

**Video Message by H. E. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
To the Global Philanthropy Forum
Redwood City, California,
April 15-17, 2013**

Warm greetings, dear friends of Liberia, on the occasion of this Annual Global Philanthropy Forum. Yours is a gathering which is fast becoming a premier expression of some of the world's good-hearted personalities and institutions.

The people of Liberia are witnesses to your philanthropy. This August, Liberia will celebrate a decade of sustained peace, economic growth and development. Our achievements would not have been possible without the huge contribution of global philanthropic partners like you, who have stood by us during our most difficult moments. With the end of 14 years of a devastating civil war, the catalytic effect of philanthropy has helped to set Liberia on a course of relief, recovery and reconstruction.

Philanthropic support to us was not limited to humanitarian aid; it also came in the form of expertise, human capacity building, and financial capital for economic revitalization and social services.

To properly facilitate and encourage such support, we established the Liberia Philanthropy Secretariat – the first office of its kind in the world – in order to eliminate certain challenges and ensure the effectiveness of philanthropy in the country. Through appropriate coordination, information sharing and solution-focused orientation, philanthropy contributes significantly to the remarkable journey we are undertaking.

With collaborative support from our partners, we have further committed ourselves to reconciliation, and to the advancement of democracy, rule of law and human rights, especially protection of the rights of women and children. We are also ensuring inclusive access to opportunities for all Liberians.

We are pursuing a National Vision 2030, an Agenda for Transformation and a Roadmap for Reconciliation, all aimed at making Liberia a middle-income nation by the year 2030. We are sharing this vision with our development and philanthropic partners, and identifying areas where your support can have the greatest impact. Already, philanthropic support is impacting the lives of Liberian women and youth through social protection initiatives and job creation.

Let me, therefore, thank all of you for your interest in, and steadfast support to, Liberia. I invite you to visit us and see for yourselves how your contributions are impacting our development efforts to fight poverty. We know that philanthropy alone cannot fill all the gaps; that government, the private sector and other stakeholders must do their part. However, in developing nations like Liberia, philanthropy can and should play a catalytic role in reducing poverty and making the nation and its people self-sufficient. I believe that, together, we can find creative solutions to improve lives.

Thank you, and I wish all of you a successful forum.