

# **Press Union of Liberia(PUL)**

## **First National Congress**



## **REPORT**

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The Press Union of Liberia convened its First National Congress from November 12 – 13, 2010. With sponsorship from TrustAfrica, the event was held at the Baptist Theological Seminary outside Monrovia and brought together over 200 journalists from around the country. The purpose was to look generally at the media and specifically at the Union and then hold elections. This report presents a detailed account of the gathering, including the induction of the new elected officer, attended by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf.

## **1. Introduction**

The Press Union of Liberia convened in its First National Congress on 12 & 13 November 2010 at the Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary in Paynesville. The Congress was held in keeping with Article 10 of the 2009 Revised Constitution of the Union. To effect this activity, the President of the Union, Mr. Peter Quaqua, named an 8-member congress committee chaired by K. Abdullai Kamara, with members as follows - Sheriff Z. Adams, Rose Kaiwuh, Nah Davies, John T. Monibah, Darlington Poka, D. Kaihennh Sengbeh and Ahmed Jallanzo. Within the working of the committee, Eddie Harmon and Melody Mezay were invited to assist. An additional four young people were invited as support staff.

In keeping with the constitution, the Congress was scheduled to hold discussions on administrative and financial procedures within the union, as well as hold elections for a new leadership. An independent committee chaired by Fr. Anthony Borwah was appointed to undertake this latter assignment. Other members of that committee were Mrs. Torwon Sulonteh Browne, Ms. Zoe Horace, and Messrs Joseph Chesseman and Martin Kerkulah.

After three weeks of preparation and meetings, the Congress was finally convened. Activities were held on schedule and ended successfully. The accompanying report is a full account of the congress, including day to day issues, challenges and recommendations.

## **2. Organization and Support**

The Congress Preparatory Committee was tasked to organize and execute congress activities, including but not limited to pulling resources, organizing logistics and plans, scheduling, invitations and programs. To ensure success in these activities, the committee held a total of ten meetings during which various sub-committees were set up to care for specific activities. Among the sub-committees set up were: Transportation; Venue; Security; Programs & Invitations; Protocol & Accreditation. To further ensure success, the following protocols were established to ensure orderliness:

- Pre-registration at PUL Offices to help in arranging logistics
- Arrangement of bus stations and route lists to help in conveying participants
- Meal ticketing system

Support for the Congress was provided by Trust Africa, the African grant-making organization.

## **3. Participation**

Participation at the Congress was restricted to registered members and former officials of the Press Union of Liberia (PUL). Representatives of civil society, officials of government and members of the diplomatic corps were invited to attend various sessions of the Congress. The registration listing of the Union showed a membership of 276. Of this number 101 pre-registered to participate in the events. However, the accreditation at the Congress listed 200 members (72.46%), including 176 (69.92%) who voted.

## **4. Proceedings**

## 4.1 Opening Session

The Chairman of the Congress Preparatory Committee, K. Abdullai Kamara, made opening remarks and welcomed guests and members of the PUL to the Union's first Congress, noting that the gathering was not just about electing officers of the PUL, but especially about setting an agenda, reviewing the progress of the Union and defining a suitable way forward. Mr. Kamara said the theme of the Congress, "***Positioning the Media to Strengthen Democracy in Liberia,***" was selected based on the indispensable role the media is bound to play in the Liberian democratic process. Most importantly, he said as the country goes towards elections in 2011, the media needed to be well positioned to play its required role in informing the public without fear or favor, and in a very professional way that enhances our democracy.

Remarks were made by invited guests from civil society organizations and partners of the PUL.

### 1. ***Civil Society Advisory Committee***

The Chairman of the Civil Society Advisory Committee Lancedell Matthews hailed the PUL for the historic Congress and called on the Press to always identify with communities and consider issues that affect all. He said the media must position themselves to promote peace, development and unity.

### 2. ***National Elections Commission***

A representative of the National Elections Commission, Nathan Garbie, applauded the PUL and noted the importance of the media in the country's second post war democratic elections. He said institutions like the PUL were vital in strengthening democracy by going through electoral processes to choose their leaders. He said the media was expected to educate the public on the pending electoral process. He added that the NEC considers the PUL as a critical partner.

