

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

OPENING

Nana Chairman,

Togbi Chairman of the Advisory Council of the JEA Mills Memorial Heritage

Abusuapanyin Cadman and family members,

Excellencies, Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour for me to be asked by the President MILLS Memorial Heritage to speak at this 10th anniversary event, commemorating the passing of a remarkable human being whom I was privileged to have known from our days at the Faculty of Law, University of Ghana, Legon. He was three years my senior when we were students and we later were colleagues when teaching.

He was President for just over three and a half years, having served earlier, from 1996-2000, as Vice-President. **President Mills earned global respect as an exemplar of integrity in political leadership. I want to suggest that the impact of his leadership goes beyond his lifetime and that now, more than ever, his legacy is critical for our nation's future. We can recall how, in death, he brought the nation to a unified acknowledgment of his stature in a manner that has been without equal. Even political opponents of his could not help acknowledging what he represented for the country and how his character had been an important stabilizing and moral force for our collective good in that period.**

I just ask us to take our minds back to recall the national acknowledgment that followed the news of his death, right up to the solemn funeral attended by international dignitaries including the Presidents of neighbouring Cote d'Ivoire and Togo, Mr. Kofi Annan and the then US Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton. In death, the strength of Professor Mills' personality and his stature as Asomdweehene, brought this country together in grief in a very powerful way.

I have been excited to learn of the country-wide nature of the memorials that are being organized to honour President Mills and the long-term plans of the Memorial Heritage. This is **because I am convinced that his stature of will grow bigger and bigger in the years and decades ahead. I have that conviction because of the outstanding legacy of integrity that he has left**

behind. That is what I have chosen to highlight today under the theme for these memorial events -THE MAN JOHN EVANS ATTA MILLS-TEN YEARS ON. **I believe that his legacy is even more vital today amidst the travails of our nation as well as what I see as a global crisis of leadership. Today, more than ever, we can appreciate the importance of the human qualities of the man, John Evans Atta Fiifi Mills.**

So I would like to start with some remarks about the man. I will then consider how he got into his roles in politics and proceed to outline a few of his important achievements as President. It will not surprise you that I will dwell a bit on achievements in the oil and gas sector, and highlight the relevance of those achievements for the future of that sector. **It will be my thesis, broadly, that the life and work of President Mills represent a gold standard of leadership which our nation desperately needs. I will be insisting that, especially for our youth, President Mills shines a clear light for our nation's future which we cannot just applaud or even just claim to be inspired by. Our honouring his memory is not so much about raising physical monuments to him, but more about ensuring that his legacy of integrity is given full meaning in our nation and in what we demand of our leaders as well as ourselves.**

Since Sunday morning, 24th July 2022, we have seen at Asomdwee Park, President Mills' resting place, that what is now inscribed over his grave and under his bust does not even have his name! Was he really the one being honoured in that event where this inscription was unveiled? But I can almost hear him, after listening to me utter those last two sentences, saying calmly: "Ooh, dem a? Menkasa won ho ay", (Ooh, really? Don't bother about them) and, then, asking me to move on to the more important subjects he and I need to discuss!

President Mills aspired to "A BETTER GHANA". That is undoubtedly a shared aspiration we all have as Ghanaians, unless the circumstances of our absurd partisan politics make some refuse to share that aspiration because it was espoused by someone from a political party other than the one they belong to. We shall look at how even his short time as President saw some important steps he took towards that BETTER GHANA agenda and, more importantly, how his human qualities can help our quest for a BETTER GHANA, our resolve to make our nation great and strong.

Let me stress from the beginning that **I do not seek to idolize President Mills because that would not even be fair to him. He was a servant leader who**

never sought to be idolized and he would not accept that. He was, indeed, human and had his limitations and weaknesses, just like all of us. What I am interested in, on this occasion commemorating the 10th anniversary of his death, is to distil from his life qualities that are worthy of our attention and emulation.

THE MAN JOHN EVANS ATTA FIIFI MILLS

President Mills was a man with a deep devotion to Ghana and to public service. From his days as a lecturer at Legon, teaching both at the Faculty of Law and the School of Administration (his subjects being Company Law and Tax Law), through the time of his involvement in reform of the country's revenue agencies and, then, his becoming Vice-President and, eventually, President, his life was one dedicated to the country. **He did not seek to enrich himself or his family or friends in the course of any of his commitments to serve. His simplicity, humility and modesty, combined with his integrity, meant that he was fundamentally seeking the public good and not his personal benefits.**

As President, he would often sacrifice personal comfort and convenience to spare the nation undue expense on himself. He was frugal about expenditures at the Presidency and, thus, set an example for his staff and for his Ministers and other public servants. It was never about his entitlements, but rather what the people he was dedicated to serving were entitled to expect from a leader like him. Sadly, some believe that politics is all about winning power, with no moral boundaries, all about enriching one's self. President Mills was the polar opposite of that mentality.

On 18th June 2008, speaking at a forum organized by the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), he said, with deep meaning:

"There can be no doubt that the 2008 election is also about leadership and character, about the human qualities of the person into whose hands the people of Ghana are going to entrust their future.

I, Atta Mills, bring to the table the core values of truth, honesty and humility which have guided me through life.

I believe political leadership and decency are not mutually exclusive."

Throughout President Mills' political life, he maintained his human decency. This was, in fact, an important part of his political capital.

He did not need to make promises or proclamations about his integrity; he lived integrity! The fire of integrity was evident in his famous encounter with Customs officials at the Tema Port when he was calling the officials to order over the corruption among them that was eroding the revenue base of the nation. He could express himself so vehemently and categorically because he himself embodied the virtue he was demanding in others.

