

SPECIAL MESSAGE

FOR

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

ON THE OCCASION OF

THE OBSERVANCE OF

THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

INDEPENDENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

THE CENTENNIAL MEMORIAL PAVILION
BROAD AND ASHMUN STREETS
MONROVIA, LIBERIA

JULY 26, 2022

***His Excellency Mr. Umaro Sissoco Embaló,
President of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau,
and Chairman of the Authority of Heads of State and
Government of the Economic Community of West African
States;***

***His Excellency Mohammadou Buhari,
President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria;***

***His Excellency Mr. Adama Barrow,
President of the Republic of the Gambia;***

***Her Excellency Chief Dr. Jewel Howard Taylor,
Vice President of the Republic of Liberia;***

***The Honorable Deputy Speaker Fonati Koffa and Honorable
Members of the House of Representatives;***

***Mr. President Pro-Tempore and Honorable Members of the
Liberian Senate;***

***His Honor the Chief Justice, Associate Justices and
Members of the Judiciary;***

The Dean and Members of the Cabinet;

Officials of Government;

***Hon. Mawine G. Diggs,
Minister of Commerce of the Republic of Liberia,
and National Orator of 175th Independence Day Celebration***

The Doyen and Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Representatives of Heads of State and Government;

Our Special Guests;

Bishops, Prelates and Members of the Clergy;

Chiefs and Traditional Leaders;

Our Development Partners;

Superintendents and Local Government Officials;

Political and Business Leaders;

Marketers, Students;

Members of the Fourth Estate;

My Fellow Citizens;

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

Let extend a warm and profound Independence Day salute to all Liberians on behalf the First Lady Madam Clar Marie Dekontee Weah who is not here with us today. She celebrates our Independence Day with us all from afar.

Family and Friends, each year, since 1847, we have assembled as a proud nation to celebrate the proclamation of the Independence of the Republic of Liberia as Africa's first free, independent, and sovereign nation-state.

Today, as we gather here to observe and commemorate the 175th Anniversary of our birth as a nation, let us begin by giving thanks and praises to the Almighty God, for the protection and many blessings that He has bestowed upon our Nation, and upon us as a People.

His Goodness and Mercy have followed us throughout all these years since our founding, and He has always protected us from the many dangers that have threatened our national existence. In spite of our own shortcomings and weaknesses, He has kept us united as One People.

God's great faithfulness has given us not only comfort in times of storm, but hope in periods of despair. And, whenever we have fallen short of His Glory, He has been by our side, encouraging us to remain strong and resilient, so that together we will reach our destiny and fulfill the promise of our glorious future as One Nation, under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.

I say today To God be the Glory, for the Great Things He has Done.

DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

Today, we are greatly honored, and pleased, to welcome several Heads of State, who have taken the time out of their busy schedules to join the People of Liberia in celebrating this 175th Independence Anniversary. Excellencies, on behalf of my fellow citizens, and in my own name, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you sincerely for this solidarity, goodwill and support for Liberia.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I now ask you to rise, and stand, as a sign of respect, and give a whole-hearted welcome to each of our very special guests, my colleagues and brothers from our Economic Community of West African States, who I will now respectfully ask to stand as your name is mentioned:

***His Excellency Mr. Umaro Sissoco Embaló,
President of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau,
and Chairman of the Authority of Heads of State and
Government of the Economic Community of West African
States;***

***His Excellency Mr. Mohammadou Buhari,
President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria;***

***His Excellency Mr. Adama Barrow,
President of the Republic of the Gambia;***

You may now take your seats.

Thank you very much, Your Excellencies. Liberia and Liberians will always remember and be grateful for the friendship, high esteem, and regard that you have shown towards us today. For my part, I pledge to continue to work closely with you, as we together strive to maintain peace and security within our region, and promote policies and programs that will bring development and prosperity to the citizens of ECOWAS. Once again, let me say a big welcome!!

Additionally, there are also present with us today a number of senior government officials representing their respective Heads of State and Government who expressed regrets that they were unable to join us today, due to other pressing duties of State. To you, we would also like to extend a whole-hearted welcome. We thank you for honoring us with your presence.

