

BAWUMIA'S COPYCAT VISION SPEECH MIMICS UNFULFILLED RHETORICAL VISION OF TEAM AKUFO-ADDO & BAWUMIA IN 2016 AND 2020 ELECTIONS FOR POWER: BY MARTIN A. B. K. AMIDU

Defending the 1992 Constitution: **“A nation can survive its fools, and even the ambitious. But it cannot survive treason from within...A murderer is less to fear.”** - Marcus Tullius Cicero.

I have read line by line and paragraph by paragraph Vice-President Mahamudu Bawumia's seventy-three (73) page paper he delivered at the University of Professional Studies, Accra on 7 February 2024 outlining his vision for Ghana should the Ghanaian electors give him the mandate to succeed incumbent President Nana Akufo-Addo as the President of Ghana on 7 January 2025: contrary to statements and criticisms about his vision for Ghana that I have read on the electronic media since 7 February 2024, I have been unable to objectively find any betrayal of President Akufo Addo or the New Patriotic Party (NPP) in Bawumia's published vision for Ghana.

Bawumia owned up to being an integral part of the Nana Akufo-Addo's government of family, friends, cronies, associates, and looters and attempts to reclaim credit for a messy economic situation that sent the country to the IMF when he says at page 40 of his vision that:

“107. What we have been able to accomplice so far shows that it is possible for Ghana to achieve many things that some believe to be impossible. It is possible if we put our minds to it. We need to break the shackles of impossibility and embrace the mind set of possibility.”

All that an objective reader needs to do is to refer to the historical materials and the promises made by the Nana Akufo-Addo/Bawumia 2016 and 2020 presidential campaigns and she/he would come to the realization of what either Nana Akufo-Addo or Mahamudu Bawumia mean when they deployed the rhetoric of the impossibility becoming possible. The ordinary Ghanaian just has to assess his economic conditions today, the loss in savings and income that the Akufo-Addo/Bawumia joint promises and management has unleashed on the gullible electorate that swallowed hook, line, and sinker the demagogic and messianic deception of the electorate that voted to bring the pair to power at the polls in 2016 and 2020.

I have read Bawumia's vision several times since I had time to do so after delivering my keynote address at the University for Development Studies on 8 February 2024 and he comes out to me like a copycat replica of the style and deceptive persuasiveness deployed by Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo in winning the 2016 presidential elections only to renege on all the promises he made on taxes, use of natural resources for the benefits of the ordinary Ghanaian, the right of citizens to speak up and not be spectators: and above all the unprecedented unfulfilled plan and leadership commitment to fight corruption.

Bawumia's vision is a repeat using a decoy to disguise a similar cajoling vision the Akufo-Addo/Bawumia team presented to the Ghanaian electorate at the 2016 elections. It is no different in form and substance from the deceptive vision team Akufo-Addo/Bawumia presented even at the 2020 elections when economic situations were exceedingly difficult. These visions have always been founded upon promises to ameliorate the harsh tax conditions the private sector and ordinary Ghanaians are facing daily in the marketplace.

Nana Akufo-Addo was my worthy colleague at the Bar with whom I sparred in many landmark cases. I had profound respect for his integrity as a lawyer and a colleague to the extent that I lost my sense of critical assessment of him as a demagogue politician desperate to wield the presidential power for brute power's sake and not as an instrument for the common good of citizens as enjoined under the 1992 Constitution. So many Ghanaians were taken in by Nana Akufo-Addo's presentation of self as capable of leading one of the most incorruptible governments after 7 January 2017. The converse reality is now pertinent for all electors to assess and make their own decisions and tell their lived experience of how demagogues and messianic leaders of the likes of team Akufo-Addo and Mahamudu Bawumia deceive the unsuspecting electorates for their votes only to unremorsefully abandon them to a life of the worst economic sufferings as we witness daily in Ghana today.

Bawumia's vision makes no pretensions of distancing him from the Akufo-Addo/Bawumia visions for the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections. Bawumia only refines the rhetoric by promising to reform the most hated tax measures under the incumbent government likely to affect his fortunes at the 2024 elections by cleverly suggesting the possibility of eventually eliminating the hated taxes through an untested tax policy that will make "it possible for the elimination of some taxes such as the VAT on electricity, the emission tax, and the betting tax without compromising our deficit target." The contingent conditions and context of feasibility for this vision in Bawumia's own words at page 48 of the Bawumia vision are that: "The new policies that I am proposing to implement in 2025 will give us the fiscal space to eliminate some taxes such as the VAT on electricity, the emission tax and the betting tax without compromising our deficit target."

