

Africans Rising

For Unity, Justice, Peace & Dignity

PRESS RELEASE

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Africans Rising welcomes the removal of Kotoka's name from Ghana's main International Airport but urges more action to restore Kwame Nkrumah's Legacy.

24th February 2026 marks 60 years since the illegal overthrow of Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first President and foremost Pan-Africanist. We are pleased to learn that the government of Ghana has taken the decision to remove the name (Emmanuel Kotoka) of the lead architect of this action from the country's main International Airport. Nkrumah was on a peace mission to Hanoi, North Vietnam when the counter-revolutionary rebellion occurred, orchestrated by the CIA of the United States of America. That singular act abruptly ended the vision of an African nation focused on rapid industrialization for the benefit of the people and set the agenda for African unity back at least 50 years.

Nkrumah's government not only offered refuge, training, logistical and other support to fellow Africans who were waging their struggle for independence, it also undertook massive developmental projects to turn the African situation around. The Accra International Airport was one of those projects. In 1967, a group of soldiers organized themselves to remove from power those who illegally overthrew Kwame Nkrumah. In the ensuing gun battle, Kotoka was shot dead at the vicinity of the airport, the name of the airport was changed from Accra International Airport to Kotoka International Airport. For decades, this has stood as a stark contradiction, shame and dishonour to Ghana and Africa. Travelers from all over the world have journeyed to see Kwame Nkrumah's gravesite only to be met at the main entrance with a name that represents retrogression. Renaming the airport is an important corrective step toward historical coherence and national dignity while reaffirming Kwame Nkrumah's legacy of Pan-Africanism.

We therefore welcome the decision to rename the "Kotoka" International Airport back to its original name, **Accra International Airport**.

However, that is not the only corrective measure that is needed. And the effort to honour Nkrumah's legacy will not be complete without the implementation of a full visa-free travel for Africans. Today, African nationals are charged **\$200 for visa-on-arrival**. This also contradicts the very ideals that Dr. Nkrumah championed, undermines African unity, discourages intra-African travel, and reinforces the artificial barriers imposed during colonial rule.

Renaming the airport without addressing restrictive mobility policies risks becoming a symbolic gesture without transformative substance.

Africans Rising therefore calls on the Government of Ghana to:

1. eliminate visa-on-arrival fees for African nationals.
2. ratify and implement the AU Free Movement of Persons protocol

Let this moment mark not only a correction of history, but a renewal of vision.

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