

Speech
by the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr. Christoph Retzlaff
on the occasion of the Day of German Unity
Accra, 8 October 2019

- **Hon. Minister for Communications Ursula Owusu Ekuful,**
- **Hon Ministers and Deputy Ministers**
- **Hon. Members of Parliament**
- **Traditional chiefs**
- **Excellencies, dear friends and guests**

Thank you for being here with us tonight to celebrate the 29th anniversary of German reunification, 30 years of the fall of the Berlin wall and of course our vibrant partnership with Ghana.

German unity was a once in a lifetime event for us Germans. It was a day of huge joy and deep emotions. The fall of the wall was made possible by courageous people –not only in East Germany, but also in Poland Hungary and the former Chechoslovakia - who stood up for freedom, human rights and democracy. It was a peaceful uprising that changed the world and still is an inspiration for many people around the world. We are grateful to our Eastern European neighbours and our international partners, mainly the US, Russia, France and the UK, for their trust and support.

1989/90 was a defining moment for Europe and the world. A united Europe emerged after decades of cold war and division into Western Europe and Communist Eastern Europe. Europe today looks completely different from 1989. The former Eastern and Central European countries are now members of the European Union. Our European continent – once the front line for a potential confrontation of the superpowers- became the most peaceful and prosperous continent in the world. This was a tremendous success story for

the European Union, a European Union that is and will remain indispensable for Germany. We stand for multilateralism and cooperation, not for nationalism. And we are proud to have Ghana as our ally.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Ghana and Germany are in a strong partnership together. President Steinmeier and Chancellor Merkel both visited Ghana. President Akufo-Addo has already been four times in Germany since taking office and will come to Berlin once again in a few weeks.

Our partnership with Ghana is built around three pillars: investment and jobs, good governance and the fight against poverty.

Germany initiated the G20 Compact with Africa Initiative and we have launched our bilateral “Reform- and Investment Partnership”, very much in line with the “Africa-EU Alliance”. This partnership is producing concrete results: Germany and Ghana just signed a financing agreement for 16 Mio EUR for Ghana’s membership in the “African Trade Insurance Agency”. This will boost trade with and investment in Ghana. And Germany has launched the new “Africa Fund” with a volume of 1 Bill EUR to foster investment in Africa.

Our development cooperation is reflecting Ghana’s priorities along the Ghana Beyond Aid Strategy. We have increased the volume considerably under our Reform- and Investment Partnership. For us, economic development is always linked to the fight against poverty . We must make sure that millions of poor people get the chance to live a life in dignity. Poverty is- as President Akufo-Addo just said at the UN in New York- still a daily reality in this country and it robs people of their dignity. It is our joint task to change that.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Germany-Ghana economic relations are making good progress. Trade volume went up by 25 % in 2018. But we can and must do better on both sides.

Conditions for doing business in Ghana have improved, but they are still not as good as they could and should be.

Many German companies are interested in investing in Ghana. In February we hosted the “German Africa Business Summit” in Accra-the biggest Africa event of German business with more than 700 participants. And in November the new “German-Ghanaian Business Council” will be launched in Berlin.

Volkswagen will start car assembling in Ghana soon. German company Knauf has opened a vocational training center in Accra for 900 young Ghanaians. Vocational training is key for the industrialization of Ghana. We will therefore expand our vocational training programs and will provide 25.000 young Ghanaians with vocational training in the next years!

We are supporting Ghanaian start-ups and young entrepreneurs. And in December 2018 the biggest European internet and digital conference-re publica- from Berlin- came for the first time ever to Africa and to Accra.

Our cooperation in science and education is strong. We now have over 40 university partnerships between Ghana and Germany. Currently 500 young Ghanaians hold scholarships for German universities. We intend to widen this program. The recent visit by our Federal Minister for Education and Research will further strengthen our cooperation . In March we have launched a 25 Mio EUR program for e-waste recycling in Agbogbloshie. And with the WASCAL-Institute in Accra, supported by the German Government, we are studying the effects of climate change in West Africa and try to provide strategies for preventing them or help farmers to adapt to them.

These are just a few examples how we want to strengthen the enormous potential and creativity in Ghana.

Honorable Minister,

Dear guests,

In concluding, I would like to thank all 15 German institutions present here in Ghana for their excellent work and cooperation. My thanks go also to our generous sponsors Allianz, Accra Brewery, B/ Braun, Brussels Airlines, Denk Pharma, DHL, Evonik, Ghacem, Knauf, Kühne & Nagel, MC Bauchemie, Siemens, Universal Motors, Volkswagen, Porsche and C. Woermann for supporting our reception tonight.

And last not least a big thank you to our great Embassy team!

Honorable Minister, dear guests

May I now invite you to join me in a toast

- **to the good health of H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana, the people of Ghana and**
- **to the friendship between Ghana and Germany.**

Thank you.