

Grußwort von Gerd Kallweit zur Übergabe des Kleinspielfelds an den Sektor Gikonko im November 2013

Ladies and gentlemen, girls and boys, dear friends,
congratulation to your new sports field.

Etienne, the former secretary of Gikonko, wished that we should help to finance this field. So we did. It was paid by three partners: the government of Rhineland-Palatinate, the association of sports of this country and us. But what does "us" mean, who are we? These few abazungu, who came to visit you, represent a small association of about 45 members called Rwanda Partnership Mainz-Finthen. Perhaps you have heard about the city of Mainz. It is the capital of Rhineland-Palatinate. Finthen is a suburb of Mainz.

31 years ago Rwanda and Rhineland-Palatinate started to build up a partnership. The alliance of these both countries became the roof of many partnerships between communities, schools, universities, parishes and associations. A handful people in Mainz-Finthen thought, we should join that bundle of connections. And when we looked for a Rwandan Sector, who could be interested in having contact to us, there came a message from Gikonko saying something like "yes, we want" and "yes, we can". Now we are sure this message was the beginning of a wonderful partnership.

What is the idea of partnerships between organisations of different countries? Of course there are many ideas. First of all we have to understand, what the history can teach us. The history of the world is full of hatred, full of depression, full of wars. Building partnerships means, we don't want hatred, don't want depression, don't want war any longer. We want to live in peace, we want to accept each other without caring about different beliefs, different ways of life, different skin colour, different cultures. There is only one mankind in the world. It is a big challenge to keep mankind alive for long time. Therefore we have to live und to work together instead of against each other.

It is the task of the politicians to care for peace and to give us the possibilities for a convenient life. But it is ours, it is every ones task as well. The way to reach a goal begins with the first step. Many further steps must follow. It is not very important, how big the steps are. Maybe a politician does bigger steps than a child in the school. Maybe young people need more steps than a politician for the same distance. But there are only a few politicians and many schoolboys and –girls, many young people. Many little steps can reach a goal even faster than a few bigger ones. 31 years ago politicians of Rwanda and Rhineland-Palatinate decided to have a partnership. It was a big step. After that people completed it with many small steps to build grassroots-partnerships.

Now, what has this to do with your new sports field? Isn't this made for playing against each other? Isn't it made for competition? Yes, it is made for competition, but not for war. Playing against each other does not mean fighting against each other. What we need is fair play, and that means playing in friendship. If you, boys and girls, learn to play fair on a sports ground, you will also learn to be fair in your daily life. And if playing and living fair feels good to you, you will understand, how important it is, to have friendship and partnership between different people, different communities, different countries.

In this sense I wish you fun and success on the sports ground. And I hope, we shall have a grassroots-partnership for many years. For us this means friendship at eye level.