

# **JOHN DRAMANI MAHAMA, A PRESIDENT YOU CAN TRUST**

Speech read by Fifi Fiavi Kwetey

Good afternoon, ladies, and gentlemen of the media.

His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, the Flagbearer of the National Democratic Congress has been on the Building Ghana Tour. So far, he has visited eleven (11) out of the sixteen (16) regions of Ghana with his vision and message of hope. Specifically, he has visited the following regions: Volta, Northern, Upper East, Bono East, Bono, Ahafo, Western, Western North, Central, Ashanti and Eastern.

As General Secretary of the NDC, I have accompanied President Mahama on some of these Tours in pursuit of the quest to build the Ghana we want together with Ghanaians.

Some of the assurances our flagbearer has given to Ghanaians on the Building Ghana Tour that resonates with the immediate needs and aspirations of our diverse demographic groups across the nation include:

## **1. Economic Revitalization and Tax Reform:**

- Scrapping draconian taxes imposed by this NPP government (e.g., E-Levy, port charges, betting tax).
- Increasing government share of profit and revenue from natural resources to fund development and reduce tax burdens.

## **2. Anti-Corruption and Governance:**

- Adopting a comprehensive approach to fight corruption at all levels.
- Warning the NPP against dubious contract agreements such as the SML contract.
- Abolishing the payment of ex-gratia to members of the executive under Article 71 and persuading other arms of government to accept the same.
- Initiating far-reaching constitutional, political, and governance reforms to restore confidence in our democracy.

## **3. Job Creation and Industrialization:**

- Implementing the 24-hours economy vision for Job creation
- Establishing a Western Industrial Development Enclave.
- Creating well-paying jobs through various initiatives, including completing abandoned projects and establishing factories based on ecological advantages.

- Establishing factories across the country based on ecological areas' comparative advantages (e.g., Pwalugu tomato factory, meat factory for Wulugu and Zuarungu, cocoa, cashew, tomato, and other food processing plants).

#### **4. Agriculture and Rural Development:**

- Reviving the cotton industry and supporting cotton farmers to grow cotton for export.
- Establishing Farmers' Co-operatives and service centers with technical and financial support in every region.
- Establishing Farmers' service centers in each district and providing 15 tractors each to support farmers.
- Investing in irrigation projects across various regions.
- Pursuing restructuring and using the Ghana Exim Bank and the Ghana Infrastructure Investment Fund to finance irrigation projects in the Accra plains- Ningo Prampram, Dodowa and Ada. Kamba in the Upper West Region, Kpli and Dekpor-Weta-Afife enclave in the Volta Region, Amate in the Eastern Region, Mpruem in the Central Region, Nasisa, Libga and Paga Zaa in the Northern Region among others.
- Completing the Pwalugu dam and setting up land/irrigation canals to absorb the spillage from the Bagre dam from Burkina Faso during their annual spills

#### **5. Infrastructure and Development Projects:**

- Building the Tamale Airport cargo service center for export of agricultural produce.
- Completing the Pwalugu dam and other critical infrastructure projects.
- Reviving construction of Cocoa roads in cocoa growing communities and completing the Eastern Corridor Road project.
- Completing all abandoned projects started and uncompleted by the NPP government.
- Constructing an airport in the Upper East Region

#### **6. Education and Health:**

- Abolishing the Teachers Licensure exams and incorporating the exams into the main academic work as well as improving the quality of education at the Teacher training colleges
- Supporting housing schemes for teachers and implementing salary increments for those in rural areas.
- Continuing the National Apprenticeship Program
- Establishing a modern dialysis center and constructing an airport in the Upper East Region.
- Improving the Free SHS programme.

- Scrapping the QUOTA SYSTEM for admission in Nursing and Teacher Training Colleges to increase enrolment.
- Ensuring prompt posting of trained health and teaching professionals
- Implementing an additional 20% basic salary for teachers in rural communities.
- Adding teacher accommodation to basic schools.
- Establishing a modern dialysis center in the northern zone of Ghana.
- Working with Teachers Associations to Support the Housing Scheme for teachers on flexible terms

#### **7. Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development:**

- Working closely with chiefs and other stakeholders to protect the forest reserves of the country.

#### **8. Industrial and Economic Policies**

- Creating a Western Industrial Development Enclave to expand industries and create well-paying jobs.
- Continuing the National Apprenticeship Program and ensuring prompt posting of trained health and teaching professionals.

