

Special Statement By: Hon. Boima S. Kamara; Minister of Finance and Development Planning - APRM National Focal Point During the Fourth Launch of Liberia Country Program National Sensitization & Outreach Campaign – Buchanan, Grand Bassa County – January 4, 2017

- Chair and Members of the Grand Bassa County Legislative Caucus;
- Senator Jonathan L. Karpay, Senator Grand Bassa County,
- Hon. Gabriel B. Smith, Representative of District #3, Grand Bassa County;
- Honorable J. Levi Demah, Superintendent, Grand Bassa County;
- Hon. Julia K. Bono, Buchanan City Mayor;
- Officials of Government present;
- APRM Strategic Partners;
- Chairman and members of the National Governing Council;
- Traditional leaders, chiefs and elders;
- Members of the press;
- Students, Youth & Women Groups;
- Stakeholders;
- Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

Today marks the fourth in a series of citizens' engagements, as part of an important national conversation on the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) Liberia Country Program's National Sensitization & Outreach Campaign.

We are delighted, as a country, to continue the process of national awareness and sensitization with citizens and stakeholders across the 15 political sub-divisions of our beloved country.

The APRM Liberia Country Program is therefore happy to launch its national sensitization & outreach campaign in Buchanan City, Grand Bassa County. Few weeks ago, we launched similar campaigns in Kakata, Margibi County; Gbarnga, Bong County; and in Ganta, Nimba County. Today's event in Buchanan is manifestation of the emphasis we place on the involvement of the local population in the APRM process, instead of focusing on Montserrado County alone.

APRM, which stands for African Peer Review Mechanism, is a way by which a country can evaluate its own performances, instead of relying on international actors alone. At the end of the process, a country, with the involvement of its people reports on how your government is governing. This is what I refer to as "Write your own story".

Liberia acceded to the 14th Forum of Heads of States and Governments of the APRM in January 2011, and has since made meaningful contributions in terms of representation and participation in the APRM process.

In May 2013, Her Excellency Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was appointed Chairperson of the APRM Forum. She served for the period of 2 years before turning over to President Uhuru Kenyatta of the Republic of Kenya. Professor Amos C. Sawyer, Chairman of the Governance

Commission also did an excellent job as an APRM consultant and former member of the panel of eminent persons.

In February of this year, the APRM country support mission met with President Sirleaf and signed a Memorandum of Understanding for Technical Assistance to the APRM Liberia Country Program.

In August 2016, our President also committed to the peer review of the APRM Special Summit in Nairobi, Kenya by promising to conduct self-assessment in July 2017. Today, this gathering is one of the fruits of these many engagements.

In October 2016, Liberia received a joint APRM - ECA Technical Support Mission, led by Professor Eddy Maloka and a team of resource persons from the United Nations Economic Commission on Africa and APR Continental Secretariat.

The team was in Liberia to participate in the launch of the national sensitization & outreach campaign, and also to provide technical assistance and capacity building for key stakeholders and four Technical Research Institutes (TRI's). The anticipated outcome of these activities was to prepare Liberia ahead of the conduct of our self-assessment study and country review.

As a government, we want to use this medium to call on all stakeholders to participate in the APRM activities at the national and sub-national levels. We equally admonish all actors to cooperate with the Technical Research Institutes, the National Governing Council and APRM National Secretariat as Liberia conducts its country self-assessment study. This is not going to be a Monrovia-based exercise.

As we implement this ambitious roadmap, massive sensitization efforts will accompany the conduct of country self-assessment study and review around the country.

The foundation of the APRM is built around four thematic pillars: Democracy and Political Governance; Economic Governance and Management; Socio-economic Development; and Corporate Governance.

Under Democracy and Political Management, member countries are committed to the following:

- The rule of law
- The equality of all citizens before the law and the liberty of the individual;
- Individual and collective freedoms, including the right to form and join political parties and trade unions, in conformity with the constitution;
- Equality of opportunity for all;
- The inalienable right of the individual to participate by means of free, credible and democratic political processes in periodically electing their leaders for a fixed term of office; and

- Adherence to the separation of powers, including the protection of the independence of the judiciary and of effective parliaments.

Under Economic Governance and Management the following are core principles agreed upon:

- Code of Good Practices on Transparency in monetary and Financial policies
- Code of Good Practices on Fiscal Transparency;
- Best Practices for Budget Transparency;
- Guidelines for Public Debt Management;
- Principles of Corporate Governance;
- International Standards on Auditing; and the
- Core Principles for Effective Banking Supervision.

For Socio-economic Development, the following are agreed upon by member states:

- Democracy, good governance, peace and security;
- The development of human and physical resources;
- Gender equality;
- Openness to international trade and investment;
- Allocation of appropriate funds to social sector and;
- New partnership between government and the private sector, and with civil society;

Under Corporate Governance, the core principles accepted by member countries include:

- The provision of an enabling environment and effective regulatory framework for economic activities;
- Ensuring that corporations act as good corporate citizens with regard to human rights, social responsibility and environmental sustainability;
- Promoting the adoption of codes of good business ethics in achieving the objectives of the organization;
- Ensure that corporations treat all their stakeholders (employees, communities, suppliers and customers) in a fair and just manner; and
- Provide for accountability of corporations and directors.

The APRM is a commonly approved framework voluntarily consented to by member states. Since its establishment in 2003, 37 countries, more than half of Africa's 54 countries have acceded to the APRM framework.

Thank you all very much and we wish you all a productive and a Happy and Prosperous New Year, 2017.