



**CITATION
PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTMENT OF MR.
ANTONIO RUDIGER AS "BRAND GLOBAL
SIERRA LEONE" FOOTBALL AMBASSADOR.
PRESIDENTIAL LODGE, FREETOWN - 28TH
JANUARY 2022**

Your Excellency,
Ministers of Government,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

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Benjamin Franklin once said, "out of adversity comes opportunity." Our honouree hails from Kono district – born at a time when Sierra Leone civil war ravaged the nation and displaced populations. Against all overwhelming odds, he persisted and prevailed and today he has excelled and triumphed.

His humble personality belies his successes on the pitch and his much highly decorated career. Since his international debut for Germany in 2014, he has won 49 caps scoring two goals five years apart in two world cup qualifications.

At club level, he has had a distinguished playing career from VfB Stuttgart through AS Roma to Chelsea where he has plied his trade with since 2017 with assured verve.

He has won numerous honours with Chelsea Football Club including the FA CUP, the SUPER CUP, the CHAMPIONSHIPS LEAGUE, the CONFEDERATIONS CUP including eight man of the match performances.

On the field of play, he is described as a "tough tackler" with a "commanding presence in the air." Indeed, a tough tackler he has been off the field too where he has worked assiduously to tackle some of his country's challenges.

His voice has been trenchant against racism in football but he has also maintained a soft spot for the vulnerable and the underprivileged. He has used his professional football career to model what is possible and as a platform for enhancing lives.

Since the establishment of his Foundation in Sierra Leone he has undertaken impactful projects that effuse good conscience and magnanimity

- He has been feeding 250 kids in various communities.
- When COVID-19 struck, he mobilised five Chelsea & Arsenal footballers to support the "Mask up Freetown Campaign" by LunchBoxGift & partners. The project produced 60,000 face masks for market women across Freetown.
- He has provided humanitarian support for victims of tragedies including for Fire victims of the Mabayla Community.
- To communities, he has inspired kids who would dream and can become with donations of jerseys and football kits.

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- He has constructed a water well in his mother's village in Kono that serves over 250 people.
- He is a permanent sponsor of the LunchBoxGift mobile library project.
- He has also supported "Big Shoe" – a project that has provided life-changing surgery for eleven children in Sierra Leone.

His elation was obvious in a tweet on occasion of the successful surgical procedures on the eleven children.

"Thanks so much to @BigShoe_11 to help these children in need in my 2nd home in Sierra Leone  This is what really matters in life to see them smiling again. Together we made it possible to give 11 kids a better life again - May God protect and bless them all"

But it is that he does not relent or hesitate to donate to causes dear to his heart and that benefit millions of children in Sierra Leone. His mission, it seems, is about changing lives and changing stories.

On Sunday 19 January 2020, he met with His Excellency President, Dr Julius Maada Bio, on the margins of the UK-Africa Investment Summit in London and pledged Le 1 Billion (USD 101,000) for Sierra Leone's Free Quality Education initiative. No doubt, it still remains the largest contribution by a single individual to the Free Quality School Education programme.

He has not rested on his honours and his successes. He has launched his Foundation focusing on four key pillars:

- Sports Education
- Sports Infrastructure
- Sports Inclusivity
- Literacy - Language, digital literacy, and numeracy

Your Excellency, when you received the honouree's pledge to free quality education in Sierra Leone, you said, "The narrative about Sierra Leone must change and it is the duty of every Sierra Leonean out in the diaspora to come on board the rebranding process".

Our honouree has been rebranding Sierra Leone with deliberate commitment and great passion. Ladies and gentlemen, with great acclamation, Sierra

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Leone indeed proudly honours one of its own, MR. ANTONIO RUDIGER, AS
"BRAND GLOBAL SIERRA LEONE" FOOTBALL AMBASSADOR.