So far, these assurances encapsulate the vision John Mahama presents for Ghana, emphasizing his focus on sustainable development, job creation, anti-corruption measures, and significant improvements in the education and health sectors.

A few days ago, the Flagbearer of the failed New Patriotic Party, Alhaji Mahamudu Bawumia outdoored what he described as the next chapter at the auditorium of the University of Professional Studies, Accra, UPSA.

Entering the campus of the UPSA for his speech, I hope the NPP flagbearer recognized and appreciated the solid transformation IPS, now UPSA underwent under the visionary NDC government of President Mills and President Mahama and with the leadership of Professor Joshua Alabi, then Vice chancellor of the University. This is the true meaning of we have the men and women of substance. Not the NPP kind.

In that very auditorium of the UPSA, the credible, visionary, experienced, incorruptible, nation builder John Dramani Mahama delivered his ground-breaking speech on “Building the Ghana We Want” about seventeen (17) months ago in October 2022. That epochal address was a sequel to Mr. Mahama’s alternative policies-laden “Ghana at Crossroads” speech in May 2022.

This means twenty-one (21) months ago whilst Mahama was espousing alternative policies in the hope that the government will listen to bring relief to suffering Ghanaians, Bawumia and his NPP so-called solid Economic Management Team were busy destroying Ghana’s economy, impoverishing Ghanaians and sinking many Ghanaians into great suffering.

You may recall Mahama’s promise to abolish the e-Levy in May 2022 against the resistance and stubborn impedance from the NPP government and legislators. And you may also remember the following assurances from President Mahama that he will:

- Get Ghanaians out of the mess the NPP has created and provide hope for all.
- Strictly enforce prudence in the management of public finances by cutting out waste and ostentation and ensuring the Bank of Ghana plays by the rules. Not the malpractices we have seen where the Bank of Ghana has become a money printing machine, intoxicating government with seigniorage thereby accelerating inflation to a high of 54%.
- Restore faith in our almost collapsed financial system and embark on sweeping reforms at the Bank of Ghana.
- Actively pursue policies to ensure robust local participation in our banking, financial, telecommunications, mining, agriculture, agribusiness, and manufacturing sectors.
- Operating the leanest but most efficient government under our fourth republic with sixty (60) ministers and deputy ministers of state in addition to drastically reducing staff at the bloated presidency – You know what? I Guess if Mahama had mentioned 50 in his October 2022 address at the UPSA, the copycat Bawumia would have gone for 40 and if he had proposed 40, Bawumia would have opted for 30.

And do you recall the Vice President, Alhaji Mahamudu Bawumia promising NPP delegates during their presidential primaries – in Awutu Senya East Constituency of the Central Region – that he will allocate at least ten (10) appointments to party members in each of the 275 constituencies if he became president? The primaries are over so his promise to the NPP delegates is dead. Alhaji Bawumia Ghanaians are not going to fall for your lies!

Ladies and gentlemen, I submit to you that long before the NPP flagbearer began thinking about the future, Mahama had thought. Hence no amount of political chicanery can save the NPP come December 7, 2024.

Mr. Mahama has also in the past assured Ghanaians that he will initiate and undertake the most far-reaching constitutional, political and governance reforms to restore confidence in our democracy in addition to abolishing the payment of ex-gratia to members of the executive under Article 71 and persuading other arms of government to accept same.

Let us face the truth! The NPP promised heaven whilst Ghana was on earth under Mahama and has delivered hell to every Ghanaian except their close families and friends. And so how can you trust the NPP going forward? I mean how? Can you trust a party that sharply criticized and condemned \$1 to Ghc3.9 and is now serving you with an exchange rate of \$1 to Ghc12.6?

Ladies and Gentlemen, with the round condemnation and disappointing reception Alhaji Mahamudu Bawumia's speech has received both in traditional and social media, we would have ordinarily let Ghanaians stick to their own negative verdict on the vice President's address.

However, because he peddled many lies, we are duty bound to set the records straight. Moreover, we must bring to the attention of Ghanaians grave character and capacity failures that we believe must not be glossed over if trust is to be restored again in political leadership across the partisan spectrum.

The following are six critical deficits Dr Bawumia is suffering from, which make him unfit for leadership unlike John Dramani Mahama.

### **1. Vision Deficit**

A true servant leader must be endowed with clarity of vision and ability to see far.

