

March 23th, 2017

Deputy Managing Director speaks at
“Business Forum”
of the Ghanaian-German Economic Association

Ghana is Germany’s fourth largest trading partner in Sub-Saharan Africa. Looking at the figures, however, i.e. 266 million Euros total exports from Germany to Ghana and 270 million imports in 2015 there is obviously room for a lot more.

To improve business and political relations between Ghana and Germany the Ghanaian-German Economic Association organized the “Doing Business with Germany” Forum on March 9th, 2017.

The Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Ghana, H.E. Christoph Retzlaff, in his keynote speech successfully addressed the unique opportunities that Germany and Ghana offer each other. The following contributions by the Ministry of Business Development and GIZ, the German Agency for International Co-operation, added more valuable information to the Forum.

It was a pleasure for the DMD of Hospital Engineering GmbH, Johannes O. Bockmann, to speak about German Business Culture. Understanding basic differences between cultures and especially being mindful about each other’s culture facilitates business. A prove that this basic recommendation works on a daily basis is the long lasting involvement of Hospital Engineering in Ghana. In 2017 the company is celebrating 50 years in the country. Offices in Accra and Kumasi show their strong commitment to the local market and give proof of sustainable business relations.



Johannes Bockmann, DMD of Hospital Engineering, at the GGEA Business Forum 2017



The Regional Director of Hospital Engineering Ken Asante talking with a GGEA Business Forum Participant



Left to Right - Gerhard Buchmann, the of Founder Hospital Engineering - Stephen Antwi, the President of GGEA - Johannes Bockmann, DMD of Hospital Engineering

German investors upbeat about 'one district, one factory'

By Charles Andoh, ACCRA

SOME German companies with operations in the country have expressed their willingness to invest in the one district, one factory initiative by the current government.

Telecommunications equipment manufacturing giant, Siemens, and a leading steel producer, ThyssenKrupp AG, a leading producer of steel, which are members of the Ghanaian-German Economic Association (GGEA), are among the companies that have expressed the interest.

"Ever since the policy was announced, a lot of German companies have been making enquiries about the viability of the policy and their readiness to come on board and invest in Ghana," the President of the GGEA, Mr Stephen Ankwil, announced at a business forum on "Doing Business with Germany" organised by the association in Accra last Wednesday.

The monthly business forum brings together German and Ghanaian businesses operating in both countries to share ideas and experiences on how to increase bilateral trade between both countries.

German work ethics

Although Mr Ankwil said many of the policies put forward by the current administration were feasible and would



• Mr Christoph Retzlaff
— German Ambassador

attract a lot of investors, "if the Ghanaian culture of doing business is not changed for the better, it will be difficult for investors to stay whenever they come into the country."

He said Ghanaian businesses ought to adopt the German way of doing business, noting that there must be integrity, truthfulness, responsiveness, time consciousness and accountability.

Ghana as trade partner

The German Ambassador to Ghana, Mr Christoph Retzlaff, said he was not happy



• Mr Stephen Ankwil

about Ghana's current trade stance with Germany, adding that the country could do more.

Ghana is currently number four on the list of Germany's trading partners in sub-Saharan Africa, after South Africa, Nigeria and Cote d'Ivoire.

"This calls for new efforts from both countries to put Ghana into its deserved place among our trading partners," Mr Retzlaff said.

He also indicated that Germany would continue to support Ghana in development projects, as well as assist in the growth of its economy.

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The German Ambassador to Ghana, Mr Christoph Retzlaff, has assured Ghana of Germany's continuous support for the country.

Since 1983, Germany has allocated more than €1.5 billion to development cooperation in Ghana.

Business culture

In a presentation, the Deputy Managing Director of Hospital Engineering, a German company operating in Ghana, Mr Johannes Beckmann, advised Ghanaian and German investors to be mindful of the culture of both countries.

He said for instance that because a German business culture was based on values such as integrity and time consciousness, a Ghanaian businessman dealing with a German investor for the first time should be time conscious in order not to lose their trust.

The Country Director of the German Development Cooperation (GIZ), Mr Alan Walsch, also called on the government to work towards ending the export of raw agricultural produce, saying it came as a loss to the country, hence the need to reverse the situation immediately.

The Special Advisor to the Minister of Business Development at the office of the President, Ms Akua Asaba Asare, assured investors that the government would ensure a conducive atmosphere for businesses to thrive.

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