



STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT OF REPUBLIC OF GHANA

ON THE OCCASION OF REMEMBRANCE DAY CELEBRATION

BY

**HONOURABLE MARK OWEN WOYONGO, MP NAVRONGO CENTRAL AND
MINISTER FOR DEFENCE**

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It is my prayer that Government and all our countrymen and women will work diligently towards the promotion of peace and development just ^{like} ~~as~~ the contribution of these soldiers who have exhibited discipline, hard work, good moral standards and other virtues for the development and progress of society. Without security no development will thrive in any country. Insecurity therefore impacts negatively on the living standards of our people. It is in this vein that, our military men and women continue to play a crucial role towards the realization of peace and security in Ghana, Africa and the rest of the world with the deployment of our forces at various peace-keeping operations under the auspices of the United Nations.

Society and indeed the majority of Ghanaians ^{hold} ~~recognize~~ our soldiers ⁱⁿ ~~with~~ high esteem and see their image as the guiding principle for their actions. As we honour our veterans for their loyal and dedicated service, let us remind our youth that our country Ghana, is worth dying for. It is time we took care of our veterans to prove to all that we value selfless services to the nation, so that others will be equally willing to die a little for mother Ghana.

Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of Remembrance Day let us remind ourselves about the disastrous consequences of the two World Wars and commit ourselves to domestic and international peace and security,

because the poppies bloomed over the graves of fallen soldiers and across some of the worst battle fields of the First World War. The Poppy has since become the world's most recognized memorial symbol of soldiers who have died in conflicts and wars. The Red Poppies also represent the blood of those who died in battle to bring peace to those of us alive today and make the world a better and safer place for mankind. Revenue generated from the sale of Poppies is meant to enhance the well-being of our ex-servicemen.

I wish to use this opportunity to recognize and applaud the Government and Parliament of Ghana for passing the veterans Administration ^{Ghana} ~~Law~~ - Act 844, which was given the Presidential assent on the 10th May 2012. The main object of the act is to form a body of persons who have served in the Gold Coast Regiment of the Royal West Africa Frontier Force or the Ghana Armed Forces and have been honourably released, to promote the unity of military veterans and foster among the military veterans the spirit of comradeship and mutual help. The main function of the veterans administration will therefore be to ensure that proper attention is paid to the welfare of military veterans honourably released from the military and see to the maintenance and comfort of those who require special treatment such as the disabled, the sick, the aged, the infirm, the needy and the destitute.

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Mr. Speaker, Distinguished Honourable members of Parliament, I wish to thank you for the opportunity to make this brief statement on the occasion of Remembrance Day.

Remembrance Day (also known as Poppy Day or Armistice Day) is a memorial observed in Commonwealth countries since the end of the First World War to remember members of the armed forces who have died in the line of duty. This day is also recognized as a special day for war remembrances in many non-commonwealth countries.

Remembrance Day is observed on the 11th November to recall the end of hostilities in the First World War on that date in 1918. Hostilities formally ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918.

In Ghana, Remembrance Day was observed on Monday 11th November 2013 – that was yesterday. This occasion was in memory of our gallant soldiers who lost their lives in the first and second World Wars. This day is also used to remember all those who have made the ultimate sacrifice with their lives in conflicts and war around the world. A significant feature of Remembrance Day celebration is the wearing of the Red Poppy. The Poppy has become a familiar emblem of Remembrance Day

especially in the wake of increasing terrorist attacks around the world. The recent terrorist attack in Kenya is an example of such attacks on African soil. Let us remember that another World War could have disastrous and devastating consequences for mankind, especially in the wake of the proliferation of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) such as nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Remembrance Day should therefore spur mankind on to continue to pray and work for peace and the avoidance of another World War which could see the annihilation of the world.

As a mark of tribute to our fallen heroes I would like to implore honorable members to observe a minutes silence in their memory. May their souls rest in perfect peace.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members I thank you for the opportunity to address this House.