

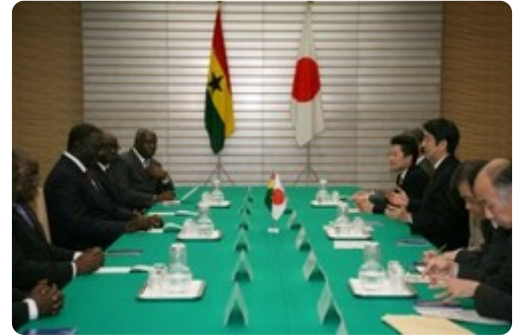
Ghana, Japanese firm hold bilateral discussion

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Mr Haruna Iddrisu, Minister of Trade and Industry, on Thursday reiterated government's commitment to increase the nation's electricity generation capacity from the current 2,800 megawatts to 5,000 megawatts by the end of 2016.



Ghana government pledges its "absolute support" for Marubeni's sugar plantation project in Northern Ghana, saying it will facilitate the acquisition of land.

He said there are as many as 500 rural communities across the county in the Western, Central, Upper East, Upper West, Northern, Brong-Ahafo and the Volta Regions that are still desirous of getting connected to the national electricity grid.

Mr Iddrisu made these disclosures during a meeting with a Japanese trade delegation which included Marubeni Corporation, and assured Ghana's industrial players that the government will continue to ensure adequate and sustainable supply of utilities, particularly water and electricity.

The Trade Minister appealed to Marubeni Corporation to secure concessionary funding from Japan for the extension of rural electrification under the self-help rural electrification initiative.

"We would be happy to work with you to extend electricity in order to give meaning to President Mahama's declaration of energy for all by the year 2016," he said.

He also explained that it is the expectation of President John Dramani Mahama that more rural communities in Ghana are connected to the national electricity grid.

He pointed out that Ghana remains an oasis of peace, stable social and political order, and has put in place legal and regulatory regimes to protect any investments.

Mr Iddrisu assured Marubeni Corporation of the security of its investments, and appealed to the corporation to assist in building an energy plant to be dedicated to industries in the Tema area and Western Region since they have interest in the energy and power sector.

He said Northern Ghana remains the most viable place for commercial farm that, the Brong-Ahafo, Western and Central Regions, are also fertile ground investment.

“I am aware of Marubeni’s interest in development of sugar plantation in Northern Region of Ghana,” he said.

He pledged President Mahama’s absolute support for the initiative to establish a factory in Northern Ghana.

He said government will play its role in facilitating the acquisition of land together with an accessible road to the site.

Mr. Naoto Nikai, Japanese Ambassador in Ghana, who led the delegation, said it is one of the largest Trade and Investment Companies in Japan which operates all over the country.

He added that Marubeni Corporation’s powerful delegation to Ghana shows their business relations in Ghana.

The Japanese Ambassador was optimistic that there would be a fruitful result from the business relationship between his country and Ghana.

Mr Shigeru Yamazoe, Senior Managing Executive Officer of Marubeni Corporation, said it is one of the most important partners of Marubeni Corporation from the sub-Saharan Africa.

Mr Yamazoe pledged the corporation’s desire to organise and promote various projects in the country, adding that they would create employment and develop the various sectors of the country.