President Mills angrily turned away anyone who tried to make approaches to influence him with money. I recall an account he gave of some business people -soon after he was sworn in as President -making overtures of “arrangements” which they indicated they previously had which they wished to continue, involving making monetary provision for his needs! He drove them away fiercely, with a warning that if he heard that anybody in his Government was accepting any payment from them, they and the recipient of the payments would be in serious trouble. **We all know that it could never be said of President Mills - whether by the Chairman of his own party or anybody else - that he himself was receiving everything at the Castle and not allowing anything to come to the party!**

He valued the peace and unity of the country so much that he would not be goaded into seeking political vengeance by making people in the previous administration targets of persecution during his Presidency. Though he was under pressure to expose wrongdoing that had taken place previously, he considered that his priority was to focus on the development of Ghana and the wellbeing of her citizens within a framework of unity. President Mills was not one to orchestrate the jailing of people he considered political opponents. He absolutely meant it when he said even before becoming President, that he was going to be a President for all Ghanaians, irrespective of political party affiliation. He said in that speech I quoted earlier:

“I am committed to a decent, honest, humble and truthful government to mend the broken trust between government and the people. I will be President for all Ghanaians; not the NDC, not my family, not my friends. .. I want to leave an enduring legacy of a peaceful and united country where there is opportunity and prosperity for all. And I want to be remembered as the President who restored honesty, truth and sincerity to government.”

These words, spoken with conviction and absolute sincerity, reflected the fact that his character was a major part of what he was offering the nation; they reflected his assurance to us that he would not be succumbing to the

temptations of political power. He lived up to those declarations totally. He was a “Father for all” as, indeed, a President should be. That may not exactly have been music to the ears of some NDC faithfuls, but President Mills said what he believed was the right thing to do and he meant every word of what he said.

The accolade, Asomdwehene, “King of Peace”, conferred on him by popular acclamation, was a recognition of his preoccupation with the peace and unity of the nation. That was also his nature, his temperament; peace-loving, soft-spoken; but, make no mistake about it, he was firm in his convictions and would not yield to the dictates of others. When after the 2004 elections, there were calls on him to reject the results because of the way the role of the Chairman of the Electoral Commission was usurped and the collusion between certain officials in the Electoral Commission and the incumbent Government, he insisted that it was not worth spilling a drop of blood in the country simply because he was being denied the opportunity to serve as President. However flawed that result was, he decided not to contest it. He obviously believed he would live to fight another day. That was disappointing, even unacceptable, to some but that was his conviction. **Being such a peacemaker was not a weakness, it was a mark of wisdom and maturity in a very polarized country.**

Those who thought his peaceful nature meant they could have President Mills do their bidding soon found out, to their chagrin, that they could not have their way with him. A hockey team -mate of his has used the word “grit” to describe to me how focused President Mills was on the hockey pitch, especially within that half-moon in the opponents’ half. That grit was to serve him well in his leadership roles and as a person. Of course, he was a great team player and always paid attention to the perspectives of others. This was also very valuable to him when he first got into the NDC and during his service as Vice-President and Chairman of the Economic Management Team. Even as President, he relied on his team in his role as the striker.

President Mills had a tremendous work ethic. He applied himself tirelessly to whatever assignment he was undertaking; he could never be accused of laziness. Even in the period when he was not in good health, he kept pushing himself to work right until he had to be taken to the hospital. He knew how to face tough times with a determined spirit and with a focus on what he considered the essentials, an aspect of the grit that was his hallmark.

He was insistent on being punctual and would not accept the typical excuses we often make for starting meetings or functions late. Here, again, he led by example.

All these attributes of President Mills, his integrity, particularly, were anchored in his Christian faith, which clearly gave him the inner strength to be himself and to stand his ground. His faith was a matter of the heart and not about outward appearances or symbols. He understood the words of Jesus Christ in John 4:23-24: “But a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is Spirit and His worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth”. As President, he held a small gathering of worship and prayer on Sunday afternoons in a room between the President’s living area in the Castle and the office that was known as the chapel. There were those who ridiculed this and said he had turned the Castle into a prayer camp! I am told he was at that gathering on the Sunday, 22nd July 2012, before the Tuesday, 24th July 2012 when he died. For President Mills, “to live is Christ and to die is gain.” (Philippians 1: 21) He strove to be Christ-like and chose to build for himself treasures in heaven, not on earth. He remained humble throughout his life, never assuming superior airs over others, always giving thanks to God for his life and recognising that he was a creature, just like others.

ENTRY INTO POLITICS

When he was invited in 1996 by President Rawlings (may his soul rest in peace) to be running mate, Professor Mills had not previously sought national elective office and had also not been involved in the political arena. He was an academic lawyer, not a politician and certainly not involved in partisan politics. **He was not someone who sought political office; rather he was sought after to hold political office.** Mills’ integrity as well as his humility and his dedication to public service were, clearly, all character traits which attracted President Rawlings. He was sought after because of the contribution that it was thought he could make for the country and for the person (Rawlings) and the party (the NDC) on whose ticket he was going to run.

The choice of running mate, at a time when those opposed to President Rawlings had been given a boost by his own former Vice-President joining their ranks, was obviously an important one. Bringing in Professor John Evans Atta Mills proved to be an inspired choice that enabled President Rawlings and the

NDC to retain the confidence of the electorate in the 1996 elections. Mills went on to prove himself an able, dedicated and exemplary Vice-President. Professor Mills' character and personality - a person of integrity, someone who was peace-loving and not out to seek vengeance against political opponents - were huge positives and his soft-spoken and gentle manner were an effective complement and balance to President Rawlings whose own integrity and passion for the welfare of the ordinary man were obviously what made Mills accept to be his running-mate. We must not forget, of course, that Professor Mills identified himself as an Nkrumahist and sometimes referred excitedly to the orientation he received at the Kwame Nkrumah Ideological Institute while a student at Legon. He was, therefore, very much in tune with the political orientation of the NDC and fitted easily within the tradition.

At the time he was announced as the Vice-Presidential candidate, I recall that many of his contemporaries would say of him that he was "a good man" and then, quickly, go on to doubt if he could succeed in what they regarded as the "dirty" world of politics. I will demonstrate that President Mills was a success in politics while not allowing himself to be tarnished by the dirt. He sought to clean up the politics of our nation.

By the end of the second term of President Rawlings, he was clear in his mind that the mantle of leadership should pass on to his Vice-President. There were, however, others in the NDC who thought otherwise and Professor Mills had to face leadership contests which now gave him the opportunity to show his political mettle. I believe that a key part of what made him such an attractive Presidential candidate for the NDC in the 2000 elections as well as in 2004 and then in 2008, was his character, precisely, his integrity, modesty and humility.

