

Her Excellency Professor Jane Naana Opoku Agyemang, Vice President of the Republic of Ghana,  
Neenyi Ghartey VII, Omanhene of the Effutu Traditional Area,  
Nananom, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,  
All protocol duly observed.

Today, I stand before you as Chairman of this year's Aboakyer Festival, and as a son returning home.

My name is Alexander Mould, and the Mould family traces its roots here in Winneba through the Ghartey family. Standing here is therefore more than a responsibility; it is a return to the land of my forebears, and an honour to share in a tradition that has shaped who we are.

I am deeply humbled by this invitation.

To chair Aboakyer is not simply to preside over a festival. It carries the weight of memory and history.

Because Aboakyer did not begin as celebration. It began with a debt.

Our history tells us that when the Effutu people journeyed from Techiman to this coast under the guidance of the deity Penkye Otu, their safe arrival came with a demand. Not gold. Not cattle. But human life - a royal son, year after year.

Pause and consider what that meant.

Our ancestors chose life on this land, yet the price demanded of them was their most precious possession - their children.

But the Effutu people did not accept this without question. They confronted it. They negotiated. They chose a different path.

They said:

“Take instead the bushbuck. And we will catch it with our bare hands, to show that we are not cowards.”

And the god agreed.

That decision continues to define us.

So when the Tuafo and Dentsifo Asafo companies enter the forest at dawn, they are honouring that agreement. They are carrying forward a promise rooted in courage, unity and belief.

That is why the rules have not changed. No guns. No weapons. Only bare hands. What was required was never just the deer; it was courage.

For over 300 years, the people of Winneba have upheld that standard.

This is why Aboakyer must endure. It is not entertainment. It is identity. It is a covenant between a people, their ancestors, and their God.

To the Tuafo and Dentsifo: your rivalry is part of the tradition, but its meaning runs deeper. What you represent today began as preparation for survival, and it must continue to reflect discipline, unity and shared purpose.

To our Nananom: we look to you to continue guarding this history. Our young people are growing up in a fast-changing world. They are globally connected, but connection does not replace memory. If we do not preserve and pass on our story, it will not endure.

To our distinguished guests: you are most welcome. What you are witnessing here is not simply a festival, but a living tradition and a sacred agreement that has stood the test of time.

And to the youth of Winneba: this is your inheritance. In a world full of distraction, Aboakyer offers a clear reminder - strength is found not in what you hold, but in what you are willing to face, with courage, belief, and your own hands.

Standing here today, I feel a deep sense of pride and belonging. No matter how far we go, our roots remain our foundation.

We are Effutu.

We are a people of courage.

We are a people who transformed sacrifice into tradition, and tradition into identity.

The drums will sound.

The deer will come.

And the covenant of courage will endure long after today.

**Nyame nhyira Effutu.**

**God bless Winneba.**

**God bless Ghana.**

**Meda mo ase. Thank you.**