

GHANA-DENMARK HIGH LEVEL CONSULTATION 2007
SPEECH READ BY THE HON. MINISTER OF STATE AT THE SIGNING OF
THE AGREED MINUTES ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2007

1. Your Excellency, Ambassador Carsten Nilaus Pedersen, Under Secretary for Bilateral Development Cooperation and leader of the Danish Delegation to the Ghana-Denmark High Level Consultations, 2007,

Your Excellency, Mr Flemming Bjork Pedersen, Danish Ambassador to Ghana,

Chief Directors of the implementing Ministries of Danish development assisted programmes and projects,

Officials from the Danish Embassy and implementing MDAs/institutions,

Friends from the Press,

Ladies and Gentlemen,
 2. It is my pleasure to warmly welcome you all to this important ceremony this afternoon. The Agreed Minutes that we are about to sign is the outcome of deliberations that have taken place since last Wednesday when the Ghana-Denmark High Level Consultations for this year began and among other things, gives an indication to the future direction of the development cooperation between our two countries.
 3. It is interesting to note, ladies and gentlemen, that Danish development assistance to Ghana started as far back as 1957 when this dear nation of ours gained her independence from colonial rule.
 4. Between 1957 and the end of the 80s however, this assistance comprised of:
 - (i) social support channeled through NGOs and
 - (ii) the execution of projects funded by Danish Government loans and grants tied to industrial purposes, water supply, and the supply of agricultural equipment, among others.

This support has not only grown in size and quantum over the years, but also in scope.
 5. Current Danish development assistance to Ghana comes in the form of outright grants and the focus is in five (5) main sectors of the economy namely,
 - (i) transport
 - (ii) water and sanitation

- (iii) business/private
- (iv) governance and
- (v) health.

6. Ladies and gentlemen, the overall objective of Danish development assistance is to contribute towards Ghana's Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) and reports available indicate a high level of cooperation between officials of the implementing MDAs and their Danish counterparts leading to a remarkable success rate in the area of implementation.
7. Permit me, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, to mention a few of the programmes and projects funded with assistance from Denmark. These include:
 - Rehabilitation of the Konongo-Kumasi road;
 - Construction of the Commercial Court;
 - Support to the Judicial Service;
 - Support to the Registrar General's Department;
 - Support for our decentralization programme;
 - Support to independent governance institutions including Parliament, CHRAJ and the Electoral Commission;
 - Provision of water to a number of selected deprived communities in various parts of the country;
 - Support to School Sanitation and Health Education programme aimed at improving hygienic behaviour among school children and the youth in selected targeted areas;
 - Support to the Private Sector (in collaboration with other DPs through the pooled fund arrangement) by way of technical assistance, subsidized credit through equipment financing and outright grants.
8. Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, it is worth-mentioning that Denmark was one of the first nine (9) DPs to sign on to the MDBS programme adopted by the Government of Ghana in 2003 and has since been contributing to it religiously.
9. Ladies and gentlemen, the focus of this year's High Level Consultations was on overall policy issues and five main areas were looked at. These are
 - (i) progress towards poverty reduction;
 - (ii) aid effectiveness including harmonization and alignment;
 - (iii) regional issues;
 - (iv) present and future bilateral development cooperation between our two countries and
 - (v) cross cutting issues such as empowerment of women and climate change.

10. I must confess, ladies and gentlemen that the discussions were highly fruitful.
11. Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I wish on behalf of the Hon. Minister and the Government and People of Ghana, to express a most profound gratitude to the Government and good people of Denmark for their invaluable support to our nation's development over the years. May the future bring our two countries greater prospects.
12. Thank you.