

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 44
PROTECTING LIBERIAN FORESTS BY A TEMPORARY
MORATORIUM ON PRIVATE USE PERMITS

WHEREAS, the forests are part of our natural heritage that exist for the benefit of the people of Liberia;

WHEREAS, forests in our Nation's territory constitute forty percent of the tropical rainforests in the West African sub-region and therefore must be managed in a manner that takes cognizance of this fact and of the vital role Liberians must play in conserving, harnessing, and harvesting these treasured assets in a responsible, ecologically prudent, and beneficial manner;

WHEREAS, as part of the reform process that culminated in the enactment of the National Forestry Reform Law of 2006, provision is made for Private Use Permits (PUPs) which allow land owners who have forest resources on their land to apply for such permits;

WHEREAS, based on allegations of misrepresentations and abuses in implementing the law that allows for issuance of PUPs, Government established a Special Independent Investigating Body in August 2012, to conduct a comprehensive review of the issuance of PUPs;

WHEREAS, the report issued by the Special Independent Investigating Body has revealed that there have been massive fraud, misrepresentations, abuses and violations of the National Forestry Reform Law in the issuance of Private Use Permits to the extent that this inter-generational asset has been severely threatened;

WHEREAS, because the mismanagement of the PUPs poses a threat to the efficient, effective, and sustainable management of our forests, it is imperative to impose a moratorium to protect the national interest;

NOW THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority in me vested by the Constitution and laws of the Republic of Liberia, I do hereby declare and order:

1. A moratorium on the issuance of PUPs is in force and activities involving or related to the felling or export of logs under any PUPs granted, authorized or approved by the Forestry Development Authority is suspended;
2. That this moratorium applies to all individuals, communities, groups, and associations who are holders of PUPs;
3. That this moratorium applies also to all logging activities of any person, whether natural or juridical, who holds a PUP and operates in Liberia under any other logging license;

4. That the relevant ministries and agencies of Government shall take appropriate actions to remedy the situation through criminal prosecutions, review of the relevant legal and regulatory framework, validation of deeds, audit of the Forestry Development Authority, public sensitization, and such other necessary measures;
5. That this moratorium shall remain in effect until otherwise lifted.

This Executive Order shall take immediate effect.

**GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL
OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA THIS
4th DAY OF JANUARY, A.D. 2013.**

**Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
PRESIDENT
REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA**