



# **D** PRESIDENTIAL **EBATE** ACCRA OCT. 2008

Strengthening the pillars of Ghana's Democracy



THE INSTITUTE OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

# **PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE**

## **Strengthening the Pillars of Ghana's Democracy**

**October, 2008, Accra.**

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The Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) Ghana was founded in October 1989 as an independent public policy institute dedicated to the establishment and strengthening of a market economy and a democratic, free and open society. It considers improvements in the legal, social and political institutions as necessary conditions for sustained economic growth and human development.

The IEA supports research and promotes and publishes studies on important economic, socio-political and legal issues in order to enhance understanding of public policy.

Further information may be obtained from:

The Institute of Economic Affairs,  
P.O. Box OS1936, Osu, Accra, Ghana.

Tel: +233-302244716 / 0307010714

Fax: +233-302-222313

Email: [iea@ieagh.org](mailto:iea@ieagh.org)

Website: [www.ieagh.org](http://www.ieagh.org)

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# Presidential Aspirants 2008



PROF. J.E.A. MILLS  
(NDC PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE)



NANA AKUFO - ADDO  
(NPP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE)



DR. PAA KWASI NDUOM  
(CPP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE)



DR. EDWARD MAHAMA  
(PNC PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE)



## PREFACE

The Institute of Economic Affairs, IEA, has since the year 2000, organised Presidential Election Debates ahead of each of the national presidential elections. In 2008, two debates were carried out. The theme for the debates was “Strengthening the Pillars of Ghana's Democracy”. The first of these debates took place in Accra on the 29<sup>th</sup> of October, 2008.

Participating debaters were Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo of the New Patriotic Party, Dr. Paa Kwesi Nduom of the Convention People's Party, Professor John Evans Atta Mills of the National Democratic Congress and Dr. Edward Nasigre Mahama of the People's National Convention.

The Debate provided a forum for these candidates to present their vision to the nation and dialogue with each other on the policies and programmes that they believed would best serve the national interest. It also provided the electorate with the needed information to make informed choices as to who could best lead the nation. Equally importantly, the debate emphasised an issues-driven approach to the presidential campaign and the demand for accountability from the candidates.

The issues and questions that were debated upon were the following:

- ✍ Unskilled Labour and Job Creation
- ✍ Promotion of the Agricultural Sector
- ✍ Management of the Oil Industry
- ✍ Private Sector Development
- ✍ Sub-regional Trade and Financial Integration
- ✍ Education
- ✍ Women's Rights
- ✍ Children's Rights
- ✍ Maternal Mortality
- ✍ Ghana's Pension Scheme

- ✍ Energy Supply
- ✍ National Security

Moderators for the Debate were Professor Kwame Karikari of the University of Ghana and Mr. Cyril Acolatse, a renowned broadcaster.

This publication provides a transcript of the events at the Accra Debate.

I hope you find this publication useful.

Thank you.

**Jean Mensa**  
**Executive Director**

### **Question One:**

*You have each indicated in your manifestoes that you will put money in the pockets of the people of Ghana. This implies creating jobs. What will you do to create more jobs?*

### **Nana Akufo-Addo:**

Good evening fellow Ghanaians. I am sure Ghanaians are very happy about this event, and are grateful to the IEA for bringing together all of us who are candidates in decisions affecting our nation. I am particularly happy we have you, Cyril Acolatse and Kwame Karikari, stars and figures in the media, moderating this event. I also take the opportunity to wish my colleagues the best of luck.

This has been a central question for us in this campaign and in the management of our nation.

At the level of the public sector, we are committed to doing something that will have an impact on jobs. We are committed to increasing the Police Service of our country, doubling it from 25,000 to 50,000. We are committed to putting 20,000 sanitary inspectors or town council inspectors on the streets every year, for the next 5 years.

We are also committed to increasing the employment range of the National Youth Employment Programme from 108,000 to some 500,000.

We are basing our philosophy on the premise that it is the private sector that, above all, will be responsible for creating jobs.

What does that mean?

Two things; firstly, that we must support small and medium-scale enterprises in our country since they are the main producers and creators of jobs. That is why we are committing ourselves to

establishing an Industrial Fund of ₵1 billion to make it easier for people who want to create new small- and medium- scale enterprises to access capital.

Secondly, that the transformation of our economy from producing raw materials to industrialising will in the medium to long term, be the best way of guaranteeing jobs for the masses of our people.

We are committed to reducing the tax burden on the manufacturing industry, by proposing a reduction in corporate tax from 25 to 15 per cent.

***Follow-up question:***

*How will you to take the head porters (kaayaye) and truck pushers off the streets?*

**Akufo-Addo:**

First of all, we need to open the avenue for more education for everybody, including those who are already in the streets. There will be evening classes and distance learning for skills upgrading. We have a mass of people who are not equipped to operate in a modern industrialised economy.

Getting their skills up is one fundamental policy position that we have taken distance education, the apprenticeship programme that we now want to launch within the larger process of stimulating our industrial development: How for instance we can get many into apprenticeship programmes? That becomes another way of enhancing capacities in these areas.

**Dr. Paa Kwesi Nduom's response to main question:**

Good evening fellow citizens of Ghana. Thank you for the opportunity to be here this evening.

Job creation: This is a centrepiece of what the Convention People's Party is offering to Ghanaians and that is how come we say *Edwumawura*.

We want to bring change, but not just any kind of change; change that Ghanaians can feel in their pockets. And if that is going to be done we need to do something different from what we've been doing in the past 60 years. Specifically, this is what we will do:

We will use the State's purchasing power to buy what we produce here in this country; if we grow rice we will buy Ghanaian rice, if we produce anything we will buy that which is produced here in Ghana. That is, after all, what the Koreans and Singaporeans did. Indeed, that is what the Americans do. If you see an American official coming from the United States of America to Ghana, they fly American Airlines. This is what the Convention People's Party will lead us to do.

We will use the State's purchasing power to help our private sector and others to grow. Every time you come to a state function under the Convention People's Party leadership, nothing will pass through your lips that was not grown in Ghana or produced in Ghana.

Our people need help and the most important thing to do is to create a market in Ghana for the people who have invested their monies in Ghana. That is what we will do.

Let me just give you two or three specific examples. If you go to Mole near Damango we have a wonderful tourist attraction, the Mole Game Park. The road there is horrible. We will create a first class road there so that people from all over the world will come to Mole. Jobs will be created. If you go to Ashanti Region we are a leading cocoa producer - 200 million cocoa sacks are needed. We will bring back the jute factory, plant Kenaf all over the country and make sure we create real jobs Ghanaians can benefit from.

With the oil find in the Western Region, we don't want the CPP administration to have anybody say that we are just going to continue to export the raw material. We will create a petrochemical industry in the Western Region, produce plastics and polyester and other things so that we can create real jobs – jobs that can fill Ghanaian pockets.

The state in America is putting in US\$300 billion to help and subsidise its farmers. We will do the same in Ghana.

That is what the CPP will do to create meaningful jobs for Ghanaian pockets.

***Follow-up question:***

*What is your attitude to the growing culture of “buy and sell”?*

**Dr. Nduom:**

Buying and selling is not necessarily a bad thing, as long as you are buying and selling what you produce in your own country.

That is where our emphasis lies; to ensure that we can industrialise. Remember, in the 1960s we started industrialisation. Over sixty of those enterprises collapsed. We will bring most of them back. Industrialisation is what we need. No country in the world has developed on the back of exporting raw materials or supporting what other people create and then sell in their own country. We will not support that. We want to produce here in this country. That is what will produce meaningful jobs; that is what will produce good money; money in Ghanaian peoples' pocket.

**Prof. Mills' response to main question:**

Thank you for the opportunity given to me and my compatriots.

When you talk about jobs, you also have to think about how you are going to prepare people for the jobs. Training is very important. Helping

people to acquire skills is very important. The state in this case has a role to play. One of the problems bedevilling our employment creation is the fact that we have a large army of unskilled people. When you take the figures, only 40% of our kids who go through JSS end up in SSS and then at the tertiary institutions. What do we do with them?

There are very few technical schools, very few vocational schools, no avenues for apprenticeship and therefore they do not have the skills. I know that it is not the state's duty to provide the actual jobs. But the state must create an enabling environment, and within the Constitution it is very clear that all political parties are to foster an atmosphere to promote private sector growth.

Now when you come to the productive areas of the economy; because the economy must be such that it can propel the private sector to produce jobs, we are being told that agriculture accounts for about 60% of the population's workforce. Agriculture in this country has collapsed and the reasons are not hard to find.

We need the necessary inputs. We need to give them capital. If we take agriculture seriously we would be serving at least 60% of the population.

The private sector is in distress. The business atmosphere is indeed very unfriendly. Our SMEs and industries have collapsed. They are competing with cheap and sometimes shoddy imports. We haven't given them the necessary capital and there is slow uptake of technology. So what we need to do is to look at the issues facing the industrial sector because when the private sector is strong it will be able to provide the requisite jobs.

When you talk about jobs you also think about those who have gone up the educational ladder – there is graduate unemployment. What do you do about them? We need training, training, training.

***Follow-up question:***

*What are the most critical issues you will tackle regarding un-skilled labour?*

**Prof Mills:**

The most important one is the private sector – private sector and agriculture. The agriculture sector is crying for help and indeed, government should pay attention to the private sector.

**Dr. Edward N. Mahama:**

Good evening fellow Ghanaians and thank you IEA for having us come together. We have to start from where we are.

60% of the Ghanaian population are farmers. And one sector of that farming community has shown Ghana what needs to be done. Most of the farmers are private because there is no government plantation in this country. The cocoa farmer gets some sort of subsidy and the most important thing for him is the guaranteed market. A farmer in Afram Plains said to me; “Dr Mahama, if you can guarantee me a market for my maize, I will produce”.

Meanwhile, a poultry farmer in Brong Ahafo is crying for poultry feed for his poultry. I have seen the linkages from talking to these two farmers. We will produce corn in Afram Plains, ship it over to a poultry meal factory, produce the meal, feed it to the poultry in Brong Ahafo, and feed the chicken to Ghanaian children. I promise that every Ghanaian child at lunch will get one piece of chicken. That chicken will be grown locally.

