

## A reflection on the life of #Ghana President John Atta Mills

Ghana's President John Atta Mills, who was suffering from throat cancer, died in Accra on 24 July 2012. He was an alumnus of the London School of Economics and Political Science having completed an LLM at the School in 1968.



John Atta Mills, President of Ghana, visits LSE in 2009

In 2009, Professor Mills paid a visit to the Law Department meeting with staff and students, where he accepted a gift of an LSE baseball cap (a traditional gift of the School to world leaders) and a t-shirt.

He also brought gifts for his former university – presenting LSE with a chair, a painting and a traditional Ghanaian leadership stool for the School's Chairman, Mr Sutherland.

Although it was never officially confirmed, the 68-year-old had been ill for some time, recently seeking treatment in the United States of America and cancelling some of his planned appearances. However, he had still intended to seek re-election in Ghana's December elections.

Professor Mills was born in Tarkwa in Ghana's Western Region on 21 July 1944. He studied at Achimota, one of Ghana's most celebrated schools, before completing a bachelor's degree and a professional certificate in law at the University of Ghana, Legon in 1967.

Following his studies at Legon, he came to England where he followed up his LLM at LSE with doctoral studies at SOAS. In 1971, Professor Mills was selected for the Fulbright Scholar Program at Stanford Law School.

The future President returned to Ghana after completing his PhD where he took up a position as a lecturer in law in Legon. He went on to spend almost 25 years teaching at Legon as well as holding visiting professorships abroad with Temple University in USA and Leiden University in Holland.

Professor Mills served as Vice President to former President JJ Rawlings from 1996-2000. He was the losing presidential candidate for the National Democratic Congress (NDC) in the 2000 and 2004 elections, before a narrow win over Nana Akufo-Addo of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) in

2008. His Vice-President, John Dramani Mahama was sworn in as President within hours after his death.

He is survived by his wife Ernestina Naadu Mills and a 19-year-old son, Sam.

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