

Karpowership Visits Ministry of Energy, Shares Vision in the Energy Sector with Sierra Leone

By:Austine Luseni

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Sierra Leone's Minister of Energy, Alhaji Kanja Sesay, has received a high-powered delegation from Karpowership in Turkey in reciprocation of a visit he and some senior officials at the Ministry of Energy made to Turkey in October this year.

It could be recalled that on October 11, 2021, the Minister of Energy used his time in Turkey to hold fruitful discussions with the Turkish energy company and to extend an invitation to the company with a view to making it share and or present a sustainable or user-friendly energy roadmap or plan for Sierra Leone.

Receiving the team, Alhaji Kanja Sesay said Karpowership occupied a strategic place and function in Sierra Leone's national development agenda, adding that the Government and the People of Sierra Leone were appreciative of the services the company is providing in the country.

He said besides the Bumbuna Hydroelectric Dam, Karpowership had been the major source of electricity supply in the western area. Mr. Sesay noted that the country was looking forward to strengthening its bond with the company, stressing that the company is now critical to helping the country achieve its overall policy objective in the energy sector.

Alhaji Kanja Sesay said that his visit to Karpowership in Turkey in October, 2021 was on the instructions of President Bio, who had asked him to engage the company on its present and future relationship with Sierra Leone. He recalled the two-year emergency agreement signed between the Government of Sierra Leone and Karpowership in 2018.

He however bemoaned the fact that the Ministry of Energy was heavily indebted to Karpowership in respect of arrears that runs into millions of dollars. He was however quick to praise the company for showing the type of patience it had shown while also promising that government was bending over backwards to ensure that arrearage are settled.

The Minister of Energy said that on his visit to Turkey, he was impressed by the company's Chief Executive Officer's statement that his company's continued presence in Sierra Leone was not driven by the desire for profit but that it was motivated by the political space that President Bio had provided for his company to operate or thrive.

He concluded by commending the delegation for sharing or presenting their vision and roadmap for Sierra Leone's energy domain. He described the presentation from the delegation as a proposal which now required the usual political and technical considerations.

Giving a brief history about Karpowership, Executive Director of the company, Yasin Suudi, said his company had focused on energy for the past twenty-five years and was generating some 5,000MW in four continents.

He said the company develops, finances, builds, owns and operates its power plant. He spoke about the strong bilateral relations that Sierra Leone now had with Turkey, highlighting the direct flights between the two countries, the expansion of the airport by a Turkish company and the presence of Karpowership as a testament to the strong relationship between the two countries.

Project Manager of Karpowership, Dosucan Bayrantar, said access to energy in Sierra Leone before 2018 stood at 15%, but that owing to the tremendous strides of the New Direction administration, the access to energy percentage in 2021 now stands at 31%.

He spoke about the need for Sierra Leone to diversify its source of energy generation and gave a succinct and persuasive insight into the action plan or vision that the company had presented to the Minister of Energy.