John Mahama who came from the Kwame Nkrumah stock, molded by Jerry John Rawlings and inspired by Professor Atta Mills has proven to have so much of the clarity of vision of his illustrious predecessors.

It takes a visionary to work closely with Prof. Mills to establish the Atuabo Gas Processing Plant. This single infrastructure has represented a massive game-changer within the energy ecosystem of the country.

It takes a visionary to make the far-reaching investments in health infrastructure like the UGMC, the Ridge Hospital, the Ga East Municipal Hospital, the Shai Osudoku Hospital etc. that became so critical during the COVID-19 pandemic.

It takes a visionary head of economic management team to have the far sightedness to establish a stabilization fund as part of the oil revenue funds. That stabilization fund became a savior to the visionless Bawumia led economic team when COVID struck in the year 2020.

It takes a visionary to establish a sinking fund to be used for the repayment of the remainder of the first Eurobond (\$750 million) Ghana contracted under President Kufour. In nearly 8 long years during which the NPP government has had access to a total resource envelope of over 800 billion Cedis, the Bawumia led economic team cannot point to one dollar left in any fund to take care of the strangulating debts we have to be paying soon from 2025.

It takes a visionary leader to construct over 900 km of rural fibre optic backbone, connecting 120 communities in all, from Ho to Bawku with a link from Yendi to Tamale.

This superlative vision is acknowledged even if grudgingly by NPP's own minister for communications, Ursula Owusu, as the biggest telephone infrastructure on which government digitalization efforts are run.

It takes a visionary leader to also build a 300 km metro fibre optic network within the Tema-Accra enclave that offers Wi-Fi and internet services to the public and institutions.

Not to forget about the vision to invest in other robust digital infrastructure – 4G LTE, the National Data Centre, the Accra Digital Centre, and several electronic applications. including the e.services.gov.gh platform which Bawumia renamed Ghana.gov.

Alhaji Mahamudu Bawumia boasts about digitalization when he has no idea how these vital investments came about. He must understand that digitalization is not just about buying foreign software and installing them on infrastructure built by the NDC.

How can a Vice President lower himself to speak as if merely buying a mobile phone is all that is needed to make and receive mobile calls even if the telecommunication companies have not built critical cell sites?

How can Bawumia compare licensing private entities laying fibre to the actual investment done by the JM led NDC, in the laying of altogether over 1,500km fibre optic cable and all the other projects and systems put down by previous NDC administrations?

The complete lack of vision of Dr Bawumia led economic team can be seen in the way they spoke a lot about making a shift towards export yet have supervised the situation where importation has rather reached astronomical levels.

The paucity of vision can also be seen in the shocking fact that very little has been done by this government to increase the power generation capacity of Ghana – a vital prerequisite for any economic transformation.

It takes a visionary leader like JM to set up ESLA Fund, Ghana Exim bank, get GPHA and Ghana Airport Company to build great balance sheets and leverage such to raise billions of dollars for massive expansion.

In doing so, John Mahama was showing he was ahead of the curve and if Bawumia had any humility, he would have learned and not superintended over the most monumental and reckless borrowing which has today, brought Ghana the shame of not being able to pay her debt and reduced us to an object of ridicule all over the world.

In addition, it was Mahama's vision and toil that yielded 960,000 metric tonnes of cocoa production. Today, cocoa production has declined to below 500,000mt. How this clueless and visionless Bawumia can even have the audacity to boast about bold solutions beggars belief. We submit to you that Bawumia has a massive vision deficit and cannot be compared to Mahama in any way, shape or form.

## **2. Responsibility Deficit**

A true leader takes responsibility for his words and works. He does not take the credit for good things done and seek to blame others for the things that are not good. President Mahama took over from President Mills. He could have chosen to create the impression that the single spine salary policy, the implementation of which, caused massive problems for the economy, was a policy he disagreed with. Instead, like a true leader who has honour, truth and sense of responsibility, he took full responsibility for all previous decisions and braved the storms that the single spine brought – particularly the storm which led to about 70% of all our taxes being used for public sector wages in 2013. It was this expenditure storm that John Mahama described in the analogy of the meat being down to the bones which the Bawumia led NPP deliberately continues to misrepresent as economic mismanagement.

Dr Bawumia is running away from what he clearly views as not very good policies of the very government he serves in as Vice President.

Has he even had the humility to apologize to the country for those policies? John Mahama demonstrated a high sense of responsibility. Bawumia demonstrates he has a massive Responsibility Deficit.

Such a person does not have the character to lead our nation.

