

Remarks at Crowd '50 New Officers' Installation Ceremony

By Her Excellency Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

April 23, 2010, City Hall, Monrovia, Liberia

Members of Crowd '50

Crowd '50 Officers to Be Installed

Guests,

Fellow Liberians

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Good evening!

I am pleased to be here to speak to this distinguished audience, many of whom I know. I am also pleased to install the new corps of officers of the Crowd '50 Club.

I understand that this Club is all about service, or giving back, to country and to the community. This is a courageous mantle because community service is about making a difference in the lives of real people, and I hope you will not only continue on this path, but serve as examples to others.

Many of you are successful private businessmen. I implore you to compete in this economy because this country cannot and will not develop on the backs of only expatriate business people. I can assure

you that my Administration will do its utmost to support Liberian entrepreneurial efforts although we are a free enterprise nation. We cannot make laws or policies that skew the business environment in a way that is unfair to any one group. We believe our country and the Liberian business class will be stronger when they compete against other, more experienced and resource-endowed business people.

Our country is moving from emergency to recovery. I encourage you to get involved in the expansion of our economy, in creating and sustaining a viable private sector and a thriving middle class. Get involved in community development. This is the missing part of our development effort. It is engaging and involves everyone in improving their own lives.

Members of Crowd '50, I commend those of you to whom this applies for returning home to serve – and in your own words, to give back to Liberia some of what Liberia has given you. The opportunities for this are many and varied: Volunteer to teach pro bono at the University of Liberia. Volunteer to mentor young men who need positive and strong male mentoring in your communities, at your workplace, on the soccer field, at the YMCA, and in other places. Don't forget to return to your counties of origin and encourage our people, to engage

in agriculture and contribute to the success of our Food Security initiatives.

I applaud you for organizing yourselves into a group that cares about people outside of its immediate circle and for sustaining this union throughout the years of conflict.

I encourage you to intensify your efforts to reach out to less fortunate members of our communities and society. Congratulations on your decision to adopt JFK as your project for 2010. I look forward to seeing the results of this endeavor.

Thank you!