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“America’s Leadership in the World is Needed” - Says President Sirleaf

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Washington, D.C., September 26, 2017: In her final major speech at the United States Capitol in Washington, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf says America’s leadership is needed today, more than ever as the world faces new challenges. According to a dispatch from Washington, President Sirleaf made the call for a more assertive U.S. engagement in global affairs when she delivered a keynote address at the U. S. Capitol’s Congressional Visitor Center Auditorium, in Washington on Monday, September 25, 2017.



[1]
President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Speaking at the Congressional Visitor Center at the U.S. Capitol

“America’s leadership is needed today, more than ever as the world faces new challenges, including transnational threats, rogue nations equipped with the most sophisticated weapons, millions of stateless families fleeing their homelands in search of security and economic opportunity, and our planet screaming for us to protect it.”

Punctuated by rounds of applause, President Sirleaf said: “My friends, do not let the leadership void in our changing world be filled by the disruptors. The dream of America is alive in the hearts of all people who strive for freedom and for a better life for their families. Continue to be a champion.”

President Sirleaf told Americans that they should never forget what is possible: “what we have done together as a united world community with U.S. policy grounded in bi-partisan cooperation.”

She also called on the U.S. to remember the Liberian people, who are willing to take risk for democracy, for peace and the chance to see their children live proud, productive and dignified lives. “Liberia’s ‘love of liberty’ was inherited from the United States of America, from your values of democratic governance, respect for all, regardless of race, creed or religion,” she noted. “You are the beacon of light from across the Atlantic.”

President Sirleaf indicated that during her recent speech at the United Nations General Assembly, she acknowledged that Liberia’s transformation was powered by a world community that made a shared commitment to deliver peace to a country and a sub-region beset by civil conflict and cross border destabilization.

Nevertheless, she noted, it was the U.S., through the leadership of the U.S. Congress, bipartisan and bicameral, and with the support of successive U.S. administrations, that guided the international effort to restore and maintain Liberia's peace and reconstruction.

President Sirleaf paid homage to Congressman Ed Royce, former Chair of the House Foreign Relations Committee, who, according to her, fought harder to secure Liberia's peace. She also paid tribute to Senator Chris Coons, who she described as Liberia's champion.

"If I could, I would walk door-to-door, to all 535 Congressional Offices, to say thank you," she said. "It was the U.S. Congress, with your 'power of the purse,' which singled Liberia out to be one of the largest recipients per capita of foreign assistance on the African continent."

President Sirleaf pointed out that Liberia's transformation was achieved in partnership with the U.S., under the leadership of four remarkable U.S. Ambassadors: Donald Booth, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Deborah Malac, and Christine Elder.

She also lauded the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and the U.S. Peace Corps, among others, for strong support to Liberia.

The Liberian leader saluted several recent American presidents who provided exceptional leadership and showed bravery when Liberia needed it most. She named former President George W. Bush, who took action to end the Liberian civil conflict and begin the process of reconstruction. She also named former President Barack Obama, "who took a bold decision, in the face of domestic opposition, to deploy the U.S. military to build a logistical bridge, which helped Liberia to fight and contain the Ebola disease that plagued the country.

The speech was followed by a panel discussion with the President, Senator Coons and Congressman Royce, moderated by Ms Tami Hultman of All Africa, a leading global media network with a focus on Africa.

The program, hosted by Senator Coons, was jointly sponsored by the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP), The National Democratic Institute (NDI), the National Republican Institute (IRI), the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).

The speech was followed by a reception, attended by a number of members of the U.S. Congress from both parties, including Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, as well as members of the presidential delegation and Liberians in the Diaspora. Full remarks by can be found in the press release. Click here:====>>

To read the full piece from *Executive Mansion*, click [here](#) [5].

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