If Bawumia has shown that he can literally stab Nana Akufo-Addo in the back by way of running away from poor policies while taking credit for the good things done, who else is Dr Bawumia not able to betray and throw under the bus? If you can betray the man who overlooked other very qualified party officials to pick you an outsider who was not even a party person as running mate, then no one is safe under Bawumia. A Judas cannot be entrusted with the leadership of Ghana.

President John Dramani Mahama took full responsibility for Dumsor even though Dumsor was neither caused by him nor President Mills but has been the problem of successive governments failing to ramp up energy supply to match up with the demand. President John Dramani Mahama blamed nobody and went ahead and resolved the energy crisis, one whole year before he left office.

What has been the reaction of Bawumia to the unprecedented economic collapse? What he cannot blame Nana Akufo-Addo for, he will find another scapegoat – COVID-19 cum Russia-Ukraine war and President John Dramani Mahama. Do not be surprised if very soon he blames COVID-19, Russia-Ukraine war and Mahama for the Black Stars' catastrophic AFCON performance in Cote d'Ivoire.

Ladies and gentlemen, COVID-19 came along in the year 2020. However, the economic problems began as early as 2019 when budget deficits reached 7%, when the cedi depreciated by nearly 13%, when Debt to GDP started rising sharply – Debt to GDP was already above 60%.

This failure to take responsibility shows Dr Bawumia has not got the humility to accept when he is wrong. If you cannot take responsibility for your poor policy decisions which antedated COVID, Ghana cannot be safe in your hands.

### **3. Credibility Deficit**

If there is a single area where Alhaji Bawumia has the biggest character deficit, it is the arena of credibility and trustworthiness. And we all know the critical value of trustworthiness in life and in leadership in particular. A few rhetorical questions will suffice.

How can you be trusted:

- When you proclaim yourself as the leader of a Solid Economic Management Team and yet land the economy in the total collapse we see today?
- When you proclaim in 2012 that when the fundamentals are weak, the exchange rate will expose you, only to turn around in 2019 when the currency was fast depreciating that you made that statement rather in 2014 when the fundamentals were weak when the records show that you made the statement in 2012 at a time the fundamentals were relatively stronger?
- When you proclaim that you will move the economy from taxation to production only to heap myriads of taxes on suffering citizens?
- When you proclaim that your so-called solid economic management team has stabilized the cedi/dollar rate and locked the dollar and left the padlock with the IGP only for the cedi to break jail right from 2019 when it depreciated by nearly 13% and now pushing towards 13 Cedis to the dollar?
- When you boasted that under your economic leadership, Ghana will see growth and growth and growth and jobs and jobs and jobs only for Ghana to experience unprecedented levels of unemployment in recent memory?
- When you boldly claimed that no village or community in Ghana will have water or toilet problem within the first 18 months of being elected?
- When you still claim in February 2024 that Dumsor was fixed by you when you yourself admitted back in 2016 in the premises of Multimedia that John Mahama fixed Dumsor but should not be praised?

- When you declared, we don't have to borrow for roads, the money is here. All we need to do is to toll the roads and we will get money to build all the roads we need"?
- When you promised that all SHS students will receive free tablets in the year, 2023?
- When you deliberately lie to the people of Cape Coast in 2020 that a brand new harbour was being built for them?
- When on your own freewill, you promised that the NPP government will start constructing roads with concrete instead of asphalt?
- When you promised the construction of 16 model schools for Zongo communities in all the 16 Regions (in the presence of His eminence, the National Chief Iman)?

The examples of the deliberate lies are too numerous to exhaust.

Friends from the media, on the issue of the NPP flagbearer's deceptive promise to scrap some taxes, let us critically examine the obtuse logic that he is canvassing.

Essentially, this is what he is saying to the people of Ghana:

"I know that together with President Akufo-Addo we have imposed several draconian taxes on you, but endure them for the next ten months while I continue in office as Vice President on the ticket of the New Patriotic Party and as Chairman of the Economic Management Team."

After enduring the hardships imposed on you by my government and party, you can vote for me to be President on the ticket of the NPP, and I promise to scrap just three of the about 40 taxes we have imposed on you in the last eight years."

Think seriously about this, ladies, and gentlemen.

This is why we insist that a vote for Bawumia is in reality just a third term for Akufo-Addo.

