

Second national decoration for the AMAN-International Foundation

The Director of the FAI Board of Directors was awarded the rank of Officer of the Order of Merit of Solidarity of Côte d'Ivoire

Gagnoa / Abidjan (28.08.2009) - In order to show the importance of the national decoration awarded on August 25 to Prof. Dr. h. c. Bernd-Dieter FRIDRICH, Director of the Board of Directors of the AMAN-International Foundation (FAI) on the occasion of the National Day of Solidarity (JNS) in Gagnoa, a solemn ceremony of presentation of the insignia of the decoration and presentation of the actions of the FAI was organized on August 28 at the Goethe Institute. This is the only distinction of its kind in Côte d'Ivoire that has been awarded to a German personality in the humanitarian and social field.

For the past few days, the Director of the FAI Board of Directors, Prof. Dr. h. c. Bernd-Dieter FRIDRICH, has been in Côte d'Ivoire as part of an official visit in response to an invitation from the Government of Côte d'Ivoire through the Minister of Solidarity and War Victims, Louis-André DACOURY-TABLEY.

This invitation followed the decision of the Council of the Order of Solidarity to award a national decoration to this personality of the AMAN-International Foundation who - through his personal support to humanitarian and development action in favor of Côte d'Ivoire from his country Germany - has demonstrated his friendship for our country.

Gagnoa (August 25) - This is the date that marks the official presentation of the decoration of Professor Bernd-Dieter FRIDRICH who was received in the rank of Officer of the Order of Merit of Solidarity of Côte d'Ivoire on the occasion of the National Day of Solidarity (JNS) in Gagnoa, in the "City of Cheese" chosen this year for the holding of the festivities of this national event.

The decoration ceremony of the Director of the FAI Board of Directors took place in the presence of several personalities from the Government of Côte d'Ivoire as well as personalities from international institutions and civil society, some of whom also received an award. Among the distinguished personalities, the most remarkable Ivorian is certainly the former Prime Minister Charles Konan BANNY who received a medal alongside Professor FRIDRICH.

This is the second award granted to an FAI personality, the first having been granted to the Founding President of FAI, Marie Ginette AMANI, who was awarded the rank of Knight of the Order of Merit of Solidarity on 25 August 2008 in Daloa.

In view of the importance of the role played by the AMAN-International Foundation during the crisis period for the consolidation of peace and social cohesion, FAI officials and the Minister of Solidarity and Victims of War have - by mutual agreement - wished to give a more solemn character to the celebration of these humanitarian and social actions.

Abidjan (28 August) - The Goethe Institute located in Abidjan-Cocody was the setting chosen by the two partners, FAI and the Ministry of Solidarity and War Victims, for a presentation of FAI's actions.

This special ceremony organized by FAI was attended by the Minister of Solidarity and War Victims as well as the Minister of Culture and Francophonie as co-sponsors of the event, the Director of the Goethe Institute, the Secretary General of UNESCO Côte d'Ivoire as well as several personalities from national and international institutions and civil society of Côte d'Ivoire.

In her speech, the Founding President of the FAI presented the history of its creation, the definition of its fields of intervention and an inventory of the poignant actions carried out by the Foundation. She made a point of highlighting the support and personal commitment of Professor Bernd-Dieter FRIDRICH and his impending role within FAI.

Created in 2003 in Côte d'Ivoire, the AMAN-International Foundation is a non-profit, non-political humanitarian and developmental institution that has carried out numerous significant actions to improve the living conditions of the poor in Côte d'Ivoire, with a particular focus on children and women in need, as well as increased support to local civil society organizations. FAI has its Board of Directors and an official representation in Germany and several correspondence units in Third World countries.

Among the actions carried out by FAI in Côte d'Ivoire, we count among others

- in the field of education: equipping school libraries in precarious neighborhoods and donating school kits to poor children in ex-assieged areas in the interior of the country, granting scholarships to approximately 1,000 students throughout Côte d'Ivoire and covering the school fees of school-age children,

- in the area of health: equipping school pharmacies and rehabilitating community centers in precarious neighborhoods,

- in the field of project financing: financial aid to more than thirty civil society organizations and individuals among the most vulnerable populations, in particular war victims and women,

- in the field of environment: several programs related to the salubrity of our cities as well as to sanitary hygiene have been developed within the framework of the FAI program "Croisière du Cœur" initiated by Marie Ginette AMANI,

- in the field of food: food has been made available to several families in destitute families and displaced by war during the crisis period,

- in the area of capacity building: several training sessions and seminars for capacity building of youth, women and civil society organizations within the framework of the special program - called "FAI-RENCAP" - were conducted in the areas of project management, IGAs (Income Generating Actions) and the setting up of the special program "FAI-RENCAP-Humanitarian Corps" whose diploma is delivered by the FAI Board of Directors in partnership with UNESCO

- in the field of public relations: several media and event activities were organized, notably communications or broadcasts through several radio stations and national and international television channels; communications in several national and international media were also published. FAI has initiated and organized international events such as the "International Humanitarian and Development Fair" (FAI-SIHD) and the "Night of Excellence in Humanitarianism" (FAI-NEH) in Côte d'Ivoire and Germany.

