

**STATEMENT BY SAMUEL OKUDZETO ABLAKWA – THE HONOURABLE MP FOR NORTH
TONGU AND RANKING MEMBER ON THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENT
TO CELEBRATE ILLUSTRIOUS SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF OUR NATION ON THEIR
RESPECTIVE APPOINTMENTS INTO HIGH INTERNATIONAL OFFICES.**

May I express my debt of gratitude to you, Right Honourable Speaker, for the opportunity to make this statement in honour and celebration of the appointments of Ms. Hannah Serwaah Tetteh, Mrs. Marietta Brew Appiah-Oppong, Dr. Kofi Konadu Apraku, Mr. Kwabena Osei-Danquah, Madam Anita Kokui Gbeho, Dr. Alfred Mahamadu Braimah, Major General Francis Vib-Sanziri, Madam Gertrude Oforiwa Fefoame, Ambassador Thomas Kwasi Quartey and Mr. Emmanuel Bombande into their respective international high offices.

Mr. Speaker, without equivocation, the feat achieved by these illustrious Ghanaians lift high the flag and image of Ghana. They help preserve the great tradition Ghana has become associated with as a nation whose human capital can be relied upon by the international community in carrying out onerous assignments with distinction. This testimony remains fresh in our memories following the outpouring of profound tributes from all over the world to attest to this fact when former UN Secretary General, Busumuru Kofi Annan was called to glory last year.

Mr. Speaker, the year 2018 has been touted as the year of the woman – from the remarkable courage and gains of the Me Too Movement, the refreshingly progressive gender balanced cabinets which are on the rise with Ethiopia and Rwanda showing the way in Africa, to the historic results of the 2018 US Mid Term elections; I shall therefore in this spirit and hoping that 2019 would follow this trajectory, begin by celebrating our great women achievers:

Mr. Speaker, as has been widely reported; on 10th December, 2018, UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres swore in Ghana's former Minister responsible for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Hon. Hannah Serwaah Tetteh as the UN Secretary General's Special Representative to the African Union (AU) and Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU).

This elevation came after her earlier appointment as the Director-General of the UN Office in Nairobi, Kenya on July 13th, 2018.

Mr. Speaker, we do recall that Hon. Hanna S. Tetteh served as a Member of this august House for the Awutu Senya Constituency from 2001 to 2005 and for Awutu Senya West Constituency from 2013 to 2017. She also held the position of Minister of Trade and Industry from February 2009 to January 2013.

Mr. Speaker, Ghana's learned former Attorney-General who served under the Mahama Administration from 2013 - 2017, Hon. Marietta Brew Appiah-Oppong, has also been appointed a member of the International Court of Arbitration (ICC). Her appointment took

effect from July 1st, 2018. She has since been discharging her duties for the prestigious global arbitral institution with offices in Paris, Hong Kong, New York, Sao Paulo and Singapore.

Mr. Speaker, on June 12 2018, Madam Gertrude Oforiwa Fefoame, who is visually impaired, was elected to the committee that oversees the UN's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The committee of 18 members went from having one woman to six in the June elections where Madam Fefoame was elected with Rosemary Kayess of Australia; Miyoon Kim of South Korea; Risnawati Utami of Indonesia; Mara Gabrielli of Brazil; and Amalia Gamio of Mexico.

She is a board member of the Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations, and Sightsavers' Global Advocacy Adviser for Social Inclusion and has worked closely with the UN to champion the rights of persons with disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, another distinguished daughter of the land, Madam Anita Kokui Gbeho, has been appointed as Deputy Joint Special Representative for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) to replace Bintou Keita of Guinea. Since 2015, she has served as Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme, Namibia, where she supported the Government of Namibia to coordinate its external development assistance through the United Nations Partnership and Namibian Development Frameworks.

Mr. Speaker, kindly permit me to now focus attention on their male counterparts. The Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] Council of Ministers has appointed Dr. Kofi Konadu Apraku as ECOWAS Commissioner for Macroeconomic Policy and Economic Research following his nomination by President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo. He is expected to serve in that capacity for the next four years.

Prof. Robert Dussey, Chairman of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers in a statement specified that Dr. Apraku's responsibilities shall include "Multilateral surveillance mechanism which involves regular assessment through joint surveillance mission of the economies of ECOWAS Member States to ascertain whether the convergence criteria are being met". Dr. Apraku is a former Minister of Regional Co-operation and NEPAD, and also Minister of Trade and Industry. He also served as a Member of Parliament for Offinso North Constituency for three consecutive terms (1997 - 2009)

It is also worth noting that Dr. Alfred Mahamadu Braimah, another Ghanaian was appointed Auditor-General of ECOWAS Institutions. Dr. Braimah before this appointment was the ECOWAS Director of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, another distinguished Ghanaian, Mr Kwabena Osei-Danquah who before his appointment had served in various capacities as a diplomat for Ghana and a senior official of the United Nations over a course of 33 years, has been appointed as the Chef de Cabinet to