

MR. PRESIDENT YOUR FATE FOR THE NEXT FOUR YEARS IS IN YOUR OWN HANDS: BY MARTIN A. B. K. AMIDU

Your Excellency, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana! We travelled the same path as fellow travellers and citizens seeking free and fair elections at the 7th December 2016 Presidential and General elections when you were the Presidential candidate of the New Patriotic Party (NPP). That auditions journey, by the will of the electorate, resulted in the potentiality for positive and lasting democratic change for our great country Ghana when you overwhelmingly won the elections for President. Ghanaians have since been waiting with bated breath for their votes to be reciprocated with the transformation of the potential into real, concrete, and above all positive changes as you assured the nation.

At mid night on 6th January 2017 Parliament was convoked with a majority of members belonging to the NPP which sponsored your candidature for President. The next day, 7th January 2017 upon your taking the solemn oath of office and assuming office as a popularly elected President and Commander-in-Chief of our dear Republic in recent memory we, your fellow travellers parted company with you as citizen travellers to remain citizens only while you took your additional and rightful place as President and Commander-in-Chief of the Republic of Ghana for the next four years. In these coming four years, your fate for the success or failure of the management of the enterprise called Corporate Ghana is solely in your own and exclusive hands.

Mr. President there is no gain saying that the experiences of the majority of Ghanaians in the immediate past few years have generated tremendous support and enthusiasm for your professed cause of action to save our dear country within the next four years. In whatever you do for the next four years, remember that unlike your predecessor whose mandate was based on a casting vote of the Supreme Court, you received the overwhelming vote of the entire nation in spite of deliberate attempts by the incumbent to rig the elections. Electoral Commission and cohort member, it does not now matter to us whether the margin between the winner and incumbent stood at 1.5 million when you succumbed and declared the results or at your revised figure of 984,570 votes as you caused to be published on Starrfm on 12th January 2017 Gambian style - we the citizens thwarted the rigging machine, period!

Your Excellency Mr. President, in this new presidential journey upon which you have embarked, remember at all times during your tenure that your massive victory and thrashing of the incumbent, and the majority parliamentary seats your political party gained was not the exclusive work of members of the political party that sponsored your candidature. Indeed, it was the collective work of millions of ordinary Ghanaians including some frustrated supporters of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), our brothers and sisters in uniform, retired persons on the reserve list, and retired persons generally who had committed their lives to fighting the machinery which the incumbent had put in place to facilitate rigging the elections against the winning candidate.

Your Excellency, these ordinary Ghanaians are not looking for appointments or positions in your Government neither do they care about the usual diplomatic political correctness of the international community in pretending that these citizens did not actively thwart the incumbent's rigging machine that forced the acceptance of defeat and the symbolic arrangements for conceding defeat before the results were finally announced by the Electoral Commission. All that these ordinary and committed citizens care about is that you never repeat the mistakes of your immediate predecessor's government which simply took Ghanaians for granted as undiscerning and looted them to pulp.

ECOWAS and the other international political establishments did not commission Ghanaians to defend their own country and its democratic credentials. This is Ghana, and John Dramani Mahama and his cohorts could not have refused to concede defeat when the victory was so overwhelming let alone to have done what Yahaya Jammeh did in The Gambia. Thank God! The facts and social and political interactions from 7th December 2016 to the formal declaration of the results will forever be preserved in cyberspace to support the fact that there were active malicious attempts to rig the elections in Ghana by the incumbent and his cohorts.

And no amount of reframing of the facts by any external bodies to give the appearance that John Mahama voluntarily conceded defeat to the winner can ever change what really happened. The prime credit for successfully managing last year's elections goes first and foremost to the Supreme Court of Ghana for narrowing the windows for rigging and secondly to the vigilance of ordinary Ghanaians against that type of looting which must be acknowledged by the international community and not reframed.

Your Excellency, I have read several written statements by fellow citizens showing the usual euphoria of victory in trying to deify you even before you can execute any of your promised developmental plans, adherence to the rule of law and good governance systems. Such unintended sycophancy is the greatest danger facing African leaders including Ghana with numerous examples of the halleluiah, halleluiah today and cries of crucify him, crucify him tomorrow. Remember always that governance as a human enterprise is susceptible to unforeseen natural contingencies that affect every human endeavor whatever one's good intentions and wishes. It works like applying quantum mechanics theory in social and political interactions.

Mr. President, you have been in office for a week already and in the process of forming your Government. Ghanaians exhibit a great deal of good will for you to succeed as President. But make haste slowly and be fairly sure of each step you take. The John Mahama retirement residence and office saga nearly cost you well-meaning supporters both in your political party and amongst ordinary citizens of good will. The ordinary Ghanaian was quick to see that Mahama had with preconceived malice planned for years to take the Vice President's residence for himself as his life-long retirement home right after Professor Mills' demise. Even the ordinary Ghanaian sitting in the Madina tro tro bus realized that Mahama's scheme of remaining

in the Vice President's official residence instead of moving to the Presidential residence at the Flagg Staff House was part of his pre-meditated and internalized looting behavior of state assets.

Mr. President, you need no reminder that an experience and eminent lawyer and statesman of your caliber ought to be wary when dealing with public purse looters of any hue. I thank God that like the monkey which says the mango at the tip of the branch of the tree top which he cannot reach and pluck smells badly, and therefore he does not want it, so too John Mahama with his tail between his legs seeing that Ghanaians were overwhelmingly against his looting of the official residence and office as his retirement award for life, has ingeniously made a face-saving by writing to withdraw his earlier letter of request with a curious copy to the King of Asante. Manasseh Azure Awuni's beautiful article – "Manasseh's Folder: of a greedy nation and a homeless president" - should be a must read for citizens seeking a fair analysis of the Bungalow No. 3 Prestige Link (residence) and Bungalow No. 6 on 3rd Avenue, Ridge (office) premeditated looting saga (see myjoyonline.com).

Mr. President, your anti-corruption promise and agenda in my view was your winning manifesto item at the elections whose actualization we are expecting you to implement without fear or favour, affection or ill will, no matter whose ass is gored. I agree entirely with former President Rawlings that it is the high anti-corruption moral ground you occupied over the NDC which made your victory a foregone conclusion. Many Ghanaians, like me, are not followers of your political party but I dare say that as long as you continue occupying that high moral ground and fight corruption in deeds you will succeed and your first four-year tenure will usher in the golden age of Ghana again. I also have no reason to doubt that as long as you always put Ghana First in your administration the present goodwill you enjoy will endure throughout your tenure.

My humble observation from some of your recent pronouncements and acts as President, however, is that you appear to trust so many people without any reservations. In my experience, that has been the undoing of many an honest statesman. Duncan, King of Scotland, in Macbeth after describing Macbeth as: "O valiant cousin! Worthy gentleman!" and declaring - "Great happiness!" to the news of victory also said of his hitherto trusted Thane of Cawdor who had turned traitor and rebel that: "There's no art To find the mind's construction in the face. He was a gentleman on whom I built An absolute trust." But as fate had it Duncan immediately placed his unreserved trust in the valiant cousin and worthy gentleman, Macbeth, and that became his undoing. A word to the wise is enough or as some of us from northern Ghana playfully like putting it, "a word to the wise is in the north".

Mr. President, your fate for the next four years is entirely in your own hands. God helps those who help themselves. May God, Allah, help you - Good luck! Put Ghana First!

Martin A. B. K. Amidu
Accra, 15th January 2017