

# German Investment Encouraged

Wednesday, 04 September 2013 00:00 By Winston W. Parley



TRANSLATE

Highlighting Liberia's numerous challenges ranging from youth unemployment to lack of capacity and infrastructure amid vast natural resources, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has told newly accredited German Ambassador to Liberia, Mr. Ralph Timmermann that the country encourages German Private Sector to take a more active role as Liberia aims to manage its own resources efficiently.

Charting with Ambassador Timmermann at the Foreign Ministry in Monrovia yesterday during the presentation of his Letters of Credence, the Liberian Chief Executive said government's aim was to grow the private sector to be able to manage the country's resources efficiently to enable government support its own endowment and development agenda.

"But you can do it if you can get the private sector opened; we continue to want to encourage German Private Sector to take a more active role because Liberia is a natural resource-rich country, and we see the private sector as our main engine...", she said.

Despite celebrating ten years of peace, President Sirleaf said, the country still has major challenges, emphasizing the need to get young people trained so as to prepare them for decent work, while government was at the same time trying to bring back home repatriates who, she said, had left the country over the years.

In response, the German Ambassador to Liberia, Mr. Ralph Timmermann thanked President Sirleaf for the reception and assured Liberia of his country's preparedness to work in collaboration for the strengthening of the long existing relations between the two countries.

In a subsequent interview with journalists at the Foreign Ministry yesterday, Ambassador Timmermann said Liberia has many opportunities for German companies, especially where Liberia is a country rich in natural resources couple with infrastructure that has to be built.

"So, I think German companies have good possibilities to participate in these. But my job will be to inspect the works, and to give them information and to see that there is actual investment in this country," he said.

Earlier, President Sirleaf gave a historical background to the bilateral relations between Liberia and Germany, going back to 1855, and recalled that Germany has been a long time friend to Liberia, since a treaty was established back in 1855.

Several years after Liberia declared its independence, President Sirleaf noted, Germany was the first country to recognize the Independence of Liberia even before Liberia's main partner- the United States.

Since the establishment of the relations, President Sirleaf said, Germans has been in the private sector, making reference to Bong Mines, a company that provided uncountable jobs and training for Liberians.

She also recalled the support she obtained from the German Chancellor, who, according to her, was very instrumental in rallying some colleagues to relieve Liberia of \$4.9b debt, besides hosting Liberia's first reconstruction meeting, in which the country was able to get partners look at its agenda and give support for it.

"And Germany continues to support our reconstruction trust fund managed by the World Bank that is involved in our road-building program, and also support our hydro, which,, for us, is a major endeavor because it removes some of the constraints from our Agenda for Transformation," said President Sirleaf.