Let's start from where we are, and then we move on to industrialisation – agro-based industries.

Ghana has been growing cocoa since 1847 when Tetteh Quarshie brought the bean to Ghana. Yet we still export the cocoa in the form of beans. No Ghanaian has been encouraged to establish a factory to

extract the cocoa butter so that jobs will be created here. A PNC administration will put these linkages in place so that jobs will be created alongside what we are doing.

The oil industry coming online should be a way to boost the agriculture revolution that we need so that our importation of rice, sugar and other food items will go down. When you do this then you create a linkage between the petrochemical industry and agro industry and there will be plenty of jobs for people. We think that we will, over the period, create not less than 100,000 new jobs.

***Follow-up question:***

*What specific kinds of subsidies will you offer to farmers?*

**Dr. Mahama:**

Guaranteed prices; buying the products at the farm gate. One thing I have noticed going round the country is that it is very, very difficult for farmers in Kpandai, Kete-Krachi area to transport their yams. The roads are bad. Often times I see one big truck lying on its side loaded with the yams getting rotten. By the time it gets to Accra the farmer has lost because the market woman who has gone to get them now has to take account of the rotten yams within a consignment. So basically, when she goes out to buy, she is giving the farmer less than the production price.

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

I want to respond to the statement that was made by Prof Mills that agriculture in our country has collapsed. I think one of the things that is quite clear to many of us who know the realities of what is going on in Ghana, is that the food stocks of our country and the capacity of our farmers to produce food especially, grains and tubers, are very high. That is the reason why we have been able, much better than even most of our neighbours, to withstand these dramatic increases in food prices that have been experienced across the world.

**Question Two:**

*Ghana has found oil in commercial quantities. What will you do to ensure that the oil money benefits all Ghanaians?*

**Dr. Nduom:**

If this oil is not going to benefit the Ghanaian, it must stay in the ground. It must stay in the ground because we have seen natural resources in Ghana before. Oil coming to Ghana is nothing new.

We have seen diamond. Go to Akwatia and see what is happening there. Go to Prestea, go to Nsuta; go to many of the places where we have seen natural resources. It has not benefited the Ghanaian. And therefore I want to make sure we don't experience what has happened in the Niger Delta in Nigeria, where there is abundant wealth flowing and the people wallow in filth and poverty. I don't want that in Ghana and therefore what I will do is this:

Number one; in those communities surrounding the area where the oil has been found, I will get the planners from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology and others in the country to re-plan all the communities and modernise them with all the necessary modern amenities so that they can see direct immediate benefit. We owe it to them; I don't want any more of the Obuasi, Akwatia situation, or anything else.

I have been to Korea. The Koreans built a refinery at the same time that we built the one in Tema. Go there and see what they have done. They don't have oil; they have a petrochemical industry, real jobs; abundant money.

They have gone from a per capita income lower than that of Ghana at independence to more than \$10,000. How did they do it? They made sure that the resources in their country benefited their own. And therefore I will use all the powers of the State to establish a petrochemical industry in the Western Region.

**Follow-up question:**

*One of the biggest problems with petroleum in Africa and many parts of the world is corruption. What is your proposal to ensure that Ghana has a different experience?*

**Dr. Nduom:**

The problem is not the oil. The problem is the people who deal with the oil. I am glad you mentioned the point about corruption because what I want to do is to separate the responsibilities of the Ministry of Justice from that of the Office of Attorney General so we can have the independence of deciding whom to prosecute. So that, should anybody do anything wrong in this country, they will not be able to run to any political party for cover.

I want Ghanaians to debate. What are we going to spend this oil money on? What are we going to do with it? Not just something brought by the presidency, but something taken around the country so that we can all agree that this is how we are going to spend the oil money.

So that no president, nobody can come into this country and say I want to spend the money this way and therefore they spend it that way, or I want to use the money this way and they use it for that. We all agree on how we want to spend the money and so it is spent judiciously.

**Prof. Mills:**

Let nobody think that it is because of their deeds that we have found oil in this country. It is a blessing from God to all of us and we dare not fail the people of this country.

We have to learn from other people's experiences. Oil is exhaustible. We must know therefore that the time will come when we will not have this resource. We do not, as we sit here, even know the quantity. At some stage they may decide that it is not worthwhile even exploiting the resources that we have. But indeed, what we must do first is to try and fight for our fair share of this exhaustible resource.

Secondly we must make provision for the future and also for the present. With the present let's use the resources very wisely in order to shore up the economy, building the necessary infrastructure making sure that those who suffer from the environmental health hazards have some benefits from this resource.

Let us get an independent authority which will account to the good people of this country for the oil resource. We don't want it to be a curse but we do not want to pin all our hopes on this. Because you've got oil you abandon your cocoa, you abandon agriculture, and you are abandoning industry. Indeed if you look at the oil law, the goods and services associated with the oil exploration should come from local sources. Let us seize the opportunity to train our people, get people to form companies to exploit this resource.

***Follow-up question:***

*There is huge foreign investment in the oil exploration. This is evoking apprehension that the management of the oil industry might be dominated by foreigners. What will you do to ensure that Ghanaians have a large say in the management of the oil industry?*

**Prof. Mills:**

We have the GNPC. The GNPC has a stake in the oil revenues, but at the end of the day it is not the investor who owns the plot of land. It is the people of Ghana. We therefore must get a body which will make sure it monitors what is going on, gets the companies to account to it for all the resources so that they will be able to account to the people of this country.

We are not going to leave everything in the hands of the oil companies; they must recoup their investments. So even at this stage our government must be interested in the kind of investments that they are making – whether these investments are of such a nature that indeed, when the time comes we can sit down and allow them to recoup. So this

is not the time to say we have struck oil and then fold up our arms. Let us try and see exactly what kind of investment is being made and whether we will allow these investments to be recouped here.

**Dr. Mahama on main question:**

Firstly, transparency. Every contract that my government will sign with any foreign company or agency must be brought before Parliament; scrutinised by Parliament and the people, so that they know what we as a nation are going into. After all it may be my minister or I who will sign the contract but it's on behalf of the people. So transparency is one way of letting people know the quantities that are coming out and the revenue that is coming.

Knowledge, they say is power. That is why another thing we will do as part of developing public funded universities in the five other regions that do not have universities, is establish one in the Western Region, with special emphasis on oil study. Our people must know what they can get out of the oil.

I have been saying that if Ghana were the USA, every child growing up within cocoa growing areas would know what to do with the leaves of the cocoa tree, the bark of the tree, the pod and maybe somebody would decide to make carpets out of the fibre that you can get from the pod. But because we are ignorant we are shipping everything abroad. So it is important for Ghanaians to begin to learn about what they can do with the oil on their land. What value can they add? What can they get out of it?

It is the priority of the PNC administration to link a petrochemical industry with agro industry. After all you can get fertilizer out of oil by-products. So basically, with these linkages you are making sure that Ghanaians reap the benefits of this oil that we have found.

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

A formula that establishes transparency is the first key. Second is how effectively the revenues will be used to propel the development of our

economy. Certain decisions are already being taken in terms of the management of this resource. A Ghana National Petroleum Authority is about to be established. A Bill is before Parliament, which will seek to separate the two functions of GNPC, its commercial and regulatory function – so that GNPC will concentrate on its commercial activities. We would then have a regulatory authority with responsibility for the supervision of the industry. That process is on-going. We will of course support that process if by the time I win the presidency and come into office it hasn't been completed.

Second is what to do with the revenue. Our view is that we have to establish an oil fund, and with Parliament, work out a formula for distribution of the fund. None of us wants to see a repetition of the issues in the Delta Region. A certain percentage of the fund must go to the development of the Western Region. We need also to attach some of these revenues to critical areas of our national life; support our education, support our infrastructure and our health system and create the funds for industrial development of our nation.

***Follow-up question:***

*Who will manage this oil fund and what are some of the outlines of what this oil fund will go into?*

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

That was my point on the regulatory function of the new Ghana Petroleum Authority. This Authority and Parliament will ultimately be the bodies that will be responsible for designating the manager of the oil fund. It is important that all the decisions are taken in the full glare of the public so that the Ghanaian people, who are the ultimate beneficiaries of the asset, will see exactly how every single dollar of oil is being used.

That is the formula that we have and I believe very strongly that cooperation with Parliament in defining the use of the oil and insisting on Parliament working with the executive to agree on a formula for

distribution provides the best guarantee. We are not going to reinvent the wheel. There are other countries which are like us; which are in the same position as we are. Norway is a classic example. We are taking our lessons from their experiences.

**Question three:**

*Economic growth requires foreign direct investment as well as the promotion of local initiatives. How will you manage foreign investment in such a way that it does not stifle local initiatives?*

**Prof. Mills:**

Describing the economy of a country as strong and buoyant without the involvement of Ghanaians leaves a lot to be desired. Ghana is for Ghanaians and we must look up to Ghanaians first. We therefore have to look to our local entrepreneurs. Are they alright? Do they have the right atmosphere? Are we giving them the right inputs? If you look at the private sector right now, it is in distress. They have a lot of problems. Their contribution to GDP is almost nil.

Over the past few years they've recorded zero growth. It is good to have foreign direct investment. Yes, but that is to supplement local efforts and indeed, we have to be very careful given the problems that we now have with the global financial problems. We are going to find that one of the possible results is that FDI is going to dry up. So I think that FDI should come only to supplement the efforts of Ghanaians.

And indeed we have cases where there is capital flight; I say that charity begins at home. Let's look at our private sector, look at our local entrepreneurs. There were some who were doing very well years ago. Where are they now? When you talk about Ghanaian economic giants who are they? I would rather talk about Ghanaian economic giants, boast about them, rather than refer to FDIs whose loyalty to the Ghanaian economy may not always be the kind that we want. They have problems and the problems are well known. We should tackle them and that is the way to gain confidence, and mind you FDI may come when

they know that Ghanaians themselves are investing in the economy.

