



## Johnson-Sirleaf Meets Paul Kagame

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President Paul Kagame has assured his Liberian counterpart; Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf that Rwanda will fully support Liberia's reconstruction endeavors.

Addressing journalists shortly after President Kagame met with a visiting Liberian delegation led by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf on February 21 at Village Urugwiro, Foreign Affairs Minister, Dr Charles Murigande said President Kagame briefed the delegation about Rwanda's post-genocide reconstruction, 13 years after the 1994 genocide, and demonstrated how Liberia could borrow a leaf from the achievements registered in that country.

According to Murigande, President Kagame pointed out that Rwandan and Liberian government officials would interact with one another to share ideas on how reconstruction programmes can be carried out in Liberia after the long period of political instability in the country.

"The two Presidents met and agreed on how officials from both countries can share information related to national reconstruction, especially that Liberia is also marked by a history similar to that of Rwanda," Murigande said.

The Rwandan Foreign Minister said, "Pres. Kagame told Pres. Johnson-Sirleaf that Rwanda's Minister of Defense is willing to share with his visiting counterpart on how Rwanda built a strong military force and how its programmes like disarmament and reintegration have made remarkable progress."

Murigande said that further areas of interaction between officials of the two governments would include decentralization, communication and energy, taxation, unity and reconciliation as well as women empowerment. The Liberian President lauded Rwanda's achievements, in promoting women empowerment and restorative justice.

"The two Presidents met and agreed on how officials from both countries can share information related to national reconstruction," Murigande said.

President Kagame was accompanied to the meeting by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs; Finance; Defense; Local Government; the Presidency; Gender and Family Promotion; Energy; and seven other senior government officials.

President Johnson-Sirleaf was in Rwanda for the first official state visit and to attend the International Women Parliamentarians Conference.

In a related development, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf yesterday returned to the country after being honored by President Kangame for the government and people of that country for her contribution to Rwanda ten years ago, after the genocide in that country.

The honoring ceremony was part of programs marking the climax of the tenth anniversary of the Rwandan Women Parliamentary Forum. The Forum climaxed with a major international conference of Women Leaders from across the five continents of the world, to celebrate Rwanda's record of high female representation in parliament, put at 49-percent.

Among women leaders in attendance was the wife of the British Prime Minister, Cheri Booth Blair; Dr. Gertrude Mongella, President of the African Parliament; Ambassador Sewanee Hunt, whose Inclusive Security Network, contributed significantly to the training of women leaders who participated in the parliamentary elections.

President Paul Kagame, who received President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf upon arrival in Kigali, commended the President for her proud and sterling leadership qualities which have exemplified her as a true friend of the people of Rwanda, following the genocide in 1994.

The Rwandan leader recalled the significant role that President Johnson Sirleaf played when she was head of the Africa Bureau, that showed sympathy, solidarity and concrete action, which led Rwanda to the first Donor Conference.

It was in remembrance of those years of support to the people of Rwanda; Kigami said that the Liberian Leader was being honored. While in Rwanda, the President held several bilateral meetings on a wide range of issues with President Kagame and key ministers of the Rwandan government.

President Johnson Sirleaf was accompanied by three senators including Maryland County Senator, Gloria Scott; Joyce Sumo Freeman, of Montserrat; and CDC Montserrat County Senator Hanna Brent.

Others include: CDC Montserrat County Representative, Victoria Lynch; Defense Minister, Brownie Samukai; Internal Affairs Minister, Ambulai Johnson; Gender and Development Minister, Varba Kizeku Gayflor and the Director-General of the Cabinet, Mrs. Medina Wisseh.

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