For his selection as the NDC candidate for the 2008 elections, Professor Mills had to withstand the challenge from a number of more established NDC personalities. His success showed the clear grassroots backing from delegates throughout the country for the person who they had not just seen operating as Vice-President but whose personality and character had been exposed to them through the 2000 and 2004 election campaigns and who they now viewed as beginning a new era for the party.

So, from a situation in 1996 when he could be described as a political neophyte and, definitely, a newcomer within the NDC, President Mills had

become, not just the leader and flagbearer of the party, the new face of the NDC, but he was the person who took the NDC from eight years in opposition back to the Presidency at the beginning of 2009. That was no mean political achievement, especially when we recall that he did not have at his disposal a fraction of the material resources that the party in Government poured into their campaign. He could not do anything about the abuse of incumbency. He could not afford the huge, expensive billboards of his opponent.

True to character, **Professor Mills launched what he called a “door-to-door campaign”, preferring direct encounters with the people whose votes he was courting through the length and breadth of the country. This was derided at the time by those in power; it was “poor boy politics”, but it has since become recognized as an important strategy for political campaigning in the country even if large, expensive billboards are still, unfortunately, dominating our political contests and defacing our environment.**

Curiously, ahead of the 2012 elections, President Mills faced a challenge to the renewal of his NDC flagbearership from none other than Mrs. Rawlings backed by her husband. **The overwhelming success of President Mills at the party’s Sunyani Congress sealed his position as the leader of the NDC.** Two things often stand out in my mind about that Congress; the first is the deepening of the support of grassroot representatives of the party for President Mills. That he did not have the backing of President Rawlings, on this occasion, did not matter to them.

The second thing from that Congress I cannot forget is the speech of John Mahama, then Vice-President, whom Mills had selected to be his running mate against the preferences of others. While backing Mills in his speech, Vice-President John Mahama offered a resounding message - couched in a wonderful story-telling style - about the need for the unity of the party! President Mills was the person around whom a unified party now rallied.

John Evans Atta Mills achieved political success, with what I have called, “the charisma of integrity”. Lack of integrity may seem to be politically successful for a time but, sooner or later, the deep human need for honesty and integrity breaks through. That is what we saw happen in Ghana in the election of John Evans Atta Fiifi Mills as President in the 2008/2009 election. His integrity enabled us as a nation to call time on a previous era in which corruption was explained away as being as old as Adam! He was the option that exuded honesty, integrity, modesty and all the character traits we have earlier

outlined. At a time when corruption and political vengeance and the abuse of power were on full display from the incumbent Government and when Ghanaians were tired of the cycles of vengeance in our politics and disgusted with all the corruption, with national resources being squandered for personal enrichment, Professor Mills was a breath of fresh air.

Not only did he show that a good man, with integrity as his banner, can win in politics, but his election also showed that character and virtue remain at the heart of human aspiration and that, even in politics, integrity matters. Deep in our hearts, most of us admire good men and women and we aspire to be like them. **Good men and women, like President Mills, are desperately needed in our politics to rescue us from the mire into which we have sunk. We have a responsibility to shape our politics so that good men and women can serve. Mills not only had the charisma of integrity but also the AROMA OF INTEGRITY which he spread around him and that sweet scent from President Mills is still in our midst today.**

That is why I am using this commemoration to challenge, especially the youth of our country, to make individual character and integrity critical determinants of who we place in leadership positions at all levels and in all contexts of our national life. Needless to say, corruption is more costly to the youth simply because they have a longer span of the future ahead of them, and what is squandered from national resources today leaves the youth with less resources to fix the country to be the country we want such that we can live the kind of lives that we all aspire to.

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES

It is not only in Ghana that the yearning for leaders of integrity is being expressed with more and more urgency. Throughout the world, lack of integrity in leaders is being exposed as unacceptable. Leaders who lie, some repeatedly and pathologically, or who are full of empty words that they do not mean, leaders who are merely flamboyant and pompous but do not seriously address the needs of their people, are being rejected and seen for who they really are, and not what the political propaganda says of them. Even at the highest levels of global leadership, we have experienced such leaders, including one who lies persistently about an election he lost and who has

obviously provided an example for others about avoiding the truth in dealing with electoral process.

I was recently quite struck by how, in a debate amongst candidates for leadership of the Conservative Party in the United Kingdom, when a question was asked directly: “is Mr. Mr. Johnson honest?”, with a request of a yes or no answer, only one person, heeded the request, answering “no”, to applause from the audience. That person, I must point out, is no longer in the leadership race! None of the others could answer yes! They danced around the question with talk of “mistakes having been made” etc. The person they were talking about was none other than the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom who had led his party to a massive electoral victory only three years ago and, yet, about whose character traits there have been issues for decades. He is on his way out, at last, because his colleagues were, apparently, no longer comfortable with the lack of integrity.

One of those colleagues has spoken about how attending a Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast was the moment of truth for him: “I was listening to [Reverend Les Isaac] taking about the importance of integrity in public life, and, just focusing on that, I made up my mind. I went straight back to my office and drafted the resignation letter and went to see the Prime Minister later in the day.” Those were the words of Sajid Javid, a former member of the Cabinet of Prime Minister Boris Johnson. In his resignation speech in Parliament, Javid spoke again about the Prayer Breakfast and Reverend Les Isaac speaking “about the responsibility that comes with leadership - the responsibility to serve the interests of others above your own and to seek the common good of your party, your community and above all your country.” Integrity was, again, his highlight – “the public expects all of us to maintain honesty and integrity in what we doI have concluded that the problem starts at the top”, he indicated.

We have also been seeing images recently of the crisis in Sri Lanka which also tell us that there is a limit to the patience of a country after a long period of tolerance for a Government that had been run as if it were a family business and that had failed to address the dire living conditions faced by the people. A once very powerful President has had to flee from his own country amidst the angry protests of people he had taken for granted for so long.

The fact that in recent assessments of risks of debt default globally, Ghana and Sri Lanka are mentioned in the same breath means that we cannot be complacent about our situation.

