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[Home](#) > President Sirleaf Appeals for Support to Rebuild Liberia's Educational System

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# President Sirleaf Appeals for Support to Rebuild Liberia's Educational System

***Embassy of the Republic of Liberia in the United States*** , Thu, Dec 7, 2017

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has appealed for support to rebuild Liberia's educational system, which was destroyed during the years of civil conflict in the country.

According to a dispatch from the United States, President Sirleaf made the appeal on Monday, December 4, 2017, when she spoke at the Frank and Kula Kumpuris Distinguished Lecture Series of the Clinton School of Public Service of the University of Arkansas in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Addressing students of the Clinton School of Public Service and hundreds of distinguished guests who crowded the auditorium, President Sirleaf said despite the progress Liberia has made since the end of the civil crisis, the educational system has been one of the weakest areas in the country's recovery.

President Sirleaf noted that progress made in upgrading the educational system has led to an increase of two million students enrolled in school. She, however, added that there is a serious deficit of qualified teachers to properly mold the minds of the young people.

"The students are so many and the teachers are so few," she said, adding that there is a need to give the children quality education to enable them to compete within the global community.

President Sirleaf also noted that the health system in Liberia also remains a challenge that must be addressed to enable Liberians to enjoy the benefit of quality health care.

Amid thunderous applause, President Sirleaf lauded the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI)/Clinton Foundation Ebola Response for sending the largest single supply of medical materials to Liberia to combat the Ebola epidemic. She pointed out that while many expatriates left the country in the wake of the Ebola outbreak, the CHAI staff remained in Liberia and worked very closely with the health authorities to combat the disease at the risk of their lives.

She also commended President Bill Clinton and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton for their steadfast support of Liberia during the country's post-war reconstruction, including the Ebola crisis.



Serving as moderator during the interactive question and answer period, former U.S. President Bill Clinton lauded President Sirleaf and the people of Liberia for the progress Liberia has made in its post-war recovery, and assured that the Clinton Foundation will continue to be a partner in Liberia's progress.

President Clinton expressed the need for Americans to seriously consider developing strong partnership with Liberia, which he described as a beautiful country with many investment opportunities. "Liberia is a good place for investment," President Clinton added.

President Clinton also indicated that there is a need for partnership to help improve Liberia's health system. He assured that efforts would continue to be made to assist Liberia in those two areas of critical needs, which are education and health.

Prior to the impressive ceremony, President Sirleaf was taken on a tour of the Clinton Presidential Library, which is featuring an exhibit titled, "Mandela: The Journey to Ubuntu. The exhibit, which features various aspects of the late human rights legend, started September 17, 2017 and will end February 19, 2018. Photos below:

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**Source URL (modified on Dec 7 2017 - 2:28pm):**<https://liberianembassyus.org/in-the-news/president-sirleaf-appeals-for-support-to-rebuild-liberias-educational-system-0>