SPEECH AT THE LAUNCH OF DARKEST HUMANITY ON 17TH SEPTEMBER, 2019

Spirit lead me where my trust is without borders...
Let me walk upon the waters wherever you would call me...
Take me deeper than my feet could ever wander...
And my faith will be made stronger in the presence of my Saviour.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen; I would like to start by thanking the Almighty God, the Creator of the universe, for making it possible for us to assemble here for this great event. I would also like to use this opportunity to express my profound gratitude to key individuals whose invaluable inputs have made our gathering here possible. First is Reverend Kennedy Okosun - CEO of KRIF Ghana and KRIF media partners, and publishers of integrity magazine.

In reverence to God, I would like to talk about how I came into contact with Reverend Kennedy Okosun. There is a fortnightly program in my Church called Prophetic Bliss. During one such program, Pastor Jeffrey Mbreh gave me an 18 Day Prophecy. He said that within a period of 18 Days, I would come into contact with someone who would have a great impact on my Book Project and the launch. Within the 18 Days, I came into contact with Madam Selikem Acolatse of GBC, host of Women’s Voice. Madam Selikem made certain revelations about my Book Project to me, and clearly said that it is a Divine Mission. So I was wondering if the Prophecy concerned Sister Selikem Acolatse.

However, on the last day of the 18 Days, I had a call from the USA. The caller told me he would send me someone’s number to call. And that the person is an International Man who can bring the Ambassadors in Ghana to my Book Launch. Reverend Kennedy Okosun’s name and phone number was sent to me. Quickly, I googled him. Lo and behold, I saw pictures of him and the diplomatic community online. Without wasting time, I called Reverend and we spoke. Reverend then said that the gentleman from the US is the 10th Person to have sent him excerpts from my Book, and hailing my Book a groundbreaking work, and a potential World Bestseller. After the phone call, I received a message from reverend:

“Excellent. At your convenience, kindly give me a call when you find it appropriate. It shall be my pleasure to have lunch or dinner with you. And be rest assured: there will be no fish and chips.”

I have since had several meetings with Reverend at Golden Tulip Hotel, and a final one with my Protocol Team for the launch in his office at Adabraka. But for Reverend, we would be having this event at PAWA House in Roman Ridge. Well, after over 3 decades, I now have someone I happily call “Daddy!” Daddy Kennedy Okosun, I would want to spend the rest of my life under your counsel. God richly bless you, Daddy Ken.
My next person is Madam Doris Dabasu Kuwornu - Vice President of Ghana Association of Writers. After our general elections at the Association some months ago, the new executives appointed me to serve as a member of the Awards Committee. Madam Doris Dabasu Kuwornu happens to be the chairperson of the Awards Committee. Being the youngest on the Committee, I was asked to take minutes at meetings. So, I became the Secretary to the Awards Committee. Auntie Doris, as I affectionately call her, became my boss.

Auntie Doris has since become a great pillar to me, the one who gives me insight into the corporate world, drawing from her many years of service as Director of Corporate affairs at the GBC. Whenever there is a corporate event taking place, Auntie Doris would invite me to come. Auntie Doris invited me to witness Mike Eghan’s Book Launch at the Coconut Grove Hotel some weeks ago. “Talk to people, make friends…” she kept telling me at the Coconut Grove Hotel. And thank God I made friends with uncle KSM that day. Now I’m already booked to appear on the KSM Show. And I’m honoured to have both Uncle Mike Eghan and Uncle KSM at my Book launch, thanks to Auntie Doris. Auntie, actively provided me with all the support and guidance that I needed for this event. Auntie, I am exceedingly grateful. God richly bless you.

Other notable key persons who have contributed hugely to this project are Mr Emmanuel Adams Kusi – a supervisor at the Bank of Ghana, my printer Mr Daniel Masetorwo and his company Almok Books and Stationery, my editor Miss Esther Sedinam Dominic and Mr Francis Gbormittah – President of Ghana Association of Writers.

