



**Gulf Research Center**  
Knowledge for All

# Ghana - GCC Relations





## 1. Key Domestic Developments

Ghana is a West African country on the coast of the Gulf of Guinea, bordering Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, and Burkina Faso. Over the past two decades, it has made major strides towards establishing a democracy under a multi-party system, with its independent judiciary gaining public trust. President Nana Akufo-Addo won his bid for re-election in 2020 however, his New Patriotic Party lost its majority in Parliament to the New Democratic Congress.

President Akufo-Addo's second term has been marred by a significantly more challenging environment, including a debt crisis, allegations of corruption within the administration and the mining sector, high levels of unemployment, and an energy crisis.

The economic situation in Ghana is marked by high inflation rates, as energy and food prices have soared due to Ghana's heavy reliance on imports despite its agricultural and energy potential. Furthermore, the Ghana currency, cedi (GHS), has depreciated 18% against the dollar in 2024 alone, causing the price of imports to soar and adding to the inflation crisis that has festered into a cost-of-living crisis.

Meanwhile, Ghana has accrued significant public debt, which has caused grave problems in its ability to repay this debt. The economy has faced significant hurdles in securing international financing as investor confidence has fallen. As such, the government has had to rely on IMF programs to mitigate its economic challenges. For instance, it secured a 3 billion USD loan from the IMF in May 2023, which addressed some of their challenges and saw the inflation rate decrease from 54% in December 2022 to 44% by 2023. However, according to the World Bank, the economy remains at a high risk of debt distress.

The country has also faced a looming energy crisis with persistent power outages. Energy sources primarily depend on hydroelectric power from the Akosombo Dam; however, irregular rainfall has reduced reservoir water levels, leading to a reliance on thermal power plants using gas and crude oil. Similar to the macroeconomic challenges, the sector is burdened with mounting debt. The Electricity Company of Ghana and the Volta River Authority have accumulated debt due to mismanagement, inefficiencies, and delays in receiving payments from customers. With a rapidly growing population, industrialisation and urbanisation, Ghana's electricity demand has





soared, yet power producers remain unable to meet demand for the aforementioned reasons.

These domestic challenges led to a mass protest in September 2023, labelled the “OccupyJulorbiHouse,” outside Jubilee House, the seat of government. The protest aimed to hold the government accountable for the cost-of-living crisis, high inflation, government mismanagement, and alleged corruption in the Akufo Addo administration.

National elections will take place in December 2024. Former President John Mahama from the National Democratic Congress (NDC) will challenge current Vice President Mahamdu Bawumia from the National Patriotic Party (NPP) for the people’s vote.

### *Key Economic and Social Data*

- **GDP:** \$75.24 billion USD (2024)
- **GDP per capita:** \$2,203.56 USD (2022)
- **Annual Growth Rate:** 3.1% (2022)
- **Inflation:** 38.1% (2023)
- **Population:** 33.48 million (2022)
- **Unemployment Rate:** 3.6% (2023)
- **Credit Rating: Standard & Poor:** CCC+ with a negative outlook (2024); **Moody’s:** Caa1 with a stable outlook (2024); **Fitch:** RD (2024)

## **2. Ghana’s Foreign Policy**

Ghana’s foreign policy has historically been characterised by its commitment to pan-Africanism, non-alignment, and regional integration. The country has played a significant role in promoting peace, stability, and economic development in West Africa. It actively supports the African Union (AU) and regional bodies like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Ghana is pivotal in ECOWAS peacekeeping efforts and regional security, particularly when it

comes to conflict resolution and mediation in West Africa. For instance, when coup d’etats overthrew the leaders of Mali, Burkina Faso, and Guinea, Ghana joined members of ECOWAS by imposing sanctions on these coup-riddled countries before rescinding their membership to the regional economic bloc in 2023. Ghana serves as the headquarters of the Secretariat of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which strives to boost intra-African trade by promoting a single market for African goods and services. As such, regional integration is a fundamental pillar of Ghana’s foreign policy.

Violent extremism from the Sahel and the cross-border region in Northern Ghana between Burkina Faso, Togo, and Benin present a threat for terrorism to escape through its borders. As such, Ghana Gas worked with international partners to address the terrorist threat from Al Qaeda and the Islamic State affiliates. For instance, it received a 22 million USD security support package from the European Union and has joined several conflict prevention initiatives, including the United States’ Global Fragility Act. Furthermore, the Accra Initiative was created in 2017 between Benin, Togo, and Ghana to prevent the spread of extremism by sharing intelligence and conducting cross-border operations. Eventually, a task force based in Ghana will be established to combat extremism.

Ghana is strongly committed to international peacekeeping. It is one of Africa’s top contributors to UN peacekeeping missions, reflecting its dedication to global security and humanitarian efforts. As of 2024, Ghana has offered its soldiers several UN-led peacekeeping missions in Lebanon, South Sudan, and Sudan.

