**REMARKS BY HON. DR. KWABENA DUFFUOR**

**AT THE 2017 EDITION OF THE EXCLUSIVE MEN OF THE YEAR AWARD-(EMY AFRICA AWARD)**

**DATE:**

**24TH JUNE, 2017**

**VENUE:**

**KEMPINSKI HOTEL, GOLD COAST CITY ACCRA**

**Let Us All Rise Up and Intervene**

It is with the greatest pleasure and gratitude that I accept this prestigious award, the “Ultimate Man of the Year”. I thank the organizers of the EMY Africa Awards for this great honour.

But Ladies and Gentlemen, I must confess that my heart is very troubled because I am receiving this award at a time when we Ghanaians are increasingly losing our identity and values. What we are witnessing in our country presently is a **moral crisis**, a willful negligence **in extremis**. Day after day we witness base behaviours in both low and high places – rampant mob-killings, indiscipline on our roads and places of work, wanton destruction of our environment, corruption and mass looting of state resources. Our current state is one of “Biblical scale transgressions”. It reminds me of the Exodus account in which the entire Jewish nation abandoned Yahweh and decided to worship the golden calf.

Ladies and Gentlemen, How did we end up here as a nation?

Our forefathers possessed a noble virtue – **Selflessness**. As they set about conquering lands for you and me, our forefathers’ major concern was to provide for the future generations and not for themselves. But now, one would struggle in vain to find evidence of selflessness in our behaviour whereas only a few decades ago, we were known to be **Kind**, **Patriotic**, **Helpful** and full of **Love** towards one another.

Sadly, we are all aware that our Institutions are being destroyed because of **self-interest**. And yet we forget that institutions rest on “***moral footings and that there is no force that can erode those foundations more rapidly than a cataract of self-interest***”.

Ladies and Gentlemen, In spite of all these societal ills, I still have great hope in our country. That is why I wholeheartedly agree with the EMY Africa Award Organizers when they advise that we all **rise up and intervene**. I also agree with the EMY Africa Award Organizers when they propose that intervention should involve mentoring younger ones to become better people for the good of society.

I would like to submit that since **“Self-interest”** is the real canker undermining the very moral foundation of the society, our mentoring of the younger ones should aim at inculcating in them values of good virtue and Godliness. The younger ones should be moulded into becoming citizens with integrity so that they would grow to become individuals who are truthful, trustworthy, dependable, loyal and not deceptive. They would become individuals who keep their word and are honest and open in dealing with their fellows. And above all they would become God fearing and public-spirited citizens.

In my view, the process of character-moulding of our younger people should also be supported by intensive moral education through introduction of **Religious Education as a compulsory subject in our schools. This will help create a solid foundation of values for our young people before they enter the tertiary institutions to acquire skills for their future careers**. I believe that, public-spirited leadership could be nurtured by identifying young people with what we call a **“Moral Force of Character and Instincts to lead”** and thereafter giving them quality education which will further develop the much-needed characteristics, namely Integrity and Skills.

Ladies and Gentlemen, In the Bible we are told **“*And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them*”** (NIV, Psalm 78v72). This means that Integrity and Skills are the two pillars of leadership. Integrity is the first characteristic of public-spirited leadership. It is an indispensable prerequisite for successful nation- building without which skills may be working in the dark.

Thus, mentoring young people to become good citizens calls for both traits. Inculcating these values in them will mould them into public-spirited leaders. I have no doubt in my mind that **public-spirited leaders are all that we need in our country** at the moment. This is because a public-spirited leader will not abuse the system for personal gains because of godly attributes and values in him or her. In this way, the deterioration in the moral fibre of our society shall be halted.

And now, my fellow awardees, distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, **let history record** that we all stood up and **mentored a generation that acquired high integrity and skillfull hands**.

**Let history be told** that we stood up at the time we were needed and **stopped the moral crisis that had almost engulfed** our dear nation. **This is indeed a defining moment. LET US ALL RISE UP AND INTERVENE.**

Finally, permit me to thank the organizers of the EMY Africa Award for the honour done me and my family. I thank all of you here today. May the Almighty God Bless all of us. And may He Bless Our Homeland Ghana.

Thank you!!!