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[Home](#) > Amb. Patten Calls for Strong Private Sector Partnership Between Liberia and the State of Georgia

Amb. Patten Calls for Strong Private Sector Partnership Between Liberia and

*Embassy of the Republic of
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by Gabriel I.H. Williams

Washington, D.C.: Liberia's Ambassador to the United States, H.E. George S.W. Patten, Sr., has called for strong partnership between the Republic of Liberia and the State of Georgia, especially in the private sector.

According to a dispatch from the Liberian Embassy in Washington, Ambassador Patten made the call on May 15, 2019, when he met with the Governor of the State of Georgia, Hon. Brian P. Kemp in Atlanta, Georgia. Ambassador Patten was in Georgia on his first visit to engage with the Liberian community and to further enhance the relationship between the Republic of Liberia and the State of Georgia.

Ambassador Patten indicated that improving relations between the Republic of Liberia and the State

of Georgia in the private sector would be mutually beneficial to both sides. He also called for the renewal of the sister-port agreement between the Freeport of Monrovia and the Port of Savannah in Georgia.

In response, Gov. Kemp underscored the State of Georgia's desire to strengthen the relationship between the Republic of Liberia and Georgia. Gov. Kemp specifically mentioned that Georgia was strongly exploring avenues for the purchase of latex for the growing carpet industry in the state, an area in which a partnership could be established with Liberia.

Ambassador Patten also met with Georgia State Senator Donzella James, during which he emphasized the need



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H.E. Ambassador George S.W. Patten, Sr.

to further strengthen the historical ties between the Republic of Liberia and the State of Georgia, dating back to the beginning of the founding of Liberia.

Responding, Senator James said Georgia is open for business, and she pledged to work with Ambassador Patten and the Liberian Embassy to further strengthen ties between the Republic of Liberia and the State of Georgia.

During a meeting with the management of Hartfield Jackson International Airport, Ambassador Patten emphasized the need for the establishment of a cargo hub as a way of strengthening the sister-airport agreement between Hartfield Jackson Airport and the RIA. He added that establishment of a cargo hub would enhance air travel services in Liberia and within the West African sub-region.

Ambassador Patten's three-day visit included a meeting with officials of Medshare, an international humanitarian organization that deals with the recovery and redistribution of medical supplies and make them available to underserved hospitals and clinics around the world. Medshare provided support to Liberia during the Ebola epidemic.

In response to Ambassador Patten's appeal for support to Liberia's health system, Madam Nell Diallo, Medshare's vice president for International Development, expressed that her organization stands ready to assist in the improvement of Liberia's health care system. Madam Diallo promised to reach out to partners for funding to ship containers of medicines and equipment to Liberia. She also indicated her willingness to encourage the participation of stakeholders in the investment forum for Liberia.

The Liberian envoy also spoke at a luncheon attended by members of the Georgia Consul Corp, during which he emphasized that Liberia is ready for business. He used the opportunity of the event to elaborate on the Pro-Poor agenda of the government. He informed the gathering that the agenda places the Liberian people at the core of everything the government is endeavoring to undertake to spur social economic growth and development.

Ambassador Patten said it is the policy of the government that strengthening the economy to induce growth and development will be led by the private sector.

He then invited the business community to seize the opportunity to invest in the many opportunities in Liberia. Ambassador Patten also used the occasion to invite members of the Consul Corp and business leaders and entrepreneurs interested in Liberia to attend the Investment Forum on Liberia, which is expected to be held in New York in September 2019.

Ambassador Patten's visit was climaxed with a town hall meeting with members of the Liberian community in Georgia, during which he emphasized the need for Liberians to be united and to invest in the country. He also invited members of the Liberian community and entrepreneurs to the forthcoming July 26th Independence Day celebrations in Washington, D.C., as well as the Investment Forum on Liberia in September.

Ambassador Patten's delegation included Liberia's Honorary Consul to Minnesota, Hon. Jackson George, and the Honorary Consul of Georgia, Hon. Cynthia Blandford.

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