- in the field of institutional lobbying: FAI has developed several partnerships with national public institutions and with personalities from the economic, political and diplomatic world in Côte d'Ivoire and abroad.

After this presentation of the FAI, its President Marie Ginette AMANI addressed special thanks to Professor FRIDRICH whose unfailing commitment to the struggle for the restoration of human dignity she praised. She encouraged him in his perseverance before closing her speech by congratulating him for his decoration.

Finally, she invited the assembly to view the FAI documentary film entitled "La Force d'un Rêve" (The Force of a Dream) which gave an idea of the impressive actions undertaken by FAI in recent years.

After this presentation, the Director of the Board of Directors greeted the illustrious assembly for having honored him with its presence; he said he was amazed by Côte d'Ivoire, a country he had only known through detailed documentation he had obtained in bookstores, through digital research and even through films relating FAI's actions on the ground.

He emphasized that even though he was not physically present in Côte d'Ivoire, his commitment to FAI went beyond financial and material support to participate fully in the technical preparation of projects as well as in the organization of actions in the field.

"I sometimes indicate to the President Founder the best route to take to reach a town in the interior of Côte d'Ivoire within the framework of FAI's activities", he said ironically under the gaze and admiring smile of the guests.

Mr. FRIDRICH then explained his role as Director of the FAI Board of Directors which consists - outside of Côte d'Ivoire - in coordinating the expansion strategy and activities of FAI's representations in other developing countries.

He has also placed emphasis on the education component through the initiation and development of the "Capacity Building" program (FAI-RENCAP) for which FAI holds the unique label and for which diplomas of different specializations are granted by FAI.

The Director of the FAI Board of Directors specified that he was also present in Côte d'Ivoire in order to deliver with his own hands the FAI-RENCAP-CH Diploma - by definition "Capacity Building of the Humanitarian Corps" - to some thirty recipients who benefited from a scholarship granted by the FAI Board of Directors and who brilliantly obtained their Diploma after four training sessions and after having presented their research work before an independent jury.

Finally, FRIDRICH addressed his congratulations and encouragement to the entire FAI team in Abidjan, in particular to the Founding President for her major initiative and above all her big heart. He said he was proud of her courage, which for him is a testimony of love for his fellow man, adding that it represents "the greatest medal he will have won in his life".

The floor was given to the personal representative of the Minister of Culture and Francophonie, Augustin KOMOÉ, who praised the efforts of FAI and its team and said he was happy to have the opportunity to meet with Prof. Dr. h. c. Bernd-Dieter FRIDRICH whose visit in 2007 was already envisaged in the framework of the "Salon International de l'Humanitaire et du Développement" (FAI-SIHD 2007) initiated by FAI and which he sponsored.

He emphasized that the Minister was very satisfied with the evolution of FAI's activities, which he was able to follow very closely through the press and its annual activity reports. He encouraged FAI to continue on this path and expressed his openness to pursue and strengthen collaboration with FAI. He concluded by extending his sincere congratulations to the Director of the FAI Board of Directors and his entire team for their support to Côte d'Ivoire in the very difficult period the country has experienced.

Then, the main sponsor of this ceremony, the Minister of Solidarity and Victims of War, Louis André DACOURY-TABLEY, took the floor to first solemnly wish the traditional "AKWABA" to Professor FRIDRICH. He said he was pleased to have had the opportunity to present - on behalf of the State of Côte d'Ivoire - the medal to Prof. Dr. h. c. Bernd-Dieter FRIDRICH.

Minister DACOURY-TABLEY underlined that it was exceptional and rightly so that two personalities of the FAI were in two consecutive years honoured by the State of Ivory Coast. He confided that - for several years now - the Government of Côte d'Ivoire has been able to follow with great attention and satisfaction the efforts made by FAI. He underlined the seriousness and continuity with which these actions have been carried out in a very difficult context of crisis in our country.

The Minister also noted the relevance of these actions and their impact on the target beneficiary populations. He said he was even more impressed by the digital presentation on a giant screen that was made on the programs and even more amazed by the documentary film projected "La Force

d'un Rêve" relating the actions carried out by FAI in recent years. He then expressed his admiration for the FAI leaders, namely the Founding President and the Director of the Board of Directors, for their personal commitment to the mission they have set for themselves. He congratulated them and encouraged them to persevere and never give up in their commitment which makes them exceptional people.

The recipients were then invited to the presentation of their decoration badges which included for each one a medal, a roll of honor as well as a ministerial order. They were then invited to a series of family photos that ended the first part of this ceremony.

The second part of the ceremony was devoted to the presentation to about thirty beneficiaries of scholarships, certificates and diplomas of the FAI-RENCAP-CH program issued by the Board of Directors of the AMAN-International Foundation only.

After this solemn moment, all the guests were invited to a cocktail that ended the event.