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MONROVIA, LIBERIA – Monday, May 4, 2015) Former United States President Bill Clinton is urging Liberians not to discriminate against Ebola survivors rather embrace them and make them feel a part of society. “Don’t be afraid of them; they are okay. They should be embraced, rather than discriminated against,” he said.

According to an Executive Mansion release, former President Clinton made the comments to reporters at the Emergency Operations Center following a whirlwind visit to Liberia on Monday, May 4, 2015 where he held a meeting with the Incidence Management System and partners (local and international) who have assisted Liberia in its fight against the Ebola virus disease.

During his visit to the Center, the President Clinton interacted with some Ebola survivors including the leadership of the Ebola Survivors Network. Speaking on behalf of the survivors, the president of the network, Patrick Faley, highlighted problems affecting them including discrimination, stigmatization, access to income, jobs and healthcare.

President Clinton, responding, said they were in the country because they didn’t want the world to forget about them. “We want to do what we can to help. I want the people in Liberia not to discriminate against you. They should not be afraid,” he urged Liberians, adding, “We have to get past this stigma. We can’t have your country men and women discriminate. They should celebrate with you that you survived and help you deal with these other problems that come up.”

On the visit overall, President Clinton said it is necessary to support Liberia’s post-Ebola recovery plan and assist President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf rebuild the country’s healthcare delivery system, specifically in training more healthcare workers so just in case there is another outbreak of the disease, they will be able to deal with it expeditiously. “We need to get the funds in here to train community health workers and other health practitioners to make sure you don’t get this disease,” he said.

Upon arrival in Liberia late in the afternoon, former President Clinton held a meeting with President Sirleaf and high-ranking government officials before his visit to the Emergency Operations Center.

President Clinton and his daughter Chelsea are on a nine-day, four country tour to observe foreign projects the Clinton Global Initiative has supported connected to healthcare, global warming, wildlife protection, education and agriculture.

He and his delegation have already visited Tanzania, Kenya and are now on their way to Morocco on the last leg of the African tour. This is the 12th time the president has visited Africa, and this is a nearly annual trip that he, and more recently Chelsea, take to visit the work the foundation supports.



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