



LORD PAUL BOATENG: BARRISTER

Many Africans praised his appointment, stating that it was an important symbolic break from Britain's colonial past

“My colour is part of me but I do not choose to be defined by my colour.”

Born in Ghana in 1951, Boateng is the son of a former Ghanaian cabinet minister, and a Scottish mother.

Following a military coup in Ghana in 1966, he moved to England with his family. He came to prominence in the late 1970s as a civil rights lawyer in Lambeth, and became a familiar figure at protests of police activity in South London.

He was elected to the Greater London Council in 1981 and became chairman of its police committee, where he campaigned for greater accountability over the Metropolitan Police, and vice-chair of its ethnic minorities committee. He continued to be a persistent critic of the police, especially in relation to their dealings with the black and Asian communities.

Paul was appointed Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 29 May 2002. In 1997, he made history when he was appointed Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department of Health, becoming the first black person to hold ministerial office in the Government. In October 1998, he became the minister of State for Home Affairs.

In 2010 he was appointed to the House of Lords. A frequent broadcaster he now devotes his time to working in Africa, as a lawyer, business advisor, and for charity working on development, governance, and youth issues. He is also a Methodist Lay Preacher.