**SESSIONAL ADDRESS BY THE METRO CHIEF EXECUTIVE, DURING THE FIRST ORDINARY MEETING OF THE 3RD SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY ON**

**THURSDAY 16TH MAY, 2013 AT THE SNNIT CONFERENCE HALL AT 9:00 AM**

**HON. PRESIDING MEMBER**

**HON. MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT**

**HON. ASSEMBLY MEMBERS**

**HEADS OF DEPARTMENT**

**NANANOM**

**MEMBERS OF THE PRESS**

**DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

**INTRODUCTION:**

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to His Excellency President John Dramani Mahama for nominating me to the high office of the Chief Executive of the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly.

I am highly honoured and privileged to be with you this morning to give my first sessional address that outlines my vision and mission for Kumasi during my term of office. Let me therefore seize the opportunity to thank the Almighty God for bringing us together and for making it possible for us to see this memorable day.

Again, I wish to express my sincerest gratitude to you all for reposing your confidence in me. It is my prayer that we will work together as a team to achieve our ultimate goal of restoring Kumasi to its past glory.

**Hon. Presiding Member, Hon. Members of the Assembly**, I am aware that the Assembly’s long term vision is to provide the requisite infrastructure that will guarantee quality life for the people; through the provision of essential services and the creation of an enabling environment to promote and sustain the development of the city.

I therefore wish to focus on the following priority areas to help achieve this vision:

* Security
* Sanitation
* Education
* Restoration of the Garden City
* Infrastructural Developments
* Promoting Sporting Activities
* Media

**SECURITY**

The security of the people of Kumasi is my number one priority. To this end, the Assembly will continue to collaborate with the security agencies to ensure that there is total peace and security within the Metropolis to enable residents go about their duties without fear.

In order to achieve this goal, the KMA would procure and install CCTV cameras within the Central Business District (CBD) and known flash points. These would be networked to a central security monitoring system. The central security monitoring system would be managed by the Police and the Military to effectively monitor the activities of criminals within the metropolis.

In addition to that, the Assembly would provide walkie-talkies for members of the Metro Security Committee, selected heads of departments, and heads of the security agencies to ensure effective communication and coordination of security activities within the Metropolis. The Assembly would also strengthen the Security Coordination unit with the appropriate security personnel to ensure that the maximum level of security prevails. The Metro Guards of the Assembly and the Task Force members would also be made available, equipped and properly monitored to enable them support the security agencies in providing security.

The KMA would also seek support form donor agencies, friends of Kumasi, businesses and the international community to procure security combat vehicles as well as uniforms and other accoutrements to support the Police in their daily activities.

The national security operatives would also be available to complement efforts at making Kumasi a safe place to live.

**RESTORATION OF THE GARDEN CITY**

**TREE PLANTING**

Hon. Assembly members, we are all aware that Kumasi which is popularly known as “the Garden City” or the “heart beat” of Ghana used to be endowed with so many beautiful species of flowers and trees. But over the years its beauty has been dwindling as a result of environmental degradation coupled with population growth and urbanization which is also characterized by the emergence of unauthorized developments.

Our trees and gardens have been cleared for buildings and other projects. People have built in waterways whilst others have put up structures in places designated as nature reserves.

To address these issues, I would do everything in my powers to halt all unauthorized developments and collaborate with key stakeholders to undertake a special “Greening Kumasi” project aimed at planting about **One Million trees** by 2017 in a bid to restore the beauty of the city to promote tourism and also improve our climate in our own small way.

**ENVIRONMENT AND SANITATION**

Our city in the last decade has experienced incidents of severe rainstorms, followed by floods which occur in some parts of the metropolis as a result of blocked waterways and choked gutters due to the indiscriminate dumping of waste and littering.

In order to address these problems of waste generation on account of the increasing population in the metropolis, I have, instituted a “Night Cleaning Squad” consisting of about 150 personnel from the metropolis to clear the filth generated at the Central Business District (CBD) during the day.

I want to assure this august house that this programme would not be a nine-day wonder. We are working around the clock to put measures in place to sustain the exercise. I have asked for secondment of some military Warrant Officers to supervise the night cleaning exercise.

**SPORTS AND TOURISM**

One would ask, why sports? But you would all agree with me that sports is a great market for the country’s economy, especially the tourism industry. It also provides the platform for the Metropolis to showcase itself internationally and allows the advertising companies and other institutions to exhibit their products. Indeed, sports can promote our social relationships with the outside world.

I therefore want to make it a point to promote sister-city sports competitions and tournaments in the metropolis and also liaise with the appropriate stakeholders to spearhead international conferences and events to attract investors into the city. By so doing, I am going to organize Kumasi International Marathon for Sports men in Kumasi and Abroad and this will bring Kumasi to the world.

**EDUCATION**

Hon. Presiding Member, Education serves as means by which individuals develop their knowledge abilities, attitudes and moral values in the societies in which they live. It is an eye-opener to the individual and creates rational sense.