EXCELLENCIES, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to our National Orator, the Honorable Mawine Diggs, Minister of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Liberia, for her inspiring and thoughtful Address, which has given us new insights into the importance of peace and unity in our Nation, and renewed our hopes for a better Liberia.

I am personally very proud of you, Hon. Diggs, for your excellent Oration, because you brilliantly represented two of the most important demographics in our country: women, and the youth. You have justified my confidence in the ability and unlimited possibilities of women and young people to make meaningful and significant contributions to the national discourse, and to fully participate in the leadership and management of our governance structures.

I am sure that all of us who were under the sound of your voice today will agree that you did justice to the official theme of this year's Independence Celebration, as you articulated on the subject of: **"Fostering Unity, and Protecting Our Peace for Development and Prosperity"**.

Your message today was simple, understanding, relevant, and will resonate well not only with the women and youth, but with all Liberians. You used your personal story to demonstrate the importance of hard work and determination, as well as the importance of education in pursuit of one's goals, and by so doing, you have given us much food for thought. I say to you, congratulations, and thank you very much.

FELLOW CITIZENS, DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

We want to acknowledge with profound gratitude the special relationship subsisting between Liberia and the United States of America. Indeed, we are connected and it is very clear from our history that the People of the United States of America have goodwill towards Liberia and Liberians, and the feeling is mutual.

This goodwill was manifested by the decision of the American Government to make a commemorative plaque that was given to Liberia on the occasion of our Centennial Celebration on July 26, 1947. And now today, at this celebration of our 175th Independence Anniversary; we have just witnessed the resubmission of that plaque to the Government of Liberia by the American Ambassador to Liberia H.E. Michael McCarthy.

On behalf of the Government and People of Liberia, we extend our profound thanks and appreciation to the Government and People of the United States of America; through you, Ambassador McCarthy, for this recognition and solidarity. We cherish the wording on the plaque, and remain optimistic that our two Governments and Peoples will continue to embrace each other in harmony and love.

FELLOW CITIZENS, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

The 175th Independence Celebration this year is unique, because it also coincides with another major national milestone, which is the observance and celebration of our Bicentennial, marking 200 years since our founding. These large numbers which define our continuous existence as a body politic are genuine and valid reasons for celebration.

However, they also present the opportunity for us to soberly reflect on our political genesis and journey, not only from whence we have come, but also how long and how far we have traveled together, lived together, worked together, survived together and developed together.

Indeed, the bonds that have held us together have been tried and tested over these years, and continue to grow in strength as we advance together in cohesion as One People, with One Destiny.

Yes, we may have differences, but we are proud of the ties that inspire our unity. So let us join ranks and consolidate our resources as a Nation and People, so as to uphold the legacy that our forefathers have passed on to us, because there is so much more that unites us, than divide us.

I therefore encourage you, my fellow citizens, to put off the spirit of disagreement and division, and put on the spirit of unity, love, reconciliation, peace, stability and nationalism. We must respect and love one another.

As your leader, I urge you to join me to build our dear country. It does not matter who you are, or your status in life. It does not matter what political ideology you aspire to, or your ethnic background; religious persuasion, social class, or academic standard.

We have a patriotic duty, and a sacred obligation, to protect our sovereignty through good deeds, innovation, and hard work. We must unite and be reconciled in peaceful co-existence as citizens of Liberia.

Maintaining our sovereignty is the most successful achievement we have made as a nation and people. It is now our collective responsibility to sustain the peace, security, and stability of this first independent nation in Africa, called Liberia.

Fellow Citizens, we must advance its credentials for good governance, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law; as well as its core values and principles.

Fellow citizens, let me tell you this:

Some say that the Love of Liberty BROUGHT us here.

Others say that the Love of Liberty MET us here.

I say today to all Liberians, hear me and hear me well. Whether it brought us here, or met us here, let that Love of Liberty UNITE us here!

Let me now wish all of you present here today, Liberians throughout our Land, and all our fellow Liberians everywhere in the world, a Happy and Enjoyable 175th Independence Day!!
Toy good friend McCarthy, please inform President Biden that I received and accept his invitation to attend the Summit in Washington D.C. I will be there to represent the Liberian people

Long live Liberia, happy land!

A home of glorious liberty,

By God's command!!!

I thank you, and may God bless Liberia!