

MEDIA STATEMENT ON ITLOS NATIONAL AWARDS

I understand that my decision to decline the offer of a national award is being interpreted as motivated by partisan political considerations. In my letter of 2 November 2022 to the Solicitor-General, in response to hers informing me of the offer of an award, I explain that “I have long and deeply held convictions about not accepting recognition in the form of national honours.” Those who know me will confirm these convictions as well as my inclination to avoid grand public gestures and the fuss around them.

If anything tarnishes the awards, it is not my rejection of the offer to me, but rather the unfortunate selectivity in deciding those involved in the maritime boundary litigation to whom awards would be given. It is impossible to understand the criteria which excluded the names of Nana Asafu-Adjaye, Thomas Manu, Ayaa Armah, Kojo Agbenor-Efunam, Nana Appia Kyei and Nii Adzei Akpor. Even Professor Martin Tsamenyi is left out. It was his work that led to the creation of the Maritime Boundary Secretariat, which co-ordinated the litigation. He was an influential member of the team till he fell ill. Nor is it clear why Kwame Mfodwo, the Co-ordinator of the Maritime Boundary Secretariat and Nana Poku, the indefatigable cartographer of the team, were only deserving of “Certificates”, in an evidently belated attempt to offer them some acknowledgement.

I prefer to celebrate the collective effort of the team and the leadership that promoted collaboration and stifled disruptive elements. The unforgettable images of Marietta Brew Appiah-Opong handing over to Gloria Akuffo symbolise that and remain indelible.



F.S. Tsikata

Accra

15 March 2023