

**SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI PRANAB
MUKHERJEE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

Ghana, Africa: June 13, 2016

1. Good Afternoon to all of you! It is indeed a pleasure and privilege for me to be amongst you.
2. It is a great pleasure whenever I have such an opportunity to see the bright faces, sparkling eyes and young minds of students filled with high hopes, aspirations and a strong desire to make a change in the environment in which they live.
3. Dear students, your quest for innovation and yearning for positive change are the Critical Mass and Centre-of-Gravity around which a Nation's hopes and aspirations are built. By challenging society's mores, seeking the rationale of ideologies and questioning systems and beliefs, you prevent society from wilting into complacency. I am, therefore, delighted to be with you today.
4. My delegations consists of Dr Jitendra Singh , Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister of India, Shri Surjit Singh Ahluwalia , Member of the Lok Sabha - the House of the People and Shri Mansukh Mandaviya , Member of the Rajya Sabha, the Upper House of the Indian Parliament. We bring to you the good will, love and affection of the people of India.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

5. I am aware that the University of Ghana is one of the largest in Africa, and home to one of the most vibrant student communities in Africa. The scholarship that emanates from this University has contributed to the currents of change and advancement in Ghana and other countries in your neighbourhood and beyond.
6. Friends, today's robust and confident India is not an overnight phenomenon. Decades of toil and the sacrifices of our leaders strengthened by the momentum generated by hundreds of thousands of students and scholars are behind India's freedom and rise; it is their innovations, discoveries, rock-solid determination and self confidence, and more importantly a burning desire to serve the nation, which has contributed to India's success.
7. Independent India, after 1947, refused to simply replicate what the developed countries were doing, nor did we follow blindly the models of development that might have been successful elsewhere. We recognized that natural and financial resources were only one side of the coin of development; but the other side is the quality of human resource that alone can transform the natural resources into prosperity and happiness of the people.
8. Distinguished members of the Faculty and dear Students, you would be aware that since the 1960s, the Government of India, guided by her experience, has been sharing her knowledge and skills with nations in Africa and other developing countries. India's

capacity-building programmes - Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC) and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) Scholarships scheme - have become household names across Africa. Every year, 250 Ghanaian government and semi-government officials receive training in India while about 20 scholars pursue full-time under-graduate, Masters and Ph.D programmes on scholarships. I have learned, to my delight, that students from Ghana are rated by institutes and universities in India as the finest among all foreign students. Please accept my hearty congratulations. Having recognized Ghana's immense human resource potential, I am happy to announce that the Government of India has decided to increase seat allocations for Ghana to 300 ITEC slots and increase the number of annual scholarships under other Indian schemes to forty.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. The friendship between India and Ghana is rooted in our common history of struggles against foreign domination and struggle for independence. Both our peoples cherish the shared vision of our founding leaders and the values of democracy, plurality, inclusiveness and human dignity. These commonalities have bound us in a fraternal embrace. The measureless goodwill and the extent of familiarity and affinity that exist between our two peoples defy geographical logic and confound political scientists! No wonder our two governments work so closely together on major international issues and in multilateral organizations including the Commonwealth and the Non-Aligned Movement. By adapting our

bilateral relations to the present global context and the changing geo-political dynamics of the present situation, we will be able to renew and nurture this goodwill and affinity.

10. We should recognize that challenges are an inevitable and integral part of the developmental process. Today our nations face many similar challenges:

- the goal of eliminating poverty,
- defeating the scourge of international terrorism;
- sustainable development in harmony with our environment and eco-systems;
- preserving and further refining our democratic systems and strengthening our democratic institutions;
- adding greater value to our resources and efficiently generating employment for our youth.

We not only have to be watchful, but have to stand shoulder-to-shoulder in confronting them. India, as a friend and partner, is with you in this journey.

11. In brief, there is a need for a paradigm shift in the way we conduct our relations - while building further on the foundation of our mutual goodwill. We need to define a new positive and create a brighter, innovative and updated narrative of India-Ghana relations.

12. I am confident that our youth – who are our leaders of tomorrow would fit in seamlessly into this renewed and revised model of cooperation. By duly making them stakeholders, we will succeed in reinvigorating our partnership and taking it to a new level.

13. My dear friends, I do believe that science and knowledge will simply remain a scholarly preserve if it is not translated into wisdom that guides humanity towards a better tomorrow. Education is like a lamp, brightly-lit, which should show the way and enlighten many more lives. I would, therefore, call upon the youth of Ghana to employ your learning and knowledge in the service of your society and your nation. I am confident that the coming generations of this great nation, the inheritors of the legacy of the great son of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, have the credentials to make their Nation proud. I have no doubt that you will claim for Ghana the rightful place that it deserves in the comity of Nations.

Distinguished Ladies and gentlemen,

14. I believe that Ghana is already moving in the right direction. Your democratic credentials are the envy of many African countries; your rapid progress in realising the Millennium Development Goals is commendable; your social and religious harmony is exemplary and the peace and stability that prevails in this country are your greatest assets. Your role in the integration of the Economic

Community of West African States is widely recognised. The exceptional solidarity shown by Ghana in rendering their support to Ebola-affected countries in Africa is worthy of admiration. However, no developing nation can afford to be complacent. We should continue to strive and be watchful. The road ahead is very long, and sometimes tortuous. Alone we may stumble, but together we can go farther.

Ladies and gentlemen,

15. India has suffered many challenges in its long history, and continues to confront them. But we are ready to share our success and the expertise we have developed in some key sectors with the people of Ghana under the umbrella of our South-South cooperation programmes. This is one of the reasons why India organized the Third India-Africa Forum Summit in October last year in New Delhi. We want to enhance our developmental cooperation with Africa.

16. India calls upon students and the faculty of this great university and others to take full advantage of the scholarships and training opportunities announced by India at the India Africa Forum Summit last year. The capacity building dimension of India-Africa relations has been vastly expanded to include research in various fields such as agriculture, bio-technology and other subjects of relevance to your country.

17. In this context , I would like to commend two eminent centres of learning in Ghana for their role in nurturing an institutional relationship with India: the first is the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology, Kumasi, which has been coordinating the Pan-African e-network Programme, a brainchild of my illustrious predecessor, the Late Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. The second is the India-Ghana Kofi Annan Centre of ICT Excellence in Accra, which, I am happy to note, has been imparting ICT skills to the youth of Ghana and also other countries in this region. I am looking forward to visiting this Centre tomorrow morning.

18. My dear distinguished friends, let us pause and take a look at the present day geo-political global scenario. Outdated structures cannot resolve problems of today. Positive transformation cannot be brought about by archaic systems and concepts. The United Nations, established in the wake of the 2nd World War cannot effectively respond to the rapidly evolving international challenges that we face today. It is imperative that the organs of the United Nations should keep pace with the changing times. A country of India's size which houses every sixth citizen of the world and the entire African continent do not have a place in the permanent membership of the Security Council. Reform and change of the United Nations is inevitable.

19. Let me conclude quoting from Gandhi the Mahatma, the Father of the Indian Nation, whose statue I have had the honour of

unveiling in the precincts of this University today : Gandhiji had exhorted us against:

“Wealth without work; pleasure without conscience; knowledge without character; commerce without morality; science without humanity; worship without sacrifice; and politics without principles.”

20. There is no better counsel than the above for the youth, the future leaders of our two countries. I wish you all success in your future endeavours. The world belong to you bright young men and women and the entire community wants you to make the change you desire to see the in the world.

Thank you.