Ghana’s pragmatic foreign policy approach seeks to balance its relationships with various global powers. While it has strong historical ties with Western nations, particularly the United States, it has also cultivated deep economic and political relationships with China and other emerging powers.

Meanwhile, the nation is keen on using foreign policy to foster economic development. It promotes trade and investment by establishing bilateral partnerships and securing international financial aid and investments. Relations with organisations like the World Bank, IMF, and foreign donors are crucial for addressing its economic challenges.

### 3. Ghana-GCC Fact Sheet

Ghana's Trade in Goods with GCC Countries in 2023

Country	Export Value (USD million)	Import Value (USD million)	Balance of Trade (USD million)
<b>Bahrain</b>	0.022	168.63	-168.61
<b>Kuwait</b>	0.097	17.90	-17.80
<b>Oman</b>	0.61	21.38	-20.77
<b>Qatar</b>	0.36	22.18	-21.82
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	3.69	265.33	-261.64
<b>United Arab Emirates</b>	1,713.46	620.86	1,092.60

Source: Comtrade

#### Establishment of Diplomatic Relations

- **Saudi Arabia:** 1960
- **Kuwait:** 1974
- **Qatar:** 1981
- **Bahrain:** 1978
- **United Arab Emirates:** 1981
- **Oman:** 1989

#### Current Diplomatic Representation

##### Bahrain:

Representation accredited from Saudi Arabia

Ghanaian Ambassador to Bahrain:

H.E. Mr. Mohammad Tijani

##### Oman:

Representation accredited from Saudi Arabia

Ghanaian Ambassador to Oman:

H.E. Mr. Mohammad Tijani

##### Kuwait:

Ghanaian Ambassador to Kuwait

H.E. Mohammed Idris

Kuwaiti Ambassador to Ghana

H.E. Mr. Mohammad Al-Failikaw

##### Qatar:

Ghanaian Ambassador to Qatar

H.E. Mohammed Ismaila

Qatari Ambassador to Ghana

H.E. Mohammed bin Ahmed Al Homaid

##### Saudi Arabia:

Ghanaian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia

H.E. Mr. Mohammad Tijani

Saudi Ambassador to Ghana

H.E. Sultan Al-Dakhil

##### United Arab Emirates:

Ghanaian Ambassador to UAE

H.E. Ahmed Ramadan

Emirati Ambassador to Ghana

H.E. Mr. Khalida Alzaabi

#### Key Officials with Responsibility for the Gulf Region

- **Minister of Foreign Affairs:** Shirley Botchwey
- **Minister of Interior:** Ambrose Dery
- **Minister of Agriculture:** Dr. Bryan Acheampong



### *Establishment of Diplomatic Relations*

- **Saudi Arabia: 1932**
- **Kuwait: 1969**
- **Qatar: 1972**
- **Bahrain: 1973**
- **United Arab Emirates: 1973**
- **Oman: 1973**

### *Key Research Centers and Think Tanks*

- Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC)
- Centre for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana)
- Institute of Economic Affairs Ghana (IEA)
- Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy – University of Ghana (LECIAD)
- Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research – University of Ghana (ISSER)

### *Key Experts*

- Dr. Kojo Opoku Aidoo- University of Ghana
- Dr. Peter Narh- University of Ghana
- Ambassador Hassan Ahmed

### *Key Developments in Ghana-GCC Relations*

Ghana has strengthened trade and investment ties with the GCC, particularly in infrastructure development, energy, and agriculture. GCC countries, especially the UAE, have been key investors in Ghana’s energy, infrastructure, and agriculture industries. Responding to Ghana’s long-standing energy challenges, Abu Dhabi-based TAQA formed a joint venture with the Ghana Volta River Authority to operate a liquefied natural gas terminal in Tema, Ghana. The joint venture--TICO, has seen consistent investments from the UAE’s Mubadala Investment Company and demonstrates the resilience of the bilateral ties. Furthermore, Ghana and GCC leaders have held several high-level bilateral meetings

### *Ghana- Saudi Arabia*

- August 2024: President Akufo-Addo and Saudi Ambassador Al-Dakhil inaugurated the renovation and expansion of the Bolgatanga Regional Hospital in Ghana, a 32 million USD project financed by the Saudi Fund for Development.
- May 2024: Saudi Arabia’s Agriculture Minister Abdulrahman Al-Fadley met with his Ghanaian counterpart, Dr. Bryan Acheampong, during his trip to Ghana and agreed to increase investments in agriculture and food security.
- March 2024: Ambassador Al Dakhil inaugurated KSRelief’s Food Basket Distribution project in Ghana, which distributed 5,300 food baskets to 31,800 Ghanaians.
- November 2023: Defence Minister Dominic Nitiwul led Ghana’s delegation to the Saudi-Africa Summit in Riyadh
- September 2023: Ghana’s Transport Minister Kwaku Asiamah attended the Sustainable Maritime Industry Conference in Jeddah chaired by Saudi’s Transport Minister Saleh bin Nasser Al-Jasser.
- February 2023: Saudi Communications Minister Abdullah bin Amer Al-Swaha met with his Ghanaian counterpart Ursula Owusu in Riyadh to enhance partnerships in digital economies.



