

Remarks by H.E. Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
President of the Republic of Liberia, delivered at the 168th
Independence Celebration of the Republic of Liberia
Greenville, Sinoe County
July 27, 2015

Fellow Citizens:

We have gathered here today to celebrate another year in our statehood, the 168th Independence Anniversary of the existence of our Nation. It is a celebration far different from that of the previous years as we look back to the last year, to the true test of our faith and resilience to the challenges posed by an unknown enemy that our nation had never seen before. Despite those trying times, our country and its development objectives have not faltered, and the fundamental principles of this Nation, dedicated to democracy, the rule of law, human freedom and individual dignity, were strengthened by our resolve to defeat the Ebola Virus Disease.

We give thanks to God Almighty for strengthening this resolve, and now ask that we stand for one moment of silence to the memory of the precious lives of more than 4,800 of our fellow compatriots. May God continue to strengthen and richly bless their families who the Liberian nation deeply console.

We recognize and express gratitude to the unprecedented show of solidarity from the International Community to the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Mission on Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) which

coordinated and advised on the response. We express profound appreciation to our multilateral and bilateral partners, foundations and individuals several countries from all over the world. We especially applaud our continental organizations, ECOWAS and the African Union which mobilized unprecedented private sector support and recruited 339 Africans from 16 countries including (Burundi, Cameroon, Congo, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Benin, Cote D'Ivoire, Ghana and Niger) to make the sacrifice to leave their country and families to join us in the fight.

My dear compatriots, as we celebrate our National milestone, we must be mindful that global conditions force millions of people in all parts of the world to face death, and destruction from wars, earthquakes, floods, terrorism and other violent natural phenomena. Sometimes, these tragedies take form of internal descent, unrest, oppression and hunger. The ability to surmount these challenges come from a demonstration of inner strength to survive, to recognize the progress upon which we can build to regain lost ground, to continue to build a nation toward the common goals of peace and prosperity.

In these trying times we do not ask many what you can do for your nation, because that would be asking too much in effort of patriotism, in recognition of the long road of definitive and quantifiable progress. But we can and must ask for informed positions of expressions which reflect honesty and truth as this is the true test of power.

Our Government is pleased to note that bilateral relations with Governments represented near this capital have been most cordial and that the spirit of

friendship and solidarity have dominated our official and special contacts. We congratulate the Doyen and Members of the Diplomatic Corps and assure them of the continued determination of the Government and People of Liberia to live in peace and friendship with all nations and to work and live together as equal partners in the pursuit of permanent world peace and cooperation.

Finally, Fellow Citizens, as we return to our homes and daily preoccupations after today's celebration, may we in our hearts resolve to love our country, protect our heritage and pledge anew to the true ideal of service to our nation.

I wish you all a very Happy Independence Day!

Thank you!