

OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR



**SPEECH BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR AT THE COMMISSIONING OF ROLLING
ARCHIVAL SHELVES IN CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL ARCHIVES DAY**

ADDRESS BY:

**PROFESSOR NANA ABA APPIAH AMFO
VICE-CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 2026

**J. H. KWABENA NKETIA ARCHIVES
INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON**

- *The Chairperson,*
- *Director of the Institute of African Studies,*
- *Representatives of the Donating Agencies,*
- *Distinguished Guests,*
- *Faculty, Staff and Students,*
- *Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is a privilege to join you today for the commissioning of the rolling archival shelving system at the J. H. Kwabena Nketia Archives and to celebrate International Archives Day under the global theme, **“Archives for Justice: Rights, Memory and Futures.”**

Today is significant for several reasons. First, we celebrate an important investment in the preservation of one of the University’s most valuable heritage resources. Secondly, we acknowledge the growing international recognition of the J. H. Kwabena Nketia Archives, particularly the inscription of Professor Nketia’s rare field recordings on the UNESCO Memory of the World Ghana National Register. Thirdly, we reaffirm the University’s commitment to safeguarding knowledge, memory, and cultural heritage for future generations.

Archives are often described as the memory of institutions and

societies. They preserve evidence of our past, support accountability in the present, and provide resources that help shape the future. Universities, in particular, have a responsibility not only to create knowledge but also to preserve it. The University of Ghana has long embraced this responsibility, and the J. H. Kwabena Nketia Archives stands as one of the finest examples of this commitment.

The collections assembled through the vision and dedication of the late Professor J. H. Kwabena Nketia constitute an extraordinary record of African intellectual, cultural, and artistic life. They document voices, performances, traditions, and histories that might otherwise have been lost. Through these collections, generations of scholars, students, and communities continue to engage with Africa's rich cultural heritage.

The commissioning of these rolling shelves may appear a modest undertaking, but in archival practice, proper storage infrastructure is fundamental. Preservation begins with ensuring that collections are safely housed, properly organized, and readily accessible. This donation will significantly enhance the Archives' capacity to protect valuable materials while creating additional storage space for future acquisitions.

On behalf of the University of Ghana, I wish to express our sincere gratitude to **Faber & Faber, Decolonising the Archives Agency** and **Library of Africa and the African Diaspora (LOATAD)** initiative for their generosity and belief in the importance of preserving African documentary heritage. Partnerships such as these demonstrate what can be achieved when institutions and individuals work together toward a common goal.

The University remains committed to supporting initiatives that preserve, digitize, and make accessible our documentary heritage. Such efforts align closely with our strategic priorities of research excellence, partnerships, stewardship, and transformative student experience.

As we celebrate International Archives Day, let us remember that archives are not merely repositories of old documents. They are living resources that support scholarship, strengthen identity, advance justice, and promote dialogue across generations. They remind us where we have come from and help guide where we are going.

I congratulate the Institute of African Studies, the staff of the J. H. Kwabena Nketia Archives, and all partners who have

contributed to this achievement. May this occasion inspire even greater efforts to preserve, protect, and promote Africa's documentary heritage.

Prof. Nana Aba Appiah Amfo

Vice-Chancellor

June 9, 2026

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