

Minister's Message
2017 Thanksgiving Service – Ministry of Finance

Dear Colleagues,

Afehyia Pa to you all. The end of the year is a great time to reflect on what we've done over the last eleven months – reviewing our achievements in the light of the vision and new direction set for our country by HE the President and reflecting on those things that didn't quite go according to plan; but recognising the opportunities to re-assess and re-implement them having in mind all lessons learnt.

More importantly, the end of year is for confirming God's providence and blessings in all circumstances and upholding our firm reliance on Him for the future – Because of Him we dare to hope.

I would like to thank you all for your commitment and for playing your individual and collective roles to enable the Ministry support our fellow Ministries, departments/Agencies... and importantly to bring real solutions to the people of the Republic of Ghana. Managing the finances of this Country places us in a critical position of trust – in a sense we are the central nervous system of this Country: If other Ministries and indeed the Nation are to have any resources to implement their policies we at the Ministry of Finance are the ones who make it happen: we are the custodians and stewards of the Public Purse. What an awesome responsibility we have!

My prayer is that daily we will reflect on this assignment and practically see ourselves in the light of our national role from the cleaner to the clerk; from the secretary to the schedule officer, from the programmer to the estate manager, from the security man to the budget analyst!

Colleagues, this has been my first year with you and it continues to be an honour working with you. I have said in previous engagements that I have been pleasantly struck by the sheer magnitude of talent in this Ministry: There is so much we have done together this year directly and indirectly:

- Literally getting to know you all and starting the journey of building trust with you all.
- Working together to make the new Policy initiatives such as Free SHS take off successfully
- Restoration of nurses and teacher trainee allowances
- Paperless Port system that increased revenue at the Ports by 56%, from GHc130 million in the first week of September 2016, to GHc213 million in the same period for 2017.
- Abolition and reduction of taxes, to mention but a few
- We have also implemented the Public Financial Management Act, 2016, Act 921 for a whole year, and we look forward to good reviews. Let's remember

to work within this law so that we can avoid becoming victims of PFM sanctions.

- We have worked to deliver two national budgets this year, with the Midyear review making it three; the Budget performance has been good, although we did not meet our revenue targets, we did better than previous years.
- and our debt management strategy is beginning to yield results.
- Our relationship with our Development Partners remains cordial and this has also been boosted with the implementation of the IMF programme. Under the fund programme which ends next year, the Ministry has been reviewed four times and all of them have been successful.
- At the Ministerial level, i.e. the Ministry and all her agencies, we have begun the process of streamlining our businesses processes and look forward to being more efficient in the coming years.
- We have begun our Tuesday prayer meetings to continually recognize God as our Help, our Strength and our Provider.

This could not have been achieved without our collective efforts. Thank you, Team MoFEP.

And yet there remains so much more to do and so much ground to cover as we step into the New Year. Despite the limitations of time and space I am convinced that a unified team can achieve the impossible - the story of the Tower of Babel in Genesis Chapter 11 says it all. The people set for themselves an audacious vision – they said ***"Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth."***

The main lesson in the Babel story lies in God's response to the progress of the people "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them". (Genesis 11:6-7)

I would like for us to focus our efforts on speaking one language as keep we our eyes on our goals. Similar to the people of Babel, we will be pursuing some Big Hairy and Audacious Goals – as a Ministry and as a Country; our Key to success here is the common language. But unlike them, it is not about us: it is about God's purpose for this Country, for this Republic, for the people of Ghana.

How do we speak a common language?

- We rely on God as the enabler
- We must have a good understanding of our goals and what it takes to achieve them
- We must have a clear understanding of our unique role in this nation.
- We must develop a yearning to contribute significantly to history making events, even if our contributions initially seem banal and insignificant (Babel, wouldn't have been possible without porters, carpenters, masons...and yet it is tempting to think about the architects as the history makers)

- We must show care towards our colleagues in the Ministry as well as those in other Ministries and departments.
- And finally we must develop a sense of collective responsibility.

The New Year will bring its own mix of successes and challenges, but no doubt our direction is clear, as we know what is before us: We are building a Ghana where our people can harness our collective wealth for the benefit of all, we are building a Ghana that is beyond Aid: a Ghana where citizens can live and work and reap the rewards of hard work. I encourage you all to continue to stay focused on our objective of transforming lives and realizing the hopes and aspirations of this Country.

Recognition of Distinguished service for Retirees

This afternoon, we will also be celebrating eight retired staff who have distinguished themselves in service to God and country. We do have some mixed feelings in this regard, on one hand it is sad that we are losing hard working staff some of whom have been working with us for nearly 40 years. We have enjoyed working with you, we have learnt a lot from you, you have also been role models for your younger colleagues, for these and more we say Ayeeekoo, thank you and Congratulations!

In recognizing distinguished service, it is important to signal that across our Ministry we are stepping into 2018 with a determination to entrench a performance-oriented culture where rewards will be based on performance. I believe Chief mentioned this in earlier durbars. I have tasked General Administration and HR to come out with a reward system that recognizes hard work and sacrifices.

Finally, to all of you, Merry Christmas and let us all get back to work in 2018 healthy, refreshed and invigorated to do better for God and Country. Let us resolve, in the spirit of unity, to speak a common language as a Ministry in order to successfully realise the audacious goals before us!

Afihyia paa ooo