



## ARTS, CULTURE & HERITAGE:

Lever for Building the  
Africa we Want

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## DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

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### PRESS RELEASE

#### **Parliaments play a key role in checks and balances, and in being the voice of the people: Ghana's President.**

The President of the Republic of Ghana, H.E Nana Addo Akufo-Addo has lauded the role and efforts of the African National Assemblies in shaping the public discourse at the national level of member states. While addressing legislators of the fifth Parliament of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) in Midrand, South Africa, the President underlined the importance of National Parliaments to develop capacity to ensure enhanced accountability for the realization of Africa's vision of good governance and apt service delivery to the African citizenry.

The President's visit and address at the Pan-African Parliament was regarded as a reaffirmation of the strategic importance of the parliament as one of the essential pillars to achieve the objectives of the African Union and achieving the aspirations in the developmental framework of Agenda 2063. "I am a strong believer in the work of Parliament. In our respective countries we often underestimate the importance of Parliament and consequently undermine its work. We cannot emphasise enough the role of Parliament in exercising the checks and balances needed on the Executive. We cannot emphasise enough the role of Parliament as the voice of the people. And we cannot emphasise enough the role of Parliament in setting the tone for public discourse in the country", he observed.

H.E Akufo-Addo also underscored the critical importance for the African continent to improve the livelihoods of its citizens. "It is time to marshal our combined voices and say Africa deserves better, and Africans should not take part in impoverishing our continent and her peoples. We have it within our power to transform our economies and bring prosperity to our peoples. Let us join together to make it possible within our generation, and let us work together towards fulfilling, in our time, the Pan-African dream of a united Africa, which was so eloquently articulated by Ghana's first President, Kwame Nkrumah, in the early years of independence," he stated.

The African Parliamentarians had convened to deliberate on among other key issues, the African Union (AU) theme for 2021 as the Year of the Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want. The President observed that the theme is aligned with Aspiration (5) of Agenda 2063, which seeks "An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics" and therefore encouraged member states and all African citizenry to promote the history, identity, heritage and consciousness of African peoples and Diaspora even as we tap into Africa's rich heritage and culture to ensure that the creative arts are major contributors to Africa's growth and transformation. He noted, "the AU has chosen "Arts, Culture and Heritage as its theme for this year, which is commendable. A continent is defined by many things. It is defined by its geography to an extent. It is defined by its economy to an extent. It is defined by many other things. However, nothing defines a continent more than its art, culture, customs, heritage and traditions."

Meanwhile, addressing the PAP on behalf of the Host Country, South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, H.E Naledi Pandor urged Africa to "invest in Higher Education. "As a continent we need to prioritise education of our young people. Education is the future of this continent and if we are to develop and grow as a continent, we need to adopt strong policies towards education. With proper education we can achieve more when it comes to home grown solutions."

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