

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL ON MANAGEMENT OF GHANA'S CASTLES AND FORTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ghana's role in the slave trade can be seen in the number of castles and forts (see definition in appendix 4) that are dotted along her southern coast line. Built between 1482 and 1863, the castles and forts served as members of Ghana's role in commerce and as transit points for slaves taken outside the continent. This historical past, distasteful though it may be, has created interest in Ghana by Africans in the Diaspora in tracing their ancestral roots. To the rest of the world, they are monuments to mankind's shameful past.

2. By faith of their history, the castles and forts are of tourist interest and Ghana derives some economic benefits by promoting them as tourist attractions. Secondly, the castles and forts constitute huge museum elements useful to students of history and researchers. Furthermore, the castles and forts have been designated world heritage sites by UNESCO.

3. There were **42** of such forts and castles left over as relics of the slave trade by 1950. Only 17 are left standing today, with the rest in ruins. Realising their historical significance, UNESCO has designated the 17 World Heritage Sites.

4. The Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB) was established under the National Liberation Council Decree (NLCD) 387 of 1969. GMMB is to acquire, protect, conserve and manage Ghana's movable and immovable material cultural heritage for posterity, for the purpose of research and education of the public. GMMB is to take advantage of the unique character of this heritage to derive maximum economic benefit to the Institution, the Community and Nation in collaboration with the government, marketing and promoting agencies.

5. The audit was conducted to ascertain how efficient and effective GMMB has been in carrying out this mandate.

6. The audit was based on interviews, review of documents, inspection and observation at the two castles and eight forts and covered the period 1999 to 2003.

7. The audit found that GMMB has satisfactorily acquired the monuments, sourced external funding and training of staff. However, restoring and taking the unique position of the monuments to derive economic benefits had not been fully accomplished. These difficulties are in the areas of maintenance and marketing of the monuments and also in management of the human resource capacity and capability.

8. The main findings are:

- Good initiatives and efforts
- The Castles and Forts are not well maintained;
- The Castles and Forts are not well marketed;
- The management of human resource is ineffective

Good initiatives and efforts

9. The management of GMMB since its establishment has identified and recorded 42 castles and forts, but more could be done with the assistance of the UNESCO office in Ghana. GMMB has also sourced external funding for training of staff and for restoration works on the castles and forts.

10. To sustain and improve upon the good initiative and efforts, we recommend GMMB;

- To continue the good efforts on the documentation of the castles and forts, and seek assistance from the UNESCO office in Ghana to

identify and retrieve Franklin Lodge which is not documented and any other monument that might not be known to them.

- To pursue the expected external assistance from the Italian Government for the restoration of fort Amsterdam and UNESCO funding under “The Elmina 2015 strategy” and
- To continue to seek staff career development through in-house and out-house training programs.

Castles and Forts are not well maintained

11. GMMB has a statutory duty to maintain the castles and forts. However due to insufficient funding, inappropriate restoration practices, coupled with limited inspections to Cape Coast and Elmina Castles, GMMB has not been able to fully accomplish its mandate.

12. In order to improve upon maintenance of the Castles and Forts we recommend that GMMB:

- Takes an active part in selecting, through competitive tendering, consultants and contractors with proven track records in restoration works for future works;
- Insists on following laid down principles in restoration works and involves trained staff during restoration exercise and monitoring processes;
- Not limit inspections to Cape Coast and Elmina Castles but extend inspection to the other forts by making alternative transport arrangement to inspect and report defects as early as they appear to forestall further damage.
- Sets aside a much higher percentage of Internally Generated Fund (IGF) for routine maintenance and as a matter of urgency seeks assistance to salvage the castles and forts which are on the verge of collapse.

The castles and forts are not well marketed

13. Promoting Ghana as a Tourist destination and to attract Tourists require that the castles and forts are well marketed to the outside world to enable the nation achieve the intended economic benefits. The audit found that GMMB has not been able to achieve this objective as the institution has not taken advantage of the technological development to market these monuments.

14. To improve as a consequence upon the image and marketing of the Castles and Forts we recommend that GMMB should:

- Have a website and give it publicity;
- Collaborate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) to instruct all the missions abroad to include a brochure about the monuments with every visa application form.
- Set parameters with Tourist Board on the extent to which marketing of the monuments should be done by the Board.
- Consider re-training and equipping some of the idle staff as security guards to protect the environs of the monuments and/or collaborate with the District Assemblies to provide security.
- Consider re-enacting some of the scene of the slave trade by creating dummies in the slave dungeons and also recreate the governor's residence which is empty to excite the Tourist; and
- Follow up management's idea to stage artistic performances in the night to improve revenue generation from gate fees.

The management of human resource is ineffective

15. Maintaining the required number of skilled staff and artisans are essential to enable GMMB perform its responsibilities. The audit showed that, while at the same time retaining high levels of artisans that are redundant and continue to draw salaries. GMMB is unable to retain skilled staff trained abroad in restoration works, it is at the same time retaining high levels of artisans that are redundant and continue to draw salaries.

- 16.** To improve human resource management we recommend that:
- Management should take steps to retain their specialist and skilled staff for whom resources have already been used to give training abroad by expediting action on the proposed restructuring exercise.
 - Management should re-examine the needs of the artisans and either redeploy or reassign them.