

# Ghanaian teachers, nurses to work in Jamaica

By Pacome Emmanuel Damalie

**G**HANAIAN-trained teachers and nurses are set to be deployed to Jamaica for employment opportunities under an agreement between the two countries.

The trained professionals, who had been unemployed after national service, would be absorbed by the Jamaican government to augment its counterparts in the two sectors in the Caribbean country, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa, said.

The minister announced the new agreement at the weekend, saying: "Jamaica is ready to receive nurses and teachers from Ghana under a special bilateral partnership".

Mr Ablakwa announced the new agreement after a meeting with the Jamaican Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Kamina Johnson Smith, on the sidelines of the Organisation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) Summit in Brussels, Belgium, which ended yesterday.

The bilateral agreement is expected to bring the needed relief to the

graduates who have been unemployed for years and have been praying and hoping for the government to open up employment opportunities to accommodate them.

Teachers and nurses have regularly served the country with the many industrial actions and complaints in recent times due to several reasons, chief among them being graduates' unemployment.

From the cry for training allowances to inadequate jobs and non-payment of salaries and allowances for some, these professionals have often registered their displeasure.

The new agreement would not only provide jobs for the trained teachers and nurses but also provide experience in working in a foreign country with a better condition of service often sought by teachers and nurses, the minister said.

Mr Ablakwa said the two countries had also agreed to deepen cooperation



• Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa, Minister of Foreign Affairs

in other critical sectors of their economies for mutual growth.

"Ghana and Jamaica are also expected to hold high-level political consultations to deepen our cooperation in trade, education, agribusiness, tourism, cultural and sports exchange," Mr Ablakwa said.

He said that could help Ghanaian farmers and exporters find new markets in the Caribbean.

Tourism cooperation may also increase the flow of visitors and generate income for both countries.

Meanwhile, the cultural and sports exchanges are expected to give Ghanaian creatives and athletes more platforms to share their work and build relationships with Caribbean counterparts, who are noted for their excellent athleticism on the world stage.

## Shared history

The Foreign Affairs Minister emphasised that the new agreement between the two countries was a responsive action to deepen and expand the frontiers of the existing "inseparable historical relations" between the two countries.

Jamaica, like much of the Caribbean, has deep links to Ghana and West Africa as a whole. Through the transatlantic slave trade, many Jamaicans trace their ancestry to West Africa.

Yearly, Ghana receives several tourists from the Caribbean who have often described Ghana as the land of their ancestry and their second home due to the similarity and cultural practices.