

German Ambassador His Excellency Hubert Jager and Honorable Herbie McCauley Admitted as DATI Honorary Peace Advocates!



Two distinct personalities were simultaneously admitted into the Honorable Body of Dehkontee Artists Theatre, Inc. (DATI) on Monday, March 2nd, 2020, as Dehkontee Artists Theatre Honorary Peace Advocates. The solemn traditional Liberian cultural ceremony took place at the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Congotown, Montserrado County, Liberia. The honorees were His Excellency Hubert Jager, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany accredited near Monrovia and DATI's newly appointed Chief Sponsor, Honorable Herbie Teconbla McCulley. The historic visit to Germany on Liberian soil was made possible under the auspices of Honorable McCauley, a Liberian businessman and humanitarian.

During the acquaintanceship visit, Honorable McCauley formally introduced Liberia's cultural icon and scholar artist Prince Joseph Tomoonh-Garlodeyh Gbaba via Facetime to the German Ambassador, as the chief custodian of Liberian culture spanning over forty-six years. Mr. McCauley lauded Dr. Gbaba for the great contributions he has made to Liberia in the realms of education and culture and for motivating Liberian college youths to launch the DATI Kukatonon Peace Project in Liberia. He said,



L-R: German Envoy H.E. Hubert Jager & Honorable Herbie McCaulley, Honorary DATI Peace Advocates

“Mr. Ambassador, I have the distinguished pleasure to introduce to you, Liberia’s cultural icon Dr. Joseph Gbaba. For months I have followed his writings on social media. I was inspired to offer my services as a patriotic Liberian citizen and businessman because I am convinced, he is sincere about his clarion call for the restoration of peace and national unity in Liberia as is evidenced by the massive support he is receiving from Liberian youths across the country. Therefore, he deserves the support of the Liberian government and people as well as the international community so that together we can collectively collaborate to secure genuine peace, reconciliation and rule of law in our beloved native land. I am fascinated with the passion these youths are carrying out their peacebuilding activities and would like to do all within my purview to give them the support to successfully implement their peace mission in Liberia. Further, I am very interested in their agricultural program and would like to offer them thirty acres of farmland for them to jumpstart their agricultural activities.”



Presently over one hundred and twenty-five college students from across Liberia have signed up as DATI Peace Advocate volunteers in Montserrado, Maryland, Margibi and Lofa Counties, to carry out peacebuilding activities that include artistic performances promoting peace and reconciliation

through the performing and visual arts and literacy, public health education, adult literacy, and agriculture, among many others. Speaking on Facetime from his residence in the United States of America on behalf of the honorable body of Dehkontee Artists Theatre, Inc. and as Chairman of the Kukatonon Peace and Reconciliation Initiative, Inc. (KPRI), Dr. Gbaba stated:



DATI's Executive Director & Founder

“Your Excellency, Hubert Jager, it is a great pleasure to be in your presence via Facetime to express my deepest gratitude for granting the Dehkontee Artists Theatre Peace Advocates and Liberian college youths audience to share with you our plans and aspirations to promote peace and national unity in Liberia. No better place or person at this time in Liberia we could have visited to share our thoughts about peace and reconciliation than the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany because once upon a time Germany was a divided nation—East and West Germany. Nevertheless, through the resilience of the German people, through their determination to attain freedom, justice, and liberty, today we have a united Federal Republic of Germany. Accordingly, through your timely intervention we pray to achieve this same goal for the Liberian people someday.

Against this backdrop, we have humbly come to seek wisdom and knowledge and logistical supports so that we may model our peacebuilding activities after the German peace module. In the future, I look forward to a cordial and mutual working relationship with you and the German people in our peacebuilding efforts. We look forward to establishing a cultural exchange program between German and Liberian college youths, and we look forward to benefit from the technological opportunities Germany has to offer the world.



Mr. Ambassador, I am very pleased to introduce to you some of the finest youths in Liberia whom I have trained. They have sacrificed their meager resources to serve their country and fellow countrymen and women as DATI volunteers and Peace Advocates. These children deserve the support of the Liberian government and people and the international community because I have deep confidence in them. Most of DATI's peace Advocates were born during the Liberian conflict. They are survivors of unfathomable atrocities that left most of their colleagues dead, traumatized, and illiterate. Yet, these youths before you were resilient enough to accomplish their academic dreams. Some of them are nurses, public health majors, civil and electrical engineers, agriculturists, business administration majors, chemists, etc. We look forward to an exchange program through which they may visit Germany to pursue further studies and that German students may visit our war-torn country to exchange ideas and build cordial bilateral relationships between Liberia and the Federal Republic of Germany.”

The head of DATI's delegation and Montserrado and Grand Bassa County Director, Statesman Henry Garjay Brumskine presented DATI's peacebuilding plan of action to the Ambassador. He provided basic information about the various peacebuilding activities Dehkontee Artists Theatre would like to undertake in the areas of public health, agriculture, the performing and visual arts and literacy, as well as agriculture. Statesman Roland Yowah, DATI's Country Representative



also spoke briefly during the meeting. He is a graduate from Cuttington University Nursing School. He spelled out the need to promote health care in post-conflict Liberian society. Statesman Hillaryson Soe, Regional Director for Southcentral and northern Liberia, and DATI's National Secretary General and KPRI Youth Representative, Statesman Albert Ninneh expressed their grateful thanks to the German envoy for warmly receiving them. Both statesmen stressed the need for an office space and national headquarters and official address for Dehkontee Artists Theatre. Peace Advocate Hillaryson Soe said DATI has identified an office space but the organization needs funding to secure a lease for the property. He also stressed the need for logistical supports, such as buses, four-wheel-drive pickups for the various chapters to transport DATI Peace Advocates on peace tours and to implement the organization's agricultural projects across Liberia.



In response, His Excellency Ambassador Hubert Jager warmly welcomed the DATI delegation to the German Embassy and expressed his delight to be in their midst. He shared his passionate experience as a German youth born during the Second World War and how he lived in a divided Germany as a youth. However, he said,

“The youths of Germany were the fulcrum for the success of our reunification. We were determined to unite our country. We made it clear to our elders we wanted a united Germany and we strove to achieve our goal by doing what Liberian youths in Dehkontee Artists are doing today.

You have taken on a great patriotic task that when pursued will bring lasting peace to Liberia because you are the future leaders. Soon the mantle of running Liberia will be in your hands. Do not relent. Continue your good work. Thank you for the information you have submitted to me. My staff and I will go over your concerns and requests and we will get back to you. Thank you for coming to visit me...”



DATI's Dobugbor Chapter County Director Statesman Henry Garjay Brumskine with German Envoy H.E. Hubert Jager at German Embassy.

The historic visit to the German Embassy was culminated by the formal induction of His Excellency Hubert Jager and Honorable Herbie McCaulley as Dehkontee Artists Theatre Honorary Peace Advocates. The solemn Liberian cultural ceremony was conducted by Stateswoman Hawa Guwor. It included the presentation of white kola nuts, salt and pepper and white powder pasted on the foreheads of both honorees, as a traditional Liberian symbol of peace. Both gentlemen's faces lit up and an awesome presence of our forefathers and foremothers filled the room. The German envoy was elated and so too was Honorable McCaulley as well as DATI Peace Advocates who felt honored and invigorated to renew by the kind gestures of the honorees to renew their commitment to national peacebuilding in Liberia.

Published by DATI Public Relations Section

March 3, 2020