

Statement Delivered By

H.E. Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr.

President of the Republic of Liberia

at the Launch of the National Agriculture Development Plan (NADP) 2024-2030

EJS Ministerial Complex, Congo Town, Liberia

Wednesday, July 10, 2024

My Dear Citizens, Friends, and Partners:

I come to you on this historic day with warm greetings as I bear the hope that whatever we share here today will exact a meaningful impact upon the course and pace of our nation's forward march.

I step forth this moment, to announce a new six-year agriculture development policy initiative dubbed "LIBERIANS FEED YOURSELVES AGENDA," as our National Agriculture Development Plan (NADP) 2024-2030.

With the contemplation and calculation invested into its formulation, this Plan promises to reinvigorate our agricultural sector and enhance our self-sufficiency in food production.

As we navigate the lanes of these challenging times of climate change and economic crises that conspire to undermine human civilization across the globe, ensuring food security for our people is paramount.

Fortified with inventive strategies and propelled by modern technologies and comprehensive investments, the NADP is not just a plan but a game changer, a

roadmap to a more secure and sustainable future that is built on a striving agriculture sector.

Knowing agriculture to be the backbone of our economy, there is no missing the point that we must take proactive steps to harness every potential in the sector, to bring progress and development to our people.

Let this fact sink down to us today-when we import rice, chickens, eggs, and cows from other countries, we are subsidizing their agriculture and undermining ours. Now, let us subsidize our agriculture and eat what we produce.

The NADP is a policy framework intended to do just that—to harness our vast agricultural potential and shepherd us from a world of want to a world of abundance to reduce our over-reliance on food importation.

Our prevailing sad reality is that our country is endowed with vast tracts of arable lands suitable for rice cultivation, but we still import 70% of the rice we consume. By doing so, we channel our scarce foreign exchange resources into importing food items that we could produce right here at home instead of channeling those resources into building roads, schools, and health facilities and creating jobs to develop our human capital.

This unfortunate situation must change, and the change begins with the **LIBERIANS FEED YOURSELVES AGENDA**. This, to me, passes for such a groundbreaking initiative designed to support and empower our farmers to increase productivity and efficiency through strategic investments in agricultural infrastructure, technology, and research.

The NADP bears within it a huge potential for a remarkable paradigm shift in food production, from traditional subsistence farming to large-scale, sustainable, mechanized agriculture. We will train our farmers in modern agricultural

technologies and empower them with resources to undertake large-scale cooperative farms. The NADP will revolutionize agriculture practices to make agriculture a smart and lucrative business that will attract a mammoth number of Liberians, especially our young people.

Wielding the mandate to preside over this country's destiny at this juncture in our history, I promise to deploy the needed political will to motivate all of us to embark upon this make-or-break agricultural journey.

We will provide our farmers with the necessary resources, including farmlands, modern technology, farm to market roads, and improved seeds and other inputs to lure them into big-time farming so as to produce food to feed our people. We will also produce more cash crops for export to resuscitate our ailing economy.

This is a call to duty to all Liberians, especially key stakeholders in the agricultural sector—farmers, agro-businesses, researchers, and policymakers. Your participation is crucial, your technological know-how is vital, your investment funds are indispensable, and your wholesale commitment is critical for us to embark upon this journey together to meet these targets.

We have been wandering in our agricultural wilderness for far too long and now comes the time not only to gaze, but to reach, our promised land. With deep faith in ourselves and the tact this task demands, we, together, can build a more resilient and self-reliant agricultural sector.

When agriculture flourishes in Liberia, the entire Liberian nation flourishes. No one goes to bed on an empty stomach; no child is left malnourished; no child goes to school hungry; more jobs are created; poverty diminishes, crime goes down, peace reigns; the Lone Star shines, and we all, with one accord, celebrate the glittering joy and happiness in the bright shining Lone Star.

As I close, let me summon all of you, my compatriots, to embrace this clarion call to revolutionize our agriculture and live the lives we deserve. And as we mount on that noble tract let us all in unison **THINK LIBERIA, LOVE LIBERIA AND BUILD LIBERIA!**

God bless us all and save our Republic.