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## Liberia Replies CPJ

*Embassy of the Republic of Liberia in the United States* , Mon, Sep 9, 2013

On behalf of the President, I acknowledge with thanks your continuous interests in the post-conflict development of Liberia. In the matter of your present concern, however, I am compelled to point out that it is more complex and challenging than you have represented.

Firstly, Liberia's continued progress in preserving free speech is second to none. Since 2006, the media landscape of Liberia has exploded with more than 30 newspapers and online services, 19 radio stations and 45 community radio stations which operate across the rural areas. All of these are independently owned and operated. Together with the implementation of the freedom of information law, under which, only a few days ago, the Independent Freedom of Information Commissioner ruled in favor of a private petitioner's right to information against a government functionary, as well as a robust engagement with the civil society on issues of transparency and accountability within the framework of the Open Governance Partnership (OGP), Liberia continues to take steps to uphold and preserve access to information and free speech.



Liberian Information Minister, Lewis Brown

Additionally, being the second only country on the Continent to accede to the Table Mountain Declaration, having now enlisted the inputs of stakeholders including the Press Union of Liberia, the Umbrella organization of journalists in the country, we are in the advanced stages of legislating the decriminalization of media related offenses from our statutes, a process we hope to conclude by the next sitting of the Legislature which begins in January. All of these – and we are prepared to do more – has improved the environment and expanded the space for voices, at home and abroad which were previously silenced, to be heard on national challenges and public policy issues.

Yet, we must also admit that this media explosion is growing in dire need of technical support and assistance including training for journalists and a strong self-regulatory framework, as well as renewal of commitments to best practice, professional care and ethical standards. Careful to avoid impugning on the important values of independence of the media, the government has tried to reach out in a limited way, and would warmly appreciate your assistance and support, for the continued development of the Liberian press.

Secondly, today, the sheer confluence of voices and the heightened public awareness against corruption ought to testify to how far we have travelled in this fight against corruption.

To read the entire statemeny by the Minister, [Click here](#) =====> [1]

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