



Help Liberia - Kpon Ma e.V.

Verein für
medizinische Hilfe
in Liberia



German Humanitarian Non-Governmental Organisation for Medical Aid in rural Liberia

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short summary of lecture to the „Business Forum Liberia“ in Leipzig

Mr. Thomas Boehner who worked in Liberia shortly after the war as a medical leader of the Bong Mine Hospital and established five bush clinics in the interior of Liberia gave some impressions about the present situation. He explained what his own founded organisation „Help Liberia-Kpon Ma“ is doing there which is running two health posts deep in the bush around the St.Paul-River. Mr. Boehner and his NGO are mainly focused on the rural people because even now the health system now is still down when the slow improvement was striken back after the Ebola crisis.

Qualified in Germany as an Ebola worker he preferred to support his volunteers in the clinics instead of sitting in a German ETU which never saw any Ebola case.

After short introduction according to the economic topic of the event he went back short to the great past when the Germans were in Liberia in Bong Mines. With recent pictures he showed that the Chinese activities went down; selling only crushed rocks from the mine and giving back the Bong Mine Hospital to the government of Liberia because they are not able and willing to run it properly. The Chinese in Liberia also paved some roads, after they failed in their first attempts, because they had to experience the serious weather conditions with heavy erosion in this country.

Mr. Boehner gave a short overview about the present economic situation especially how the grassroot people are feeling about it.

The cleanliness on the public roads is improving he said. Also an anti corruption campaign of the government is gradually showing effect. After the Ebola crisis the country is quickly recovering. The number of multistory houses is growing every day. Companies are going to become more established like Gold Mining, drinking water and telecommunication.

Mount Coffee, the huge Hydro Power Plant which was served the country before the war is hopefully going to come back online by the end of this year, thanks to the help of German technology.

Mr. Boehner who has a big family background in Liberia can see a huge encouragement of the Liberian people in spite of the long war and the Ebola crisis. They have the power to stand up again taking their chances to found small and bigger start ups. He showed a lot of examples that history did not bring them down so much to be despaired. During the Ebola outbreak a few Libanese and Indian companies benefitted through the millions of US-Dollars as donations which were flowing into the country. The benefit for the citizens in rural Liberia was going to zero. But the will of the Liberian people to survive and recover is strong. All over the country he had discovered plenty of new business which he showed with many examples.

According to Mr. Boehner the rate of literacy is increasing slowly. Inspite of this, the entire nation now has three book shops instead of one and this only in the capital.

After speaking to several of his contacts in different counties in Liberia he has noticed that most people are not satisfied with the performance of the President, citing that the country's progress is not fast enough. But, he notes, that corruption is not the only problem. The fact that many citizens don't pay their taxes als weakens the governments ability to help its citizens. He does though underline the fact that there has been improvement in this area.

Mr. Boehner warns that Liberia must be careful with new investors such as palmoil companies which can gradually overwhelm the rain forests, similar to Firestone which left behind desolate rubber plantations.

His impression of Liberia is that it has great potential in the tourism industry, due to the rare and valuable environment which has to be rescued.

He can see new hotels, recreation and entertainment centers erecting more and more and the challenges in this sector are endless in Liberia.

Closing his lecture with words of encouragement brought a big approval from the audience.

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