



Ambassador to Germany talks on investing in Sierra Leone with Afrika-Verein

Prior to the hosting by Afrika-Verein of 6th German African Infrastructure Forum between December 3rd and 4th 2018 in Berlin to which the Sierra Leone Government is invited, Ambassador Egon

Kochanke who worked in Africa before retirement from the diplomatic service, and presently Consultant Afrika-Verein der Deutschen Wirtschaft (German-African Business Association) has held discussion with Ambassador M'baimba Baryoh during which he briefed him on their work and what they've been doing specifically investing in Africa with a membership of 560 and business companies all interested in doing business in Africa.

Receiving Mr. Kochanke, Ambassador Baryoh told him that he has been informed that the focal point of the embassy with regards to bilateral collaboration should indeed be Afrika-Verein. Sierra Leoneans are a resilient people, he told him, cataloguing how the country, rich in mineral resources, was able to rebounded from a terrifying rebel war, to Ebola and mudslide and moving on the right direction under the new direction of President Julius Maada Bio. He re-emphasized how Germany has done extremely well for Sierra Leone in the past but unfortunately being the last to get recognition like for example its citizens need to travel to Ghana to obtain German visa.

He briefed him of the government flagship programme which is the free quality education stating that a population not educated cannot build on its middle level manpower to sustain itself. Letting him also know that government spends US\$300million on rice importation annually. And on the other hand the priority of the government is to reduce corruption.

Explaining the structure of Afrika-Verein and some of its activities, Mr. Kochanke spoke about the annual agricultural event hosted in Berlin and hooked up to the German Green Week next month. the following month is a health event in collaboration with the German Alliance and then the Munich Security Conference involving trade and security issues on the African continent. The Afrika-Verein, he says, is of the opinion not to emphasize on Aid but on trade and investment with business collaborations in Africa.

In response to request for help by Ambassador Baryoh, Mr. Kochange was positive in that he could write through the Afrika-Verein and inform business companies/association about business opportunity in Sierra Leone. " We are only matchmakers. We act as a lobby organisation. We draft policy papers and business members like to get support from the German government and seek funding". And invited Ambassador Baryoh to give a talk on business investments and opportunities.

Meanwhile, Dr. Dennis Sandy, Minister of Lands, Housing and Environment has been officially invited to the 6th German African Infrastructure forum and will take the platform as guest of honor and keynote speaker. The forum will focus on two main areas "MOBILITY AND LOGISTIC" on December 3rd and "ENVIRONMENT AND TECHNOLOGIES" on December 4th.