### 3. ***Trust Africa***

Among several things, the Representative of Trust Africa, Mr. Kanio Gbala, expressed his organization's commitment to assist in strengthening the media in Liberia. He said Trust Africa has been working with the media in Liberia because of the media's role in promoting democracy. He said with support from his organization, capacities have been built and that Trust Africa is currently working with 15 local radio stations to help strengthen their capacities ahead of the country's pending elections. Besides support to the media, Gbala said Trust Africa was funding several other civil society organizations in Liberia and plans were underway to bring all of them together to evaluate their activities and see how well funding could be allocated to support democratic programs.

## **b. Keynote Address**

The Ambassador of the United States of America, Mrs. Linda Thomas-Greenfield, delivered the keynote address, in which she cautioned the media to remain professional. The role of the media, she said, was very critical to the sustenance of democracy in Liberia. She underscored the important role the media has played, but said more was demanded of it.

Ambassador Greenfield hailed the passage of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act into law by the National Legislature as a milestone in the country's democratic process. With this gain, she recommended that media institutions begin to train and prepare their staff for the elections, which are very critical to the future of the country and people. She called on the media to present timely

and accurate information as a way of helping Liberians make wise and informed decisions during the elections.

**c. State of the Press Union of Liberia**

The State of the Press Union of Liberia was presented by the President, Mr. Peter Quaqua. He expressed delight over the holding of the first congress, but observed that the Union might have to wait for the second congress to be able to experience the full extent and effect of congress. "We come therefore to use this as a test case," the President asserted.

He described the transformation of the PUL into a trade union as the most significant achievement of the term.

As regards decentralization, he listed the following achievements:

- a) Hosting of PUL activities out of Monrovia – eg. Anniversary celebration in Gbarnga (Bong County) and Buchanan (Grand Bassa County);
- b) Capacity-building projects hosted in Gbarnga, Bong County and Tubmanburg, Bomi County for journalists from all parts of the country;
- c) The PUL also engaged the UNDP which supported several trainings in and out of Monrovia to encourage competition in development reporting.

**i. *Other accomplishments***

- The Union led advocacy that succeeded in having the Freedom of Information Act passed at the National Legislature;
- The Union issued a number of statements about threats and actions against the media, and also reprimanded media houses that acted unprofessionally or unethically.
- The PUL witnessed the establishment of several community radio stations,
- Developed a photo tapestry of all past presidents of the PUL
- Established a website – [www.pressunionliberia.org](http://www.pressunionliberia.org)
- received donations of equipments from the UNDP and Birmingham City University

**ii. *Fiscal Matters***

The President also reported that the administration for the first time undertook a full audit of the union's finances and systems. The need for audit, he said, was meant to show credibility and transparency with funds received from donors and the union's activities. The audit revealed that the Union managed a total of US\$63,340 and US\$77,620 for the 2009 and 2010 fiscal years, respectively.

According to Mr. Quaqua's report, the audit recognized some lapses in the operational system, and made the following recommendations:

- That the PUL ensures payment of employees' withholding tax
- That the PUL maintains a cashbook
- Prevent comingling of funds
- That the PUL prepares monthly bank reconciliation

He ended the reported by lauding the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) for their unrelenting support for the sustainability of the PUL. He similarly recognized the UNDP, the US Embassy and Trust Africa among others for their support. Acknowledgment was also given to the parent organizations: The West Africa Journalists Association (WAJA), the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and its African charter, the FAJ for their support.

#### 4.2 Session 2: Special Edition of the Edward Wilmot Blyden Forum

##### ***The second session of the Congress was a special edition of the Edward Wilmot Blyden Forum, held under the theme: Supporting the Media for Effective Leadership and Development***

The panel was made up of T. Lawrence Randall, Executive Director of the Liberia Media Center, and William Burke from IREX-USAID Civil Society Media Leadership Program. The following summary relates to direct presentations and responses during the session by the individual presenters.

- a. Mr. **Burke** centered his presentation on sustainable media development and how it can be achieved. Among key issues, he spoke about the massive brain drain within the Liberian media circle - several journalists died, some left the profession, and as a result the Liberian media has a serious capacity issue. Beyond that, the media here has a resource problem too.

