



KONO CONFERENCE: PAVING THE WAY FOR BETTER PROSPECTS
UNDERSTANDING THE PAST, MARKING THE CHALLENGES AND SHAPING OUR FUTURE

Announcing The Second Annual Kono Conference in Washington DC, 7am to 6pm, August 3-4, 2017

**WHERE: THE ELLIOTT SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, LINDNER FAMILY COMMONS, RM 602
GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY 1957 E STREET NW, WASHINGTON DC 20052**

WHEN: AUGUST 3-4, 2017 7am to 6pm both days

HOST: Kono Union USA (KUUSA INC.)

CO-SPONSORS: The Elliott School of International Affairs and Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies

The 2nd Annual Kono Conference is coming to Washington DC. This forum is the first of its kind in the history of Sierra Leone and the Diaspora to bring together multidisciplinary scholars, professionals, philanthropists and grassroots activists to identify and discuss the region's key problems and solutions to development.

The purpose of the Kono Conference is to raise the global profile of Kono District and its indigenous ethnic groups, as well as to identify social, economic, environmental, political and cultural issues facing our communities. One of our immediate goals is to benchmark each sector of sustainable development and identify stakeholders. Our key strategy is to engage and involve all stakeholders to understand root causes, challenges, and solutions in the formulation of a comprehensive action plan for the development of Kono District.

As such, the Kono Conference is open to all descendants and residents of Kono District as well as our friends in Sierra Leone and the Diaspora. The Kono Conference is a strictly apolitical forum and does not represent the interests of individuals or affiliated organizations that make up its membership and administrative Secretariat. As a collective, the Kono Conference may vote on specific resolutions with respect to policies or decisions that impact Kono District, inhabitants or descendants in Sierra Leone and the Diaspora. These actions are non-partisan and do not in any way promote, support or bolster individual politicians, political parties or political movements.

Those of us who are Sierra Leonean Americans are excited and proud to hold the Kono Conference at a highly reputable institution, The George Washington University, and at the Elliott School of International Affairs, which has the largest international relations program in the country. We hope that convening in the capital of arguably the most powerful nation in the world would remind us all that we are not just representing a tiny region called Kono or even the small nation of Sierra Leone but Africa as a whole and our unique place within a complex and complicated global community.

On behalf of the Kono Conference Chairman, Dr. Aiah Ndomaina, we give special thanks to Professor Nemata Blyden, Interim Director of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies at GWU's Women's Institute and Associate Professor of History and International Relations at the Department of History, for facilitating the venue at the Elliott School and honoring us with her role as moderator at the two-day conference. We would also like to thank the Sierra Leone Government delegation, Kono traditional chiefs, as well as our keynote speaker who have arrived or are en route from Sierra Leone to grace this important occasion.

Finally, we are indebted to the Kono Conference in DC host for 2017, the historic Kono Union USA Inc. On behalf of the Kono Union President, Sahr Pombor, we have the pleasure to invite all Sierra Leoneans and friends of Sierra Leone in the Washington Area to the exclusive Kono Union Ball, which is the grand finale to celebrate our unity, *kwendodwe*, our commitment, *kono ay kono faa* and our ethnic diversity *dawo* on Friday, August 4th at the DMV's elite entertainment spot, The Camelot at Martin's 13901 Central Avenue, Upper Marlboro MD 20774.



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Contact:

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**WOMEN'S, GENDER,
AND SEXUALITY STUDIES**
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