The context of the likely elimination of those taxes are clearly as stated in Bawumia's vision dependent on new tax policies, just as the team Akufo-Addo/Bawumia pair used the rhetoric of no new taxes and the natural resources for the benefit of Ghanaians vision to secure the votes at the 2016 election particularly, and also at the disputed 2020 elections in which innocent citizens died. The impression created by critics and commentators of Bawumia's vision that he distanced himself from the draconian E-Levy is not borne out by my reading of the Bawumia vision document. Bawumia has been so associated with Nana Akufo-Addo that he has developed the unconscious mimicking of Akufo-Addo's rhetoric and demagogic/messianic style of taking the electorate for granted as yokels. The abolition of e-levy is contingent on the economy moving towards a cashless economy and the use of electronic channels of payments that will make taxes on digital payments unnecessary under his vision (see page 63 thereof). The VAT on electricity, the emission tax, the betting tax, and the e-levy were taxes forced down the throat of the electorate with the support of the minority in parliament and our Almighty Transactional Speaker which hunts the NPP in the coming 2024 elections. I would have been surprised if Bawumia did not mimic Nana Akufo-Addo's campaign rhetoric in trying to convince Ghanaians of the possibility of eliminating them as part of his vision once elected. The electorate has experienced seven years of deception under the Akufo-Addo/Bawumia government to decide whether as first fools and second fools they wish to become the third fools who indeed will be the real fools at the 2024 elections.

The Bawumia vision is in accordance with the team Akufo-Addo/Bawumia refrain in which they used the cover of the COVID pandemic and the Russian-Ukraine war to introduce draconian and unconstitutional laws including executive instruments to loot the national purse for their friends, family, cronies, and associates in the name of COVID testing at ports

of entry and other social interventions that never reached the ordinary Ghanaian. In the same copycat manner, Bawumia parrots Akufo-Addo's vision and voice, and for geopolitical comprador reasons disingenuously leaves out the effect of Israel's mayhem on innocent Palestinians. As a Muslim, Bawumia is so bent on coming to power that he is distancing himself from the Israeli/Gaza war and its genocidal consequences on the poor Arabs of all faiths suffering the excesses of the Netanyahu madness against all Palestinians. South Africa has shown Bawumia the way to follow on the innocent deaths in Palestine as a true African which he cannot follow for geopolitical reasons should the 2024 elections be stolen for him as was done for the dictator Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu wa za Banga of Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo) for years.

Bawumia's vision like the team Akufo-Addo/Bawumia's squandered vision in the past seven years is to use the benchmark of a skewed performance of the NDC Government between 2013 and 2016 as the battering ram of success and a promise for a better future. I came away with the impression that the Bawumia vision, like the team Akufo-Addo/Bawumia vision for the 2016 and 2020 elections, is unable to show its own achievement independent of the past which they promised to eradicate.

Bawumia's vision on eradicating corruption using digitization is so naïve when compared to the continued discovery of corruption within China which has an advanced digital and cashless system than Ghana whose illiterate and semi-literate population negates the Bawumia vision of all round digitization. The population of Ghanaians registered for the Ghana Card according to Bawumia's own analysis shows the challenges of achieving his vision. In any case, the government which had the prescience to licence and encourage Mobitel (now Airtel/Tigo) and Scancom (now MTN) ought to be taking credit for today's digitization and not the Akufo-Addo/Bawumia regimes. Well-kept archival records in Ghana will show the letters from the Public Agreements Board that facilitated the establishment of Mobitel and Scancom when I was the Chairman of the Public Agreements Board under the PNDC regime and how these developed under the NDC 1 and 2 regimes with the roles Captain Tsikata, and Alhaji Mumuni Bawumia, the two term NDC Chairman of the Council of State played in actualizing what are the telecom networks in Ghana today.

As Ghana gets closer to the 2024 election season the NPP and the NDC are deploying various deceptive tools to win over the electorate whom they will each forget after securing the votes of the electorate to come to power for the next three years until the next election year. The 2024 elections should be won by established facts and projections with high degrees of probability for actualization. Unfortunately, every day one just hears promise upon promise from the two major political parties without any demonstrable ability to implement those promises once elected to power. The political elite from various political parties see the election season as a period of deception instead of canvassing for votes on proven record and achievement. This is the period for selfless constitutional activist whose political party is Ghana and the 1992 Constitution to expose the chicanery and deceptions being deployed to secure votes only to abandon the electorate to their fate once the winner assumes power. Ghana must always come first!

Martin A. B. K. Amidu
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