

PRESS RELEASE

1. Following his inauguration as Head of States of the Republic of Ghana, the 7th January, 2009, His Excellency Prof. John Evans Atta Mills, President of the Republic of Ghana, paid a friendly visit to Burkina Faso on 8th April, 2009.

2. This visit falls within the context of the historic and fraternal relations existing between the Republic of Ghana and Burkina Faso and demonstrates the strong will of the two Heads of State to increasingly work towards strengthening the special and fraternal bonds of solidarity which has always existed between the two countries.

3. President John Evans Atta Mills was accompanied by a strong delegation including :

- H.E. Mr. Mohamed Mumuni, Minister of Foreign Affairs And Regional Integration;

- H.E. Amb. James Victor Gbeho, Adviser to the President ;
- Dr. Cadman Atta Mills, Special Assistant to the President ;
- Mr. Mahama Ayariga, Presidential Spokesperson ;
- Mr. Victor Smith, President's Protocol ;
- Col. Emmanuel Lawson, ADC to the President ;
- Mr. William Awinador Kanyirige, Director, Africa and AU Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration.

4. The Burkinabè delegation, led by H.E. Mr. Blaise COMPAORE comprised:

- H.E. Mr. Bédouma Alain Yoda, Senior Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation
- H.E. Mr. Sini Pierre Sanou, Ambassador of Burkina Faso to Ghana

5. During the discussions, Their Excellencies Messrs John Evans Atta Mills and Blaise Compaore briefed each other on the situation in their respective countries and discussed issues of common interests on bilateral, sub-regional, regional and international levels.

6. The two Heads of State expressed satisfaction with the climate of peace and social dialogue prevailing in their respective countries as evidence of free and transparent elections in Ghana in 2008.
7. Regarding bilateral issues, the two Heads of State exchanged views on their respective experiences in matters of governance, economic and structural reforms, the fight against poverty and on current issues, notably those relating to the high cost of living and its social implications.
8. The two Heads of State were happy to note the efforts at integrating their two economies in areas as diverse as trade and investments, transports, telecommunications, post, energy, mines, agriculture, water resources, livestock, health, culture, scientific research, environment, petroleum resources, infrastructure among others.
9. In this context, the two Heads of State indicated their commitment to further strengthen cooperation between Burkina Faso and the Republic of Ghana. They accordingly instructed their Ministers in charge of Foreign Affairs to convey, in the shortest possible time, the 10th Session of the Joint Commission of Cooperation in Accra with a view to re-dynamising the relations between the two countries.
10. They indicated that special emphasis will be placed on issues relating to the free movement of persons and goods, crossborder administrative cooperation, the demarcation of the border between the two States, cooperation in the energy and postal sectors, the construction of dams, trade exchanges, community infrastructure, education and agriculture among others.

11. On the sub regional level, their Excellencies Messrs John Evans Atta Mills and Blaise Compaoré reaffirmed the commitment of Ghana and Burkina Faso to the ideals of the United Nations, the Africa Union and of ECOWAS, which constitute the appropriate framework for the building of peace, solidarity and cooperation between the two countries and peoples.
12. They further reiterated their commitment to work towards the strengthening of community institutions in order to make integration in the sub region, a reality.
13. On the regional level, the two Heads of state expresse concern over the current situation in Guinea Bissau, Madagascar, Guinea Conakry, Somalia, Darfour, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mauritania. They however noted with satisfaction, the positive evolution of the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire and the regained stability in Togo.
14. In this context, His Excellency Prof John Evans ATTA MILLS congratulated his burkinabé counterpart, His Excellency Blaise COMPAORE, for his commitment to peace, the effectiveness of his mediation and personal role in helping restore peace, particularly to the said two countries.
15. On the international level, the two Heads of State reviewed the situation in the Middle East. Deploring the recent events in the Gaza Strip which resulted in the loss of lives. They appealed to the two parties in the conflict to scrupulously respect the ceasefire and resume dialogue in view to achieving a lasting solution in which the two States, Israel and Palestine live side by side within established and recognized borders.
16. Examining the world in the context of poverty, the high cost of living, transnational crime and terrorism which is of great concern for their States, they committed themselves to closely collaborate with the view to uphold the challenges of development.

17. Concerning the international financial situation, the two Heads of State expressed their grave concern about its negative consequences and repercussions on the economies of the developing countries, still made fragile by the unjust and unbalanced international trade system.
18. In that vein, they reaffirmed the necessity to resume, as soon as possible, the Doha round of negotiations with the view to reaching an agreement that will enable equitable international trade, which will be beneficial for all. In that spirit, they encouraged the promotion of South-South cooperation to allow the developing countries to take good advantage of the global economy.
19. In this regard, they equally underscore the need to bring into realisation the reform of the international systems, notably, the United Nations and the Bretton Woods Institutions, to make them useful tools for development, peace and security.
20. At the end of his visit, the President of the Republic of Ghana, H.E. Prof John Evans ATTA MILLS expressed his profound gratitude to the President of Faso, the Government and the Burkinabe People for the warm welcome and cordial hospitality, friendship, brotherliness and respect accorded to him and his delegation.
21. H.E. Prof John Evans ATTA MILLS extended an invitation to H.E. Blaise COMPAORE to pay an official visit to Ghana. The President Blaise COMPAORE accepted the invitation. The dates for the visit will be communicated through diplomatic channels.

Done in Ouagadougou,
this 8th day of April, 2009.