***Follow-up question:***

*What are your priority areas regarding the Ghanaian entrepreneur?*

**Prof. Mills:**

Industry, Manufacturing, Agriculture. When you come to industry, what industrial establishments do we have now? These are the sources of employment for a number of our people. We are importing everything. When it comes to agriculture, I made that statement that agriculture has collapsed. What happened to the poultry industry? How many poultry farmers can say they are doing well?

When you look at fishing, we are importing fish into the country. When you look at livestock, what is happening in these areas? I think that with manufacturing, we must be able to manufacture using our local raw materials. I will therefore place much emphasis on agriculture. Agro processing is one area where you can ensure food security and also produce for export. So it's a combination of factors, but I know Ghanaians are experts in these areas and can be relied upon.

**Dr. Mahama's response to main question:**

The way to get the best foreign direct investment is to make sure that the Ghanaian at home is doing well. Then foreigners will see that the business environment is very good and they will come. Many times we go out with cup in hand begging for foreign direct investment when we could help the local people grow. We have this gentleman who is manufacturing cars and doing so well. Somebody like that really ought to be helped to get a partner, maybe one of these car giants to come in and work with him to build the cars locally.

We started building cars or at least assembling cars when I was a medical student and used to do industrial medicine in these assembling plants. Where are they? That is the basis for foreign direct investment. When you have a local entity and they go out and contract the partners

and bring them in that's fine, but if you just go out there and beg people to come, they will come but when things change or your conditions change, they will leave. But the Ghanaian is going nowhere. This is his only land.

I will not go out and beg people to come but I will make it very, very palatable for my own people. Some Ghanaians are abroad, they hold citizenship abroad; they own their own businesses. These are the people that I will ask to come back home.

***Follow-up question:***

*The Ghanaian business person wants to compete on an international scale but is limited by credit facilities. How will you address this?*

**Dr. Mahama:**

We will do that through local banks, which we will guarantee. The problem is that when you have this sort of programme the party machinery usually will hijack it and people think that this is a free gift from the party they helped come to power. So you do it through the banks and you have an understanding with the banks that these are areas I want to encourage and these are the conditions. You give them the loans. If they default for genuine reasons, international financial crises or strikes, or natural disasters, then the government will pay that money.

But it should be a bank-to-individual or enterprise deal rather than from government; not like the recent support that the government has given to people to alleviate poverty. They first got the fertilizer, to get it then you have to get a coupon. To get a coupon you have to go to the District Chief Executive, and you will never get the coupon from the District Chief Executive on time. By the time you get it, it is over and you can't use the fertilizer.

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

Every economy in the world, even the biggest economy – United States of America, welcomes foreign investments into its country. Anytime

that you are in a position to use other people's savings to help develop your economy it is a bonus for you. I welcome the idea of foreign investment in Ghana. And I believe also that the conditions have been created. For instance, we are told by the Ghana Investment Promotion Council that for the first time in our history the value of foreign direct investment in our country may well hit the \$5 billion mark this year.

These are welcome developments in our country because with this of course comes other things – transfer of technology, etc. But really at the end of the day, we know that it is not foreign entrepreneurs or foreign entities that are going to develop our country for us. We have to do that ourselves. And what does that mean? In so far as the private sector is the agency generally responsible for creating jobs – what do we need to do to strengthen our private sector?

Immediately, three things come to mind:

First of all, we need to pass in Ghana a domestic content law that insists that for instance in the oil industry, 25% of whatever supplies go into that industry have to be procured from local sources and producers.

Secondly, the government's intervention in trying to create that critical mass in the private sector is that we are proposing that in future 50% of all procurements by the state will be from Ghanaian producers. We will make that by an amendment to the public procurement law.

Thirdly, we are looking for stimulation; small-and medium-scale industries all over the world are the main creators of work. The \$1 billion industrial fund is to help deal with this issue of capital that you quite rightly raised. These are the ways that we can make sure that our local industry survives and expands.

***Follow-up question:***

*What will you do to keep the engine of the private sector moving?*

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

Some of the measures to do this are already on the table. What we need to do is to grow our private sector. We grow it by providing technical assistance to small-and medium-scale enterprises, making sure that they have this access to capital – long term capital – to enable people to create new enterprises, to expand existing ones.

We are talking about the boost that will be given to local activity by the state herself, saying we will be responsible for 50% of the supplies of government coming from local sources. It is this combination of measures – fiscal and administrative directives put together – that will give us that boost and make the engine run much more efficiently and much more effectively.

**Prof. Mills:**

Are these suggestions not seven or eight years too late? I have had the opportunity to meet the AGI and the complaints that they laid on the table showed that for seven, eight years nothing has happened. Indeed, they are recording negative growth. If the Government knew that this is the way to go why has it waited for so long?

That engine will not crank because that engine has rusted. We've waited for too long and if you look at their contribution to GDP, about which we are singing from the roof top, it is zero.

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

The single factual matter is that the contribution of the manufacturing sector to GDP is not zero, it is 10%. The contribution of our industrial sector to GDP in the country is 25%, it is not zero. Simple fact!

**Dr. Nduom's response to main question:**

You've listened to them. Now listen to the alternative. What we need in this country is not the same old things – the same things that have been done in the past 16 years. Look, let us understand each other. We should rather be talking domestic investment. So let us put the foreign direct investment thing aside and let us go to the transformation that needs to happen.

And again I want to use examples because it is no use just talking. Go to Korea, how did Samsung come about? How did Daewoo come about? How did Goldstar come about? The Government of Korea decided that it needed to create jobs in the country and therefore it went to them and looked at their technical plans. It accepted them. It gave them money – low interest loans and then tax incentives and finally, it made sure they had a market in Korea and when they were able to fill the needs of the market, it helped them to export.

We must do the same things for our people. That is what the Americans do. Small business administration – they give them money – low interest loans; they give it to them and they help them get a market in America. That is what we must do and so when we talk about all of these things, please let's remember others have done it. We can't re-invent the wheel. Let us just do what others have done successfully in this country.

And indeed, when we talk about domestic, over the past 16 years, people have been talking about the private sector as the engine of growth. My friends, if you put the engine there, is it going to move? Absolutely not! What you need is what the CPP administration led by me will do. Give it the body; give it tyres, put fuel in it and put a competent driver in it and it will move in the right direction.

***Follow-up question:***

*Dr Nduom, not long ago you were a public sector reformist and then we are talking about empowering the private sector to play a dominant role*

*in the economy. How will you want to look at it differently from perhaps, what is happening now?*

**Dr. Nduom:**

My experience in the private sector actually informs what I am talking about. I started a hotel in Elmina; not in Accra, not in Kumasi, and what did I have to do? I had to buy my own transformers, all the poles - electric poles- myself. When I outgrew them, the ECG came and said what I paid for belongs to them so I should buy new ones. You know water does not flow to my hotel. It hasn't flowed through the pipes for 2 years. I bought a water tanker. Who is to help me? Nobody.

So that is why I am insisting that our government, the State of Ghana, the Republic of Ghana, whoever is in charge must not just sit in the Castle or the Flagstaff House but go around to where our businesses are and discover what our needs are and help them grow. Period and simple, that is what we need to do.

**Question four:**

*What strategies do you have for Ghanaian industries to benefit from trade within ECOWAS?*

**Dr. Mahama:**

I have traveled throughout West Africa by road. When the West African Heads of State came here for a meeting about Charles Taylor's issue, I asked how many of them had come here by road to Ghana. Try going from Ghana to Lagos by road.

When I am going to my hometown Nalerigu, it takes me about 7 hours to get to Kintampo. Accra to Kintampo is the same distance as Accra to Lagos. It takes you 12 hours to Lagos because of border problems. It still does today. In fact, at one time they asked me to pay a certain levy on the car because it had never crossed there and Dr Limann's son was asked to pay a levy because his passport was virgin and never had

crossed there. These are realities on the ground.

But I have always looked at the Ghana market as too small for even a big Ghanaian entrepreneur. We need the ECOWAS market.

The first thing we need is to remove the borders. Remove them so that goods, services and people can flow directly. Then you have a market that you can talk of. But at the moment, as it is, it doesn't happen. And yet our President is a friend to President Eyadema's son and a friend to Yayi Boni. So I don't understand why we are unable to remove those borders so that goods and services can move freely. I really don't!

The second is what I have been saying all along that we have to be self-reliant. We have to know ourselves; we have to believe in ourselves. This is something that we don't do. Everybody that gets sick in the government goes abroad for treatment. They don't get the treatment here because they won't keep the hospitals well enough to treat them. I will get my treatment here and I will make sure that every other minister gets his treatment here.

***Follow-up question:***

*The barriers you speak of are of many forms, including the physical barriers of the road and tariff barriers. If they have not been removed, what specifically, concretely, will you do to get your colleague presidents to now act?*

**Dr. Mahama:**

In the past it's been because we have had military dictatorships who were worried about their position. If Ghanaians vote me in I am not going to be concerned about somebody coming in like Charles Taylor to take my position. He will have to face Ghanaians. So part of the security efforts have been because of this. The other area of course, is drugs and narcotics. Ghana is one of the two nations mentioned as a haven for drug trafficking.

The neighbours might be feeling that “hey we don't want the drugs to come across.” There are some security measures we have to put in as neighbours. In the US you can travel from Illinois to Florida without anybody stopping you at a border to say; “Show me that you are legitimate”. But here, even to go across Aflao you have to produce your passport. If you don't have it you can't cross. They won't even take your voter ID. These are some of the things that I will tackle.

**Nana Akufu-Addo's response to main question:**

I think what we are talking about here are the central features for our strategies for development. There are a quarter of a billion people living in West Africa. So you have there a very large market. And it is a market that the Ghanaian manufacturers can access; obviously for all our mutual benefits.

