



## ***OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SECRETARY***

***Ministry of State for Presidential Affairs  
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***Sam Mannah***

### **PRESS STATEMENT**

Monrovia, Liberia; March 25, 2018 - The attention of the Office of the President has been drawn to concerns coming from Mr. Jonathan Paye-Layleh, a Correspondent of the BBC in Monrovia, who is seeking clarification from his recent interaction with the President during the Press Stakeout on Thursday, March 22, 2018 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with President George Manneh Weah and Madame Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations.

Mr. Paye-Layleh is concerned about President Weah's response to a question he asked about his position on calls for prosecution of individuals said to have perpetrated acts inimical to the respect for human rights during the civil crises.

The Office of the President clarifies that as a longtime champion of human rights and an ardent advocate of peace and social justice, he only sought to remind Mr. Paye-Layleh during his response to question asked; that when he was advocating for justice and creating awareness to the gross human rights violations that were being perpetrated against the Liberian people during the fourteen years civil conflict, he (Paye-Layleh) and others were bent on undermining his efforts by depicting a positive image of the carnage.

However, contrary to Mr. Paye-Layleh's concerns, President Weah's response should be seen in the context of his determination to foster peace, reconciliation and forgiveness. As Head of State, President Weah wants all Liberians to follow his footsteps by expressing their feelings in the spirit of genuine reconciliation and national unity.

The President is in no way against Mr. Paye-Layleh as he is trying to portray, neither does the response seek to target him. As a journalist, he remains a strong partner of the President who has pledged to uphold the "Table Mountain Declaration", which allows free speech and press freedom and not to witch-hunt him or any other Liberian.

In another development, President George Manneh Weah wishes to express heartfelt remorse for the Accident that occurred around the Edward Binyah Kesselly Barrack along the Robertsfield Highway at about 5:00PM involving the First Lady's motorcade upon her return to the Country on Saturday, March 24, 2018.

The Accident occurred when one of the EPS vehicles was forced to dodge a taxi cab that intruded into the First Lady's Convoy while en route to her residence in the Rehab Community.

***Department of Public Affairs***

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Five persons sustained injuries, four of whom have since been discharged from the hospital while the driver of the EPS vehicle was immediately flown to Ghana for further medical attention. The First Lady visited the victims at the ELWA Hospital, offered prayers and wished them speedy recovery. The EPS driver is reportedly in a stable condition.