

REMARKS

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY DR. GEORGE MANNEH WEAH
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

FIVE HUNDREDTH (500TH) NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATION

OF

THE KINGDOM OF SWEDEN

THE EXECUTIVE PAVILION
BROAD STREET
MONROVIA, LIBERIA

JUNE 6, 2023

Your Excellency Mr. Urban Sjoström,
Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden to Liberia;

The Speaker, President Pro-Tempore, and Honorable Members of the 54th Legislature;

Members of the Judiciary here present;

The Dean and Members of the Cabinet;

The Doyen & Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Officials of Government here present;

Swedish Nationals in Liberia;

Members of the Fourth Estate;

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

On this festive occasion commemorating the 500th Anniversary of the founding of the Kingdom of Sweden, it is my distinguished pleasure and honor, on behalf of the Government and People of the Republic of Liberia, and in my own name, to extend heartfelt congratulations and warmest felicitations to you, Mr. Ambassador, and through you, to His Royal Majesty King Carl the 16th Gustaf, King of Sweden, and to the Government and friendly People of Sweden, as you celebrate this major milestone in your country's history.

I am delighted to join you here at the Executive Pavilion, Ambassador Sjostrom, and members of your staff, as well as all Swedish nationals within and outside the Republic of Liberia, on the very auspicious occasion, and I want to extend my heartfelt commendations to the Swedish People for achieving the remarkable feat of holding together as a nation-state for five centuries. Five hundred years of existence as an independent state since 1523 is indeed a remarkable achievement worthy of celebration.

DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

Liberia and Sweden have enjoyed excellent bilateral relations that have stood the test of time since 1958, that has grown from strength to strength throughout these sixty-five (65) years. Sweden has been one of Liberia's largest donors of foreign aid, which has extended over time into major development investment.

We particularly remember that the involvement of Swedish industry in the Liberian American-Swedish Minerals Company (LAMCO) which operated in Liberia between 1963 to 1989. It was the largest Swedish commercial investment in Africa at the time. Indeed, LAMCO transformed the socioeconomic and political landscape of Liberia.

Today, through the Swedish Government's Agency for International Development Cooperation (SIDA), Sweden has been actively engaged with the post-conflict reconstruction and development of Liberia.

SIDA has given significant support to the work for peace, democracy, and human rights in Liberia, as well as economic development and environmental climate protection. We

hail the work of SIDA and continue to be grateful to the Government of Sweden for this level of support and cooperation.

For our part, Liberia pledges to remain committed to good governance, transparency, respect for human rights, promotion of climate and environmental protection and, above all, upholding peace and security in Liberia and the world.

DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

Almost four months from now, Liberians will go to the polls to participate in Presidential and Legislative elections. As I have repeatedly said on many occasions, my Government promisea to conduct these elections in a manner that is free, fair, transparent and credible, that will meet the highest national and international standards, so that the voice of our people will be heard and respected.

We are aware that the outcome of the October 10th elections will define our future course; whether they will enhance our growing democratic credentials and allow us to continue on the path of peace; or whether we will relapse into confusion and conflict.

For my part as the Political Leader of this Country, and Head of State and Government, I am convinced that, with the full cooperation and support of our international friends and partners, we will achieve the desired objectives of these elections, and that Liberia will continue on the path of peace, security and stability.

MR. AMBASSADOR:

We remain upbeat that the strength of our bilateral relations will continue to grow from strength-to-strength as we explore ever wider areas of heightened cooperation. Please be assured that Liberia remains committed to our common position on international affairs, including the advancement of global peace and security, rule-based international order, democracy and the promotion of gender equality and human rights, including freedom for all peoples.

TOAST:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Please rise and raise your glasses and drink to the good health and prosperity of His Majesty Carl XVI Gustaf, King of the Kingdom of Sweden on this 500th Anniversary of

Sweden. I wish for His Majesty and the People of Sweden continued peace and prosperity.

CHEERS.

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