You will all agree with me that education alone cannot improve without the provision of libraries which serve as instruments of self-education. My main focus during my term of office would be to provide **200 Capacity Libraries** for all the **Nine (9) Sub Metros** alongside the provision of infrastructure and other amenities for schools in the metropolis.

**DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS/PROJECTS AND INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENTS**

**Hon. Assembly Members**, in terms of development planning, the necessary measures have been put in place to ensure the smooth implementation of our plans.

The 2013 Annual Action Plan was prepared out of the Medium Term Development Plan (MTDP) under the various sources of funds of the Assembly. The following programmes and projects are earmarked for implementation in 2013:

**District Development Fund (DDF)**

**Nineteen (19)** projects were captured in the Action Plan under the DDF. **Three (3)** out of these were rolled over from 2012. The new projects are:

* 9no Education facilities
* 2No. Health facilities
* 1No Road project
* 3No. sanitation Project
* 1No. Security project

**Urban Development Grant (UDG)**

Under the Urban Development Grant, 24 subprojects are being implemented. The projects are made up of:

* 13No. education projects
* 6No. Health projects
* 32No. mechanized boreholes with overhead tanks (one Lot)
* 2No. Road projects
* 5No. Sanitation Projects (in 2two lots)

Eighteen (18) of these projects are at different levels of completion. There are:

* 7no. at the substructure level
* 8no. at the Superstructure level
* 1no. Completed and
* 2no supplies on-going (Communal skip containers and school furniture)

The Evaluation Reports for the last six have been forwarded to the Regional Tender Review Board for consideration and subsequent action.

Also as part of the UDG, there is the **Local Government Capacity Support Project (LGCSP). This project aims at** supporting urban local governments to improve their management capabilities in Public Financial Management, specifically in Budget Reforms, Reporting and Auditing, Local Revenue Management, Asset Management, and Social Accountability.

Under this project, a US$4,000,000.00 Capacity Support Fund (CSF) has been allocated to KMA for the engagement of Consultants (service providers) to support the Assembly in any of the five PFM areas. A proposal is being developed to source fund in the area of Asset Management.

The Assembly is also expected to sign an MOU with the Regional Technical Advisory Team (RTAT) who are facilitating the implementation of the project in this zone.

**Internally Generated Fund (IGF)**

Under the Internally Generated Fund of the Assembly, **twenty nine (29) sub-projects were rolled over from 2012.** It is important to note that some of these projects were awarded about **three to four years ago**.

**District Assembly Common Fund (DACF)**

Sixteen (16) projects are being implemented under the DACF. All these projects, which were awarded about **five (5) years ago,** were rolled over.

**Hon. Presiding Member, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,** you will agree with me that Kumasi has become a very outmoded city and I believe we need to urbanize the city by changing its style of development. The buildings in the city especially those found at the CBD and along the major streets look very old. As an Assembly we need to sit down and look at Kumasi critically in terms of development in the next twenty (20) years. The engagement of an International Urbanize Architecture to give us a look and feel of how Kumasi should be by 2030 is very paramount.

To begin with the KMA office which was once an old cocoa shed needs to be revamped and given a facelift. The Assembly urgently needs a new modern office complex with conference facilities and cafeteria to accommodate all the sixteen (16) department under the Assembly.

To be able to attract a lot of events and international conferences we need to expand and change the size and capacity of the Prempeh Assembly Hall to a more modern theatre.

I am reliably informed that designs and drawings of the new KMA Office complex and that of the Prempeh Assembly Hall are at the Works Department of the Assembly. These designs will be studied and pushed forward for necessary action before the end of my tenure of office.

**REBRANDING KUMASI CITY**

I have watched with mixed anticipation, the ambitious plans of people in the rebranding process. Rebranding is a difficult process that forever changes not only structures, but also purpose, drive and meaning of everything involved. How do we go about it? What at all should be our motive and drive? I would like to share with you few lessons picked during a rebranding process:

1. **Lead the change you want to become.**
2. **Plan boldly and defy the dissenters- doubting Thomases**
3. **Partner strategically**
4. **Be open to change.**
5. **Celebrate what makes you different**
6. **Realist alert: have lots of money**
7. **Enhancement of KMA’s Logo**
8. **Re-design of our Letter Head,**
9. **Corporate vehicle, uniforms etc.**

It has been said that a journey of a thousand miles always begins with a step, Kumasi needs to compete with International Cities such as Johannesburg, Boston and London. We need the support of all stakeholders such as Tele**c**ommunications, Financial Institutions, The Media, Individuals, etc to join the train with the label: a **new Kumasi, to our destination.**

As part of the series of activities outlined are the following:

* **Holding of an International Conference in Kumasi known as “Invest in Kumasi”** – this is a conference in Kumasi intended to bring to the city; investors both local and foreign. This would provide the opportunity for Kumasi to showcase her rich business potential.
* **Creation of the Airport City**: - The Airport would be given a facelift to exhibit the status of the International Scenes. Facilities such as hotels, Banks, Restaurants, and Packing Lots etc would be made available and that could increase the revenue base of the Metropolis as well as the Region and the Country as a whole.
* **Cemetery:** The Tafo Cemetery, one of the oldest and biggest cemeteries in the Metropolis houses many cherished relatives of ours, however it is sad to see how deserted the place looks. A wall would be constructed around it, just to beautify the environs.
* **Children’s Park:** I will rehabilitate the children’s park to an international standard.

