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Washington, D.C.: President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has called on Texas Instruments (TI), a leading global technology company, to afford young Liberians aspiring for a profession in technology the opportunity to benefit from the company's training programs.

According to a dispatch from Washington, President Sirleaf made the call on June 29, 2017, when she visited the headquarters of TI in Dallas Texas. Founded in 1930, Texas Instruments is a global Fortune 500 technology company. During a meeting with TI Executives, President Sirleaf indicated that as the company plans to expand its presence in Africa, Liberia is an ideal place for TI to establish an operating center. She added that Liberia is ideal because English is spoken in Liberia and many young Liberians returning home from surrounding countries speak fluent French, which is also widely spoken in the region.

President Sirleaf expressed the hope that young Liberian professionals in the areas of technology would be afforded the opportunity to benefit from TI's internship and other training opportunities to better prepare them for quality service. She also noted that by affording Liberians training opportunity and establishing a presence in Liberia would create a market for TI's technology and products in the region.

The President also participated in a live interactive discussion on the TI Diversity Network (TIDN), the company's television channel, in an auditorium crowded with employees and mostly interns. During the employee event, which was hosted by the TI Women's Initiative and the TI Diversity Network, President Sirleaf recounted a brief story of her life, of how she has managed to succeed by setting goals and working hard to accomplish those goals. She urged women and young people to remain focused in the pursuit of their goals or as they strive to realize their dreams, irrespective of the challenges they may encounter.

The live interactive event, moderated by Ms. Cecelia Smith, TI Vice President for Analog, was characterized by questions and comments from the audience, mostly interns, some of them from different countries. Among the interns was a young Gambian, who thanked President Sirleaf for her leadership role in peacefully resolving the leadership crisis early this year in his homeland, The Gambia.

President Sirleaf was accompanied to the TI Headquarters by Education Minister George Werner, Monrovia City Mayor Clara Doe Mvogo, Liberia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Lewis Brown, and the Charge' d'Affaires at the Embassy of Liberia in US Jeff G. Dowana, among others.

In another development, on the evening of Thursday, June 29, the Liberian Leader and delegation attended one of the most important sessions of the Dallas 2017 Megafest, hosted by Bishop and First Lady T.D. Jakes of the Potter's House and T.D. Jakes Ministries, which was held June 28-July 1. Bishop Jakes was the featured speaker during the evening session, an electrifying, spiritual-filled worship service attended by some tens of thousands of



people who crowded the Kay Bailey Hutchinson Convention Center downtown Dallas.

Taking the stage after award-winning gospel music artist Tye Tribbett thrilled worshippers on their feet, Bishop Jakes delivered a soul-searching message on the theme: "A Grip on Grace." Bishop Jakes, a very eloquent speaker and prolific author, said anyone who cannot get a grip on what God has done for them will remain unfulfilled. He said God has blessings in store for everyone but individuals must get a grip on what they want. "Anything you don't get a grip on - you will lose," he pointed out.

Bishop Jakes noted that in the face of success and possibilities, many people are unable to fulfill their dreams because they continue to hold on to the past and refuse to let go.

On Friday, June 30, 2017, President Sirleaf concluded her inspiring and memorable visit to Dallas with a reception hosted in her honor by Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson of the 30th Congressional District of Texas.

The reception was attended by hundreds of distinguished guests who crowded the Congressional Office of Congresswoman Johnson located downtown Dallas. Those at the reception included Congresswoman Karen Bass of the 37th Congressional District of California and former Speaker of the California State Assembly; officers and members of sororities with which the President is a member or an affiliate, such as the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc.; and the LINKS, an international, non-profit corporation whose members are professional women of color and are engaged in voluntary services.

Welcoming President Sirleaf to Dallas, Congresswoman Johnson, who has been in Congress since 1993, said her involvement with Liberia began when she met Madam Sirleaf in the early 1990s during the Liberian civil crisis, at an event organized by an organization she founded. The organization is called "A World of Women for World Peace." Congresswoman Johnson said she was moved to establish the organization to promote global peacemaking initiatives after she saw the photo of two Liberian boys holding guns on the cover of a magazine. The Congresswoman lauded President Sirleaf for her exemplary leadership that has not only ensure sustainable peace in Liberia but that she has been a global champion for the cause of women.

Responding, President Sirleaf thanked Congresswoman Johnson for the very warm reception and for the many years of friendship. She also reflected on the special historical relationship between Liberia and the US dating back from the founding of Liberia by African Americans in the 1800s.

President Sirleaf also used the occasion to thank the city leaders and citizens of Dallas for the warm hospitality accorded her. She said coming back to Dallas provided her the opportunity to also say thanks for the good coordination and support that obtained between Liberia and Dallas during the Ebola epidemic when a Liberian infected with the Disease came to Dallas. President Sirleaf said that she looks forward to the deepening of ties between Liberia and Dallas.

As part of the highlights of the reception, President Sirleaf was given the Seal of Congressional Records by Congresswoman Johnson. In return, President Sirleaf also presented to Congresswoman Johnson, a large quilt hand-woven by Liberian women.

During the presentation of the quilt to Congresswoman Johnson, Liberia's Deputy Chief of Protocol, Mrs. Ethel Toles, gave a brief history behind the use of hand-woven quilt as a presidential gift in Liberia. According to Mrs. Toles, the practice dates back to the 1800s during the era of Liberia's first President Joseph Jenkins Roberts, who used quilts hand-woven by a group of women as gift.





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