



The name of Iker Casillas is a household name in Sierra Leone and with our young people at the University of Makeni. So too is the name of CEU San Pablo University in Madrid, Spain. In 2010, July 10, few years ago, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding bringing together the two universities, CEU San Pablo and Unimak to work towards building bonds of love, hope and a sustainable country. This partnership has grown from strength to strength.

Our partnership with CEU San Pablo has taken diverse forms and activities ranging from working together with the City Council of Makeni on Urban Planning for Sustainability, building an Auditorium that is almost completed, sending volunteers to work on different academic and infrastructural projects in the University and Makeni city. Both universities share the same vision and ideals rooted in our catholic faith. The ideals of working for the poorest of the poor, the vulnerable, building the common good, promoting participation, solidarity and making creation sustainable.

What is also interesting is that the actors involved in all of these projects are young people. The involvement of the young gives us hope and joy noting that over seventy percent of our population is youth.

Sierra Leone, with a population of 5,478,289 remains one of the poorest countries in the world with a GDP per capita of only 254 dollars. Sierra Leone is a country that has come out of a ten years civil war. It has come a long way from being a fragile state to a country poised with the potential

to becoming a thriving state. There are many opportunities that we could tap to make our country prosperous and sustainable. Agriculture, including fisheries and forestry are the mainstay of the economy contributing about forty six percent of the GDP and providing employment for about seventy five percent of the population. The land is fertile with an annual rainfall being 3,150 mm.

This presents an opportunity to create sustainable jobs in agriculture whilst addressing local food security needs. As a natural resource country, the potential lies in the nature wealth power nexus. With increasing investment in the mining sector and bio-fuels, the outlooks for the coming years could see the economy growing at about 25 percent by 2025. All of this requires us to deal with the following challenges and adopt new strategies and instruments broad range of legislations, organisations, procedures, actions the reform of the state and the strengthening of civil society.

It is in this context that the University of Makeni and CEU San Pablo University can help in the socio-economic and cultural transformation of the society. Our engagement in planning sustainable cities, teaching, research and community services can contribute in making Sierra Leone sustainable and developed. We hope that both, CEU San Pablo and University of Makeni can contribute in building a better civilization of love.

Rev. Dr. Joseph A. Turay.  
Vice Chancellor of the University of Makeni.