



PRESS RELEASE

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709.41 CARATS DIAMOND FOUND IN KONO DISTRICT

The Kono District Development Association (KDDA) UK, a registered Charity in United Kingdom, wish to express our profound concern and legitimate interest in the issues surrounding the recently discovered 709.41 carats diamond in Koyadu village, Kono district, of eastern Sierra Leone.

It is a fact that Diamonds are inextricably linked to the past and future of Kono District. It is also factual that Kono District has nothing of value to show for this God-given wealth in the District, but sad memories. This we hope will change dramatically this time around. We therefore :

- strongly advocate for a transparent and open tender for the sale of this Diamond, and a verifiable account of the entire process.
- Require the proceeds to be divided among all the genuinely legitimate and relevant parties; the owner, Kono District and the Republic of Sierra Leone.
- Reiterate here that Kono District must not be marginalised as usual with the excuse that it is a national issue, a pretext to sidestep the well-deserved development of Kono District.
- In determining the value of the diamond we call for the involvement of licence and genuine international diamond valuers who are acceptable by both the Directorate of Precious Minerals Trading and the local parties.
- We call for the privacy and protection of the legal owner of this fortune.
- We call for a fair representation of the local Kono authorities during the bidding process.
- We require the government to publicly declare the total purchase cost, details of the buyer, and the appropriate percentage allocated to all the aforementioned parties.

Diamonds are a huge opportunity for Kono District in particular and Sierra Leone as a nation to develop if the right measures are put in place to ensure thorough and robust regulations. The Republic of Sierra Leone must be awake to the potential hazards of mining operations in Kono District which continues to adversely affect the health and daily lives of the residents in Kono District. This trend must stop!

Any responsible government must consider the health and welfare of its nationals a priority and treat citizens fairly. We require a complete overhaul of the mining activities to reflect the dignity of the people, strict adherence to corporate responsibilities, the development of Kono district and the nation.

It is our hope that the people of Kono District will benefit from this latest diamond discovery and demand that the blatant neglect and naked exploitation be stopped.

Long live the people and land that we love.

Mr. Aiah Yornie Sodengbe
Secretary

Mr. Aiah Bondowa Tondoneh
Chairman

VISION: *"Together the descendants of Kono will make Kono a better place to live"*

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