



Mr. Akakpo (R) sharing about the opportunities in Togo

## TOGO

“We want to promote small and medium scale agro processing”

Mr. Koffi Akakpo

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**TOA:** India's bilateral trade with Togo has increased more than doubled in the recent years. How do you foresee the future of India and Togo bilateral trade relations?

**MR. AKAKPO:** Thank you for the question. The question relating to the bilateral cooperation between India and Togo interests the highest authorities of my country. For allowing our country to benefit from Indian expertise, Togolese authorities decided on opening a diplomatic representation at New Delhi. This significative presence allows Indian investors and Togolese businessmen to focus in the areas carrying the economy to ensure exponential growth of trade between our two countries.

**TOA:** Togo tourism revenue expects to increase by 56% this year. How much more perfection we can expect from this sector in future?

**MR. AKAKPO:** The contribution of tourism revenue in the Togolese economy is well established. So, the authorities in Togo have decided to set up a national tourism policy, develop a plan for tourist development and rehabilitation of existing hotels.

The significant actions in tourism are also under way, such as:

- » Privatization of state owned hotels.
- » Rehabilitation of hotel de fevrier (5 star hotel in Lome)
- » Construction of new 5 star hotels in Lome.

**TOA:** Togo has received US\$ 13 million for Private Sector Development Support Project. What are the primary objectives of this project?

**MR. AKAKPO:** I would like to seize this opportunity to

express to the Indian government, the gratitude of the Togolese people for the loan that reflects the excellent relations of cooperation that so happily exist between India and Togo. In fact, I strongly believe that the execution of this project will strengthen the actions undertaken since 2008 to develop energy supply and increase the rate of population access to energy, particularly in rural areas, extending the street lighting in Lome and in other major cities of our country.

**TOA:** Togo is heavily dependent on both the commercial and subsistence agriculture, which provides employment to 65% of the labour force. How do you look forward to India's assistance in setting up of tractor assembly plant in Togo?

**MR. AKAKPO:** Agriculture and commerce have an in-negligible leverage in the Togolese economy. Thus, the Togolese authorities in connection with the implementation of the policy of development of the country are considering the following for medium term:

- » Increase production through intensification, input distribution and capacity of small farmers.
- » Promote small and medium scale agro-processing.
- » Promote trade.
- » Improve income and conditions of living.

In this regard, assistance from the Indian government in setting up an assembly unit for tractors will allow Togo to rapidly achieve these objectives.

**TOA:** The advancement of women and equality between the sexes is a matter of human rights? What steps have been taken by the Togo government to enhance women entrepreneurship and involvement of women in different sector of economy?

**MR. AKAKPO:** The promotion of human rights is a priority of our proper authorities in Togo. Thus, the Togolese government is considering making an inventory of texts and international conventions on human rights, laws and

regulations and ratifications for their updates. The number of women in the government of Togo is a strong sign of the interest that the highest Togolese authorities have in the issue of gender equality. **ENDS**