With the issue about the constraints, some are being removed as we speak; others are proving more difficult to deal with. But what we are talking about is that there have to be 2 or 3 countries within the ECOWAS that will take it upon themselves to drive the integration agenda. I want Ghana to be one of these 2 or 3 countries. We just have to look at Europe and the manner in which the European Union and the European market have been created. There were 2 or 3 important states in Europe that took it upon themselves to drive the process of integration. We know who they are – Germany and France.

I believe that strategically, what I will try to do is to force the relationships next door with Cote D'Ivoire, hopefully coming to the end of its internal turmoil and ready to resume its position as one of the most important economies in West Africa. Ourselves and the Nigerians and Senegal as well, and we will try and impress upon these countries the need for us to take this integration agenda seriously.

It is clear and open for us to develop our internal structures in such a way that we can reach these markets.

Secondly, the institution of ECOWAS itself needs to be strengthened.

***Follow-up question:***

*One key ingredient for regional economic integration is currency. What will you do to ensure the establishment of a common currency?*

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

Convergence criteria have been established, which will define the process of creating the ECO. The five countries that are outside the CFA franc zone – Ghana, The Gambia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Guinea – committed themselves to creating this special currency. And next year is now the target date for the various convergences – public sector borrowing, rate of inflation and the rest, to converge so that we can move to it.

It is a matter of some urgency. So far as I am concerned, the lessons are going round the world, where people are coming together to create larger and larger economies. If our generation of leaders in West Africa miss that lesson we are condemning ourselves to yet further decades of continuing poverty, and that is one of the things I intend to address with all the vigour at my command.

***Follow-up question:***

*Dr Nduom, do you have anything different from what is being put forward?*

**Dr. Nduom:**

There is one fundamental difference. The Convention People's Party has three fundamental principles. One is social justice, the other is self determination and the third is pan-Africanism.

We don't need to be told by anybody that integration in West Africa and indeed the rest of Africa is necessary. I believe that we will all agree that there is something good in this for the people of Ghana and for the

people in the rest of West Africa. Many people talk as if not much has been achieved. There is the ECOWAS Parliament which is working, there is the Court of Justice; there is the ECOWAS Bank in Lome. There are many other things that are indeed, working. And maybe for those who haven't taken a look at the private sector, the private sector is moving.

Not long ago, many people would not welcome Nigerian banks to Ghana. But they are here. We are not afraid of them. They are making a contribution. That is showing the way. Indeed, there are private sector companies that are also working. They are breaking down barriers. Unilever has decided to concentrate in Ghana, producing certain products and distributing across West Africa. Through personal experience, I had a consulting firm with branches in Guinea, Togo, Nigeria, Cameroon and it worked well, all of us getting together, pooling our talents and it worked.

So my point is it can be done. What it needs is a leadership that is committed, that is willing; that will work with a sense of urgency. It will be done with alliances and with willing leadership. Leaders in West Africa, if it is 2 of us, 3 of us, 4 of us, let's get started. And with our borders it is not just breaking down the barriers, it is building common border posts so people can pass through much more easily. It can be done with the proper leadership.

***Follow-up question:***

*To the many Ghanaian traders who are listening and watching, what hope do you offer them regarding sub-regional trade?*

**Dr. Nduom:**

Number one, common border posts. It is there on the table. I worked on it myself. The difficulties we've had with that had to do with the conflicts; in Lome and Abidjan, which thankfully, are going away. So we can resurrect the matter of common border posts, everybody goes through; we don't have to duplicate what is done on the other side of the

border. It works between America and Canada; it works in many other countries in Europe. It can work in West Africa with the right kind of leadership.

And what I will like to do? Remember I keep talking to you about leadership by walking around, by going to where the difficulties are. Indeed, what we need to do as leaders is walk across the border and make sure that the people know that we ourselves are crossing the border. Let the people who are fooling around the border post know that it is not something we will tolerate.

**Prof. Mills:**

Well, I am happy that there is emphasis on leadership, and it is coming from people who have worked in government for 7 or 8 years. The problem that I see is the mistrust between our leaders. The mistrust of our leaders to sink their differences and seek our common good and interests. We spend all our time solving conflicts among ourselves and spend time also creating conflicts among ourselves. I mean look at the leadership in West Africa, on the surface they are getting on well but if you go beyond the surface you can see that all is not well.

Not much has been done since 2000 to integrate the sub-region. Mention was made of ECOWAS parliament, convergence criteria, ECOWAS Court of Justice. These things were done in 2000. We decided to fast-track ECOWAS integration. We were the ones who even initiated the West African Gas Pipeline. We were prepared to go out and sit down with our colleagues. What has happened to these?

It is because we just go round, chat with one another, have cocktails; but nobody wants to give something. You will have to give and take; and it is because you know leadership only thinks about itself. Even locally, see the number of barriers we erect when it suits us. You get the impression that some people have a vested interest in all this.

I think that where there is the will, there will be the way. An Atta-Mills' government, which is interested in getting the people to move in the direction which will ensure their welfare, will make sure that he will go round the various leaders and help sink our differences.

***Follow-up question:***

*What unique quality will your leadership have such that you will break the barrier of mistrust among West African presidents?*

**Prof. Mills:**

You must earn somebody's trust. I want to go there with an open mind, let them see by my actions, not by my words, that I mean what I say. We will act in accordance with the protocols.

We have signed so many protocols, what is holding them back? They know better than we do but I am telling you that for somebody to trust you, you must earn the person's trust. You must show that indeed, you mean exactly what you are saying. That is what many of our leaders don't do; they say one thing and do another and of course when you do that, it is difficult for people to trust you and cooperate with you.

**Question Five**

*What will you do to ensure food security?*

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

I think that today there can be no bigger question especially with what is happening in world food prices. I think the most important lesson from that crisis is the absolutely overwhelming necessity now for us to ensure our own food security and rely on ourselves for producing the food we are going to eat.

The important steps have already been taken. We need for instance, to deal with the question of the storage of food. The post harvest losses that we encounter on regular a basis, the difficulties of transportation of

goods, of food from the interior to the cities and the absence of proper storage facilities. This is one set of the problem. We have another set of problems where really, really fertile areas for agricultural activities are dormant.

So today we are saying that a major initiative of Akufo-Addo's government will be our northern initiative. We've spoken about this gap between the north and the south and the need to modernise agriculture and centre it as much as possible in the north which has the terrain and the climate and the space for being the food basket not only for our nation but for the rest of West Africa. We are going to concentrate on the modernisation of our agriculture.

***Follow-up question:***

*How will you ensure self-reliance in food production?*

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

That is why I am talking about the development of certain areas of our country; the systematic development of certain areas of our country as the areas in which we will get our food. Those areas should be sufficiently developed to be able to produce food not just for ourselves but even easily be able to export to our neighbours. The northern initiative that we are promoting is directly contingent on this whole process of self-reliance.

**Dr Nduom's response to main question:**

When we talk about agriculture and food security, let's just not talk only about maize or rice and so forth, but also the fishing industry. There are two components of this. A CPP administration will ensure that we directly subsidise what the farmer or fisherman does, just as the American government has recently done, passing subsidies to the tune of \$300 billion. They can do it, we can do it. That is number one.

Number two, to ensure that when we have abundance as far as harvest is concerned, we have opportunities all over the country for the storage of

farm products. This was indeed started in the 1960s by the CPP administration. We have done it before and we will do it again.

Number three, link what is produced to agro-business. Again, this is not new. That is why Kenaf was grown in Brong Ahafo and in the Northern Region so that the jute factory in Ashanti Region could have raw materials. It was done before and it will be done again. That is how come we know there are cattle in the northern part of Ghana and therefore there was a meat factory. The factory is still there, the cattle are still there, the meat factory will come back.

That is also how come from the north, not too long ago, we were able to feed ourselves with rice because the Government subsidised it directly. We will subsidise it directly again so that there will be abundance in all of these areas.

But indeed, why have we left the fishermen at the mercy of foreigners – the pair trawlers – destroying the ocean belt? A CPP administration led by me will put a stop to it promptly so that our fishermen will no longer be poor people as they are becoming day by day.

And then the final point is let's eat what we grow and make sure we put money – real money in the pockets of Ghanaian men and women. That is what is important.

**Prof. Mills:**

Food security merely means availability of food for the present and also provision for the future. And I am happy the question is linked with self-reliance. When the global food crisis arose, I wish the Government had gone out to support the growers of local rice. Instead, we were trying to take tariffs off imported rice. That tells you the extent to which we are self-reliant.

But what do you do with food security? First of all, you must make sure you produce enough. And how do you produce enough? We've told you,

you must modernise agriculture, you must have the right inputs with marketing, with dams, with the supporting elements in agriculture.

Two, we will have to make sure that what we produce we are able to preserve. Now what form does the preservation take? Agro-processing; we are recommending that we have a buffer stock management agency so that in periods of glut they go onto the market to purchase. We want to construct silos so that the extra can be preserved.

Then we want to look at post-harvest losses. In this area I believe that science and technology can play a part. We can use nuclear energy to preserve the food. But when we talk of food it's not only crops and then fishing even though I agree very much with you. You are talking about poultry. What are we doing about poultry? We may need, as a government, to encourage people to have large scale plantation of maize and soya beans.

So the whole thing is a package that we have to look at and I do agree with him that we have to grow what we eat. We have a situation where we are importing everything into this country. All the food crops, how many people go seriously into agriculture? So agriculture is no longer attractive and we must make it attractive and make it worth the while of people to go into this area.

I think that one of the most important things that we will have to do is to let the farmers know that they are not going to suffer any disadvantage whether the rains come or not. When there is a glut we will come to their aid, where there need to be subsidies, there must be subsidies. After all, our stand during the Doha rounds showed very clearly that we are in favour of government subsidising agriculture. So there is no reason why we should feel shy about it. Agriculture is the backbone and we must show this by our actions.

**Dr. Mahama:**

Food security requires that we have agriculture extension officers who

are helping our illiterate farmers. These days, young people do not even know the intervals between planting of the crops. Young people do not know Agric extension officers used to be there to help farmers to plant properly so that the yield could be sufficient.

