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PRESS RELEASE

**AHMADIYYA MUSLIM JAMAAT CELEBRATES AFRICAN INDEPENDENCE
JUBILEE**

On 13 November 2010 the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat celebrated the 50th Anniversary of Independence of 17 different African countries in an event organised by the Pan-African Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK. Dignitaries representing a number of African States attended the function that took place at the Baitul Futuh Mosque in Morden, Surrey. The highlight of the event was the attendance and address given by the Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad.

Guests were welcomed by Issah Ahmed Wemah the Chairman of the Pan-African Association who informed that the Association had been set up over 20 years ago to assist and help African members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat in both spiritual and worldly matters.

During the course of the event a number of Dignitaries took to the stage. His Excellency, Mr Edward M Turay, High Commissioner of Sierra Leone spoke of the '*strong roots*' that the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat had developed in Sierra Leone and the great services it had provided in the education and health sectors. Mr Alhaji

Ahmed Umaru, Head of Chancery at the Nigeria High Commission, spoke of how Nigeria was proud of the strong Ahmadi community in Nigeria. Mr Alhaji Bawah G Ayembillah representing the Ghana High Commission said that Ahmadi Muslims were spread all over Ghana and that they were amongst the best citizens of the country and were excelling in all sectors. Representing the Ivory Coast was the Deputy Ambassador, Mr Dodo Yapi who thanked the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat for its continued services on behalf of his nation. Mr Morris Barsee representing Liberia said that the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat had contributed in many ways to the development of Liberia, particularly through the schools and hospitals that it runs.

The keynote address was given by Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad in which he spoke about his great love for the people and continent of Africa. This love developed during the eight years he spent living in Ghana.

His Holiness went on to speak about the need for honesty and justice to prevail and for lessons to be learned. This was all crucial to the future wellbeing and progress of Africa. He said:

“It is a sign of living and progressive nations that they always keep their past history in view and learn lessons from it. As a result, they are able to strengthen and prepare their future. Good traditions and practices are maintained on strong foundations, and to avoid mistakes and errors great planning and effort is undertaken.”

His Holiness said that in his estimation Africa could lead the world as long as its leaders and citizens were all willing to put aside their own interests in order to strengthen and consolidate the national interest. Natural resources had to be used

with justice and honesty. The West had developed at a rapid rate, not due to any greater abilities but simply due to its virtues of hard work, loyalty and honesty. Africa too was a continent filled with capable people. His Holiness said:

“I have lived in Africa and I can testify that there are many supremely intelligent African people. When a well educated African person goes to Europe, America and other countries then the locals cannot help but be impressed by his intelligence. Thus nature has not been unjust to anyone; rather it is humans who do not utilise the capabilities bestowed upon them in a proper manner.”

His Holiness went on to talk about the long standing commitment to Africa displayed by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat. The Jamaat had longstanding communities in many African countries and its schools and hospitals were constantly engaged in serving the poor and needy.

Concluding his address, His Holiness spoke of how peace was essential for Africa’s progress and development. He said:

“For the sake of the progress of a country, mutual love, affection and brotherhood are also extremely important. Without this peace cannot be established in a country. And without peace, progress cannot be achieved... Those who fight wars in the name of religion are wrong when they say that they are fighting due to their relationship with God. Islam forbids fighting wars in the name of religion. Thus developing a true relationship with God is a means to end all wars.”

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