

REMARKS BY THE MUNICIPAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE, HON. ANTHONY AVORGBEDOR AT THE GRAND DURBAR OF THE 19th DZODZE DEZA CELEBRATION HELD ON 1st OCTOBER, 2022 AT DZODZE

- **Torgbui Chairman - Togbui Addoh VIII, the Paramount Chief of Klikor Traditional Area;**
- **Our Special Guest of Honour – H.E Alhaji Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia;**
- **Hon. Minister for Tourism, Arts and Culture – Dr. Ibrahim Mohammed Awal;**
- **Hon. Regional Minister – Dr. Archibald Letsa;**
- **Hon. Member of Parliament – Dr. James Klutse Avedzi;**
- **Hon. Samuel Kofi Dzamesi – CEO, Bui Power Authority;**
- **Our Revered Chiefs and Elders Present;**
- **Heads of Departments and Institutions Present;**
- **Distinguished Invited Guests;**
- **Our friends from the Media;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen;**

Azaaa – Namiakaatan!

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen!

I consider it a great privilege and honour to join you this day to mark the 19th Deza after several years of break due to the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic which was imported into the country on that fateful day, 12th March, 2020.

Torgbui Chairman,

Before I proceed, kindly permit me to also add my voice in welcoming our dignitaries and our sons and daughters who have travelled from far and near to witness and celebrate the Deza. **Miawoezor, welcome to Ketu North Municipality.**

Deza means palm-festival which is celebrated by the people of Dzodze. The festival provides a unique opportunity for the people to showcase their rich culture and

heritage. It also serves as an avenue for resource mobilization to embark on community development projects and programs.

Despite the enormous contribution of the festival to the socio-economic development of the people, the emergence of the coronavirus pandemic has truncated the progress made over the years and shut down the economy of the country.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Government upon seeing the enormity of the situation did not only declare the pandemic as a health crisis but a war on the national economy which required stringent measures to restore our economy to normalcy.

In this regard, the government adopted the World Health Organization's guidelines on the coronavirus pandemic and several domestic measures such as a partial lockdown,

closure of the country's air, sea, and land borders, enhanced contact tracing, and aggressive testing of a suspected case which enabled health experts to identify and isolate infected persons and protect the population from further infections. The government also implemented stimulus packages in the form of free food, water and electricity among others to cushion the population especially the poor and the vulnerable.

Just when we thought we were out of the woods, Russia invaded Ukraine. The invasion has worsened our economic difficulties. This has disrupted the country's promising recovery from the coronavirus pandemic by raising food and fuel prices, disrupting trade of goods and services, tightening the fiscal space and reducing the flow of finance for development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In this difficult times, we must begin to consider creative and innovative ways of mobilizing revenue from within and harnessing the human potential of our Municipality to promote the development of our communities. Development must be seen as a shared responsibility in that the citizens must play their part in order to complement government's efforts in ensuring national development.

As we rekindle the spirit of Deza, let us seize this opportunity to take stock of the past and devise appropriate measures to overcome the challenges of the future. We cannot predict the next pandemic. Hence, the need to be proactive and strategic in planning our development projects and programs.

As an Assembly, we would continue to create the enabling environment that stimulates the growth of the local

economy and propel the development of the Municipality. We would also continue to set aside funds to promote the socio-cultural activities of our people and provide the required support to the realization of any meaningful development initiatives by the citizens.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My remarks would be incomplete without touching on peace and security. The Municipality is confronted with pocket of chieftaincy issues which continue to negatively impact on our collective progress and resources meant for development.

Indeed, no sustainable progress can be achieved in a chaotic and conflict prone environment. In such environments, socio-economic progress made through the hard work of the people are only destroyed eventually due

to lack of social cohesion, trust and understanding among the citizenry.

Let us constantly continue to find a common ground to resolve our differences through dialogue and diplomacy. It is only by so doing that we can live in peace, unity and work together to advance the course of our society.

Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen,

A divided house can certainly not withstand any internal or external threat. Such situations only expose our lack of unity of purpose as a people and serve as a fertile ground for the agenda of the enemy to fester. We are witnesses to the insurgence of terrorists' attacks and violent extremism across the sub-region and as a Municipality we are not immune to this security threat.

It is in this vein that I wish to humbly call on all our chiefs to work cooperatively to strengthen the social cohesion of our

people in order to deal with any threat that may disturb the peaceful coexistence of our people. I urge you all to remain very vigilant and report any suspicious character or characters living within our communities to our local leaders and the law enforcement agencies for prompt action.

I wish to assure you that our security agencies are on high alert and will not hesitate to respond to any distress call.

Togbui Chairman; Invited Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before I conclude my remarks, let me seize the moment to inform you that there is the emergence of new public health threats such as the Monkey pox and Marburg virus. Our health professionals have started mass education on that and I urge you all to remain safe. Indeed our nation is only safer if we remain vigilant and prevent any threat to the stability of the Municipality.

In recent times, I have observed with much concern the practice of retailing petroleum products in our various homes. The practice does not only pose threat to our very human existence but could lead to fire outbreak, loss of properties and human lives. I therefore urge all those engaged in this dangerous act to desist from it in order to secure the safety of our environment.

Finally, my appreciation goes to the organizers for their great effort in putting together the 19th edition of the Deza celebration. But for their urgency and tireless organization, this day's celebration would not have been possible.

Ayee! Kooo! Nami! Miawoewordor!

I once again wish to welcome you all to Dzodze. Have a wonderful celebration.

Thank you!