

30.11.2017 Addo-Speech

We can no longer continue to make policy for ourselves, in our country, in our region, in our continent on the basis of whatever support the Western world or France or the European Union can give us.

It will not work. It has not worked and it will not work. Our responsibility is to charter a path which is about how we can develop our nations ourselves. It is not right for a country like Ghana – 60 years after independence – to still have its health and education budget being financed on the basis of the generosity and charity of European tax-payers.

By now, we should be able to finance our basic needs ourselves. And if we are going to look at the next sixty years as a period of transition, a period whereby we can stand on our own feet, our perspective has not to be what the French taxpayer decides to do whatever surpluses they have in France. ...

This continent is still today the repository of at least thirty per cent of the most important minerals of the world. It is a continent of vast arable and fertile lands. It has the youngest population of any of the continents in the world. It has the energy and the dynamism, we have seen it. These young men who are showing so much resilience and ingenuity in crossing the Sahara finding ways to go across in with rickety boats. We want to have those energies working inside our countries.

And we're going to have those energies if we begin to build systems that tell the young people of our country that their hopes, their opportunity are right here with us ... Migration is as old as man. It has always been linked to the same thing: the failure of where you are to provide you with an opportunity. So you move somewhere else.

We want young Africans to stay in Africa. And it means that we have to get away from this mindset of dependence, about "What can France do for us". ... Our main responsibility as leaders, as citizens is what we need to grow our own countries....

With institutions that work, that would allow us to have good governance, to have accountable governments. To make sure that the moneys that are placed at the disposal of leaders are used for the interests of the states and not for those of the leaders. ...

Our concern should be with what do we need to do in this 21st century to move Africa away from being 'cap in hand' and begging for aid, for charity, for hand-outs. The African continent, when you look at its resources, should be giving moneys to other places. We have huge wealth on this continent. We need to have a mindset that says 'We can do it. Others have done it. ...

Koreans, Malaysians, Singaporeans who got their independence at the same time as us. We're told of that at the time of Ghanaian independence per capita Ghanaian income was higher than that of Korea. ... What happened? Why have they made their transition, and fifty years after independence we are where we are. Those are the matters that should concern all of us.

I'm talking about our own propulsion, what we need to do to get our countries to work, so that we can create the conditions that would allow our young people to forgo this hazardous effort to get to Europe. ... They are going there because they don't believe they have any opportunities in our countries. That should be our focus.

If we change that mindset of dependence we would see that in the decades ahead of us the full flowering of the African people will take place.

These are my strongly held beliefs and that is the reason why I have adopted as the slogan of my presidency that we want to build a Ghana beyond aid, a Ghana which is independent, that is self-sufficient, that is capable of standing on its own feet and building its own life. We can do it.

Addo-Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EK9BnPvNSn4>