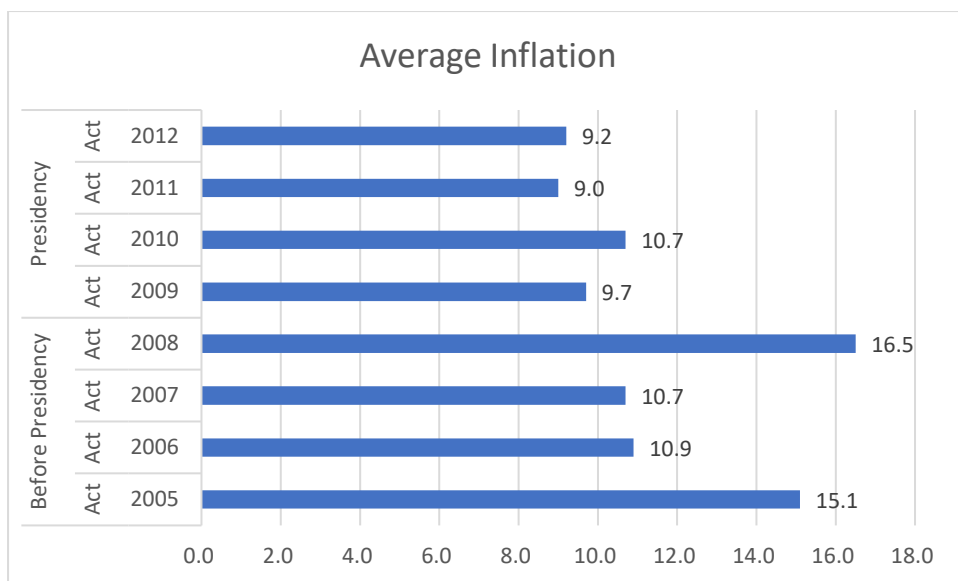
We can, perhaps, be spared that kind of tragedy in our nation if the commemoration of the life and legacy of President Mills signals to us a need to follow his example of leadership.

A BETTER GHANA

I would not be doing justice to the memory of President Mills if it seems that his moral attributes are all there was to the legacy of integrity that I am talking about. In being elected as President, he undertook to make a difference to the real lives of the people of Ghana and so it is appropriate to consider how he fared in that regard.

We must start with the recognition that President Mills inherited an economy that was in disarray, with the previous Government living beyond its means and recording large fiscal deficits in 2007 and 2008. This led to high levels of inflation in those years. The debts owed to two energy sector institutions, VRA and TOR alone, by the end of 2008 were almost US\$2 billion and rising. Rather than any measures being taken to address the economic imbalances, it was regularly claimed that the economy was doing very well. To compound the situation for the incoming Government, commitments had been made to the single spine salary adjustments for public servants without any resources being available for this nor a real plan for revenue generation to meet those commitments.

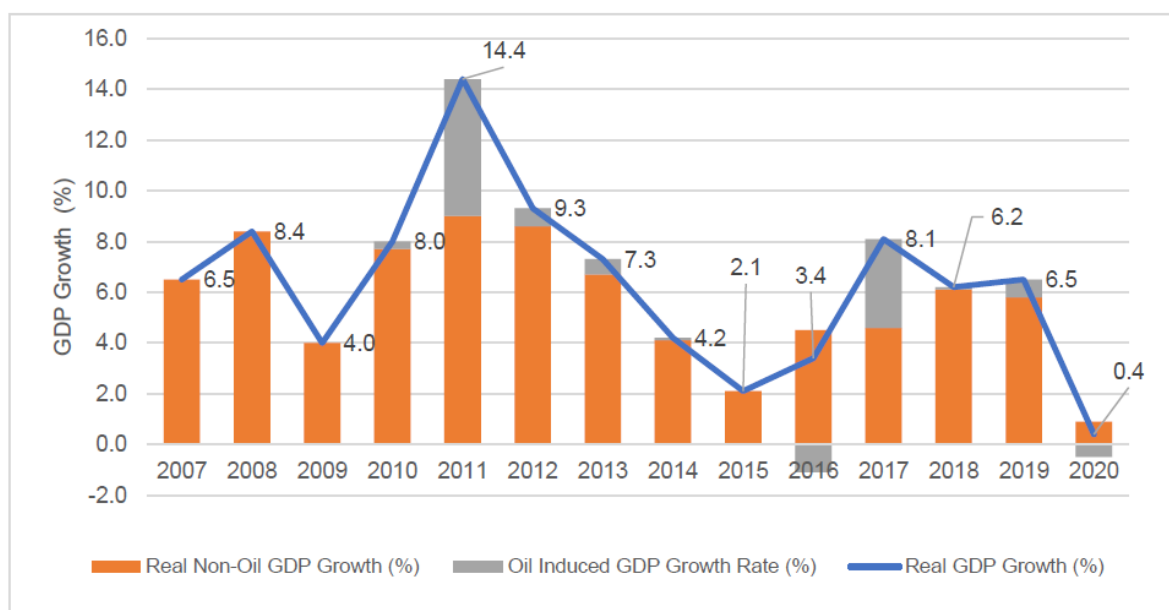
It is to the credit of President Mills that the single spine salary structure was implemented, providing most public servants the benefits of improved remuneration. He was committed to these improved conditions of service because he knew the sacrifices of teachers, doctors, nurses, policemen, soldiers, judges, officials in the Judicial Service, the security services and public servants generally. The implementation of the single spine salary structure was achieved through improvement in economic management under President Mills, particularly the prudent fiscal management which also enabled Ghana to experience significantly lower inflation from January 2009.



From a level of 16.5% in 2008 inflation came down to single digits -9.7% -in the very first year of Mills’ administration, 2009. In three of the four years from January 2009 to December 2012 Ghana had single digit inflation. Two successive years of single digit inflation were recorded in 2011 and 2012. Such lower inflation, by protecting the value of personal incomes, itself improved the wellbeing of the citizens. Fiscal responsibility was clearly practised under President Mills.