The other thing that causes problems with security is marketing. Some years they produce and there is no market, so the following year those farmers say well nobody bought it; I am not going to produce. So there is fluctuation.

Thirdly, irrigation. Our agric now is rain-fed and that to me is really not okay in modern Ghana. All the dams that have been filled with sand will be de-silted so that we will harvest the rain water and store it. Indeed, it will have a spill-over effect. The Volta won't dry up for us to have energy crises because the dams will flow slowly after harvested rain water flows into the rivers that bring it down to Akosombo. So we will do these things – guaranteed markets, technical support in the form of agric extension, storage and preservation.

Operation Feed Yourself, a modernised form of which we will bring back, is what I always use as my example. With Operation Feed Yourself, this country began to export rice. I myself was a rice grower under that programme so I know that we can and we should and we will.

**Question Six:**

*What will your government do to promote high quality and accessible education?*

**Dr. Nduom:**

As far as education is concerned, we must ask ourselves why we educate our people. You educate them to do something productive, and so if the end result is not good, then we must change what we are doing so that the product that comes out becomes what we are looking for. And indeed today, what we have is not what we want, ask the industry.

When people take the BECE exams, no matter what anybody says, most of our people are not getting the kinds of results they need to move on. And so what will the CPP administration led by me do?

Very specifically, we will go back to the basics from kindergarten through to senior high school. We will ensure that education is not only free; and when I say free I don't mean the type of free where people come to the back door to collect money from people. You put on your uniform, you go to school. That is free.

Many people don't want to talk about compulsory education. Some people drove their children to school in the sixties and that is how come they are big people all over the country today. We will make education compulsory, so that every child; boy, girl, with disabilities or whatever, can go from kindergarten to senior high school. And if that is going to happen, then what it means is that we must ensure that we build more schools, more complete compounds where there is a classroom, toilet facilities, kitchen facilities, libraries, science and computer labs and houses for the teachers so that everybody can attend.

So if there is a BECE or whatever type of exam and someone doesn't pass, they don't just go home, they stay there. They study until they can move on and everybody moves on. If we are going to have a knowledge-based economy then we must educate our children. That is what we want to do. And where will the money come from? I want to restrict the use of the GETFUND to funding what I just told you.

**Prof. Mills:**

Quality education can only be achieved if we pay attention to three critical factors. Number one is the pupil, i.e. the students. Number two the inputs, i.e. the infrastructure and the third one which people always conveniently forget is the teacher. Now let's look at the pupil. If the pupil is in such circumstances that even getting to school is a problem, if schools are not accessible, if you go to school and the roof is about to collapse, that needs to be addressed.

The people must be in a position to go to school. That is why the NDC is saying that when it comes to basic education, if we will have to buy uniforms, we will buy uniforms. The pupils must have access to education, to secondary schools. That is why the NDC was able to build 264 secondary schools.

Access is also a problem. Whenever we talk about sending pupils to school, we forget that only 40% of those who pass JSS have access to senior secondary school. So we must ensure accessibility. Give them the necessary infrastructure and textbooks. The school feeding programme which is not a bad thing, I think should be extended to all of them. But as far as I am concerned and being a teacher myself, and we are all here because of teachers, the teacher is at the centre of it all.

The teacher must be well-motivated. We know many of us went to so called "village schools" but the teachers were motivated and prepared to make sacrifices. But we have a situation where study leave is being restricted; where teachers do not know how much they are earning; where indeed, in certain areas allowances haven't been paid to them. If you have teachers who are not well-motivated, you are not going to get quality education.

***Follow-up question:***

*What will you do regarding the many pupils who leave senior secondary schools but are not able to enter the universities?*

**Prof. Mills:**

The issue really is that those who are qualified and can go to the university must not be denied access to university education. But you are not going to produce university graduates and leave them without jobs. It is something that we have to take into consideration. I have always gone for the suggestion that university education must be so telling to meet the job market so I believe there is the need for some tinkering.

But you know university education is not the only way. There are other forms of tertiary education. Indeed, professional association-run schools, technical education is also available, polytechnics are available. You can go to the highest level without necessarily going to what we describe as university. So there must be other avenues for people who want to enter straight into a profession. Some may decide that they may even want to go into agriculture from SSS; we should make it possible for them to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge.

**Dr. Mahama:**

What you often have as a teacher is actually somebody who is just passing time. We need to have professional teachers and that means that we need to motivate them. A lot of teachers live in towns and walk to the villages or ride their bicycle. On market days they don't go to school. So you have a problem where quality education is denied the poor infant or the poor pupil because of the fact that the teacher himself doesn't feel motivated to teach.

Also going round the country there are children now sitting under trees, on stones, in Ghana. How can such a student learn anything? So basically the facilities, the primary school structures are not there. Corruption is worsening the case. I know of a place where a contract was given for the school to be built. The papers or documents showed that the school was built but when the education officer went to the village, he didn't see anything but some bricks lying there.

There are areas of improvement that we need to address to make quality education actually available; cutting down corruption so that people don't take the money that is meant for schools into their pockets. I spoke to a teacher from one of the schools. He said, "I teach JSS but the tools that we need to teach them are not available, they have to look at the picture in the book and draw the picture of a hammer, or saw, or what have you." They can't learn by drawing pictures.

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

First of all, some things are already happening that are very positive. In the NPP era of rule, we've doubled the GDP ratio that we spend on education. When we came into office about 4.3% of our GDP was dedicated to expenditure on education. We've doubled it – more than doubled – it is 9.1%. In money terms we are talking about \$175 million being spent on education compared to today's \$1.4 billion. What are the results? 30% increase in the rate of enrolment across all levels of our educational system. Tremendous expansion of our infrastructure; university, secondary and primary levels.

We are saying that the world of work that we want to create is a world fuelled by science and technology. So we're now saying that of the 38 teacher training colleges in our country, we want to dedicate 15 to provide teachers in science and technology for our secondary and basic school levels.

We are talking about looking at the content of our curricula to make sure that the curricula that we are evolving today is the one that will give us that connection to the world of work that we are talking of.

***Follow-up question:***

*Nana, you have indicated on your platforms that should Ghanaians give you the mandate you are going to make senior high school education free. How will this be funded?*

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

The figures that we have in estimation, is that on an annual basis we are going to need something like \$125 million to fund that promise. We believe that with this expanding economy (just as I indicated to you, already we are spending \$1.4 billion on education in the country), it should be possible to take into account a figure for the funding of secondary school education. It is probably the single most important issue confronting our nation; education and all the training and upgrading of the skills of our young people.

**Question seven:**

*What should be the key components of an effective and equitable social security and pension system?*

**Prof. Mills:**

When a person has worked for the specified period of time, I think he is entitled to go home and be assured of a respectable sum of money. But we have a situation right now where we are operating different systems. Some are operating under the CAP 30, others social security, the university also has its own scheme. One of the irregularities that I find is that especially in the university, people are paid allowances. Sixty percent of their emoluments consist of allowances but these are not taken into consideration when you go on pension. The result therefore is while you are telling the person that you need this amount to survive while you are teaching, you are also telling him that once you cease to be a teacher that is the end of it – sixty percent is no longer coming to you. I think that we have to rationalise the pension scheme and we also encourage leaving the private sector to form their own pension schemes.

One of the problems that we are having is that government is employing two sets of workers – one on social security where admittedly the returns are low and on CAP 30, where the returns are higher. We must make sure that we marry the two. But I think that the pension scheme must be updated regularly. You have a situation where people peg your pension at the time when you retire; and very little effort is being made to upgrade it.

And one other thing, it is not even enough giving people respectable pensions. Those who are on pension will tell you the difficulty that they experience in even getting their pension payments made. I think that in reforming the system the mode of payment and the regularity of payment should also be taken into consideration.

**Dr. Mahama:**

A good pension scheme starts with a good job. If you don't have a good job to pay money into a pension scheme, when you retire you have nothing. The salary structures in Ghana need to be reviewed. It is like the chicken and egg situation. We need to increase productivity in order that people's salaries will go up. The question is which one do you do first? Government pretends to pay and people pretend to work. At the end of it the pension that they get is nothing that they can live on. So a lot of pensioners are actually below the poverty line.

It starts with first, a good job so that the pension contribution can be reasonable. And also we have to have other ways of perhaps, growing the pension money that is put in there. Social Security (SSNIT) used to invest some of the monies and I am sure that some of those investments have led to difficulties in reaping some benefits. And because of that people retire and their pension is such that you wonder how they are expected to live on it.

I have people coming from the North, from Western Region, all having to come to Accra to get their pension money when they were working in Western Region. How come on retirement these can't be processed and the monies paid there? Sometimes they pay more money to come for their pension than they actually have in the pension money. And this is not right. So there are difficulties that I see when I talk to people who are pensioners.

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

We are discussing this matter on an auspicious day because this is the day the Parliament has passed a new Pension Act which is doing exactly what some of my colleagues are talking about in terms of rationalising the system. We now have in force as of today a new Pension Act that the Parliament passed today and it provides us a new framework in which to discuss this issue.

***Follow-up question:***

*Will you say that is good news?*

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

Of course it is good news. We have a new framework for dealing with the issue, and that framework is the effort that Parliament has made to rationalise the system. We are now talking about three-tiers – tier one, tier two, tier three. I think it is most interesting because that is where we are now going to be encouraging this private participation in the creation of pensions. This is a very important development in the structure that we have now. That is one of the reasons that has given me the confidence to go around the country and tell our people especially the long suffering cocoa farmers that under Akufo-Addo's presidency, we will tackle the issue of pensions for our farmers.

We begin with an area which will make it very easy to set up the scheme, that is the cocoa farmer, because of the organisation of the industry there. Clearly, the effort would be made to extend it to other areas of agriculture and other activities. It's a process that will also help us in trying to bring the informal sector more into the formal sector of our economy. A pension scheme for cocoa farmers will assist us in that process; in the data capture, the collection of people within the pension scheme. All of these are facilitating integrating the informal economy into a modern formal sector.