Frankly, I owe a debt of gratitude to the executives and membership of Ghana Association of Writers, an institution I have come to love so dearly. To the Awards Committee Members – Mr Asare Adei, Auntie Mariska, Nii Addokwei Moffat, Uncle Ebo and Nana Kwasi Gyan Apenteng, the immediate past President of GAW – I love you all – you have greatly enriched my life. To everyone here, I am eternally grateful, but sadly I cannot mention everyone’s name due to time constraint. The presence of Auntie Elizabeth Ohene in our midst is a reminder that our public events must be completed within the allotted time.

Today is an emotional day for me, as I have come into contact with family, friends and classmates I have not seen for decades. Some people have travelled all the way from the Volta Region to grace this occasion. I just cannot find enough words to thank you all enough. God bless you all.

Now to the story of my Book – Darkest Humanity. As Nelson Mandela was about to leave prison, he made a statement:

“As I stand before the door to my freedom, I realise that if I do not leave my pain, anger and bitterness behind me, I will still be in Prison…”

Like Nelson Mandela, there had been times when I felt like leaving my pains, anger and bitterness towards the British behind me. And that would mean, in part, letting go off this Book. The only time I had strongly felt the need for my Book was on 23rd January 2016, as I was walking out of an interview room at the Bank of Ghana.
On my return from Britain in July 2014, I submitted an application to the Central Bank of Ghana in November of 2014. A year on, in October 2015, I was called to come for an aptitude test. It took place at WAEC Hall in Tema Community Five (5). Three thousand (3,000) applicants turned up for the aptitude test, morning and afternoon sessions. Then in December 2015, Bank of Ghana began interviewing shortlisted applicants. In January 2016, I was called by the Bank of Ghana to come for my interview letter.

After an impressive performance at the interview on 23rd January 2016, the Chairman of the Interview Panel said:

"Before we offer you the job, we'll seek clarification from the British Police."

With that, I knew fate had dealt me another blow. Indeed, the American lady's post on my wall had come to haunt me:

"The Beasts of England have ruined your life. Even with your master's degree, you'll struggle to get a job with multinational companies because of your criminal conviction."

A week later, in a desperate attempt to salvage my dream job, I wrote an extensive three-page letter to the Chairman of the Interview Panel. But I guess the harm was already done. Her Majesty's Beasts of England had put me down, really down; and it would take long for me to get back up. So, I became a taxi driver instead... Whilst my hard-earned British certificate gathers dust ever after... Dear Diary; here ends my story!

Well, like I said earlier, I became a taxi driver after my interview with the Bank of Ghana in January 2016. In 2018 February 2018, by some divine orchestration, I had some breakthrough and got a job with one of the Municipal Assemblies. A month or two after starting my job as a civil servant, I became saddled with dreams upon dreams about London. As I became restless with dreams about London, I realised that I have a Divine Mission to accomplish. Quickly I decided to complete typing my script. But then a disaster struck. I lost some of my scripts, perhaps would have been the most interesting part of my Book. The scripts I lost were the prison and post-prison chapters of my Book. These were the chapters I was writing as the events were unfolding.

Darkest Humanity is the product of my years of pain, anger and bitterness in the hands of the British government. In the words of Martin Luther King Jr.:

“As my sufferings mounted, I soon realized that there were two ways in which I could respond to my situation – either to react with bitterness or seek to transform the suffering into a creative force. I decided to follow the latter course.”

So, I can happily say that the best that has come out of the pains is this Book, which I believe will impact on the lives of many around the globe. In 2007, my last resident permit in the UK expired. I decided to stay on as an illegal immigrant and pursue my master’s degree, after which I would return to Ghana quietly
and live a decent life. So, I began my studies in September 2007. On 7th October 2007, I was arrested whilst on my way to school. I was served with removal note; ticket and boarding pass to be removed from the UK on 13th October 2007. Arrest on Tuesday, and removal on Saturday.

After I was released, one of the arresting immigration officers started calling me to demand bribe from me in order to sell my passport to me. I reported the matter to the Metropolitan Police Service. British Intelligence Officers kept me in Hotels for two days and trained me to do an undercover for them, after which the corrupt immigration officer was arrested. As a result, my removal was cancelled. With my assistance, the Metropolitan Police Service undertook a one year investigation into the activities of the corrupt immigration officer and his colleagues. The case proceeded to court in September 2008, and I was the prosecution witness to the British Crown Prosecution Service. The officer was found guilty of bribery and corruption and sentenced to prison for three years.

