



**STANDARD CHARTERED DIGITAL BANKING, INNOVATION AND FINTECH
FESTIVAL 2022**

REMARKS BY

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BANK OF GHANA

**“ON HOW THE BANK OF GHANA IS PIONEERING AND LEADING NEW
INNOVATIONS AND RELEVANT POLICIES TO MAKE GHANA A DIGITIZED
ECONOMY”**

26TH OCTOBER 2022

MOVENPICK AMBASSADOR HOTEL, ACCRA

His Excellency, the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana, Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia,

The Board Chair of Standard Chartered Bank Ghana, Dr. Emmanuel Kumah,

The Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Stock Exchange, Ms. Abena Amoah,

The Chief Executive Officer of Standard Chartered Bank Ghana, Ms. Mansa Netey,

Executives of Banks, Other Financial Institutions, payment service providers,

Captains of Industry,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

1. It is a pleasure to deliver these remarks on “how the Bank of Ghana is pioneering and leading new innovations and relevant policies to make Ghana a digitized economy,”.
2. It is also heartwarming to note that following calls by participants at the first edition of this festival in November 2021, Standard Chartered Bank has kept the momentum and thus today’s gathering, marks the 2nd edition of the Standard Chartered Digital Banking, Innovation & Fintech Festival. I am truly honoured to be a part of this journey and permit me to congratulate the CEO and staff of Standard Chartered Bank Ghana for their outstanding work.
3. Over the last few decades, Bank of Ghana has been at the forefront of innovation, laying the foundation for an effective and efficient retail payments ecosystem that is anchored on a robust interbank infrastructure. A prominent mile marker was in the 2003, when the Payment Systems Act 2003 (Act 662) was passed and set in motion the promotion of electronic payments in Ghana. This law provided the mandate to establish the Ghana Interbank Payment and

Settlements Systems (GhIPSS) which coupled with sustained investments in the interbank payments infrastructure, has proven to be a potent stimulant of retail payment innovation in Ghana.

4. Observing developments eastward, the Bank issued the Branchless Banking Guidelines to usher into Ghana, the mobile money concept. This guideline sought to anchor the emerging concept of mobile money on the resilience and safety of the banking sector. Further, and in line with the dictates of regulatory innovation development, the Bank developed a policy framework in concert with industry and key stakeholders to introduce the Electronic Money Issuer (EMI) Guidelines. This has provided a conducive legal and regulatory environment to promote mobile financial services, which in turn; has catalyzed the growth of an emerging ecosystem of smaller payment service providers in Ghana.
5. Ladies and gentlemen, to further capture the promise of a growing payment ecosystem, the Payment Systems and Services Act, 2019 (Act 987) was passed to provide a comprehensive framework for managing the sector, including the mandate to bring the fast-evolving payment service startups, popularly known as the “FinTechs”, under the regulatory ambit of the central bank.
6. The Bank, in line with our risk-based approach, has since developed a comprehensive licensing regime which carefully examined and calibrated the requirements of each license category to be commensurate with the risks presented by their permissible activities. It also sought to address the reality that some accommodation needs to be made for smaller entities and indigenous Ghanaian service providers.
7. Ladies and Gentlemen, to fulfill the mandate in the National Payments Infrastructure Roadmap, the Bank of Ghana in collaboration with the Ministry

of Finance, Ministry of Communications and other relevant stakeholders have been working rigorously together to set the foundational digital infrastructure base of the economy in place. The ongoing sim-card registration exercise being championed by the National Communication Authority which has our full support, will ensure the centralization of KYC data to boost delivery of financial services devoid of fraud, theft and opportunities for money laundering and financing of terrorism.

8. The consumer should be at the center of our collective efforts. As such, the Bank will not relent on its effort to protect them. It is in this vain that the Bank of Ghana has developed an artificial intelligence powered automated customer complaint system, I believe this community refers to it as a chatbot; dubbed 'Akushika'. This customer experience solution is being deployed as an additional mechanism, to manage consumer complaints and promote consumer protection. The chatbot is currently in its pilot phase and I would like to use this opportunity to encourage you all to interact with it to ensure that it becomes fit for its purpose.
9. Ladies and Gentlemen, in anticipation of our future role as a central bank within a digital economy, we set out to explore the possibility of introducing a central bank digital currency called the eCedi through a comprehensive pilot testing process that has just ended. The pilot saw the testing of online and offline versions of the eCedi in Accra, Tarkwa and Sefwi Asafo. The pilot has unearthed useful insights on the impact of the initiative of the Bank which will prove instrumental in the event of a full-scale deployment of the eCedi.
10. Further to building a safe payments ecosystem as well as promoting innovation, the Bank of Ghana launched the Regulatory Sandbox on the 19th of August 2022, to support responsible innovation, innovations currently unregulated and immature, and nurture new business models. The design of

the sandbox framework enables small scale, live testing of innovative financial products, services and business models by eligible financial service providers and start-ups in a controlled environment under the supervision of the Bank of Ghana. The sandbox will among others, enable the Bank to understand the risks these innovations pose to the digital payments ecosystem to better mitigate them. It also has the added advantage of potentially reducing the go to market time frame for innovators.

11. To build stronger collaboration and cooperation with industry, Bank of Ghana has embarked on an engagement drive through the FinTech and Innovation Office. In fact, the Bank has already started collaborating with FinTech Accelerators, Technology Hubs, and has facilitated various sessions on licensing requirements, corporate governance and compliance for reporting institutions. This further demonstrates the Bank's openness and engaging attitude towards industry players. The Bank encourages continual dialogue and is ready to engage all stakeholders to achieve our shared goals to promote innovation and a safe payments ecosystem.

12. While much has been collectively achieved, there's a lot that needs to be done in building our future economy. Let me use this opportunity to reassure players in the digital financial service ecosystem that Bank of Ghana remains resolute in our commitment to the cash-lite agenda. I also encourage you all to take advantage of the opportunities that Bank of Ghana has presented to the space to encourage innovation.

13. I do hope this summit affords us all a forum to build on the successes achieved and to help to set new goals.

Thank you.