Ladies and gentlemen, this so called promise comes from the same men who have used flattery to deceive you with their promise to move Ghana from taxation to production. The Vice President's previous promises to reduce the tax burden on Ghanaians, not to tax our mobile money wallets, and to lower import duties on spare parts are just a few of the promises that have turned into lies. This same man suddenly thinks Ghanaians have a short memory and is once again promising to scrap taxes to hoodwink the Ghanaian electorate.

Should we remind him that Ghanaians still remember his instrumental role in crafting the obnoxious E-levy policy, as was confirmed publicly by the then Minister for Information, Kojo Oppong Nkrumah and Mr. John Boadu, their former General Secretary?

We still remember his important role in the recent IMF negotiations. His actions have resulted in the implementation of the Emissions Levy, which many consider useless, and the imposition of VAT on previously exempt items.

We in the NDC have always opposed the draconian taxes imposed on Ghanaians by the insensitive Akufo-Addo and Bawumia government. We and our gallant Members of Parliament have always stood on the side of the suffering Ghanaian people and businesses.

Our advice to the Vice President is that if he has indeed turned a new leaf and has seen the light, like Saul on his way to Damascus, he should show genuine contrition by first apologising to Ghanaians and then join the NDC to scrap these taxes now and not in the



future. The Ghanaian people cannot live through another day of these suffocating taxes, let alone ten good months.

The time to scrap the crippling and draconian taxes that the NPP has imposed on suffering Ghanaians is now!

How is it possible to trust a Vice President who has shown no penitence or remorse about deliberately lying and conning the people of Ghana. A man who believes that leaders can continue to fool all the people all the time.

**A man whose words cannot be trusted, is a man who is not FIT to lead!**

Who will entrust his business in the hands of a man who cannot be trusted to tell the truth? If it is terrible to entrust a private property or business into such a hand, imagine the greater tragedy of committing Ghana and her 30 plus millions of citizens and her future into the hands of a Man whose words are worth very little and who does not understand the meaning of Credibility and Trustworthiness.

#### **4. Gratitude Deficit**

A true leader acknowledges the contributions of his predecessors. True leaders understand that leadership is like a relay race and he or she builds the new by acknowledging and appreciating what contribution was handed over to him. Mills/Mahama led NDC acknowledged that the N1 Highway was the accomplishment of the Kufuor led NPP even though the entire work was virtually done during the tenure of Mills/Mahama.

Mills/Mahama led NDC similarly did not take any credit for the building of the Bui Dam even though their administration even borrowed additional money to see to the completion of the project.

When eventually the Bui Dam was being commissioned, President Kufuor was invited and duly acknowledged as the leader whose government secured the finance for the dam. This gratitude is a mark of a secure leader. Bawumia sadly also has massive gratitude deficit.

It takes someone who does not show gratitude:

- To claim that the Tema to Akosombo (now Mpakadan) rail line was the achievement of the NPP government when all records show that the financing was secured in 2016, one year before the Nana Addo/Bawumia came into office. Cabinet and Parliamentary approvals were also fully finalized before John Mahama left office in January of 2016.
- To claim that Dumsor was not resolved before the coming of the NPP in 2017 when Bawumia himself publicly declared that John Mahama should not unduly be happy for solving the energy crisis because he was the one who brought it in the first place. Nana Poku of the NPP, an energy expert, publicly stated that JM led NDC solved the problem of Dumsor.
- To claim that the NPP government introduced the online passport application system when the truth is that the online application system was launched under John Mahama in December 2016.
- To claim that the card was nothing to write home about until Jan 7, 2017. Dr Bawumia deliberately ignoring the significant contributions of the NDC/Mahama administration in developing the GhanaCard system to what it is today. That by

2016, the Mahama administration had: Passed the law that makes the Ghana Card the sole document for identification purposes for any transaction (L.I 2111); Collected biometric and demographic data on about 16 million Ghanaians; Processed about 4.7 million cards; Distributed about 900,000 cards; Procured 9 million blank cards

- Upon assumption of office in 2017, Dr. Bawumia constituted a three-man committee headed by Prof. Ken Attafuah, to review the contract and implementation of the Ghana Card system.
- The committee established the facts enumerated above which is contained on page one (1) of the report and recommended the use of the existing database to continue from where the NDC left off. Indeed, the NIA boss Prof. Ken Attafuah told Parliament that the contract that was signed by the NDC/Mahama administration with the Margins Group, is the same contract that is being implemented today.
- Clearly, this government only came to continue the implementation of a system that had already been developed by the NDC/Mahama government, as a continuation of what was started under President Kufour and continued by President Mills of blessed memory. The Ghana card credit must therefore be shared by all successive governments who have contributed to where we are today. Bawumia does not even credit his boss, Akufo-Addo. Even though he is in disguise just a third term of Nana Addo, we need to call him for trying to play a fast one on the nation by conveniently throwing his boss under the bus. We see your Game and will not be fooled.

