

**New Year's Message By Her Excellency President Ellen  
Johnson Sirleaf to the Liberian People**  
*December 29, 2012*

Season's Greetings, my fellow Liberians:

As we ring in the 2013 New Year, let us pause to give praise and thanks to the Almighty God for his multiple blessings upon a bountiful nation that is being transformed to lift all Liberians.

At the beginning of each New Year, we look back on the year just ended, and look ahead to the year that will be, filled with promise, potential and challenges.

We can report that, with contribution from all Liberians and the support received from regional institutions and global partners, 2012 marked the ninth consecutive year of peace. Our country is still fragile, yet the record of continuity in peace and democracy is clearly present.

The year 2012 saw the culmination of a long journey towards finding ourselves as a people. Liberians from all spheres of society and the Diaspora converged in the central city of Gbarnga, Bong County, at a three-day Vision 2030 National Conference and discussed the country's future. It provided the space for us to unite in a sense of common identity, ideals and purpose, and to take control of our destiny.

The overarching event was the launching of the *National Vision 2030* and the process of transformation that will lead to structural reforms that have been lacking in our national development. To implement that Vision, we agreed an *Agenda for Transformation* –a five-year slice of the 2030 Vision – and a *Strategic Roadmap for National Healing, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation* that will lead to “many peoples of one nation, united in a sense of common identity, purpose and ideals.” Also in Gbarnga, we reminded the Liberian people,

particularly the youth and civil society, that they would have the responsibility to implement the Vision, to develop our country and promote the freedoms of a democratic and open society.

Another major achievement for us as a country was the announcement, two weeks ago, that Liberia is eligible for a Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact, a U.S.-funded initiative. We must now meet the conditions of the Compact to enable us to access significant resources that will address some of our most critical needs, especially our energy sector.

I promise you that we will get there. However, remember that no country coming from where we came can get by with a quick fix; recovery and development is a gradual process, it is difficult work, and it takes time.

For 2013, we want to see progress in the areas of reform included in the *Agenda for Transformation*. We will push ahead with our reconciliation program by implementing the Roadmap, which aims at accounting for the past, managing the present, and planning for the future.

In 2013, we are placing great emphasis on infrastructure, with power, ports and roads as our three areas of concentration. These, in turn, will facilitate the education, health and agriculture sectors. We expect 2013 to be a good year of demonstrable progress, so that our people will see what this government is doing; what we've accomplished not just in Monrovia, but elsewhere in Liberia. We hope that 2014 will also be a year of true patriotism and reconciliation that will accentuate the positive things that unite us.

In our sub-region of West Africa, we are satisfied with the level of cooperation and the joint monitoring that Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia have at our common border. We continue to work for peace and good relations with our neighbors, especially the countries of the Mano River Union. Moreover, today there's total harmony among the leadership of our sub-region, as we concentrate more on how we can improve regional cooperation and regional integration.

Fellow Liberians:

All things considered, we are optimistic about the New Year on our continent for Liberia, like Africa, is rising, showing high rates of growth and development.

We also believe that 2013 will be year when Liberians, through changed minds and attitudes, will appreciate not so much the heights we have reached, but the depth from which we came.

As a New Year dawns, we pray God's guidance in leading our nation in the direction of peace, reconciliation and development. We wish Liberians everywhere –and residents within our borders – a joyous holiday season. May the New Year be filled with health, happiness and prosperity for you and those you love. A Happy New Year to all.