

## **Cerebrating the 64<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary of Ghana on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**His Excellency Mr. Frank OKYERE  
Ambassador of the Republic of Ghana to Japan**



On the happy occasion of the 64<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary of Ghana, I am honoured to convey warm compliments to the business community in Japan.

Ghana's 64<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary is being celebrated at a time that the novel coronavirus pandemic remains a global challenge. The pandemic, nevertheless presents opportunities to be innovative in the approach at solving problems. It is in this light that, Ghana seeks to collaborate with the Japanese business community in new areas.

Ghana has over the years enjoyed stable and deepening democratic governance culture which has resulted in peace, stability and economic development. Consequently, Ghana has been rated as one of the most stable political environments in the sub-region and among the best five on the continent. Currently, Ghana is among the best places for conducting business in West Africa, and also considered to be one of the fastest economies to recover from the pandemic.

Despite the pandemic, Ghana is open for business and has ensured that all the safety protocols are adhered to. Most importantly, the digitization of the economy has created a business-friendly

environment and the ability to transact business via online platform have been enhanced during the pandemic, and will in no doubt continue post COVID-19. Initiatives such as streamlining the banking sector, digitization of land title registry, digital address system, e-payments at Ghana Revenue Authority, and improvement at the ports has reduced cost of doing business, and is providing reliable and efficient services that the business community so depend on during this pandemic.

Additionally, the commencement of trading on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2021 via the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) platform, with its Secretariat located in Accra, is expected to make Ghana the hub for trade, finance and investment on the African continent. I hope this will serve as an additional incentive to the Japanese private sector to take advantage of the continent's huge market potential.

I am pleased to note that Ghana- Japan relations have been growing steadily over the years. Presently, Toyota Tsusho has initiated the establishment of a Toyota & Suzuki Assembling Plant in Ghana and very soon it will roll out its first car. Similarly, Japanese Corporations such as Nissan, Sumitomo, Mitsui, Ajinomoto, Itochu, Marubeni, Fuji Oil, and Lotte, also extended their operations, with others in the process of doing same. In the light of the above, it is my hope and expectation that the opening of the JETRO office in Accra in December, 2020 will attract more Japanese companies to Ghana, and facilitate more trade and investment between the private sectors of the two countries.

Fortunately, Ghana-Japan cooperation have resulted in improvement in many sectors of the Ghanaian economy. This is evidenced by Japanese assistance towards improving human development capital through programmes such as ABE Initiatives; and the construction of

quality infrastructure in Ghana. In the area of health, Ghana's prevention and preparedness against public health emergencies has been bolstered by Japan through the construction of an advanced research Centre for infectious diseases at the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research (NMINR). The Centre, which serves the sub-region, has played a significant role in Ghana's fight against COVID-19.

I am therefore determined to work with the business community in Japan to improve trade, and welcome the Government of Japan's desire to promote private sector participation in Africa and for that matter in Ghana. It is hoped that the inauguration of the African Chamber of Commerce launched at TICAD7, will reinvigorate our shared determination towards enticing the private sector of Japan to invest in Ghana.

I would like to entreat more Japanese companies to explore Ghana as their preferred destination for tourism, trade and investment post-COVID-19. Ghana remains the 'Gateway to West Africa' with beautiful tourist attractions and a business-friendly environment, which makes Ghana home away from home. With abundant human and natural resources, Ghana is the world's largest producer of Gold and second largest producer of cocoa -delicious Ghana chocolate made in Japan. Explore Ghana today and "the great Ghanaian hospitality awaits you".

I look forward to continuing my engagement with the business community in Japan. To my compatriots in Japan, and all friends of Ghana, I wish you hope, good health, peace and happiness.

Long live Ghana-Japan relations.