If Dr Bawumia finds it difficult to acknowledge and show gratitude to what a predecessor government has done, why is Ghana surprised that he pretends not to know the following solid accomplishments that he and Nana Akufo Addo inherited upon coming into office:

- Sinking Fund that had \$250m for the repayment of the remainder of the first Eurobond (\$750 million) Ghana contracted under Kufour.
- Ghana Infrastructure and Investment Fund of \$270m
- Stabilization Fund of \$250m which the government fell on when COVID broke in 2020.
- ESLA Fund of 3 billion Cedis per year ; Cocoa output of 960k Metric Tons
- Gross international reserves of \$6.2b
- Balance of Payment Surplus
- Two new oil fields that accounted for the 8% growth the NPP chalked in 2017
- Ghana Exim Bank that became the vehicle to fund its 1D1Fs
- The Canadian Finance to the Agric Sector that NPP used for the Planting for Food and Job
- The Buffer Stock that became crucial for the planting for food and jobs
- \$637 million of the \$937 million IMF deal was inherited and drawn down by the Akufo-Addo/Bawumia government
- The massive stock of energy infrastructure, Health infrastructure, educational, transport, and water infrastructure- in short the biggest legacy of infrastructure bequeathed to any administration in the history of the 4th republic and possibly the most since independence.

An ungrateful person calls all the above an economic mess left behind.

What a massive Gratitude Deficit. Bawumia is clearly not fit for leadership. John Mahama's ability to acknowledge what work was previously done makes him very fit for leadership.

## 5. Competency Deficit

Competence must be the hallmark of a true leader. He must possess the capacity to accomplish a lot even with minimal resources. That is exactly what Ghana saw when John Mahama was in charge of the economic management team and later became the president of the republic.

It takes competence to bring inflation from 21% down into single digit and keep it consistently there for 33 long months- the longest period in the 4th republic and possibly since independence.

Incompetent Bawumia as head of economic management team, could barely keep inflation in single digit for any appreciable period and supervised same going all the way up to 54%, when all over Africa, no serious country experienced any such level of inflation.

It takes competence to accomplish the record of high growth Ghana saw under JM as head of the economic management team. 8% in 2010 before oil. 14% in 2011 with non oil standing at 8%. Another 9 % in 2012 as well.

The highest growth rate under Bawumia was fully attributable to the two oil fields handed over to the NPP by the Mahama led NDC.

It takes competence to achieve cocoa output of 1 million MT as seen in the year 2011 and almost repeated by the agric sector in 2016 under JM. Under incompetent Bawumia, cocoa production is now about half of that quantum.

It takes competence to get a B+ rating that Ghana recorded in 2012 when John Mahama was head of the economic management team. Under incompetent Bawumia, our rating is now D- Junk status. An Absolute Disgrace! A proud nation brought onto her knees by a Disastrous Economic Management team led by a man who talks big but delivers very little.

In 8 years when he served as head of economic management team and president, total debt accrued stood at about 110b cedis, from about 10b at close of 2008 to 120b at the close of 2016. With this relatively small quantum of resources, Ghana can point to arguably the most massive infrastructure investments seen in our country in the 4th republic. In the whole of 2016, not even one cedi was received from the BOG, yet inflation was brought down to 15.4%, T.Bill rate down to 16%, Debt to GDP stood at 57%, Non oil GDP was 4.3%, budget deficit at 6.1%, capital expenditure as a percentage of GDP at 4.2%, while the cedi depreciated by only 9.6%. It was in that same year, that the foundations were established for the 8% GDP growth NPP came to inherit in 2017; incidentally the highest growth of their 8 year mandate. Growth has never come close to that since 2017.

Contrast this level of competence with the tragic incompetence of the "Big Talking" Bawumia.

