

The Provisional National Defense Council cum National Democratic Congress Government and Tourism Development in Ghana: A Reflection

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Abstract : Ghana came under a military and democratic rule of the same leadership from 1981-2000. These were the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC), a military government and a democratic government, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) both under the leadership of Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings. Meanwhile the year 1985 marked a turning point in the development of the tourism industry in Ghana. Interest in tourism among African governments and for that matter the 'PNDC cum NDC Government' (PNDC/NDC) arose because of adverse developments in intangible exports and a corresponding decline in commodity export earnings. The 'PNDC/NDC Government' undertook measures and policies to improve the tourism industry and at the same time embarked on export diversification to reap the foreign exchange that the industry could generate in Ghana. The objective of this paper is to examine the measures and policies of the PNDC/NDC to improve the tourism industry in order to reap the foreign exchange. It specifically interrogates the role of the government as an agent of tourism development, through its deliberate creation of a conducive environment for tourism to flourish, the involvement of the private sector both foreign and local and the provision of tourism facilities and infrastructure and how these factors impacted on the tourism industry in Ghana. In the final analysis it evaluates the degree of success of the PNDC/NDC Government in this arena of Ghana's socio-cultural and economic development. Introduction The Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC), a military government under the leadership of Flt. Lt J.J. Rawlings overthrew a constitutionally elected government of People's National Party in 1981. In 1992, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) won the general election conducted in December. Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings, the party's leader became the President of the Fourth Republic from January 1993 to December 2000. It was refreshing to see Ghanaians embrace democracy with renewed energy, zeal, and enthusiasm. This paper takes a critical look at the efforts of the PNDC cum NDC Government (PNDC/NDC) to develop tourism in Ghana during the period from 1981-2000 Methodology: Qualitative method of research was adopted for the study. Data was collected from both primary and secondary sources, and analysis was done using descriptive analysis because descriptive analysis made it possible to describe or summarize the statistical data in the research. To gather data from primary sources, questionnaires, oral interviews, and semi-structured discussions were conducted. Respondents included public officials from Ghana Tourist Board, Ministry of Tourism, Hoteliers, restaurant operators and travel and tour operators in Accra. Secondary data sources included articles in journals, reports, magazines, bulletins, and books. The major findings included statistical data for tourism arrivals and receipts during the period and the status of the industry by the year 2000. Conclusion: The paper contributes to knowledge on political and historical aspects of tourism development in Ghana, which is almost non-existent, attitudes of the PNDC cum NDC government towards tourism development and the debates on the generation of foreign exchange to Ghana and third world countries.

Keywords : ghana, infrastructure, policies, privatization, tourism facilities

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