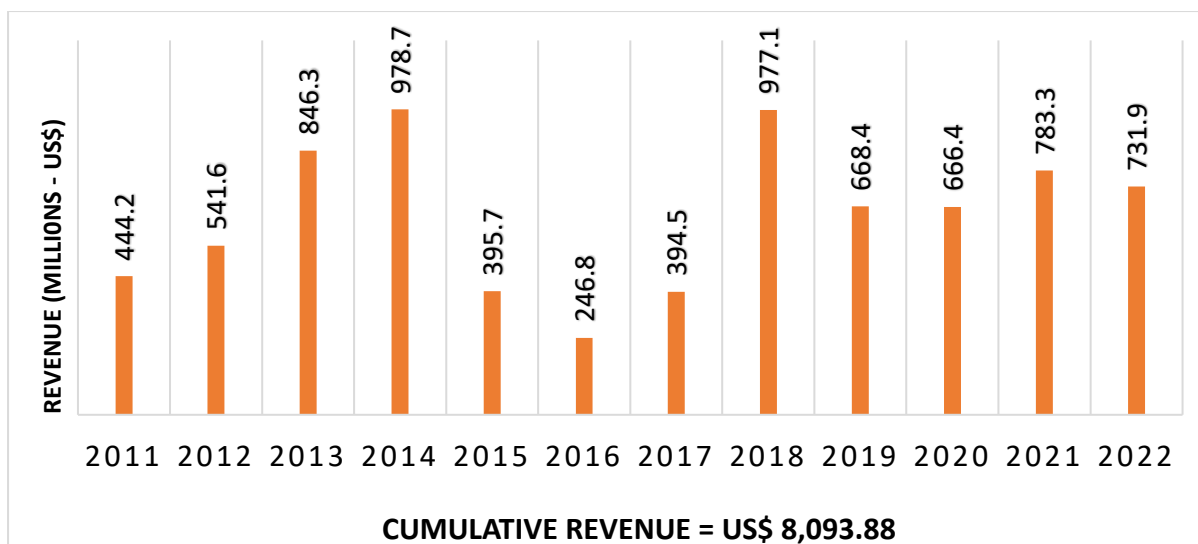
High growth rates were also recorded throughout the period of the Mills administration. Ghana’s growth rate in 2011 was among highest growth rates in the world that year. Some seek to attribute the impressive growth rates and the economic performance under President Mills simply to the onset of oil production from the Jubilee field. No doubt growth in 2011 was elevated by the new oil revenues but even non-oil growth in 2011 -above 8% -was higher than growth in the years before President Mills took up office. This is recorded, for instance, in the Public Interest Accountability Committee (PIAC) Report on “Assessment and Use of Ghana’s Petroleum Revenues”.

Figure 34: Oil Induced GDP Growth vs Non-Oil GDP Growth (2007 -2020)

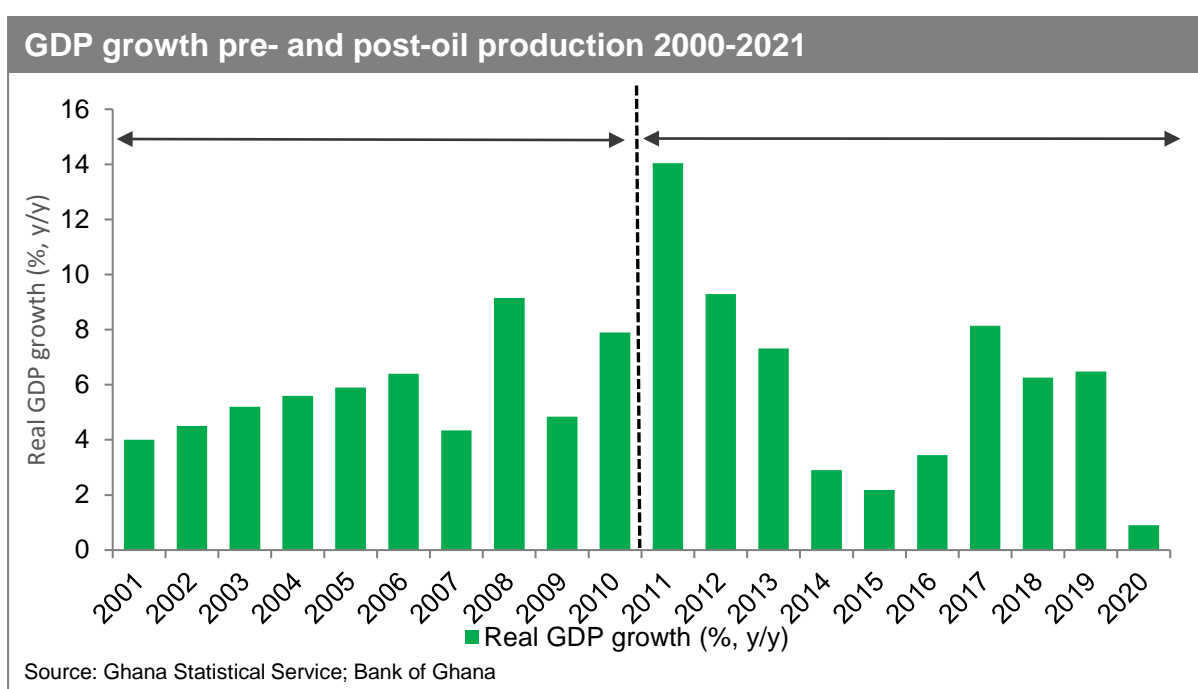


Source: Author's construct based on data extracted from Bank of Ghana Reports

It is interesting comparing the level of oil production and associated revenues during the Mills administration with the significantly increased levels in the years from 2017 to date as this also provides a perspective on the performance of President Mills. The oil revenues earned in **one year** -2018 -alone under the current government are only about US\$8 million dollars less than oil revenues in the **two years** -2011 and 2012 under President Mills after the beginning of revenues from the Jubilee field. About 57% of all Ghana's oil revenues since 2011 have been available to the current Government as against 12% that was available to the administration of President Mills. More oil revenue was obtained during the 2017-2020 first term of the current Government than in the term of any previous Government.



Despite these high levels of oil revenues, growth rates under the current administration have been consistently lower than under President Mills. Clearly, **it is not the amount of oil revenue that matters; it is how that and all other revenues are managed for the benefit of the country. Credit cannot be denied President Mills for the improved economic performance in economic growth as against what he inherited and compared to the current Government**, even though the oil revenue inflow in his time was limited.