**Dr. Nduom:**

Let me give you some more specifics because I know a lot about this particular matter. Let me begin with salaries and since government is the biggest employer, let's start from there. I have put on the table a new pay scale and what I will do to add to it is to ensure that we raise what is now known as the basic pay, because I don't believe in saying basic pay. In addition, they get free electricity, free housing, and so on and so forth. I will put them together so that we give the money to the person and the person can decide how to use it. But what it will do for people who go on pension is that the base that is used to calculate the pension will become

bigger. That is what we will want to do. That is number one.

Number two, we have people sitting in the civil service and public service who are definitely doing something against their senior colleagues who are gone on pension. The processing of pension is horrible. We need someone who is down there with a whip, if that is necessary, to ensure that the day you go on pension is the day you get your pension benefit, and we don't have people who are travelling from Pusiga to Accra and sometimes even come here to die. We don't want that again.

And I have personal experience. I helped set up the system in Zimbabwe. If you die today wherever you are in Zimbabwe your death benefit will be paid to you the same day. I know it can be done, and it will be done under my administration.

Number three; there is a related matter that many people are not drawing attention to, that I am happy I had the opportunity to be involved with. That is the national identification system. If we implement it well, where everybody gets involved, then we will know who is in the country.

That is how come we can have pension systems for fishermen, farmers, drivers; pension systems for everybody. And that is how the Bill that Parliament has passed came into being. I want people to bring their minds to it because we envisioned it based on what had happened in the US where they have something called 401K programme; your employer adds money to your saved money, it stays in the system, it is invested until you reach retirement age.

That way what happens is that you create a pool of funds; long term capital for businesses in Ghana. That is what is going to make things work and expand the economy. And this is something that we should all understand. We should all ensure that it gets implemented and implemented with a sense of urgency.

**Question Eight:**

*The maternal mortality rate in the country is 50 deaths per 1,000 live births. What will your administration do to reverse this trend?*

**Dr. Mahama:**

Generally speaking, our health system needs overhauling. I was surprised to see at the University of Winneba or Cape Coast, the number of ladies who were pregnant, and died during their course. I think they've set up an inquest or enquiry into it. Part of the reasons for maternal deaths is poor healthcare in the country. In Western Region last week, a stark illiterate, who has never been to school, has a room in which she delivered 320 babies last year. The village is on the road from Elubo to Enchi. Definitely, I am sure there are cases of maternal mortality there because if they are bleeding after delivery where does she get the help? If they develop pregnancy induced hypertension, where does she get the help? So inadequate facilities for taking care of pregnant women is one of the problems.

Second is the brain drain of nurses and midwives. I have been looking for a midwife to employ for some time now and I can't get one, yet there are people eligible to be trained. The training facilities to provide the personnel that will make sure that these things are not happening are not adequate.

So I think one needs to take a holistic look at it. Maternal mortality is not just bleeding at delivery. First of all the women may be malnourished, or in poor condition – anaemic to begin with, loaded with worms, they get pregnant, they bleed a little bit, they are going to die. So we need to look at the whole thing.

**Nana Akuffo-Addo:**

Today, women who go to our hospitals pregnant can have their pregnancy brought to a happy conclusion without having to pay for it. It has brought tremendous relief to the female population in this country especially the poorest segments of our country.

Everywhere I go around in the country I try to visit the hospitals of the areas to find out about how the most important piece of legislation that we brought into being, the National Health Insurance Scheme, is operating. And at one of the places that I went to, they had a room, which they used to call Budumburam because the women who came to have children and couldn't afford to pay to leave the hospital were all kept in this Budumburam until they were bailed out. Today, since the introduction of free maternal health care, over 200,000 women have come to the hospitals to have their children. Clearly, this is an important step in dealing with this matter because now, women are coming to the hospital and are able to have access to reasonable, respectable, professional care. That is the path we already have launched and I intend to follow that path.

And if we continue down that path, I think very soon we are going to have much more positive figures reflecting in women being able to have children without dying and without their own children being compromised in the process. They are coming into the hospitals because of this system now and it is already beginning to have an impact. We will continue down that road.

**Dr. Nduom:**

I am sorry but Nana makes it seem as if it is something simple. It is not all that simple. You know, two weeks ago I was in Savelugu, it doesn't matter if someone says it is free, there is no hospital there for the women to go to so that it can be made free. I was just on the same road from Elubo to Enchi, I was in Goaso, I went to the hospital there. There is nothing there.

I mean let's understand that our health care system in this country is under serious stress. Let's not be too quick to say we have achieved something. Let us agree that we need to sit down and come up with a comprehensive way of having a good health care system where access is provided and where training is also provided.

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

I am not quite sure what my good friend Paa Kwesi is talking about. But clearly a dire situation existed previously. Efforts are being made to come to grips with it. They may not be wholly adequate; you have to begin somewhere. We have begun to deal with this problem and I believe the method that we have chosen to go forward is the correct one. The expansion of the facilities across the country in our health care system is a matter of important concern for all of us. But we have begun and we intend to follow that process and we will get the results needed.

**Prof. Mills:**

Where the pregnant woman has access to proper health facilities, I don't think there is going to be any problem. What are the causes of maternal mortality? Lack of access to health facilities is a big problem especially in the rural areas. I have been to villages where the roads are so bad, transportation is almost non-existent, so you ask yourself if somebody falls ill, how does one get the person to hospital?

And we know also of areas where you can go to the hospital and find that there is no attendant, there is nobody to attend to the pregnant woman. Now we also have socio-cultural practices where there are some who do not even want to go to hospital. They want to deliver at home. So some education must also be given. While I have no doubt that the NHIS, where all the facilities are present, will help, I think that we are simplifying the issue if we think that NHIS alone is going to solve the matter. It isn't going to solve the matter. Let's look into it, let's make sure that our pregnant women have proper facilities and that they have access to these facilities.

**Question Nine:**

*What policy do you have in place to improve the lives and the rights of women in Ghana?*

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

For the first time in our history we have a direct governmental

institution for addressing this matter; and that is the creation of the Women's Ministry. Yes, there have been other quasi-governmental organisations, but this is the first time that the central government had intervened directly through this agency.

It's clearly had an impact, for instance as far as enrolment of female children in school, we've jumped from a figure which was hovering around 70% to today's 94%, which means that in effect we are almost now at parity with the number of male children who enter the school system. It is very important towards developing the rights of women.

Secondly, the measures that we have taken to improve access to health come as clearly the National Health Insurance Scheme has done, free maternal care, all these all are part of the package of measures that are assisting our women to get stronger and stronger presence within our society. There are other things that need to be done. We have to insist on hiring processes in the central government that pay attention to the gender issue, and not leave it as for tuition occasion.

There are other things that we need to do; improving the access of women to the world of business. The Ghanaian woman has a legendary reputation as being an extremely effective trader. The micro finance schemes that have been put in place, the greater access to credit that we've seen in the last 6-7 years – the Nigerian banks that we are talking about, the financial intermediation that is taking place; that is dramatically expanding access to credit. We need to factor women into that process and thereby strengthen their grip on the economy.

These are series of measures already underway that are being undertaken to empower the Ghanaian women. Clearly of course, in appointments we have seen what is going on in that area already.

**Dr. Nduom:**

I stand on the very strong foundation and record of the Convention People's Party as far as women's development is concerned; women

parliamentarians, women ministers- Mrs. Susanna Alhassan, and others. And today in our party we have a woman who is the Chairman (she prefers to be called chairman), of the Greater Accra branch of our party. Our national organiser is a woman, the first in the history of this country, and therefore we want to move on from there.

I have made a commitment that 50% of regional ministers will be women. When we talk about District, Municipal and Metropolitan Chief Executives, prior to the time when we will make them elected, 50% of them will be women. And indeed when we go further, I want to create a Women's Enterprise Development Fund, just as exists in many states in the United States of America.

I don't want to re-invent the wheel; there is a model that I want to implement to ensure that number one, women have preferential treatment where they are able to get a quota as far as government contracts are concerned. That they are able to fill a quota as far as appointments are concerned, and that they are also able to get low interest loans so that they can develop their businesses.

When I speak of free compulsory and continuous education, let's understand very simply some connections there. Yes many young girls have entered school but after junior high school a lot of them drop out. That is why I want to make it continuous so everybody goes through. That is why I want to make it compulsory so that no man or woman can say, "My daughter should not go school".

**Prof Mills:**

The question is on women's rights and you are going to look at it from three angles: their social rights, their political rights and their economic rights. Women have carried us in their wombs and on their backs for ages and there is no reason why we should discriminate against them. On social grounds if there are cultural practices which discriminate against women my government will make sure that we fight and uproot these cultural practices. I mean examples exist in the record books; the

intestate succession law and female mutilation. These are barriers in getting the women to go to school.

When it comes to political rights the NDC has already announced that 40% of ministerial appointments and appointments to public offices will be reserved for women. This is our aim; 40% of DCEs will be women. We will even set up a fund for women who want to participate in the non-partisan district assembly elections because that is their breeding ground.

When it gets to the economic sector, you know when a woman is working, children never go hungry. In the market about 80% of our food distribution is done by women.

So what do you do with the women? In the north for example women who go round looking for shea-nut are bitten by snakes, they walk long distances to fetch water, and then to pick the nuts. So we will help with agriculture, modernise agriculture, give them the inputs and especially give them micro credit so that they will be self sufficient. There should be a total package for them covering a broad range of women's rights.

Indeed, we agree with the proponents of the women's manifesto that we must recognise women's equality and then we must also mainstream women's affairs. In doing so, I am only emphasising the realities on the ground, the women these days are leaving the men behind and we have to recognise this fact. That's all.

***Follow-up question:***

*What will you do about children's rights?*

**Prof. Mills:**

Children are the future leaders of our country and unfortunately sometimes they can be very defenceless. And so with children somebody has to stand in locus to them. We must have rules for children. Indeed we must not leave the bringing up of children to only

the parents. They are the most natural people to do so but we must insist on children going to school, providing them with the necessities of life and also making sure that practices which discriminate against children, like child labour, like people beating children, corporal punishment for children, using children for the drug trade and crime are eliminated. We must make sure that we have proper measures to ensure that children are not used for activities which in the end will not be in their own interest.

