

August 30, 2022

Mr. Alexander Cummings
Alternative National Congress
Monrovia, Liberia

Mr. Cummings:

Let me begin by stressing that, as President of the Republic of Liberia, I have a constitutional responsibility to all citizens, regardless of their political, ethnic, or social persuasions.

I have therefore endeavored throughout my tenure in office, to ensure that stakeholders such as yourself have the requisite access that will afford you the opportunity to raise views, positions, and concerns that you may have on various issues of national interest with me and officials of my administration.

So when a communication supposedly meant for my attention appears first on the front pages of newspapers and on social media, it is obvious that the intent is to achieve a political objective; an objective that has eluded you at the ballot box. But I am glad that you have finally found your voice.

There is no doubt that the expressed action by the Government of the United States to impose sanctions on three officials of the government is a matter of grave concern that carries a lot of weight; not just because of the strong historical bonds that subsist between the two countries and the fact that they are our traditional ally and foremost international partner, but because the fight against corruption is a key priority of my administration, for which we have taken manifold steps to eradicate.

The bilateral relationship that Liberia and the United States share continues to grow from strength to strength. As a leader, I took immediate action when the United States recently accused officials of the Liberian Government of impropriety and graft, and I informed the Nation of further pending actions.

I am glad that the United States and other international partners also recognize the strides that Liberia is making toward consolidating democracy and good governance. In recent years, for instance, we have instituted more measures to fight corruption than was ever done when you served in government.

Two years ago, we convened local and international stakeholders to discuss ways in which the historical menace of corruption can be tackled. We also sponsored a major gathering of Liberia's Judiciary to ponder over statutes that have tended to inhibit the fight against corruption.

Suggestions from these gatherings were included in the new LACC Act recently passed by the Liberian Legislature. This has given us much international acclaim, including from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which positively appraised my administration's efforts at fiscal prudence, macroeconomic stability, projected growth in spite of global inflation, and other good governance measures in its recent statement on Liberia.

It is therefore the height of hypocrisy, when a person such as yourself, who dined and wined in the very system I am working so hard to fix - and never mustered the courage to speak - now wants us to believe that you have morphed into an advocate of the people - the same ones you neglected during the years of civil upheaval.

Where was your voice Mister Cummings, when sixty-plus concessions awarded by the government in which you served were found to be bogus, illegal, and inimical to the interest of the Liberian people?

Where was your voice Mr. Cummings, when the National Oil Company of Liberia was rendered bankrupt?

Where was your voice when cries for the pavement of a short stretch of road from Ganta to Yekepa could not be carried out because your administration - for pecuniary gains - then asked the concessionaire to default on their commitment enshrined in their agreement?

Where was your voice, when the Central Bank was crippling under staggering, unfettered borrowing by the government in which you served, undermining the nation's strategic reserves and leading to a weakened monetary environment?

This is but the tip of the iceberg of a humongous cocktail of mismanagement, graft, ill-governance, and inefficiency that happened right under your nose, while you maintained a loud and conspicuous silence.

A few months ago, you were accused of forgery by some leaders of your CPP group and was afforded the opportunity to go to court and be heard. Now, you are saying that others should be deprived of that same opportunity to due process. Let me remind you that the very U.S. Government that you referenced called for due process and the application of Liberian law as was stated by Ambassador McCarthy when he unveiled the designations "we stand ready to support the Government of Liberia in pursuit of its own investigation of corruption in its jurisdiction, understanding that you will apply Liberian law in an appropriate, transparent and timely manner".

You cannot resort to selective amnesia in these grave matters Mr. Cummings.

It is also disappointing to note your reference to a vote by the Liberian Senate to change elections magistrates, and your call on me to "veto this decision by the Liberian Senate". As a former Senator, let me take this opportunity to school you in the workings of the Senate, the Legislature in general, and its relationship with the Executive in the passage of laws. A vote by the Senate on any bill does not come to the desk of the President. A vote by the Senate requires concurrence by the House of Representatives before it is submitted to the Office of the President for his signature or veto.

In this instant case, this bill did not emanate from the Executive Branch, nor does it have its support. The continuous fear-mongering by you and others in the opposition, seeking to prematurely cast aspersions on the sanctity of our electoral process, in the face of the excellent track record of the number of free, transparent and fair elections which have been held since my incumbency; many won by candidates of the very opposition, is duplicitous and dishonest.