Between July 2020 to Dec 2020 alone, the Bawumia led economic team accessed not less than 30 billion cedis resource during Covid. That alone represents virtually the whole of borrowing done in the first four years of the Mills/Mahama government when the foundations were laid for the astronomical legacy of infrastructure investment we see today. The 30 billion cedis represents a little over one third of the total debt accrued in eight long years of the Mills/Mahama administration. Despite getting this colossal amount when it was just left with 6 months to end their first term, the Bawumia led group

managed to achieve zero GDP growth; left an unprecedented budget deficit of 15% when the rest of Africa did not see this level of economic and fiscal calamity.

The economy never recovered from this level of recklessness; no wonder we have subsequently seen Debt rising to over 600 billion cedis; inflation hitting 54%, debt to GDP over 100% which have stripped us completely naked and now left Ghana crawling before international investors like dust eating earthworms. The Crowning Shame of the much-acclaimed Solid Team under the so-called economic messiah! Tweaaaaa!!!!!!!

## **6. Experience Deficit**

Need I say more? It is a notorious fact that John Dramani Mahama is the experienced, tried and tested visionary nation builder and leader Ghana needs to fix the messy and avoidable socioeconomic hardship and pain the NPP government has visited on Ghanaians. Therefore, Ghanaians cannot wait to sack this incompetent and clueless NPP government from office on December 07.

The NPP has done enough damage to families through the destruction of livelihoods (Financial Haircuts, unprecedented unemployment etc.)

There is no time for Trial and Error, because Ghana is in a deep hole and Ghanaians are suffering. Ghanaians opted for A “Try Me” candidate and Running mate in 2016 and the verdict has been catastrophic.

Ghanaians already know that John Mahama as Chairman of the Economic Management Team under President Atta Mills achieved single digit inflationary rate for over 30 continuous months and a GDP of over 14% in 2011. Even when the economy faced serious head winds, President Mahama quickly restored the economy to good health such that Ghana’s economy was predicted to grow and did grow at above 7% in 2017. Three (3) active oil producing fields. Note that John Mahama had access to revenue from only one oil field. Nevertheless, he handed over revenue from three (3) oil fields because Mahama added two more fields (TEN and Sankofa) before he left office. This is what experience and vision does and this is the experience Mahama is bringing to address the challenges Ghana is facing.

Ladies and gentlemen, the economy the NPP inherited from the experienced John Dramani Mahama in 2017, provided 100% funding of Government’s budget, without recourse to the Eurobond market. But by 2018, the economy came under pressure due to NPP’s economic mismanagement. As a result, they resorted to borrowing from the Eurobond market until the economy gave up the ghost. This is what led the Domestic Debt Exchange Programme – the cruel haircuts.

The Cedi is currently exchanging for US\$1 to GhC12.6 when it was just GhC4.2 in John Mahama’s time due to Mahama’s prudent and innovative management of the economy. The national debt has ballooned from GhC120billion to over 600 billion Ghana cedis.

**Fellow Ghanaians**, we need a man with vision and experience to fix the mess. John Dramani Mahama is that man with the experience required to fix this mess and take Ghana to the next level of progress and prosperity.

## **The Illusion of Change - Akufo Addo's Government Reshuffle**

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Press,

Just before this presser, news of a supposed government reshuffle came in, and we must say we are once again highly disappointed in this government. Even though

disappointment in this government has become the norm, we were at least expecting some level of change amidst Dr. Bawumia's promise to govern Ghana with only 50 ministers. But what do we see? A continuation of the status quo that has plagued our nation's progress.

In an era where the clamor for efficient governance and fiscal prudence has never been louder, the recent reshuffle by President Akufo Addo starkly reflects a government in disarray, obstinately disconnected from the realities of its people. Despite the vociferous appeals from Ghanaians, civil society, the clergy, academicians, and think tanks to trim the bloated size of government—a glaring drain on our nation's scarce resources—this administration has once again turned a deaf ear.

The insistence on maintaining a government apparatus comprising so many ministers is not only a slap in the face to the Ghanaian taxpayer but a testament to an entrenched culture of profligacy, cronyism, and a disturbingly myopic view of governance. This unwieldy government size, under the guise of facilitating development, has instead catalyzed an era marked by inefficiency and unfulfilled promises.

Enter Dr. Bawumia, the Vice President and the freshly minted flagbearer for the NPP, who now promises a government of only 50 ministers. This pledge starkly contrasts the current administration's excesses and rings hollow in the face of his longstanding defense of this governmental bloat. Dr. Bawumia's sudden pivot, amidst the economic turmoil our nation endures, is emblematic of a desperate ploy for votes—a deception that the Ghanaian people can see through with clarity.

