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Joint Statement: 2nd Round of the U. S.- Liberia Partnership Dialogue

Embassy of the Republic of Liberia in the United States , Wed, Mar 5, 2014

The Second Session of the U.S.-Liberia Partnership dialogue was held on March 3-4, 2014 in Monrovia to build upon the special historical ties and bilateral relations between the Republic of Liberia and the United States of America; and to convene two of the Partnership Dialogue's working groups: Human Development and Agriculture and Food Security. The Liberian delegation was led by H.E. Augustine Kpehe Ngafuan, Minister of Foreign Affairs. Ambassador Thomas A. Shannon, Counselor of the U.S. Department of State, led the U.S. delegation. Both heads of delegation affirmed their shared commitment to fostering deeper bilateral relations and encouraging cooperation on a variety of issues. Discussions during the Second Partnership Dialogue in Monrovia focused on two of the three Partnership Dialogue themes, namely, Human Development, and Agriculture and Food Security. The Human Development Working Group was co-chaired by Hon. Etmonia David-Tarpeh, Minister of Education of Liberia and Mr. Charles North, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau of Economic Growth, Education and Environment, USAID. The Agriculture and Food Security Working Group was co-chaired by Liberia's Minister of Agriculture, Hon. Florence A. Chenoweth, and U.S. Acting Special Representative, Office of Global Food Security, Mr. Jonathan Shrier. Following fruitful and in-depth Working Group discussions in Washington, D.C. on May 7, 2013 on Energy and Power Infrastructures and Agriculture and Food Security, and a separate panel discussion on Economic Growth, both governments renewed their call to deepen these discussions with the focus on specific areas of cooperation and direct U.S. support within the Framework of the Partnership Dialogue. In recognition of the importance of Human Development in improving and expanding the human conditions, Liberia and the United States reviewed and discussed potential reforms within the sector with the goal of addressing existing policy challenges, as well as actions already taken to ensure improvements. The two governments affirmed the importance of education to Liberia's economic, social and political development. Accordingly, the United States affirmed strong support for undertaking a number of measures to help Liberia address institutional and policy issues in the education sector, and to address other key human development issues vital to the sustenance of economic growth and national recovery. Both countries acknowledged that Liberia's ability to compete in the regional and global knowledge-based economy depends significantly on improving the quality of education in the country. They also acknowledged that the improvement of higher education delivery in sciences, arts, humanities and social sciences is indispensable to the general wellbeing of Liberia. Liberia and the United States will exert greater efforts to connect private educational



Minister Augustine K. Ngufuan

institutions, universities, foundations and companies from their respective countries to invest responsibly in Liberia's human development sector. Such investment could include the reinstitution and/or resumption of important U.S. Government educational programs in Liberia, including the Fulbright Scholarship Program which many Liberians benefited from in times past. Recognizing the importance of agriculture in increasing food security and nutrition, and rebuilding Liberia's economy, Liberia and the United States reviewed discussions from the Inaugural Meeting of the Partnership Dialogue in the area of agriculture and food security, and the steps already taken regarding reforms that address existing policy, infrastructure, and institutional constraints in the sector. The Working Group reiterated that in order to ensure efficient land use and address land tenure reform, greater efforts must be exerted to improve the availability of high quality inputs and ease farm-to-market access, which are key steps to promoting private sector-led development in Liberia's agriculture sector. The two sides reviewed various joint initiatives in the sector and pledged to continue collaboration to improve Liberia's policy-enabling environment for food security and nutrition, including, but not limited to, the Feed the Future initiative. Both governments agreed to convene the third session of the US-Liberia Partnership Dialogue in Washington, D.C., later in 2014, and intend to follow-up on the action items discussed in the Human Development and Agriculture and Food Security Working Groups during the intervening months. The two countries agreed to strengthen their cooperation to improve Liberia's power and energy sector. They also affirmed the importance of expanding Liberian's access to education and employment opportunities, and noted the plan to meet again in 2014.

Done in the City of Monrovia, this 4th Day of March AD 2014.

Thomas A. Shannon, Jr.
Department of State
United States of America

Augustine Kpehe Ngafuan
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Liberia

The full text of the opening remarks by Foreign Minister Augustine Kpehe Ngufuan can be read or downloaded by clicking here [=====>>](#) [1]

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5201 16th Street, NW • Washington, DC 20011 • USA • (202) 723-0437

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