

REMARKS

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY DR. GEORGE MANNEH WEAH
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

AT A PROGRAM

FOR

THE COMMISSIONING OF THE WORK PERMIT DIGITALIZATION PROJECT OF
THE MINISTRY OF LABOR, R.L.

THE EJS MINISTERIAL COMPLEX
MONROVIA, LIBERIA

SEPTEMBER 13, 2022

The Speaker and President Pro-Tempore of the 54th Legislature;

The Dean and Members of the Cabinet;

Other Officials of Government, here present;

Our International Partners;

Executives and Staff of CETIS Graphics & Documentation Services;

Members of the Fourth Estate;

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

We have gathered here today to witness another milestone project aimed at the modernization of government operations for better efficiency and greater productivity, which is the digitization of the work permit system of the Ministry of Labor. This will bring Liberia on par with other African and Western countries.

Until today, Liberia is the only West African country that is still using a manual work permit system. This innovation will not only improve efficiency but will also increase revenue and provide new employment opportunities. In addition, it will enhance the capacity of the Ministry of Labour to protect and defend the rights of workers in the Republic of Liberia.

I am told that this is a five-year project between the Government of Liberia, represented by the Ministry of Labour, and CETIS Graphics and Documentation Services Company of the Republic of Slovenia.

I am further informed that, in addition to upgrading from a manual to a digital system, the project also provides for up-front delivery of over Five Million United States

Dollars worth of ultra-modern electronic equipment, as well as the supply of Fifteen (15) double cabin 4x4 Toyota Pickups; Two (2) Jeeps; Five (5) Sedans; and Thirty-Five (35) Yamaha Motor Bikes.

This contract also covers supplies of fuel, maintenance, and insurance of all equipment and vehicles, as well as salaries and daily allowances for the entire five-year duration of the project.

This equipment will enable the Ministry of Labour to enforce the Work Permit regime of the Government throughout the country. It will also immensely enhance the capacity of the Ministry to inspect and ensure the safety and other conditions of workers in the workplace, including overall compliance by employers with Liberia's labor laws, in both the formal and the informal sectors of our economy.

This will enable and empower the Ministry of Labor to work more efficiently and effectively simultaneously in all 15 counties of Liberia, in both the rainy and the dry seasons.

DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

This Government takes very seriously the protection of workers' rights throughout Liberia and adequate employment for our people who are qualified, competent, and available to work.

As a responsible Government, we also have the duty to ensure that investors are treated fairly in their relationship with the government and with their employees. However, we will not hesitate to take stringent measures against any employers who attempt to evade the payment of government taxes or who try to infringe upon the rights of workers.

The Ministry of Labor has the statutory responsibility to ensure that Liberians are given priority to jobs in the private sector. We must also ensure that Liberians are given wages that are comparable to foreigners doing the same job. These policies must be adhered to without compromise. While we seek to increase revenue from greater efficiency in the work permit regime, we will not compromise the rights of our citizens to priority employment opportunities.

We also want to see gender equity in employment, in both the public and private sectors. We will continue to seek to build our economy by increasing employment opportunities for Liberians and prioritizing capacity-building in the workplace.

It is against this backdrop that I, as the President of the Republic of Liberia, now have the distinguished honor to officially commission this Project.

I want to congratulate the CETIS Graphics and Documentation Services, the Ministry of Labor, and the PPCC for this milestone achievement, and I hereby commit my Government's fullest support to this Project.

I thank you.