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Embassy of the Republic of Liberia in the United States , Mon, Apr 16, 2018

Monrovia, Liberia: President George Manneh Weah has renewed his government's commitment to upholding the tenets of press freedom and the protection of Liberian journalists. He told media executives that he harbors no hate for them and their work, contrary to insinuations about his commitment to a press media environment.

The Liberian leader said his relationship with the media spanned over the years and assured Liberians and the media that he remains an ardent supporter of free speech, and freedom of the press. President Weah spoke Wednesday, April 11, 2018, during an interactive engagement with executives of the Liberian media at his Foreign Ministry Office.

"I want to promise you, members of the media 200% freedom of expression and press freedom under my government; How can a man like me with soft heart, humbled background as well as scores of friends in the country - clampdown on free speech; There is no way I can use my position to hunt people for expressing their views to criticize me," the President assured.

He said no member of the government will attack anyone or group of citizens for criticizing him and the government on issues they think the government is wrongly proceeding with. He encouraged the media to criticize the government but urged them to mention the good things being done in the country.

"I remain a strong partner to the press, because you all are aware that I also own one of the oldest media companies, Royal Communications Inc., in the country where many journalists in this room started their profession; Therefore, I cannot go against journalists; rather I will continue to support their activities including programs of the media and journalists."

President Weah reminded the media of their responsibility to the development of Liberia, and stressed: "While it is true the media and journalists are at liberty to write and criticize in whatever way they see, it is also incumbent of the media to mention the achievements of the government.



Responding to the issue involving journalist Jonathan Paye-layLeh, President Weah said he has nothing against the BBC stringer. He however prevailed on him to come back home. He said his response to the BBC correspondent – was inversely proportional to his critical question posed to him during the media stakeout in the presence of the visiting UN Under Secretary.

He enjoined media executives to encourage Mr. Paye-layLeh to return home to contribute his quota because he is not being hunted by the government. “Those of you who know me, please tell Jonathan Pay-layLeh to come back home, because I cannot go after people for disagreeing with me,” he opined.

Earlier, leaders of various sections of the media including the PUL President called for closer cooperation with government in order to aggressively pursue the government’s Pro-Poor Agenda.

Photo from this meeting are posted below:

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Source URL (modified on Apr 16 2018 - 1:41pm):<https://liberianembassyus.org/in-the-news/president-weah-meets-media-executives-renews-commitment-to-press-freedom>