

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & MEDIA RELATIONS PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

STATEMENT ON DOCTORED TAPE OF PRESIDENT MAHAMA SPEECH

Government's attention has been drawn to a tape recording making the rounds in which President John Dramani Mahama is alleged to have accused the people of the Ashanti Region of ingratitude.

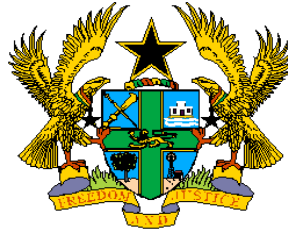
Having listened to the tape in question and also listened to the original tape we can state without fear of contradiction that the purported tape which has formed the basis for unjustified vilification of the President by detractors is doctored. Nowhere in the President's speech did he accuse Ashantis or residents of Kumasi of Ingratitude. He only referred to detractors who have made it their stock in trade never to acknowledge the good works of this government but resort to deliberate cynicism, unfounded pessimism and outright calumny to create the impression of a collapsed state.

A transcript of the relevant portion of the original recording is reproduced below;

“... the Akans have a saying that, no matter how well the chicken dances, it will never please the hawk. No matter how well the chicken dances, it will never please the hawk. Therefore, we need not be discouraged by that. **Because for some people, even if we cover all the ground with gold in Kumasi, they will not appreciate it**”

The mischievous elements behind the doctored tape cut out portions of this statement to make it appear as though the President said “... as for you people, even if we cover all the ground with gold in Kumasi, you will not appreciate it”. This editing of the President's speech creates the impression that he has singled out the people of Kumasi for criticism when in fact it can be clearly determined from the original recording that the President was making reference to cynics in general. There was also no tribal or ethnic undertone to the statement as has been claimed by the purveyors of this mischief.

There is little doubt that the broadcast of the doctored tape and other illogical claims made about President Mahama's trip to the Ashanti Region form part of a grand effort to water down the huge success chalked in view of the many social, economic and



MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & MEDIA RELATIONS

PRESS RELEASE

The revival of the Kumasi Shoe Factory which has created employment and a source of livelihood for over 200 people, the announcement by the President of a free school sandal policy, the Mampong Water project which has provided safe drinking water for the people of Mampong, the Tepa Hospital, the rehabilitation of the Kumasi Airport runway and the installation of Landing equipment as well as construction of over 20km of roads with an additional 50km to be constructed on the instruction of the President are but a few of the good works the Mahama-led government is doing to improve the lives of the people of the Ashanti Region in particular and Ghana as a whole.

We note that detractors perceive these achievements as a threat to their campaign of doom and gloom—a campaign launched for the sole purpose of exploiting genuine concerns expressed by the people of this country about some measures taken to correct fiscal slippages encountered in 2012 and 2013, to instill a sense of hopelessness and despair in Ghanaians with a view to achieving narrow political ends. These detractors therefore hatched this plot to doctor the President's statements as a way of diverting attention from the substance of the issues at stake regarding the tour.

We are also disappointed with sections of the media who without verifying the authenticity of the tape gleefully assisted the criminal minds behind this diabolical enterprise to broadcast it and give it prominence that it did not deserve. We are particularly surprised that the same media houses who in the past shielded elements in the opposition from public scrutiny when refusing to play tapes on which they were caught making incendiary statements were quick to play this particular doctored tape without cross-checking.

Such imbalance, unfairness and lack of principle is inimical to the ethics of media practice.

For the avoidance of doubt we attach the original version of the tape and request the media to give it the same prominence they gave the doctored tape. We also invite all fair-minded Ghanaians to listen to both tapes and draw their own conclusions.

(Signed)

FELIX KWAKYE OFOSU
Deputy Minister for Information & Media Relations