

**MY SPEECH AT THE TRIBUTE CEREMONY TO
THE OLYMPIC MEDALISTS IN GAGNOA**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am particularly pleased to meet you today in our beautiful city of Gagnoa, to **celebrate our young Olympic athletes Ruth GBAGBI and Cheick Cissé, both daughter and son of the region.**

I would like first of all to extend my greetings to the authorities and managers of the city of Gagnoa who are strongly mobilized for this great party, and headed by:

- **Mr. Louis-Andre Dacoury-Tabley, Minister for Water and Forests;**
- **Mr. Rémi N'Zi Kangah Goh, Prefect of the Region;**
- **Mr. Joachim DJEDJE BAGNON, President of the Regional Council;**

Gentlemen MPs of Gagnoa region; Mr. Bamba Medji, Mayor of the Municipality of Gagnoa, and all other elected officials and managers in Gagnoa region.

I would now like to greet and congratulate **Mr. Francis Albert Amichia, Minister for Sport and Recreation**, and **Sir Bamba Cheick Daniel, President of the Ivorian Taekwondo Federation** and his team, who were able to assist our athletes to the final victory, which helped bring two medals to our country.

I would also like to greet **Madam Chancellor Henriette DAGRI Grande-DIABATE, daughter of Gagnoa**, all our brothers and sisters Ministers and Spouses of Ministers and all personalities who have made the trip to celebrate our champions.

I also extend my greetings to our **religious leaders and traditional chiefs**, surrounding us with their blessings. Finally, I welcome the parents of our athletes and all people of Gagnoa for their warm and enthusiastic welcome on this feast day.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thirty-two years after **the memorable silver medal won in 1984 by our compatriot Gabriel Tiacoh at the Olympic Games in Los Angeles**, Côte d'Ivoire has shone again in Rio, with Cheick and Ruth. We are gathered today at the stadium of Gagnoa, to pay them tribute. And it is with great joy that I am with you today for this ceremony of tribute. I know that this is a moment proud for the entire Goh region. And I am delighted to share these moments of celebration with you.

Dear Athletes,

Dear Ruth and Cheick,

The entire Ivorian nation exploded by joy at the announcement of your respective victories. The President of the Republic said it when receiving you at the Palace, he was especially moved by hearing the Ivorian national anthem resound in the Rio heaven thanks to you. I'm sure every Ivorian felt the same pride by seeing you on the podium. You are true models of discipline, perseverance and excellence for the Ivorian youth. As top athletes, you give the example to follow for all our young people.

I encourage you to continue this momentum in order to remain the best in the world in your discipline. I wish your success will motivate others of your brothers and sisters, to find their own way and pursue their dreams with passion. You can always count on my support and that of my dear husband, President Alassane Ouattara, who asked me to hug you very tenderly.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At this stage of my remarks, I would like to extend a special mention to the Ivorian Federation of taekwondo, headed by **Mr. Bamba Cheick Daniel**. Dear President, thank you for believing in our young athletes, and for having trained them and effectively accompanied throughout this magnificent adventure. The impressive performances that have just been presented to us, prove that this martial art has a big future in Côte d'Ivoire. I congratulate you for it!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Gagnoa Dear Parents,

I would now like to address my sisters in Gagnoa, the mothers of Ruth and Cheick our champions. My dear sisters, this victory is also yours, and we cannot celebrate our children without thinking to you. Therefore, I took the opportunity of this visit to **increase the amount allocated to the Department of Gagnoa in framework of the Support Fund for the Women of Côte d'Ivoire**. To date, you have benefited, my dear sisters, an amount of **250 million FCFA** to enable you to start an income generating activities. Today I put at your disposal, an additional budget of 150 million FCFA which will be immediately available in the COOPEC, for all the localities of the Department. Which will henceforth raise the **FAFCI up to 400 million FCFA for the Department of Gagnoa**.

I hope that these loans will help you implement successful income-generating activities, and take care of your families. I encourage you to use this money wisely, and to make your repayments well to allow your other sisters to benefit in turn. Furthermore, I am pleased to announce that the synthetic turf that I had promised you for the stadium of Gagnoa, during my visit in September 2015, will be conducted in the coming days. The implementation works will start on 17 October and will be delivered in late December 2016, to the delight of everyone in Gagnoa, especially sports fans.

I can't close my remarks without addressing again, my thanks to **Sir Louis-Andre Dacoury-Tabley and all the authorities of the Department**, for their involvement in the success of this great party. Thank you also for the beautiful presents that you have offered me and all your affection to me. I reiterate my congratulations to our young medalists and tell them thousand times bravo. Good day to you all.

Thank you.