

**REMARKS BY H.E GBEHZOHNGAR M. FINDLEY  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA ON THE  
OCCASION MARKING THE NATIONAL AND FLAG DAY OF SWEDEN  
MONROVIA, JUNE 6, 2019**

Ambassador: Ingrid Wetterqvist;

Members of the Legislature;

Members of the Judiciary;

Members of the Cabinet;

Doyen & Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Officials of Government;

Swedish Nationals in Liberia

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen: or as the Swedish Ambassador would say- All

Protocol Observed

**A WARM GOOD EVENING TO ALL OF YOU:**

It is indeed a pleasure to join you all this evening to celebrate the National and Flag Day of Sweden. On behalf of His Excellency, Dr. George Manneh WEAH, President of the Republic of Liberia, the Government and people of the Republic of Liberia and on behalf, I am excited to transmit sincere congratulations and earnest best wishes to His Majesty Carl XVI Gustaf, and the great people of the Kingdom of Sweden.

As we celebrate this auspicious day, we reflect on the longstanding historical relationship subsisting between the Kingdom of Sweden and the Republic of Liberia. Liberia and Sweden relations heightened in the 1950s when Sweden developed interest in the Liberia-American-Minerals Company which was given a 70-year concession for ore exploration in Liberia. In 1954, a Swedish group of companies accepted to explore the Putu Range. In 1955, the Swedish group joined the

exploration project as partners and the company was renamed Liberia-American Swedish Minerals Company – LAMCO.

Fast forward, our relationship with Sweden has expanded to include several spheres including education, women empowerment, health, energy and many others. We are forever in debt to Sweden for the exceptional role in ending the scourge of the Ebola virus epidemic and immense support to the resuscitation of the Liberian economy.

I know Madam Ambassador and all the Swedish nationals here are feeling uncomfortable now. See, Ladies and Gentlemen, the Swedish do not like bragging.

By the way, Sweden is one of our major donor partners. I cannot help it Madam Ambassador.

Aware of the awesome power of local authorities to contribute to peace and development, one of the first actions of President George Manneh Weah upon assuming office was to sign the Local Government Act into law. The act which is supported by the Swedish Government provides the legal and regulatory framework for decentralization and local governance reform in the country and enhances our democracy.

The Swedish Government's support to road infrastructure in the country is going a long way in alleviating rural poverty. Through this generous assistance, roads to markets in the hinterland has improved, new markets have been established and bridges repaired and rebuilt. This has also improved living standard of rural population as they now have relatively easy access to healthcare and education.

The Swedish US\$17 million contribution toward Liberia's "Grow Program" aimed at rejuvenating the agriculture sector is already paying dividends for a post-war nation

that's struggling mightily to close the gaps on food security and offers an opportunity for farmers to develop their capacity in farming techniques

Sweden's contribution to our agriculture sector is highly value. Agriculture, as you are aware has been identified as a driver to job creation and economic growth. We welcome Sweden investments in the development of agricultural sector and the training and empowerment of our farmers.

There is an uptick in sexual based violence of late in the country. The government is doing its utmost best to curb the alarming and growing cases of rapes and other sexual based violence and is particularly appreciative of Swedish assistance in ending this plague. Since 2010, Sweden has contributed over 5 million United States Dollars to support efforts in ending sexual violence and respect for sexual health through the provision of customized medical care, therapy and women shelters, and support to the Liberian police and court and through public awareness campaigns.

### **Madam. Ambassador**

It is not lost on us of the huge number of Liberians selected for the Swedish Scholarship this year. Many of whom will be studying in the professional fields needed to spur innovations and economic growth in Liberia.

Sweden's support to young entrepreneurs is incentivizing the explosion of start-up businesses in the country. Young people are using amazing new ways to get into business through grants provided by the Swedish government.

Swedish NGO Forum SYD too is playing a significant role. Forum SYD works on democracy and human rights, gender equality, environment and climate change speak to the warmth of amity Liberia and Sweden continue to enjoy. It is predicated

upon these, that we remain upbeat that the diversity and strength of our relations, will continue to grow as we explore wide ranging areas of heightened cooperation. Madam Ambassador, please be assured that Liberia remains committed to our shared values, including the advancement of global peace and security, promotion of gender equality and freedom for all people.

Allow me on this note to once again congratulate His Majesty Carl XVI Gustaf, King of the Kingdom of Sweden on the National and Flag Day of Sweden on behalf of His Excellency Mr. George Manneh Weah, President of the Republic of Liberia, and the Government and people of Liberia. I wish for His Majesty and the people of Sweden renewed peace and prosperity.

As we go on celebrating, I would like to conclude with the words of the late Swedish electronic musician Tim Bergling, known professionally as Avicii “There is an endless road to rediscover” he said. So Ambassador, cheers to the discovery and rediscovery of many spheres of our relationship

I Thank You!

### **TOAST**

Kindly raise your glasses and drink cheerfully to the renaissance of the strong and noble friendship subsisting between Liberia and Sweden, and for the continued good health of His Majesty Carl XVI Gustaf and His Excellency Dr. George Manneh Weah.