**Dr. Mahama:**

I think the issue begins with proper education for these girls. Elsewhere we have seen that when girls stay in school long enough to get a profession like law or medicine they don't easily get into a situation where they will be undermined by anybody because it is a professional training. So education is number one.

Alongside that education, we must provide facilities for those who get into accidental situations such as unwanted pregnancies. In Ghana when a girl gets into that unfortunate situation immediately the school authorities will expel her. The child is in the womb not in the brain so she can still stay in the school. Staying in school is important because there she can bring up this child because she has a skill. But if you expel her and she goes home, now she is illiterate, she now has an unwanted baby and she is burdened with it. That is very, very bad.

But we practice what we preach. At the IEA encounter I said that 50% of our Cabinet will be women. The Cabinet starts at the presidency level that is why we took a very beautiful lady, affable lady, out-going lady, Petra Maria Amegashie as our running mate to demonstrate that we just don't talk, we walk the talk.

So far as children's rights are concerned, I asked a little girl, "I am going for a debate what do you want me to say?" A nine year old. She said, "ask for more parks so that I can sit in the park and do my homework or eat my candy." We have not made provisions for our children in our towns, in our schools; so that we need now to recognise their rights and protect

those rights because it is in our interest to do so. So these are the interventions that I will put in place.

**Question Ten:**

*What will you do to ensure that there is constant and adequate supply of energy in the country for domestic and industrial use?*

**Dr. Nduom:**

We have had plans sitting there in this country for the past 15 years. They haven't changed. We even have some that have sat there for 50 years. What do those plans need? Leadership that will work with a sense of urgency and will not worry about who is executing the contract, and will give the job to the best person available to get those jobs done.

I am determined that in four years we will become a net exporter of power again and in four years we will also become a net exporter of fuel. The fuel part goes with the petrochemical industry. I have already talked about that. But the power part, specifically, there is the Osagyefo Barge sitting at Effaso-Mangea in the Jomoro District. All that it needs is someone to say this job needs to be done today and not tomorrow. That's all it needs.

The Aboadze Thermal Plant is also sitting there. And all that it also needs is for someone to say here is this combined cycle plant, it needs the steam component so that we can produce more power. That is all, and a leadership working with a sense of urgency ought to be able to get that done within 2 years. It is there, and indeed you know the Bui Dam Project was there in the 1960s, after the 1966 coup all the equipment mysteriously disappeared. Now it has been re-started; but then it is not a matter of when you began something; it is a matter of when you end something.

And the CPP's record of starting and completing is unmatched in the area of energy. And indeed we will implement all of those solutions that have been there over the years and the ones that we know need to get

done. It's a matter of leadership working with a sense of urgency and we will get it done.

**Prof. Mills:**

I am happy that my brother Dr Paa Kwesi Nduom is admitting that there's been a blueprint all along and that it's a question of leadership. We've always maintained that the energy crisis could easily have been avoided. And we took steps when we were there. We initiated the West African Gas Pipeline, we brought in the Osageyfo Barge. The reason that we had the problem in 1998, the Volta Lake failed us and therefore we thought of alternatives. So we brought in the Osageyfo Barge which can generate 110 mega watts, we brought in the Aboadze Plant which generates 550. However if you use the turbine steam it will go up to 660.

So indeed, we felt that we should move away from oil powered energy to gas fired energy. That is why we initiated the West Africa Gas Pipeline and we still think that must come to fruition. If it does we should be able to get enough. We've already said that we want to move from 1,600 to 5,000. We are also exploring other opportunities; mini hydro dams on the Pra and Ankobra Rivers. We are even experimenting with wind energy. As for solar, we did the experiment quite some time ago and we are going to insist that traffic lights for example be powered by solar energy.

There is bio-gas also to be exploited. Even tidal wave energy. If you look at our blueprint and manifesto, we've stated everything very clearly. I can say without any fear of contradiction that if the blueprint we left behind had been followed we would not have had this energy crisis which cost the private sector about \$700 million. So we think that everything is clear. Atta Mills will not sit and ignore what his predecessors have done in the handing over notes which contain solutions to future problems.

**Dr. Mahama:**

The issue of leadership and continuity of progress of programmes is

very, very important. In 1996 when I first got involved in politics, the first thing that Dr Limann did was to take me to Bui and show me what was left behind. Of course after the coup it was all abandoned. In order to avoid future problems we need to have a healthy mix of hydro, thermal, solar and wind; and there are areas that have an advantage with these. With hydro we already have Akosombo and Bui is coming on-stream. Some other rivers can have minor hydro projects to supply inland. But we cannot depend only on these.

Solar and wind are areas we have to look at very seriously. I think if we have a healthy mix of these we can be self sufficient and avoid the crises that we have faced in the past. Part of the problems has also always been management. I live in Dome, a suburb of Accra. I have power on, power off all the time, my machines break down. If the management is poor there will be wastage and if there is wastage, it is causing the tax payer and everybody else a lot more to produce. So besides the production we have to look at the management and distribution.

Some forms of energy are easier to localise in certain areas; solar for example and wind could be located in the north where you have gusty winds and also the sun is always there. If we balance the country by prioritising the areas for energy production we will be okay. Bio-fuel is another area. The late Onua Amoah was propagating it for a long time and didn't have the support that he should have gotten.

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

I think these are straight forward matters to address. I'm not talking about the technology; I am talking about the issues. The stored capacity that we have in the generation of power in our country now is just over 2,000 mega watts. As it is, for one reason or another we are actually producing something in the region of 1,200 -1,300 mega watts a year. So there is a shortfall of what we produce.

The demand is somewhere around about 1,400 mega watts industrial, commercial, domestic, etc. So we have to address the gap. Several

measures have been taken along the way. I don't know whether the construction of the Bui Dam was in the handing over notes that my good friend Fiifi Mills talks about. But we are dealing with some of the things on the ground.

The Bui Dam is up and doing. We've negotiated the money for it. It will be producing by the time it is completed in 2012, 300 additional mega watts of power. We have got independent power producers that have also been introduced into the system who are also going to add to our capacity. When we are looking at the question of the regularity of supply, we are also having to make a projection into the future. How much power do we need now? How much power are we going to need down the road and then make your arrangements to meet these projections.

We are looking at a situation where we think by the year 2015 the demand for energy with an expanding economy and growing and industrialising economy will be somewhere around 3,000 mega watts a year, growing by 2020 to a figure in excess of 4,000. Therefore, what we are trying to do now is to put in place a system whereby we can generate in future, that capacity. All kinds of things are having to be done. We are having to make these arrangements such as the independent power producers, but other measures are also being taken including looking of course, at the very important area of alternative sources of energy other than electricity.

The West African Gas Pipeline has got stuck at the moment because the supplier of the gas, Nigeria is unable at the moment to supply us. Our own gas will fill that gap. We've determined that the gas that has been found in the oil well will become Ghanaian property. Thank you.

***Follow-up question:***

*Perhaps each one of you could take 15 seconds to make a comment on nuclear energy.*

**Prof. Mills:**

One has to learn from the experiences of others. I was in America when we had the Three Mile Island incident. I read about Chernobyl and other areas. I think that nuclear power if we want to consider it, is something that we have to study for some time. In Germany they are moving away from nuclear power. Let's find out from them what is causing this. There are other safer methods, so I will say that for now let it just be on the bed. When we are satisfied ourselves we will know what decision to take.

**Dr. Mahama:**

It is an option I will pursue because France is building more nuclear power plants, America is going to do the same and I think we mustn't run away from that bottled-up energy. Nuclear energy can be controlled in the form of power for domestic use or commercial use but in a form of a bomb it is dangerous.

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

In these areas things are already being done. We are not just talking speculation. The Adjei Bekoe Committee was established by the President to look at the feasibility of nuclear power for our country. They have produced a report, they have produced a road map. Today, the technology that is being developed is one that has made the use of nuclear power and its creation much safer than it was in the time of Chernobyl. It is an option which we've already started to examine its feasibility and development.

**Dr. Nduom:**

Well, this is positive *sankofa* as far as the CPP is concerned because if you go to Kwabenya it was started in the 1960s. If it hadn't been stopped, if some people hadn't bundled those things out and given it to foreigners we would be far ahead. So we will just go back, dust the plans off and get going once again. That's all.

**Question Eleven:**

*There have been several areas of conflicts in the country in recent times.*

*There has also been an increase in violent crimes. How will you ensure security, law and order throughout the country so that every citizen can go to sleep feeling safe?*

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

Very, very big question and very important question. A question that concerns every citizen of Ghana. I think there are two things that we need to do. First of all, the mechanism of resolving conflicts. Some mechanisms are in place, the good Cardinal here, he is Chairman of the Peace Council and the work that they are doing. I believe that we all have to support these mechanisms. It is necessary to appropriate more public funds for such organisations to be able to do their work. I am prepared to do that.

Secondly, the institutions of the law enforcement agencies in our country. We need to do something to beef up the strength of our law enforcement agencies. When we came into office we met a police service of roughly 12,000 large. We've increased it to 25,000. It is my intention under command if I have the opportunity, to double it to 50,000. The figure that the United Nations has given as to the police-population ratio that is acceptable is something like 1 to 500. We want to double it to 50,000 in the next 3 or 4 years; we will be very close to that figure and that will be a more acceptable figure for dealing with the issue of crime.

Clearly also, we have so much crime that has international dimensions. The necessity for collaboration within West Africa and the larger world between the law enforcement agencies of our various countries is also a matter of great, great concern, especially when you are going to be dealing with the issues for instance, of proliferation of the transit of drugs in Ghana.

The collaboration that we will have with the other agencies is extremely important. So we are dealing with this matter on several planes. First of all, we are doing as much as possible as political leaders to diffuse the

tensions and strengthen the law enforcement agencies on the ground; training, better conditions of remuneration, their pay, etc to be able to give ourselves a law enforcement capacity that will secure peace and quiet for the Ghanaian people.