There is a disturbing reality about our oil production that we need to pay more attention to than we have been doing. Since 2019, when a level of over 70 million barrels annual production was attained, production has been in decline.

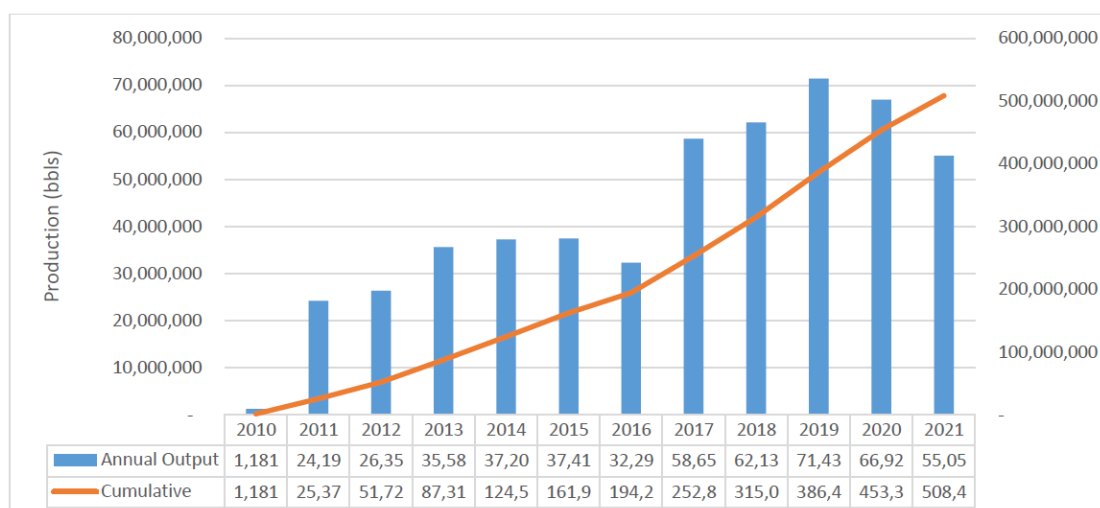


Figure 3: Annual and Cumulative Crude Oil Production (2010 - 2021)

Source: PIAC's construct, 2020 (based on GNPC and PC Data).

In 2021 just over 55 million barrels were produced. Significantly, it was the pipeline of oil and gas development projects from eleven new discoveries made during the three and a half years of the Mills Presidency -that led to oil and gas production from the TEN and Sankofa -Gye Nyame fields. It is because of these that the level of oil revenues escalated from 2017. A similar pipeline of appraisal to development projects is urgently needed to reverse the decline in oil production that Ghana is currently experiencing.

Ghana is still at a very early stage in uncovering the wealth of our oil resources and there is every reason to be confident that the decline in production can be reversed for the good of the country. It will, however, require careful, well-thought out, technically sound plans, driven by what is in the national interest.

More immediately, of course, we are faced with the issue how best to utilize oil resources to enable us climb out of our current predicament. The passage of the Petroleum Revenue Management Act 2011 (Act 815) was among the important legacies of President Mills. That Act set limits to the amounts of revenues from oil production that are expended as part of annual budgets. A Stabilization Fund was established based on the recognition that some of the revenues needed to be saved "to cushion the impact on or sustain public expenditure capacity during periods of unanticipated petroleum revenue shortfalls" as expressed in section 9(2) of the Act). Such shortfalls could arise from a plunge in oil prices or a similar unexpected event. A Heritage Fund was also established with the stated object being "to a) provide an endowment to

support the development for future generations when the petroleum reserves have been depleted and

b) receive excess petroleum funds.” (section 10(2)).

Transparency and accountability in respect of oil revenues and their utilization were also among the key objectives of the Act and section 8 provided for publication of data on petroleum receipts as well as petroleum output lifted and reference prices.

The savings arrangements have already proved valuable to us as a withdrawal was made from the Stabilization Fund during early days of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under the Petroleum Revenue Management Act, investments of the Ghana Petroleum Funds are also required to be made in a manner that insulates them from being spent in Annual Budgets. Thankfully, therefore, the 1st Half Year 2022 Report from the Bank of Ghana that was published, as required by the Petroleum Revenue Management Act, on 21st July 2022 (the birthday of President Mills!) records a closing value of US\$1,223,699,493.55 from investments of these funds. In the midst of ominous concerns about possible debt default and debates in Parliament about commercial loans with interest rates that are much higher than the interest being earned on our invested Petroleum Funds, **is it too much to ask that, in the spirit of President Mills, and in his honour, urgent, good faith, cross-party and non-partisan consultations are held to enable all our resource pools to be drawn on for the benefit of the people of Ghana?**

I have no doubt that this is what President Mills would have done.

JUBILEE FIELD DEVELOPMENT AND KOSMOS ENERGY ISSUES

Important issues about the major oil discoveries -Mahogany and Hyedua -that became the Jubilee field development were on President Mills’ table from day one of his administration and I will now go on to discuss how he handled them. I will do this to demonstrate further that what President Mills did in handling these issues and the decisions he and his Government took about our oil and gas resource are valuable reference points for issues that we are faced with today in the sector.

The critical and urgent matter of approval of a Development Plan for the Jubilee field required urgent attention right at the outset of the Mills’

Presidency if the national expectations of significant oil production were to be met. Though the Jubilee partners had not yet formally put forward a Plan, discussions had been going on that provided outlines of the intent of the Partners. In particular, the focus of the Partners on oil production led to proposals being put forward for an independent gas processing facility whose investors would offtake the gas at the wellhead and sell to Ghana at US\$4 per standard cubic foot (scf).

There was pressure for this to be accepted quickly but President Mills would not proceed without a thorough technical evaluation of this and all aspects of whatever was to go into the Development Plan. He was in the process of appointing as Minister of Energy Dr. Oteng-Adjei, who he had confidence in to undertake the tasks. Not long after the appointment of the Minister, Kosmos Energy, on behalf of the Jubilee Partners, formally submitted the proposed Plan of Development. It was apparently their expectation that there would be almost instant approval. Indeed, at a famous meeting at the Ministry in early May 2009, the then Chief Executive of Kosmos Energy rudely told Minister Oteng-Adjei that he, the Kosmos Energy CEO, had decades of experience in the industry and he did not understand why the Minister could raise issues with the Plan.

