

MY SPEECH AT THE ILLUMINATION CEREMONY OF ABIDJAN CITY OF LIGHTS

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very happy to see you this evening to proceed with the launching of the end year festivities with the traditional illumination ceremony "Abidjan Pearl of Lights". This fairytale event marks a very nice way, the start of the celebrations of holiday seasons, as our country used to do since five years.

I would like first of all, to welcome the presence of the Minister of State, Hamed BAKAYOKO, Minister of Interior and Security, who is again present at this time of sharing, to encourage this great initiative; and all the personalities present on our side.

I also welcome Mr. Beugré Mambé, Governor of the District of Abidjan, whom I congratulate on the sustainability of this great event, which has become the annual rendezvous of the end year for all Ivorians.

Dear Governor thank you for this beautiful festival that brings so much joy in our hearts.

Finally, I congratulate Mr. DAO Mamadou, the Director General of the Apotéoz company, architect of this beautiful concept that rivals imagination every year, to make us live a wonderful time. Thank you also to all the partners who support this beautiful project each year.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In this end of year 2015, the illuminations of Abidjan City of Lights, under the evocative theme: "The Côte d'Ivoire that wins" embody a particular character.

Indeed, tonight we celebrate both the 55th anniversary of the Independence of our beautiful country, the victory of our brave Elephants to ANC but also the holding of presidential elections in a peaceful climate.

I am therefore three times as happy to celebrate this moment with all of you.

This festival of lights, which aims at being more than just unifying, is registered as a flagship attraction in the heart and in the spirit of Ivorians. A

moment of magic that brings joy and encourages moments of conviviality and fraternity.

Indeed, since five years now, on the eve of the holiday season, Abidjan put on its most beautiful light ornament and displays a radiant image before the world.

With these illuminations, the magic of Christmas and new-year makes sense.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Factor of gathering and social cohesion, " Abidjan Pearl of Enlight" truly symbolizes the transition to the new year, with its new challenges and projects.

The beautiful lights that sparkle around the holidays will be the renewed opportunity for Ivorians to come together and share wonderful moments without distinction of origin, age, religion or political affiliation.

This year once more, on December 31, will be conducted the traditional fireworks. A popular spectacle, both in our country and beyond our borders, and will mark in a pretty nice way, the transition to the new year.

It is thus with great joy that in a moment, I will proceed to the official lighting of lights.

I wish with all my heart that these sparks shine in all of us and bring us peace and happiness.

On behalf of my dear husband and President Alassane Ouattara, and on my own behalf, I wish you a very happy holiday season.

Thank you.