Today's reshuffle by President Akufo Addo, rather than offering a beacon of hope for a leaner, more efficient government, has instead upheld the status quo. It is a profound disappointment and a missed opportunity to heed the people's calls for change. This action—or rather, inaction—underscores a blatant disregard for the nation's plea for governance that puts the people's welfare above political expediency.

It is particularly disheartening to witness the recycling of ministers who, over the past seven years, have demonstrated a stark inability to propel our nation forward. This reshuffle, far from being a strategic realignment, is merely a superficial rearrangement of pieces on a board, with no real intent to address the systemic failures that plague our governance.

Dr. Bawumia's slogan, "It Is Possible," now begs the question: If indeed it is possible, why not now? Why the wait, if not for political convenience at the expense of national welfare? This reshuffle could have been a moment of bold leadership, a signal of a genuine commitment to reform. Yet, it stands as a testament to a government marking time, lacking the vision or the will to implement the drastic changes Ghana so urgently requires.

As the NDC, under the distinguished leadership of His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, we reaffirm our commitment to the people of Ghana—a commitment to deliver governance that is not only efficient and lean but also transparent, accountable, and responsive to the needs of every Ghanaian.

The December 7th elections present an opportunity for the people of Ghana to voice their verdict on this administration's failures. It is a chance to embrace a future under a leader who not only understands the gravity of the challenges we face but possesses the proven track record, the integrity, and the vision to overcome them.

This reshuffle, much ado about nothing, underscores the urgent need for change—a change towards a government that respects its mandate to serve, not to squander. A

government of action, not mere words. The NDC stands ready to usher in this new dawn for Ghana

## CONCLUSION

Ladies and gentlemen, as we have laid bare before you today, the choice we face in the upcoming elections is not merely a choice between two individuals. It is a choice between two futures. On one hand, we have the path that perpetuates the status quo, a third term for Nana Addo marked by unfulfilled promises and a vision that falls short of our grandest dreams. On the other, we have the path championed by His Excellency John Dramani Mahama—a path that promises to rekindle the flame of hope, to rebuild the foundations of our great nation, and to propel us into a future where every Ghanaian, regardless of their background, can dream of a better tomorrow and see that dream become a reality.

John Mahama's vision for Ghana is not just a series of policies and promises. It is a call to action—a call to believe in the possibility of change, to remember the strength that lies in our unity, and to recognize the power of our voices and our votes to shape the destiny of our country.

Therefore, I stand before you, not just as the General Secretary of the Great NDC, but as a fellow citizen of Ghana, to issue a clarion call to every Ghanaian: let us rally behind a leader who has demonstrated time and again his commitment to our welfare, his dedication to our progress, and his unwavering resolve to lift Ghana to new heights of glory.

Let this election be more than just a political contest. Let it be a referendum on the kind of Ghana we want to build for ourselves and for generations yet unborn. **Let us choose hope over despair, action over inaction, and progress over stagnation. Let us choose John Dramani Mahama, a leader who embodies the best of our values, our aspirations, and our dreams.**

With 297 days to go until the Presidential and Parliamentary elections, let every conversation, every debate, and every moment be an opportunity to advocate for a vision of Ghana that is rooted in progress, inclusivity, and justice. Let us work tirelessly, not just to secure a victory for John Mahama, but to secure a victory for every Ghanaian who dreams of a better tomorrow.

Fellow Ghanaians, your vote is your voice. It is the most powerful weapon you wield in the fight for your future. On December 7, 2024, I urge you to vote for John Dramani Mahama. But beyond casting your vote, I urge you to become an ambassador of change, to spread the word, to ignite the hearts of your neighbors, friends, and family with the promise of what Ghana can become under the leadership of a man who has not just the vision, but also the experience, the integrity, and the heart to lead us forward.

Together, let's make history. Together, let's choose a future that reflects our highest ideals and aspirations. Together, let's vote for John Dramani Mahama and, in doing so, let's take the first step towards building a Ghana that shines as a beacon of hope, prosperity, and unity for all of Africa and the world.

And finally, when you cast your vote for John Mahama and our parliamentary candidates on December 7th, dear fellow Ghanaians, rest assured that every single vote will be accounted for. We are committed to ensuring that your votes are not only counted but also

fiercely protected. Your voice matters, and together, we will safeguard the integrity of our democratic process.

**The time for action is now. The future is in your hands. Let's rise up and make it a reality.**

**God bless you all, and God bless our beloved Ghana.**