The first account I had of that meeting was from a representative of one of the other partners who had travelled into the country for the meeting. He indicated that he and representatives of the other partners were embarrassed by the behaviour and utterances of the Kosmos Energy CEO and really impressed by the Minister's calm authority. Even as Kosmos and partners mounted pressures, including through their diplomatic missions in Ghana writing to the President, effectively requiring a rubber stamping of their proposed Development Plan, President Mills firmly backed his Minister and ensured that concerns raised about the Plan were addressed and ministerial approval only granted after the Plan satisfactorily advanced the national interest of Ghana and was in accordance with the laws of Ghana and international industry best practice.

In the end, and most significantly, as part of the negotiations related to the Development Plan, the Jubilee Partners agreed that, rather than their earlier plan in respect of the natural gas, they would supply the first 200 billion cubic feet of gas of their share of gas to GNPC free of charge! In return, GNPC would be responsible for putting in place the infrastructure for offtake of gas at the

wellhead. It is by virtue of this arrangement that, rather than Ghana having to pay US\$4 per cubic foot for buying natural gas, with its impact on the price of power in Ghana, this superior arrangement was instituted and embodied in the approved Plan of Development. This free gas to GNPC has been an important element of gas supply to Ghana's power sector.

President Mills was never eager to take credit for such achievements; he would rather give the credit to the Minister and the GNPC personnel directly involved in the negotiations. While that was obviously appropriate, there is no doubt that his backing as President was critical in empowering the technically competent personnel to do their work. President Mills would never agree to a situation in which he accepted the proposals of the Jubilee Partners and then required technical personnel to act accordingly.

The arrangement to have GNPC responsible for the gas infrastructure led to President Mills, on a state visit to China, securing financing from the China Development Bank for the construction by Sinopec of gas processing facilities at Atuabo and a gas pipeline to the plant. All this was truly part of the legacy of President Mills.

Another challenging issue that soon faced President Mills before the beginning of oil production from the Jubilee field was when Kosmos Energy and ExxonMobil publicly announced they had reached agreement for ExxonMobil to acquire Kosmos Energy. This was something that, by the terms of the Petroleum Law and the agreements under which Kosmos Energy was working, required approval of the Government, yet was presented initially as a fait accompli. It soon also emerged that without the knowledge, much less approval, of GNPC and contrary to the law and the Petroleum Agreements, Kosmos had provided data from their exploration activities in Ghana to ExxonMobil as well as over twenty other companies in the industry. It was, again, the expectation of ExxonMobil and Kosmos that their transaction should be rubber stamped and issues raised about the illegalities overlooked.

As US companies, ExxonMobil and Kosmos brought the full weight of the US Government to bear on the Government of Ghana to support their position. The US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Johnnie Carsons, and others weighed in on President Mills to give in to the US companies. Kosmos also hired a lobbyist, Riva Levinson, to work on their behalf to wage a campaign.

Nasty articles surfaced in the US press, notably the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Times and Forbes against the Government and individuals believed to be against the transaction. Famously, a visa was denied the Chairman of GNPC, Mr. Ato Ahwoi, who was to have travelled to the US for meetings with Blackstone Capital, majority shareholders of Kosmos Energy.

Not being intimidated by all this campaign, President Mills made it clear to the US officials that he had nothing against the US companies but that the laws of Ghana must be respected and that he, as President, would pursue the national interest of Ghana. He set up a committee headed by a distinguished Ghanaian economist at the World Bank, Dr. Gobind Nankani, of blessed memory. The committee was tasked to evaluate the various options of partnership open to GNPC, including ExxonMobil as well as a consortium featuring BP and the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC). Based on the work of the committee, President Mills, again, backed the Minister and GNPC in pursuing a rival offer for Kosmos Energy that matched that of ExxonMobil.

In the end, however, ExxonMobil, after Kosmos Energy shareholders sought to get more out of the transaction, announced that it would no longer proceed with the planned acquisition. Kosmos Energy also soon announced that it was no longer for sale but was rather going to do an Initial Public Offering on the New York Stock Exchange. Prior to the start of oil production from the Jubilee field, Kosmos reached agreement with GNPC and the Government on the issue of illegally sharing GNPC data with third parties, paying US\$23 million to GNPC to settle the matter but without admission of liability.

I should add a footnote to my earlier reference to the lobbyist who was hired by Kosmos Energy to wage their campaign to try and get their way in connection with their ExxonMobil acquisition. She was the same person in 2016 hired by the campaign of candidate Akufo-Addo for the 2016 election and she uses her engagement in that campaign as a case study on the website of her company, with the title: Unseating the Incumbent in Ghana's Presidential Election 2016. You can read that case study at:

<https://www.krlinternational.com/case-study-ghana-election>

The integrity of President Mills, his reliance on rigorous technical evaluation of options, his empowering of technocrats and the relevant institutions, such as the Ministry and GNPC, to do the groundwork needed for sound

Government decision-making, his relentless pursuit of the national interest, all served Ghana well. The onset of significant oil production could have accentuated corruption and self-seeking at the expense of the nation. President Mills would have none of that. **If our efforts to achieve the best for our nation from our resources are to succeed, the clarity of focus on the national interest of President Mills represents a constant lodestar for decision-making.**

CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

It is not my intention to deal with every area of significance in the BETTER GHANA Agenda of President Mills. I will only deal briefly with one final area that is currently under discussion from a variety of perspectives, that is the issue of review of the Constitution. A high-powered CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE was set up by President Mills, chaired by Professor Albert Fiadjoe, a distinguished academic. It is unfortunate that the important work of this Committee is not informing much of the talk of constitutional reform. I have no doubt that it will be beneficial for those concerned about the need for constitutional reform to benefit from the important work not only of this Review Committee but also of the Committee -under the Chairmanship of Nana Dr. S.K.B Asante -which worked on the 1992 Constitution and presented it to the Consultative Assembly.

