

Your Excellency, President of the Republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo

Right Honourable Deputy Speaker of Parliament

Chairman and Members of the Council of State

Members of the Diplomatic Corps

Nii meh, Naa meh, Nananom

Honourable Members of Parliament

The Senior Minister and Ministers of State

Members of the Clergy

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

I am honored and grateful to be attending this event to commemorate Your Excellency's appointment as co-chair of eminent advocates for the Sustainable Development Goals 2030.

The Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg is the other co-chair. Together you are key actors in pushing for the SDGs to be topics of global priority.

This is my first official act as ambassador to Ghana. I cannot think of a better way to start my mission in this country than to contribute to the promotion and implementation of the 17 SDGs by speaking on behalf of PM Solberg, and bring you her warmest regards for this event.

Mr. President,

Our two countries have established a strong relationship since the Norwegian Embassy was established in 2011. Norway is fully committed to working with Ghana on national as well as international level, on a broad development agenda. Resource management and private sector development are central components in our cooperation. Ghana's political ambition of "moving beyond aid" is fully in line with the partnership Norway is developing with your country.

Your Excellency,

Norway sees the 2030 Agenda with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals as a transformative global roadmap. A roadmap for our national and international

efforts aimed at eradicating extreme poverty while protecting planetary boundaries in addition, promoting prosperity, peace and justice. The goals are ambitious. But we cannot aim otherwise if we want to make the necessary changes.

It is a universal agenda, to which all countries and all relevant stakeholders can and must contribute. We believe that the SDGs will be powerful drivers for national policy action, international cooperation and collaborative partnerships. Norway will follow up the 2030 Agenda, nationally and internationally, and in cooperation with other countries.

Our partnership with Ghana is an excellent example here.

Mr. President,

The process of preparing Norway's initial Voluntary National Review to the High Level Political Forum has contributed to greater political and public awareness about the SDGs in Norway. The Government has taken important steps to identify challenges and integrate SDG-reporting into the annual budget documents.

Effective implementation also requires financing. Domestic resource mobilization and efficient systems of tax collection, as well as business and private sector investments, are key elements here.

Norway will continue to promote technology and knowledge transfer, open trade and market access and capacity building to ensure effective and accountable governance institutions, respect for the rule of law and human rights.

A global agenda requires global buy-in. Ownership of all the goals – not just by leaders but by everyone – is crucial if we are to mobilise the extra efforts required. Because there will be changes. And changes are never easy, especially when it comes to the way we live, how we travel, patterns of consumption, to name a few. Common understanding, joint ownership – when we arrive there we have achieved a lot, as it is part of human nature to take care of what you own.

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Norwegian Prime Minister and the Norwegian Government, I commend your personal engagement and welcome the establishment of the High Level Ministerial Committee on the SDGs.

I wish you all the best in the important work – together with Prime Minister Solberg – of co-chairing the advocacy of the development goals.

I can assure you Mr. President, of the continued commitment and support from the Norwegian Government.

Commitment and support that will be followed up actively by our Embassy here in Accra.

Thank you all for your attention.