



• Kurt Simeon-Okraku  
— GFA President



• Kudjoe Fianoo—  
GHALCA Chairman

# No way for 3rd term

## ... Fianoo warns FA

Story: Peter Sarbah

**T**HE Chairman of the Ghana League Clubs Association (GHALCA), Kudjoe Fianoo, has issued a stern warning to the Ghana Football Association (GFA), vowing to resist any attempt to amend its statutes to extend the tenure of the presidency from two terms to three.

In an interview with the *Graphic Sports* last Friday, Fianoo revealed that he had received reliable information suggesting that the GFA Executive Council (ExCo) was considering an amendment that would allow the current

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## Voice of Graphic SPORTS

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### GFA ExCo must maintain status quo

*THE recent disquiet within the Ghana Football Association (GFA) over alleged plans to amend its statutes to allow Kurt Simeon-Okraku to run for a third term raises serious concerns about governance and the dangers of unchecked power. This development, if true, is not only troubling but risks undoing the hard-fought reforms that were put in place to safeguard the future of Ghana football.*

*History teaches us that attempts to prolong leadership through constitutional amendments often sow seeds of division and conflict. Across Africa, countries such as Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea that tampered with presidential term limits plunged their countries into chaos, leading to violence and loss of innocent lives. While football is not politics, the dangers of manipulating governance structures for*

*personal gain remain the same in any institution. Ghana football cannot afford to follow that dangerous path. The current GFA governance system is the product of hard-won reforms aimed at ensuring transparency, accountability and power rotation. Before 2004, FA presidents were appointed by the government, with the football community choosing only the vice president. However, Dr Nyaho Nyaho-Tamakloe initiated reforms that allowed GFA presidents and executives to be elected, a move that met with resistance at the time. Despite the resistance, the reforms were adopted, but without term limits, allowing Kwesi Nyantakyi to remain in office for an extended period. His long tenure ended in a scandal, exposing the risks of unchecked leadership. Following Nyantakyi's exit, FIFA had to intervene by appointing the Normalisation Committee, led by Dr Kofi Amoah, to restore order. One of the committee's key achievements was introducing a two-term limit for the GFA presidency, ensuring no one could hold the position indefinitely. It is alarming that barely into the second term of Kurt Okraku's presidency, there are rumors of a plan to amend the statutes to allow him to contest for a third term. If this is true, the Executive Council*

*(ExCo) risks eroding the credibility and integrity of the very system that was designed to prevent the accumulation of power.*

*Rather than serve the interest of the football community, such a move would signal personal ambition taking precedence over the greater good of the sport. Football thrives on inclusiveness, fairness and fresh ideas, all of which are undermined when one leader clings to power for too long. The argument that a successful president should be allowed to continue indefinitely is misguided; good governance requires leadership rotation to prevent complacency and corruption. The GFA is at a critical juncture, and the decisions made today will shape its future for years to come. Allowing a third term will set a dangerous precedent that will undermine the principles of accountability and fairness. The football community cannot afford a return to the dark days that required FIFA's intervention to restore order. We urge the Executive Council to act in the interest of Ghana football by upholding the two-term limit. Stability and progress depend on transparent governance, and Ghana football needs leaders who understand that power is a responsibility, not entitlement.*

## Ballon d'Or nominee Lookman hunts for greatness

**T**HIS year has been one of extraordinary milestones for Ademola Lookman, with the Nigeria winger making headlines across Europe and Africa.

From his performances for the Super Eagles during the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations (Afcon) to playing a pivotal role in helping Atalanta win their first European trophy, the 27-year-old's star continues to rise.

"It's been remarkable," Lookman told *BBC Sport Africa*.

"I've come on leaps and bounds and it's been a defining year in terms of progress and the steps taken.

"But this is just the start of hopefully something very special."

Lookman's progress has seen him listed as one of 30 nominees for this year's Ballon d'Or, with the winner of the award to be announced in Paris today.

Being the only African on the men's shortlist added even more weight to his achievement.

"It's special being on the list and even more special being the only African," he said.

"We have achieved great things this year, with club and country.

"To be recognised as one of the contenders is a great achievement."



• Ademola Lookman

Lookman is also firmly in the running for the African Player of the Year award on 16 December.

One of the defining moments of Lookman's year came in the Europa League final, scoring a sensational hat-trick to lead Atalanta to victory against a Bayer Leverkusen side who were aiming for an unprecedented unbeaten treble.

His performance at Aviva Stadium in Dublin showcased his skill, vision and composure under pressure, and he became the first player to score a treble in a

European final since Jupp Heynckes did so for Borussia Monchengladbach in the 1975 Uefa Cup.

"That night was special," Lookman recalled.

"The way we did it was incredible because Leverkusen were on fire that season.

"Those are the moments you wish and dream for."

That Europa League triumph was a fitting reward for a player who has worked hard to achieve his dreams.

After growing up in South London and beginning his career in the youth ranks of Charlton Athletic, his route to gaining the spotlight on the global stage has taken a meandering path.

**Finding his groove in Bergamo**

Lookman joined Everton in an £11m (\$14.26m) deal when he was 19, but he showed his willingness to adapt and learn when he moved to German club RB Leipzig.

Loan spells back in the Premier League with Fulham and Leicester City followed, yet the forward has flourished since his switch to Atalanta in August 2022.

Moving to a new country, learning a new language and adapting to a different football culture can be daunting, but Lookman is thriving in northern Italy.

"Coming out of my comfort zone is never easy, but I'm open to that idea of learning and wanting to be better - not just as a player, but as a person also," he said.

"It's helped me to do that, to grow as a man. I'm glad I made that step."

His two years in Bergamo have been transformative and he believes the club's attacking style of play under coach Gian Piero Gasperini has given him the opportunity to display his creativity on the field.

"They allowed me to play my type of football," he explained.

"The coach likes us to attack, to score goals, to create. I've been able to show my qualities."

Qualifying for this season's Champions League has provided Lookman with another opportunity to test his skills

**To be continued**