## Ghana- UAE

- January 2024: Dr. Rashed Ali Al Kaabi, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Security and Military Affairs, participated in the United Nation's Peacekeeping Ministerial Meeting, which was held in the Republic of Ghana's capital, Accra. Al Kaabi met with Vice President Bawumia and Foreign Minister Botchwey.
- January 2023: President Akufo Addo led Ghana's delegation to the Ghana Business Forum held in Abu Dhabi to promote investments in several fields and was chaired by the UAE Minister of State H.E. Sheikh Shakhboot bin Nahyan Al Nahyan.
- March 2022: Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan received President Akufo Addo to advance bilateral relations in Abu Dhabi.
- August 2022: President Akufo Addo received the UAE Charge d'affaires Amer Al Alawi in Ghana to discuss bilateral relations.
- November 2019: Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and President Akufo Addo attended the signing of several bilateral agreements and MOUs spurring economic cooperation

## Ghana - Qatar

- May 2024: President Akufo Addo met with Qatari Ambassador Mohammed bin Ahmed Al Homaid.
- March 2024: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs, Dr. Khalid bin Mohammed Al Attiyah, met with Ghana's Defence Minister Dominic Nitiwul, during his trip to the Doha International Maritime Defence Exhibition.
- December 2023: Ghana and Qatar signed an air transport MoU to enhance travel options and cargo flights between the two nations.
- June 2023: Qatar's Transport Minister Jassin Al Sulaiti met with his Ghanaian counterpart

Kwaku Asiamah to discuss cooperation in transport, ports, and civil aviation.

- May 2023: Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani met with President Akufo-Addo on the sidelines of Qatar Economic Forum 2023 to discuss bilateral relations.
- March 2023: President Akuffo Addo held bilateral discussions with Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani in Qatar while attending the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.
- December 2022: Qatar's Foreign Minister Sultan Al Muraikhi met with his Ghanaian counterpart Shirley Botchwey to discuss bilateral cooperation.

## Ghana- Kuwait

- July 2024: Ambassador Mohammed Idris hosted Kuwait officials from the General Federation of Trade Unions and the Public Authority for Manpower in Kuwait to finalise a bilateral labour agreement to streamline recruiting Ghanaian workers.
- November 2023: Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah received Ghanaian Ambassador Mohamed Idris.
- October 2023: Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al Sabah received Ghanaian ambassador Mohammad Idris to boost bilateral ties.
- July 2022: Ghana's then Minister of Finance Ken Ofori-Ata signed a strategic development partnership with the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development to finance agricultural projects.
- November 2019: President Akufo Addo received the credentials of Kuwaiti Ambassador Mohammad Al Khadi.
- March 2019: Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Tijani held bilateral discussions with Kuwait's Assistant Foreign Minister for Africa Affairs Hamad Al Mashaan.



### Ghana- Oman

- June 2023: Sultan Haitham bin Tarik received the credentials of Ghanaian Ambassador Mohammad Tijani who is accredited from Saudi Arabia.
- March 2023: Sultan Haitham bin Tarik sent a cable greeting President Akufo Addo on Ghana's National Day.

### Ghana- Bahrain

- July 2024: the Bahrain Institute for Pearls and Gemstones hosted a Ghanaian delegation led by former Finance Minister Ken Ofori Attah to strengthen bilateral and economic relations.
- June 2024: Crown Prince and Prime Minister Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa hosted a Ghanaian delegation led by Private Sector Investment Envoy Ken Ofori Attah to discuss investment opportunities and develop bilateral relations.

- June 2024: Noor bin Ali Alkulaif, the Minister of Sustainable Development and Chief Executive of Bahrain Economic Development Board, received Ken Ofori Atta, Yofi Grant, the CEO of Ghana Investment Promotion Centre and Ambassador-designate Mohammed Tijani to discuss investment cooperation.

### Supporting Documents

- GCC & Sub-Saharan African Countries Relations and Opportunities August 2024
- From Ports to Pipelines: The Gulf Cooperation Council's Influence on Africa's Oil and Gas Landscape
- Africa and the Gulf Region: Blurred Boundaries and Shifting Ties September 2015
- GRM Workshop 2009: The Gulf and Africa: Developing a N





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