When I first went to report the corrupt approach by the immigration officer to the Police, promises were made to me. But after the trial, the Police and the government just abandoned me. My local Member of Parliament for Barking constituency became involved in my case for five years, mediating between me and immigration. After 5 years without success, with my passport still in the custody of the British government and about to expire, I demanded for my passport in order to return to Ghana. I was told that my “useless Ghanaian passport” had been lost, so I should apply for a travel certificate from the Ghana High Commission in London, go back to my country, and forget about my “useless Ghanaian passport” and leave.

In 2012, I wrote to immigration and requested that I wanted to be removed from the UK on a specific date. I followed it up with several phone calls to the Home Office. On the said day, which happened to be Good Friday, I proceeded to Heathrow airport with my luggage, ready to be removed to Ghana. I was again told at Heathrow that my passport had been lost. I prepared placards ready to do a demonstration at the airport should things go wrong again. This led to a scuffle between me and the airport security and Police. The Police overpowered me, forcefully kicked me to the ground, and handcuffed me as I was in pain crying. They removed me from the airport that day, and drove me to an Underground Station to board the Tube back to London. The Police warned me not to return to the airport or face their wrath.

I decided then that I would never leave Britain without my Ghanaian passport, whether expired or useless. I created a blog to publish my story. I titled my blog My Encounter with the White Man. Few weeks after I started publishing my story on my blog, the case of two terrorist shoe bombers made headlines across Britain and the world. The terrorist who tried to detonate his shoe bomb on a flight to the US was being tried. Prosecutors of the terrorist in the USA needed his British counterpart to testify against him. As a result, the terrorist turned prosecution witness was given rewards by the British Police and government.

In the arithmetic of logic and thinking of the British, it is better being a terrorist turned prosecution witness than an illegal immigrant turned prosecution witness. There was public anger against the British Government for offering a deal to a convicted terrorist on becoming a prosecution witness. The British government issued a statement in support of their decision to offer a deal to the convicted terrorist:
“The administration of justice internationally benefits from such agreement...” Sue Hemming from the British Crown Prosecution Service

With this logic and thinking of the British, I wrote an article titled I want to be a Terrorist in London. The Police then launched a manhunt for my arrest. After Ten (10) months of several raids on several addresses across London but with no possible hope of being able to arrest me, I voluntarily walked into the Police Station and handed myself over to the Police. This led to a lengthy legal battle and I was put on remand at North London’s Pentonville. After years of being subjected to horrendous treatments by the British Government, I began a protest against the Government. That ended in my incarceration by the Government. It was during my time in prison that I became aware of David Goodhart’s novel The British Dream.

Darkest Humanity was partly inspired by another Book titled The British Dream. David Goodhart, author of The British Dream portrayed immigrants in the UK in a negative light:

“From lazy Somalis and macho African-Caribbeans to inbreeding Pakistanis and standoffish Poles.”

Whilst in North London’s Pentonville Prison, I joined a journalism class. One day, a reporter from the Guardian Newspaper was invited to give a lecture on journalism. The reporter spoke about a new book titled The British Dream, and how immigrants in the UK have been portrayed negatively by the author.

The Guardian reporter expounded on the historical account of post-war Britain, and how Britain opened the floodgates of immigration and sent emissaries to the West Indies to bring in African Caribbeans to help rebuild the country after the Second World War. Britain lost most of its active workforce to the war.

Here then arose the question: can someone write the British Dream from the perspective of immigrants? This question kept lingering within me because of what I had been through, and my encounter with the British establishment – the Westminster fraternity.

One day, whilst reading a book in the library in Pentonville, I had an urge, an urge so strong that I could not resist it. The urge to start writing my Book came to me right inside the library in North London’s Pentonville prison. The urge for me to re-write The British Dream from the perspective of immigrants was so strong that I became restless. After reading few pages of the book I was reading in the library, I put the book down. The next thing I did was to start writing the All-African (Commonwealth) British Dream! Here was the birth of Darkest Humanity, a ground-breaking Pan African Book we are launching today.

Five Titles I considered when I was writing this book in Pentonville: 1 - The British Dream. 2 - Heart of Darkness, 3 - Silver and Gold, 4 - Mein Kampf, 5 - not Darkest Humanity.

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