit will provide an opportunity to strengthen the longstanding friendship and shared heritage between Ghana and Jamaica through high-level political engagements.

74. President Mahama will hold bilateral discussions with Prime Minister Holness to advance cooperation in trade and investment, health, education, tourism, defence, arts and culture, and people-to-people exchanges. The discussions will build on the outcomes of the Third Ghana–Jamaica Permanent Joint Commission for Cooperation (PJCC) held in Accra in May 2026 and focus on implementing existing agreements and identifying new areas of collaboration.

75. A key milestone will be the implementation of the Ghana–Jamaica Health Workforce Mobility Agreement, under which the first batch of **46** Ghanaian nurses is expected to depart for Jamaica in the coming days, marking a significant step in practical cooperation between the two countries.

76. During the visit, President Mahama will also hold meetings with the Governor-General of Jamaica and the Leader of the Parliamentary Opposition, address a Joint Sitting of the Jamaican Parliament, participate in a Reparations Dialogue at the University of the West Indies, engage the Jamaican business community, and meet with the Ghanaian diaspora.

77. The visit will reaffirm the shared commitment of Ghana and Jamaica to strengthening Africa–Caribbean relations, advancing the global agenda on reparatory justice, expanding trade and investment, improving connectivity between Africa and the Caribbean, and enhancing cooperation within regional and multilateral organisations. Government expects the visit to further deepen political, economic and cultural relations and translate the longstanding friendship between Ghana and Jamaica into tangible benefits for the peoples of both countries.

### **Update on the Free Replacement of Passports for Flood Victims**

78. I would like to bring the briefing to a close with a matter that has brought some relief to nationals who lost their passports due to the recent floods. The Ministry is implementing a special intervention to replace, free of charge, passports lost, damaged or destroyed during the floods that affected parts of Accra on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2026. The initiative, announced on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2026, was introduced to ease the financial burden of affected citizens and ensure that the loss of travel documents did not disrupt employment, education, medical travel or other legitimate international engagements.

79. As at the 17<sup>th</sup> July 2026 application deadline, the Ministry had received 705 applications for free passport replacement. Following verification by the Passport Office, it was established that 623 applicants held valid passports at the time of the floods and therefore qualified for the intervention, while 82 applications related to passports that had expired before the flooding and were consequently ineligible for free replacement under the scheme.

80. To date, the Passport Office has processed and printed 200 replacement passports. Of these, 155 passports have been collected by their owners, while 45 passports remain available for collection by the verified applicants.

81. The Ministry will continue to process the remaining eligible applications in batches and notify successful applicants once their passports are ready for collection. The Government remains committed to ensuring that all eligible flood victims receive their replacement passports as quickly as possible while maintaining the integrity and security of Ghana's passport system.

### **CONCLUSION**

*Ladies and Gentlemen of the Media,*

82. Before I conclude, I am pleased to announce the successful election of Dr. Sylvia Ama Adusu as Judge of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) for the 2026–2035 term. Dr. Adusu, who was presented by the Government of Ghana as its candidate, secured election during the Thirty-Sixth Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) held at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, on 18th June, 2026. She was elected in the first round of voting, obtaining 130 votes, the highest number of votes among the successful candidates in the African Group, and comfortably exceeding the required two-thirds majority. Her election marks a historic milestone, as she becomes the first African woman to be elected to the Tribunal since its establishment on 1st October, 1996, reaffirming Ghana's longstanding commitment to the development of international law, maritime governance and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

83. The updates I have shared this afternoon reflect the broad scope of responsibilities undertaken by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in advancing Ghana's interests abroad. They demonstrate that diplomacy today extends well beyond the conduct of relations between States. It encompasses the protection of citizens during periods of crisis, the promotion of economic opportunities, the strengthening of strategic partnerships, the coordination of humanitarian interventions, the advancement of Ghana's positions within regional and multilateral organisations and the continuous engagement required to safeguard our country's reputation in an increasingly interconnected world. Every intervention undertaken by the Ministry during this period has been guided by these responsibilities and by the conviction that Ghana's foreign policy must produce practical outcomes that directly benefit the Ghanaian people.

84. The Government remains committed to strengthening Ghana's leadership within Africa and the wider international community. As preparations continue towards Ghana's assumption of the Chairmanship of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union in 2027, the Ministry will continue to work closely with all relevant stakeholders to ensure that Ghana is fully prepared to discharge this important continental responsibility.

85. The Ministry will also continue to strengthen its own institutional capacity to meet the demands of modern diplomacy. This includes investing in the professional development of Foreign Service Officers, enhancing digital service delivery, strengthening coordination between Headquarters and Ghana's Missions abroad,

expanding strategic partnerships with international organisations and improving the systems through which consular services are delivered to Ghanaian citizens. These reforms are essential to ensuring that the Ministry remains responsive to emerging global challenges and continues to provide efficient, timely and professional services to the public.

86. I wish to assure all Ghanaians, both at home and abroad, that the Government will continue to pursue a foreign policy that protects our citizens, promotes our national interests and strengthens Ghana's standing within the international community. We remain committed to engaging our international partners in a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation while ensuring that the welfare of Ghanaian citizens remains central to our diplomatic efforts.

87. Before I conclude, I wish to express Government's appreciation to the many institutions and individuals whose cooperation has supported the Ministry's work during this period. I acknowledge the support also of the Governments with which we have engaged for their continued cooperation and friendship. I commend Ghana's diplomatic Missions abroad for their professionalism and dedication in responding to complex consular and diplomatic responsibilities under often challenging circumstances. My appreciation also goes to NADMO, the International Organisation for Migration, the National Commission for Civic Education, the security agencies, other Ministries, Departments and Agencies, the leadership of Ghanaian communities abroad, the leadership of The Church of Pentecost in Pretoria and Johannesburg and Global Kingdom Investment Pty. Ltd. for generously providing shelter to displaced Ghanaians during the South Africa evacuation exercise, and all other partners whose invaluable support contributed to the successful implementation of the interventions outlined today.

88. Finally, I thank the media for your continued interest in Ghana's foreign policy and for the important role you play in informing the public on matters of national and international significance. The Ministry remains committed to maintaining an open and constructive relationship with the media and will continue to provide timely, accurate and factual information on issues relating to Ghana's external relations.

89. I thank you for your attention.