Let me remind you and other members of Liberia's traditional elitist political class that, in spite of the political, economic, and humanitarian carnage you have caused for over a century and still feel an uncanny entitlement to the Office I now occupy: I assumed leadership through a peaceful, democratic, free, and fair process in which the PEOPLE OF LIBERIA gave me an overwhelming mandate - an election that you participated in and received a dismal seven (7%) percent vote of rejection.

I am a man of peace, a man of integrity. I paid my dues to my country for decades, long before I was given the mandate of leadership by the Liberian people. This was done at great personal risk, particularly during the war years. I doubt you were anywhere around to fully understand what this truly means.

I left the comforts of Monte Carlo, the comforts of Paris, the comforts of Milan, and the comforts of New York to help my people who were in distress due to war. Many days, I flew from Paris to Budumburam in Ghana, from Monaco to Conakry in Guinea and from Paris to Abidjan and Danane in La Cote d'Ivoire, to lend a helping hand to assist my people who were in dire straits in refugee camps.

I suspended my career to join UNICEF as a Goodwill Ambassador - free of charge and at great personal cost - to support the international efforts to end the war and help disarm child soldiers. The records are there, but none are as blind as those who do not wish to see. Where were you then, Mr. Cummings, did you leave your perched tower in Atlanta to lift a finger to help our people who were dying?

I know that by this response I have inadvertently accorded you the attention you have long sought in order to revive a dead political stature for which you issue weekly press releases and statements which make unsubstantiated claims.

However, I owe it to the People of Liberia, the general public, and to people the world over, to correct these completely erroneous characterizations that you and your clique continue to spew out.

The Congress for Democratic Change, now the Coalition for Democratic Change, has a history of utilizing its internal mechanisms to chastise leaders who violate the laws of the Party - including expulsion from the Party of even its chairpersons. Can we say that about your Party? Perhaps you should speak to the founding Chairman from who you bought your little party. He will tell you about the strong ethos of zero tolerance for improper behavior within the CDC.

Let me say, for the record, that Representative Solomon George, and all opinion leaders in the Coalition for Democratic Change, are fully cognizant of my publicly held position on the maintenance of the country's hard-earn peace and the rule of law. His recent statement was out of order. It was no surprise therefore that he wasted no time in setting the record straight about what he truly intended to convey.

But the insincerity on your part becomes so palpable when you are up in arms, pandering to the public gallery because of his comments, when you would not garner the same courage to reign in an agitator of a lawmaker within the ranks of your own party who constantly threatens violence and denigrates women. He in fact took guns to a protest rally in which you participated. But not a word was heard from you. How hypocritical!

This double standard removes any moral authority to offer advice on what "RIGHTFUL" path the country ought to take.

I have no history of violence. My rise from Monrovia's slums is publicly documented. It was through hard work, respect, dedication, and commitment that I clawed my way out of poverty, but I have never forgotten my roots. So there is a reason why your attempts to conflate who Liberians and the world actually know me to be have not gained much traction.

I do not condone violence in any form whatsoever. It runs contrary to my beliefs. I have made that clear in all my public statements. It is therefore malicious that in your seeming desperation to be President, you would trumpet anything and everything that comes to mind, including your disingenuous posit that I condone violence.

Let me use this opportunity to remind you that our democracy, though nascent, is being consolidated over time with the holding of many free and fair elections, some of which were lost by the ruling Party. I can assure you and others of your ilk, that my commitment to a free, fair, and transparent process in 2023 remains unbending.

I, George Manneh Weah, will be putting myself forward for a new mandate from the Liberian people and I am confident of a resounding second mandate based on my solid record of tangible deliverables in spite of huge challenges.

Let us take the debate to our people because they are the ultimate decision-makers on the issue of leadership in Liberia. Instead of seeking to use unconstitutional means to circumvent the democratic process, come and face me at the ballot.

Never again will Liberia return to the dark days of violence. All those wanting to take state power must therefore submit to the will of the Liberian people, because it is only through peace, unity, development, and democracy that our beloved nation can prosper.

Best regards,
George Manneh Weah