

**CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**  
**BY MOST REV. CHARLES GABRIEL PALMER-BUCKLE**  
**METROPOLITAN ARCHBISHOP OF CAPE COAST**  
**VENUE: ELMINA CASTLE**  
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Your Excellency Most Rev. Matthew Kwasi Gyamfi, Bishop of Sunyani and President of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference, Nananom, Distinguished Invited Guests, Participants of this International Workshop, Ladies and Gentlemen, Brothers and Sisters.

As the Archbishop and chairman of this important international workshop, I would like to begin by acknowledging the deep historical and moral significance of the issues before us. We gather here not only to confront the legacies of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade but also to chart a path toward healing, justice, and reconciliation for those whose lives have been shaped by this painful history.

The institution of slavery is one of humanity's gravest sins. It denied millions of people their fundamental rights and dignity, subjecting them to unimaginable suffering. Though we stand centuries removed from its abolition, the legacy of slavery continues to haunt our world. It manifests in the systemic inequalities, racial injustice, and cultural trauma that persist across many societies. Addressing these deep-rooted scars requires not only historical reckoning but active engagement in justice and reparative measures.

In reflecting on the aftermath of slavery, we must first honour the memory of those who suffered and perished under this brutal system. Their descendants, many of whom are still grappling with the consequences of this history, deserve our empathy, solidarity, and a commitment to creating a fairer and more just world. This is a moral imperative for all of us.

As faith leaders, traditional authorities, academics, activists, and policymakers gathered here today, our task is to look beyond the history of slavery and confront the challenges that remain. We must support initiatives that ensure racial justice, advance social equality, and foster a true spirit of reconciliation. Education is paramount: the teaching of history must include the full truth of slavery's atrocities, and the accomplishments and resilience of those who overcame it. This will help future generations understand the gravity of this history and inspire them to build a world where such exploitation is unthinkable.

Furthermore, our discussions must also include the subject of reparations, not merely in a financial sense but in holistic terms that restore dignity, opportunities, and equity. We should explore avenues that address socioeconomic disparities, promote equal access to education and employment, and encourage efforts that uplift historically marginalized communities.

The Church and faith communities play a unique role in this journey. We are called to be beacons of hope, forgiveness, and healing. But forgiveness does not mean forgetting, nor does it absolve us of the responsibility to seek justice. In this context, we must champion efforts that lead to the transformation of societies, policies, and hearts, so that the lingering effects of this historical wrong can be overcome.

In closing, I call upon all of us to engage in this dialogue with humility, courage, and determination. Let this workshop serve as a starting point for meaningful action, collaboration,

and transformation. May we leave here not only with a clearer understanding of the past but with a shared commitment to a future marked by justice, equality, and peace.

Thank you, and may God guide our efforts in this noble cause.