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U.S. Congressional Delegation Visits

Liberia Government (Monrovia)

NEWS

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Members of a seven-member Congressional delegation say the United States Congress and government remain committed to the reconstruction and development of Liberia. Speaking at a meeting on Thursday with President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the US Lawmakers acknowledged the challenges facing the country and spoke of the need for Congress to step up efforts to ensure that the government responds to the needs of the people.

"We will work as hard as we can to ensure that this country succeeds," an Executive Mansion release quotes the Head of the delegation, Congresswoman Nita Lowey of New York as saying. Congresswoman Nita said the United States Congress understood the urgency and the need to step up its efforts to move the process forward.

In separate remarks, members of the Congressional delegation praised the Liberian leader for setting into motion a program that would enhance national reconciliation and development. The US Lawmakers said their support remains unshaken because President Sirleaf provides a strong vision for the country.

President Johnson Sirleaf, in response, thanked the Congressional delegation, the government and people of the United States for the support and friendship Liberia continues to enjoy. The President lauded US support for the nation's recovery program, particularly toward the rehabilitation of infrastructure, security sector reform and debt relief. The President said government will continue to count on the leadership of the United States Treasury in tackling the remaining hurdles in the country's debt relief, now put at more than four-billion United States dollars. The President said the influence of the US Treasury department would be most welcoming in soliciting the cooperation of non-G-8 members towards Liberia's debt relief initiatives.

During brief presentations Pillar Heads of government's development agenda spoke of the progress and challenges as government tackles the needs of the country. The Ministers of Defense, Finance, Planning and Public Works highlighted the crucial role of the United States and other development partners and said there was a need to fill in the funding gap which continues to affect the timely implementation of government programs.

The delegation was later hosted to a luncheon at the C. Cecil Dennis Auditorium in Monrovia. The Congressional delegation, on a one day visit, also inspected US-funded programs, including the Capitol building, Binyah Kesselly military barracks, and the Liberia Energy Assistance Program.

Accompanied by their spouses, Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr. (D-IL); Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-CA) and Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY); were part of the delegation, which also included Congresswoman Susan Davis (D-CA); Congressman Brad Miller (D-NC); and Congresswoman, Gwen Moore (D-WI).

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