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Zambia: German Agric Minister Jets in

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GERMAN Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture Christian Schmidt is today expected in Zambia for a three -day visit.

Mr Schmidt is expected to hold bilateral talks with Agriculture Minister Given Lubinda and other stakeholders.

He would be accompanied by German Members of Parliament, the Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development and business representatives of German agricultural companies.

According to a statement released by German Embassy public relations officer Marcel Grella, Mr Schmidt's visit is to open the Agricultural Knowledge and Technology Centre (AKTC) in Chisamba.

The project is implemented by the Golden Valley Agricultural Research Trust, the Zambian National Farmers Union and a consortium of German partners with the objective to become the state-of-the-art training facility in Zambia in the sector and offer training in machine operations and farm management to various stakeholders.

During his stay, Mr Schmidt would also meet and discuss bilateral relations, opportunities and challenges in the Zambian agricultural sector with Mr Lubinda and other Zambian senior government officials.

Mr Schmidt and the delegation are expected to travel to Livingstone and would pay a visit to Chibomba Farm where he would meet with local farmers and villagers for an exchange of views on the challenges of small-scale farming in Zambia.

The German minister would also participate in the seminar "Towards a Farmer-Driven Agenda for Modernizing African Agriculture" organised jointly by the German Farmers Union and ZNFU and would officially open the AKTC, further introduce the cooperation project and exchange views with training course participants, visit the AGRITECH Expo and hold a meeting with ZNFU president Evelyn Nguleka.

He will visit Zambian Breweries to have a look at the production site of Chibuku Beer, which is made with German brewing technology. In the evening, the delegation will return to Germany.

German Ambassador to Zambia Bernd Finke said this would be Minister Schmidt's first visit to Sub-Saharan Africa and was happy that he had chosen Zambia for this trip.

The two countries are partners in development cooperation for almost five decades, and that it was gratifying that his country recently started to enlarge its engagement in Zambia, especially in the agricultural sector, including the successful agricultural investment of Amatheon Agricultural facility near Mumbwa.