

**GHANA NATIONAL COUNCIL
OF METROPOLITAN CHICAGO
51ST INDEPENDENCE – PRESS RELEASE**

Fellow Ghanaians,

In a very short time, we are witnessing yet another milestone of Ghana's Independence.

On March 6th 2008, we will witness 51 years of total Independence from colonial rule. I address you at the age of 55 years so I will take a look at myself to reflect Ghana. At this point, let me thank our primary Sponsor(s); MoneyGram, Western Union, Vigo, African Spectrum, Ghanaweb and Annaka Enterprise for all the financial help towards our programs for this year.

In reality, Ghana at 51 in development, socio-economic and emancipation into all integral parts of the citizenry is short. As a human, your destiny, character as to who you are must have been defined at this age. In short, 51 is not "**old**" if you are a nation.

Taking a look at myself some 51 years behind, I must confess, Ghana; our beloved country has seen allot of transformation for the upgrade. We have travelled from good times to bad if not worse times, from anger to hunger times and/or from destruction to construction times. We have witnessed many forms of governance. We have heard many forms of slogans as well as different styles of rulers. In all aspects of these, we have never witnessed any CIVIL WAR contrary to what have been going on around our neighbors to the East, West and North of Ghana. Instead, we were busy suggesting and negotiating PEACE to our neighbors at war. All because of "**free**" education earlier at post-Independence.

In Ghana today, we are our brother's keeper. These notwithstanding, there have been problems but we settle it by ourselves. In Ghana today, we transcend tribal boundaries in all aspects of life be it marriage, religion, tribal, tragedy and/or happiness. Never has nationalism been so transparent than what we are witnessing at Ghana@50 for all 2007 and CAN2008. Our national identity has been so prevalent all over the world. Our national currency is being traded internationally. Albeit, it feels so good being a Ghanaian. Ghana is the African country of the moment period!

As I write, tourism is at its boost and the economy is at its upgrade. This is not enough until the "**common man**" on the street is integrated into a buoyant economy. We must all continue to help our families to alleviate the pressure on the government through remittance. This is what the "Private" sector of the economy is about. It is by us privileged to be outside Ghana ability to create jobs that could sustain the economy. This is why we are in it together be it inside or outside Ghana.

As we in Chicago march towards our diner to celebrate, let us eschew bitterness, gossip, innuendos and "**pull-him-down**" syndrome and embrace Unity and of purpose towards our emancipation. We are a cradle of peace so let tranquility prevail. We are a shining example in the eyes of the City of Chicago and its surrounding areas so let us sustain it.

A new administration Presided by me is yet to be sworn-in. It is the expectation of it that we will "**adjust**" to the changing principles and "**adopt**" the unchanged principles. We will uphold "**tolerance, understanding and respect**" to all. We will deliver "**responsibility**" but please do not keep it, return it. We would demand community "**evolvment**" in all we do. It has been a privilege to have dedicated men and women to serve you but at your pleasure so enjoy.

This year's Ghana Fest is Saturday; July 26, 2008 at Washington Park in Chicago. Keep the date and mark your calendar. Hope to see you there.

Finally, we are in it together. Together we all win in unity. Divided, we will all fail but remember, the Ghana National Council has been in this for 24years and failure at this point is not an option.

On behalf of the entire Executives and Council members of the Ghana National Council, I wish you a happy 51st Independence. May God bless you all.

JOHN HENRY ASSABILL
PRESIDENT
GNC