**MEDIA ACTIVITIES**

**PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT**

Efforts are currently underway to equip the Public Relations Department with the needed resources to enable it work to meet the challenges of the times.

Measures put in place include:

* Securing Digital Cameras for field work
* Acquiring Laptop for officers to work anywhere at any time.

**NEWS PAPER**

The Assembly is coming out with a weekly newspaper with the name KUMASIANO. The newspaper is expected to project the Assembly by publishing unfolding events including all development related issues in the metropolis. The PR department has been tasked to fast track the process of designing the first copy of the newspaper in the next few days.

**KMA WEBSITE**

Redesigning of the Assembly’s website is complete.

The web site has been designed to meet the acceptable modern standard. Contact information of all chairmen of the Assembly’s Sub-committees and Heads of Department would be captured to allow them access to upload information within their electoral areas unto the site. This is very important because it is the only way that would give us the opportunity to work as one body in the promotion of the Assembly’s development agenda.

**STREET NAMING**

On 29th April, 2012, the then Vice President, now President of the Republic of Ghana Launched the National Street Naming and Property Addressing Policy and Operational Guidelines to be adopted and implemented by all MMDAs.

About a month ago, the President during the official launching of the National Urban Policy and Action Plan gave a directive that all MMDAs should within 18 months implement the Street-Naming and Property Addressing System in line with the Operational Guidelines.

This implies that KMA’s Street-Naming and house numbering project which commenced in 2002 would be reviewed in line with the current National Guidelines.

Indeed, the consultant, ASI-ZIP Code Systems Limited, has reported that the assignment is 22% percent complete.

There is therefore the need to inaugurate a 13 member street Address Team, with the Town & Country Planning Department as the head agency in line with the national policy to kick start the project.

**Hon. Members**, will be informed about the inauguration of the Street Address Team (SAT) in due course.

The primary purpose of the street naming and property addressing is to improve the response of emergency services to locations of need, delivery of Municipal Services, increase revenue generation and facilitate the operation of businesses.

**SISTER-CITIES PROGRAMME**

In the era of globalization, Kumasi stands to benefit a lot from the sister-cities relationships, which seek to promote the capacity building of local government officials through exposures, knowledge transfer and partnerships. For about a decade and half, KMA has been engaging itself with several cities in Europe, North America and Africa. Benefits from such relationships include construction of community micro-projects, capacity building for officials through exposures and training, and computerization and data system development.

We will continue to strategically explore the opportunities of the sister-cities concept. For our engagement in sister-cities relationships will enable both technical and political officials of KMA to improve on their capacity to perform their functions effectively. Furthermore, it will facilitate the mobilization of resources for sustainable community micro-projects and local economic development of Kumasi.

At present, Kumasi has three active relationships with Almere in the Netherlands, Dortmund in Germany, and Atlanta in USA; and their current areas of interests are environmental sanitation and knowledge management, climate change and cultural exchange respectively. These relationships are certainly going to be strengthened while some efforts will be made to revive the dormant ones such as Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso and Wichita in USA.

To realize the potential benefits of sister-cities concept, KMA will:

1. Re-visit the Sister-Cities Committee
2. Strengthen the coordination mechanism
3. Re-design the sister-cities programme.

**HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

The Staff Strength of the Assembly as at the end of April, 2013 totaled 1,508, made up of 856 mechanized staff, 580 non-mechanized staff, 72 other category of officers who have recently been posted from other Assemblies and the Local Government Secretariat respectively.

To improve the performance of the Human Resource base and also ensure quality service delivery some measures are being put in place. Staff will be motivated in various ways to bring out the best in them.

**STAFF DISCIPLINE**

Following recent isolated cases of indiscipline among some staff of the Assembly, it has been decided to take pragmatic steps to instill a high sense of self discipline among the staff to enable them give of their best in the service with commitment and dedication. Plans are far advanced to introduce the clock-in system to check lateness and absenteeism.

**CONCLUSION**

**Hon. Presiding Member, Hon. Members, Heads of Department, Ladies and Gentlemen,** I have noted that majority of the programmes/projects and activities of the Assembly since 2010 have over the years been rolled over and remain uncompleted, prominent among these are the IGF and DACF Projects/Programmes.

I wish to assure the Assembly that prudent measures will be taken to ensure that all the projects are completed by the end of the term of my office. In this direction, I look forward for the needed commitment, co-operation and support of Hon. Assembly Members, Hon. Members of Parliament, Heads of Department, Entire Workers of the Assembly and the General Public to enable me carry this vision through.

On this note, **Hon. Presiding Member**, I bring the curtain down and wish the Assembly fruitful discussions of this address in due course.

**God bless us all, thank you.**