**Dr. Nduom:**

When it comes to the matter of security, I will say criminal justice is a continuum. Everywhere you go in Ghana, people are talking about armed robbery, they are talking about the drug menace, they are talking about corruption, and so on and so forth. We must deal with it from its fundamental stage.

Number one, we need to make sure that we can identify all properties in Ghana and streets in Ghana. That fundamental point must be there. I will make sure that it gets done so we know where everybody lives and where to find them.

Number two, we must know who is in Ghana. I come back to the matter of the national identification system. It must be used throughout the country to make sure that we know who is here. When you have these two then you bring in technology. We can create a criminal justice information system so no matter where you go, no matter what you do, we can find you.

And the next thing that needs to be done is to also ensure this matter of dealing with corruption; the commitment of separating the office of the Attorney General from that of the Ministry of Justice. Let's consider it seriously to ensure that no one can stand anywhere in this country and say that I was treated out of turn or given unnecessary punishment or whatever because I belong to this political party or I was let off because I belong to that political party. It is important.

The final thing is leadership. When there is conflict our leaders must not just sit in Accra; they must go where the conflicts are, soothe people's feelings, calm people's fears. That is what I will do.

**Prof. Mills:**

Well, we talk about conflicts, law and order, etc. What are the causes? When it comes to conflict there are many causes. First, when people feel that they are not getting justice. Number two, where the people who are supposed to be arbiters are themselves taking sides, where you have marginalisation and polarisation. Three, where people who are supposed to enforce the law are either incapable or unwilling to enforce it. Where indeed there is also political victimisation you have this kind of problem.

Now when it comes to crime, we all agree that crime has to be brought under control. How prepared are the law enforcing agencies? But where you have situations where people act and then the law enforcing agencies are not seen to be fair, people can flout the law with impunity; it's going to be very difficult for you to control crime.

Talking about corruption or drugs, I am really surprised because when it comes to the drug trade yes, it is a very serious matter and it is something that we will have to fight and uproot. But here sometimes you feel that there is complicity, you feel that people are incapable or unwilling. People look at what is happening on the scene and they say well why can't I do the same?

So we have a situation where we must make sure that the law-enforcing agencies are doing their work and the leadership must be seen to be playing its role. If you are an arbiter or a leader, you wash your hands off; you stay aloof so that people will have confidence in your ability to intervene.

**Dr. Mahama:**

The causes of conflicts in our country are due to many things; social injustice, poverty, and the fact that there is high unemployment. These are some of the basic causes. So it is not just enough to have more police but justice must be seen to be done. Mob justice in this country is very rampant, why? Because the police will arrest the person but they will

release the person the next day because something had passed under the table. So these are some of the things that we need to do.

We need also to strengthen the Judiciary; we need to strengthen and make them independent of political influences. For example some of the hot spots in the north, Bawku, Yendi; all these other areas we know the causes; chieftaincy, politics, poverty, lack of justice, all are combined. So the approach to this is definitely to make sure that chieftaincy matters which lead to conflict in this country are treated by the traditional bodies and criminal matters are treated by the justice system. But when you lump them together and you do nothing about any one of them the conflict continues.

Recently I was doing a programme on radio in Tamale and a caller from Yendi said how can you expect me to keep peace when I can be sitting in my room and somebody will attack me and nobody does anything? Valid question! Valid question!! So I am saying that political interference in chieftaincy matters underlying some of the conflicts must be divulged so that the criminal aspects will be done. Big politicians shouldn't cover little politicians for committing crime. You know we have the example of the CPP Chairman in Tamale murdered, nothing has been done. These are some of the underlying causes for conflicts in those areas.

**Concluding messages****Dr. Nudom:**

Fellow citizens, I am in the race to become the next President of the Republic of Ghana because I believe I have something positive to offer my country. What I am offering is a government of inclusion; not just ministerial appointments; government contracts, board memberships, consultancies will go to the best people available regardless of political affiliation.

In this country, luckily we have had the NDC 8 years, what they can do they have done; we have had the NPP 8 years, what they can do they have done. There is some good in what they have both done. No one can say they haven't done anything. But the point is *kese wo kan*. There is a lot to be done and so we need to do something different. We need something that we haven't done before. We need leadership, transformational leadership; leadership that will bring people together. A peace-maker. Somebody that can make this country work as it has never done before.

And after so many years, after 16 years we still have malaria, we still have cholera, we have bad roads, bad drinking water and so on and so forth. We need something different. And what we are offering is that the Convention People's Party, working with everybody in this country after the elections for all of us to know that we are one people, one country with one common destiny, living in peace. We will make sure that we get the right things done working with a sense of urgency.

And I want Ghanaians to know that a vote for the Convention People's Party this time is a vote that will put a CPP President in the Flagstaff House. Over the past 10 months we have recruited over 300,000 card carrying members of our party. That is how come today when we look at the Convention People's Party, they are young people: young men and young women; they are the ones who are going to provide us with the legs for us to go into government the next time. All I am saying humbly is that there is an alternative. That alternative is the CPP. That is how come wherever you go in Ghana you say *Edwumawura* what they say is *Yere sesa mu*.

**Prof. Mills:**

Fellow country men and women thank you for listening to us for the past two to three hours. I am here because I want an opportunity to serve the people of Ghana, to have a better Ghana where we invest in people, where we give people jobs, where we see to people's education and health.

This country of ours is polarised. There is so much marginalisation, we are moving in the wrong direction. Many people are calling for change. Our country is in distress. I support this move because the NDC believes in social democracy. We pay specific attention to the marginalised, the vulnerable, and we believe that leadership is what matters. You need someone who is sincere, someone who is honest, who is transparent and who believes that there can always be improvement.

As a young lecturer I used to think that I was the best until I realised from my students that the students I was teaching even though they were not as educated as I was because I had gone through the motions, were more intelligent than I was so I realise that I should never describe myself in absolute terms as the best, there are better people.

I want an opportunity to serve the people of Ghana to unite us. Atta Mills as president is not going to be president for NDC alone. I will be president for every Ghanaian. Whenever the Ghanaian has to be helped, whenever the Ghanaian needs the assistance of the state, I will do so without any consideration of political, social or religious affiliation. We need to see ourselves as one people. There is a lot that needs to be done. We need to tell our people the truth. Sometimes we think that by repeating an untruth it becomes the truth. It doesn't. By changing the label on the bottle, it does not necessarily change the contents of the bottle. I believe therefore that Ghanaians will give me an opportunity to serve.

But lastly, let me say that it's God who installs kings and we must not in this election do anything that is going to cause violence or indeed, spill blood. If you do that, if power is tainted, we are not going to get God's blessing. Let's all pledge to do what will move Ghana in the good direction. May God bless our homeland Ghana.

**Dr. Mahama:**

Well, fellow Ghanaians, you've listened to all of us tonight. I want to thank you for the opportunity I have had to lead my party and to offer myself to lead this country. This country is at a crossroads. One road

will lead us down to violence and destruction. The other road will lead us to progress, prosperity and further growth. I am offering to lead you down that road of progress and prosperity. How will I do this? By offering you honest sincere leadership, leadership by example. Not leadership that says do as I say but do not do as I do. Leadership that will say and do. I am offering you real change with real hope.

Even after sixteen years a lady came weeping, her husband, who had tried to walk through the desert to go abroad for a better job, died in the process. That is the country we have for our young people. Youth unemployment, we are going to do something about it, the aged who are being marginalised we are going to do something about. Our party is a human-centred party, so whatever programme we put in we are looking at the human faces not the money that will come, not who will benefit but what benefit will it be for our people.

Ghana is a rich nation. The level of poverty in this country is far more than it should be with the kind of resources we have. Because I believe in myself and believe in you the Ghanaians that you can be self reliant, you can be independent; you can do a lot more for yourself. That we can get up collectively and go and get it. What do we get? Prosperity and progress. I am offering myself as president for you to choose. Come December 7<sup>th</sup>, you have a choice; the old and the past or the present that has moved you nowhere. The real choice is the man who preaches real change, real hope. Vote 2 Sure, 2 Direct. Vote PNC. Thank you.

**Nana Akufo-Addo:**

Fellow Ghanaians, I hope you've enjoyed this evening's encounter and I want to thank my colleagues once again. I don't think there is doubt that since the year 2001 our nation has made substantial progress across all areas of our national lives - in governance, in the management of our economy and in the development of our society. In 2000 we saw how the country went into free fall when the barrel of oil was \$36. Inflation was 40%, interest rate shot to 52%, a cedi that depreciated on a daily basis.

7 years later when oil has gone to \$147 we have inflation which is under 18%. We have a currency that is relatively stable and we have an economy whose GDP has quadrupled in these 7 years. You are therefore dealing with the party that can do it; and in whose hands you can safely entrust the management of the national economy.

I came to politics to serve certain ideas and to serve our people. For 30 years, I've been in the forefront of the struggle for democracy in our country to see a Ghana where human rights are respected, to see a Ghana where the rule of law is not a slogan but a reality. Today, that Ghana is beginning to develop. The prospects for our nation are immense. We stand on the brink of unprecedented prosperity as Ghanaians. I believe that what we need to do is to stay the course, continue the steady progress we have been making these last 7 years.

And that moment for transformation of our economy has come. I want to serve the Ghanaian people and lead that process of transformation. I want you to vote for me, vote for the NPP and in voting for me it's very simple, number one “Esoro no a na eko”, “We Are Going Forward”, “Wonya Wo Yie”, “Zaamu Gaba”, “Mili Ngo Yi”, “Toni, Toni, Toni, Toni”. Thank you.



## THE INSTITUTE OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

**IEA  
GHANA**

The Institute of Economic Affairs, A Public Policy Institute  
P.O. Box OS1936, Osu, Accra, Ghana. Tel:+233-302244716 / 0307010714  
Fax:+233-302- 222313. Email:iea@ieagh.org.  
Website: [www.ieagh.org](http://www.ieagh.org)