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President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, on a five-day visit to the United States

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Washington, D.C. - On Thursday, May 15, 2014, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf arrived at the JFK International Airport in New York for a five-day visit to the United States .

According to an Executive Mansion release, President Sirleaf departed the country late Wednesday, May 14, for the United States, to participate in the Opening Plenary of a two-day Forum, IDEASpHERE, celebrating the launch of the Campaign for the Harvard Kennedy School. The Liberian President is a distinguished alumna of the School's Edward S. Mason Fellows Program.

The visit, on May 15-16, will include the unveiling of a portrait of President Sirleaf, which will hang in the Library of the Harvard Kennedy School to inspire and motivate generations of Kennedy School students and beyond to render public service for the promotion of global peace and development. Harvard's Women and Public Policy Program (WAPPP) will host a private reception in President Sirleaf's honor, on May 15, where her portrait will be unveiled. Portrait Artist Stephen Coit, also a Harvard alumnus, was commissioned by the Kennedy School to create a full-length portrait of Liberia's and Africa's first female President.

Then, at the Opening Plenary of the John F. Kennedy, Jr. Forum, President Sirleaf and the former President of Mexico, H.E. Felipe Calderon, another Harvard alumnus, will engage in a moderated discussion, entitled "Leaders on Leadership." The two Presidents will converse with two students: Jieun Baek, President of the Harvard Kennedy School Student Government, International and Global Affairs Fellow, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs; and Amandla Agoro Ooko-Ombaka, Dubin Fellow, Center for Public Leadership. A capacity audience of approximately 650 guests is expected.

Immediately following the opening, Dr. David T. Ellwood, Dean of the Harvard Kennedy School and the Scott M. Black Professor of Political Economy, will deliver his campaign address, "A Call for Exceptional Public Leadership," featuring introductory remarks by Dr. Drew Gilpin Faust, Harvard's first female President and Lincoln Professor of History.

Later on May 15, President Sirleaf will be an honored guest at a Gala Campaign Leadership Dinner to celebrate



the power of public service and launch the Campaign for Harvard Kennedy School. Over the two days of the Forum, a total of 45 concurrent sessions will be held, featuring global personalities as moderators and panelists. Topics include: Behavioral Insights for Better Decision-making and Leadership; Challenges to US Global Leadership; Can Leadership Be Taught?; the Role of the Private Sector in Making Globalization Work for All; Why Does US Foreign Policy Keep Failing; Getting to Yes in Politics; Public Policy in the Age of Technological Abundance; Start-up Democracy; Sustainable Prosperity on a Crowded Planet; Why Does Government Not Work? Winning Back the Trust; Inequality: Past, Present, and Future; Leadership and Decision-making in the face of Great Risk; Leadership and Stress; Transforming Government through Data; and many other thought-provoking sessions hosted by the Harvard Kennedy School's Research Centers. On May 16, President Sirleaf will attend a private reception hosted by The Mid-Career Master in Public Administration Edward S. Mason Program, where she will meet, greet and interact with students. Two Liberians are current Mason Fellows: Mrs. Elva Richardson, former Deputy Minister for Administration, Ministry of State for Presidential Affairs; and Mrs. Deontee King-Sackie, newly appointed Deputy Commissioner General for Technical Affairs/Operation of the Liberia Revenue Authority. A meeting with the leaders of the Liberian Community in Boston is also scheduled. After the U.S., President Sirleaf journeys to Doha, Qatar, for a State Visit to that Persian Gulf nation, at the invitation of Emir of the State of Qatar, Sheik Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani. While the President is away, the Minister of State for Presidential Affairs, Dr. Edward B. McClain, Jr. will chair the Cabinet in consultation with Vice President Dr. Joseph N. Boakai. Sr. President Sirleaf is expected back home on May 23.

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