Nana Chairman, I recall that you were a member of that 1992 Consultative Assembly and you were also a member of the 1979 Constituent Assembly that drew up the 1979 Constitution. So you are eminently qualified to speak with authority to draw attention, for instance, to how much work on the 1992 Constitution took the 1979 Constitution as a starting point. I humbly request people like you to speak up because there is, I have to say, some very uninformed talk about the 1992 Constitution that gets an audience. When I hear a call for review of the Constitution that is based on the wholly false premise that it was a Constitution just designed for Flt.-Lt. Rawlings, I wonder if it is just ignorance or brazen falsehood or perhaps a toxic combination of the two that is on display. You, Nana Chairman, played a history-making role, together with others, in respect of the Constitution and I hope, therefore, you will not be offended by my request.

Many aspects of our current predicament as a nation, in any case, are not addressed by constitutional reform. When we are dealing with corruption and its negative impact on our development, when we talk about the weak institutions that we have or the complicity in wrongdoing of people supposed to play important roles to check abuse of power, changing provisions in the Constitution will not resolve those issues. When we talk about issues concerning remuneration for Article 71 office-holders, it is really not an issue of constitutional reform; it is an issue of what a State with limited resources should pay to various people in public service and the relativities of different levels and contexts of service. The single spine salary adjustment process involved some consideration of relativities which will always be important.

It is understandable that concerns arise as to why part-time work as a Member of the Council of State should go with a level of monthly remuneration that is about twenty times that of a full time teacher and with an end of service package as well. More especially when a number of the members of the Council of State retired on their salaries as public servants. In all this we each have our personal responsibility for assessing what is the right thing for the nation. It is the essence of the legacy of integrity of President Mills that it was never about himself but always about the welfare of others, the good of the nation.

Discussions on reform of the Constitution are important and necessary but they must not distract attention from pressing issues about harsh living conditions, issues about the crisis of the economy and excessive borrowing, etc nor be a way of taking focus away from addressing the corruption that is rampant in our midst.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS - INTEGRITY MATTERS

I have chosen today to use the memory of President Mills to call attention to the fundamental need for integrity in public life, in politics, in those who seek or hold leadership positions. I believe that we pay a heavy price for our failure to insist on integrity as a necessary qualification for those who seek high office. It is unfortunate how we shut our eyes to corruption when it is from our party and so we lack the moral authority to confront corrupt practices by others.

President Mills built on his personal integrity to deliver leadership success and initiate the Better Ghana agenda. **He showed that integrity mattered to**

deliver economic benefits because it is the integrity deficit that regularly gets translated into fiscal deficits. He was effective in delivering on governmental goals because of his integrity.

At this critical time in our nation's existence, at this time of economic crisis, of social unrest and political disaffection, President Mills, as the standard-bearer of integrity, beckons us all to establish better governance as the basis for A BETTER GHANA. Better governance is about making our institutions work effectively and not just for our party members. It is also not about coveting power for an individual or for the party. It is about serving the whole polity. That is what President Mills meant by being a President for all and not just for members of his party

I quote some further words of his in that June 18 2008 speech at the IEA which have a chilling resonance:

“is it not ironical that 7 or 8 years is long enough to make some elected officials and their families fabulously wealthy and yet they say 8 years is too short a time to solve problems of poverty for the generality of the masses?”

President Mills beckons the youth of this country, especially, to make a foundation of integrity the bedrock of our nation-building. The youth recognize starkly that their current existence and their prospects for the future are jeopardized by the lack of integrity in our nation, by leaders who frankly have less of a stake in the future that lies ahead, but who make fulsome promises for electioneering purposes.

Today, President Mills' integrity, his good judgment, his wisdom can still guide us in making the right decisions to ensure, for instance, that the oil and gas sector can be a driver of national development and well-being of all Ghanaians and not a source of corrupt personal enrichment.

THE LEGACY OF INTEGRITY OF PRESIDENT MILLS IS SO IMPORTANT TODAY IN GHANA. INTEGRITY MATTERS, SPEAKING THE TRUTH MATTERS, CHARACTER MATTERS IN NATION-BUILDING

INDEED, INTEGRITY, HONESTY, SPEAKING THE TRUTH, VIRTUE ARE FUNDAMENTAL TO HUMAN EXISTENCE AND, SO, THEY ARE IMPORTANT IN POLITICAL LIFE AND IN POLITICAL SYSTEMS. WITHOUT THESE BASIC HUMAN QUALITIES, THERE IS NO TRUST AMONG MEMBERS OF SOCIETY AND WE RISK A DESCENT INTO ANARCHY.

THAT IS WHY THE LEGACY OF PRESIDENT MILLS NEEDS TO BE EMBRACED AND BECOME A GUIDING LIGHT FOR US. I ENCOURAGE THE MEMORIAL HERITAGE TO PROPAGATE THE MESSAGE OF WHAT PRESIDENT MILLS STOOD FOR AND THE RELEVANCE OF HIS LIFE AND LEGACY TO OUR COUNTRY.

HIS INTEGRITY, HIS HUMILITY, HIS MODESTY, HIS SHEER DECENCY, HIS HARD WORK ARE ALL WORTHY OF EMULATION IF THIS COUNTRY IS TO RISE UP TO ITS PROMISE.

I AM REALLY TOUCHED BY THE MESSAGE FROM FIRST LADY NAADU MILLS TO US TODAY. ALLOW ME TO QUOTE HER AS I END: "FIIFI WAS OFTEN BATTERED AND BRUISED ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF POLITICS, BUT HE HELD FIRM TO HIS PERSONAL VALUES OF TRUTH, SIMPLICITY, HONESTY AND ABIDING RESPECT FOR ALL. THESE ARE THE QUALITIES I LOVED ABOUT HIM. TO FIIFI, SERVING AT THE HIGHEST ECHELONS OF GOVERNMENT WAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO HELP CHANGE THE CHARACTER OF GHANA POLITICS FOR THE BETTER. IN THIS REGARD I BELIEVE POSTERITY WILL JUDGE HIM WELL."

I BELIEVE SO TOO.

THE LEGACY OF PROFESSOR MILLS LIVES ON!

I MISS PRESIDENT MILLS!!

THANK YOU