

SPEECH BY THE HON MINISTER FOR CHIEFTAINCY AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS, DR. HENRY SEIDU DAANNAA AT SEFWI ANHWIASO ON SATURDAY 8TH MARCH 2014 TO CELEBRATE THE ANHWIASO STATE ELUO FESTIVAL 2014 BY THE CHIEFS AND PEOPLE OF ANHWIASO TRADITIONAL AREA

Mr. Chairman,

Ogyeahoho Yaw Gyebi II, Omanhene of Sefwi Anhwiaso Traditional Area,

Nananom

District/Municipal Chief Executives

Distinguished Invited Guests

The Media

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am most grateful for the invitation extended to me as the Minister for Chieftaincy and Traditional Affairs to join you in the celebration of your Eluo festival. I have been informed that activities of the celebration started almost a week ago with various events and today's durbar is to climax the weeklong celebration.

Chairman, Nananom, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I am particularly happy because of the fact that the celebration of this important state festival by the Chiefs and people of the traditional area which has been stalled for the past twenty-five (25) years has been actively revived. This is an important development borne out of perseverance and the desire of the people to chart a new course for themselves. It is an indication of the need to forge ahead in unity and peace as one people

with a common ancestry. I wish to use this occasion to greatly commend the Chiefs and people of the traditional area for the singular effort and achievement.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I am enthused about the theme for the celebration of the festival which is "Peaceful co-existence for sustainable Socio-Economic Development in Sefwi Anhwiaso State/Traditional Area".

Indeed, as we all know peace is a necessary tool for development. It is the bedrock which thrives development and promotes unity and cohesion. No community will develop if there is no peace because no investor will invest in a community that is at war with itself. I am therefore happy that today marks a significant turning point in your quest to chart a new course for the traditional area. I am happy that you are all embracing peace after many years of mistrust. I wish to state that whatever had been the challenges of the past shall be buried.

Today, the keyword is forging ahead in unity. In unity lies strength as we always say.

One of the potential areas of conflict that threatens national peace and security is Chieftaincy conflicts.

It is common knowledge that Chieftaincy and all other forms of disputes do not promote progress and development. It is always better to jaw-jaw than to war-war.

Nananom, on the occasion of this special festival celebration, I wish to appeal to you to refrain from any act that will endanger the peace and security of the traditional area. Let us all live as brothers and sister. There are laid down procedures and structures for resolving any misunderstanding and it is important we respect these structures. This is the only way we can help ourselves to promote the development of our respective communities.

Again, Nananom, I will appeal to you to effectively utilize the strength of your festival to open up the area to attract investment that will propel job creation and enhance the total well being of the people in the area.

Nananom, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, another important area I will like to touch on is the address delivered by H.E. The President John Dramani Mahama on the state of the Nation to Parliament on Tuesday 25th February 2014. As we all know, one of the critical concerns and issues the President raised was the issue of Galamsey and its threat to our nation's geographical environment. Indeed the Galamsey issue has become a serious environmental challenge to us as a nation today. It is polluting our river bodies, desecrating the environment to the extent that if care is not taken, we will loose these beautiful natural resources by the turn of the next decade. In addressing the challenge, the President called for concerted efforts on the part of all to halt the menace. He indicated the government's commitment to work with

Traditional Authorities in finding a lasting solution to the problem.

In this regard, the President said the government is working through the relevant Ministries to roll out the Galamsey Livelihood Programme to be implemented in all affected areas. The Programme involves the active deployment of the Youth in planting trees and filling the land sites for the land to regain its nutrients. This is a laudable alternative livelihood programme to ensure that the youth are productively and positively engaged. It will offer the youth gainful employment and take them away from the Galamsey business. It is my hope that Nananom and the entire community will support this important intervention to promote afforestation and equally create jobs for the youth when it starts.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Traditional Affairs will always work to promote the activities of the Chieftaincy Institution because of its complementary role in national development. In this regard, I wish to state that the Ministry in conjunction with the National House of Chiefs have jointly established the National House of Chiefs Project Secretariat to harmonize and coordinate all programmes of the sector. These include a series of workshops being planned for both Chiefs and Queenmothers to take place in the year and the second phase of the Codification of the Lines of Succession to Stools/Skins in 30 selected Traditional Areas. The process for the representation of Queenmothers at

both the National and Regional Houses of Chiefs is also on course. So is the amendment to Section 63 (d) of the Chieftaincy Act. The necessary Legislative Instruments on the above have been forwarded to Parliament for consideration. These programmes, I must state are designed to strengthen the Chieftaincy Institution in general and the capacity of Nananom in particular, in dealing with some of the challenges in the Traditional Areas. I hope Nananom will support the efforts of my Ministry and by extension the government in promoting the ideals of the Institution and government programmes in general. It is my hope that the Institution will continue to grow from strength to strength.

Nananom, before I take my seat, I look forward to joining you again next year for another celebration.

Once again, thank you all for the invitation and warm reception. God bless you.