He noted the impossibility of developing a true democracy without a free and strong independent media. According to him, the media's role is very important, especially as the country moves to next year's elections.

He recalled that in the past the media was strong in reporting issues that affected society and the PUL stood strong. He noted however that in those days there were threats against the media, several journalists were harassed and media houses closed, making the country an unfavorable place for the media to operate. He added that there is now a better environment for the media to operate, with new opportunities for capacity development. However, he conceded that the media remain the least-paid sector in the country, and urged the PUL to look in that direction

According to him, media development is far beyond workshops. "There are many workshops for media practitioners, but the impacts remain less, therefore, media development must deal with long term sustainability, not multiple workshops."

As regards the IREX CSML program, Burke clarified that IREX does not have US\$11m for media development, but acknowledged the availability of funds to collaborate with civil society. He however disclosed that more of the money will be invested in community radios. For the print media, he said reporters would be trained to report on three identified thematic areas: water, development and conflict resolution.

- b. **The presentation by Mr. Randall** was dominated by the controversy surrounding the status of the Liberia Media Center, vis a vis the Press Union of Liberia. According to Mr. Randall the LMC was started in 2004 by PUL and partners and he was hired in 2005 to manage the LMC. The status of the LMC he said has not been changed from the original plan, but it remains an integral part of the PUL. The President of the PUL is the Chairman of the LMC board.

He highlighted lots of challenges in the media sector of Liberia and how the LMC has been working to address these challenges through the provision of trainings and other forms of empowerment. According to him, the LMC has provided capacity building and support for 17 Community Radio Stations (CRs) across the country, at a cost of about a million dollars. He said there was a need for national response for the print media in terms of development, because, according to him, the print media was very cardinal – they have public service role as well commercial benefits. He recommended that media institutions must be treated like business entities by media heads, and until that is done there will always be problems of sustenance in the print media in particular.

#### 4.3 Session 3: Operational and Financial Report

This session was led by the President, Mr. Peter Quaqua. An initial disruption emerged over who should make the report. Several members of the body called for the Secretary General or Assistant Secretary General to make the report instead of the President. Invoking Article 10, Section 4 (d) of the PUL Constitution, several members said a Financial and Operational Review Committee should be the one to read such report. Article 10, Section 4 (d): **“It [Financial and Operational Review Committee] shall access, review and appraise the financial and operational prudence of the incumbent (or outgoing) leadership, including all standing committees. It shall submit a comprehensive and written report to congress on the second day of Congress.”**

However, the Congress Chair secured a consensus that after the President shall have made the report Congress will select a committee to implement Article 10, Section 4 (d) of the PUL Constitution stated supra. The body agreed and the President read his report.

Following the presentation of the report, Congress voted that the report be accepted and sent to a committee in line with the Constitution to review, appraise and report to the body on the second day of congress. Vote cast: 55 for; 6 against and 5 abstentions. The Committee subsequently named included:

- Zoegar Jaynes(Chair)
- Jarlawah Tonpo
- Francis Pelenah
- Raymond Zarbay
- Sonnie Morris (Ms.)
- Weemon Jallah Cole-Boyce (Mrs.)
- Festus Poquie

#### 4.4 Electoral Session 1: Debate

The next session focused on the much anticipated debate. The Elections Commission chaired by **Father Anthony Borwah of the Catholic Media Center** presided over this session. The session provided the opportunity for candidates to explain their vision for the PUL to the voters/members. The chairman assured the audience that the process would be transparent and called on members of the PUL to demonstrate to the country that “we are professional.” He informed congress that three persons were dropped from the official list of registered members whose membership statuses were in doubt. The debate was moderated by the Station Manager of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (**UNMIL Radio**) **Joseph Kojo Mensah**, who called for orderliness and for participants to address the issues rather than personalities.

Each of the candidates, beginning with those vying for Assistant Secretary General, Secretary General, Vice President and President was given five minutes to address the members, presenting

why they should be elected. Most of them said the responsibilities of their positions were already defined and they would apply their qualifications and past experiences to carry out these mandates to the best of their abilities and make the PUL a more viable organization.

The debate commenced peacefully, but witnessed some anxiety, especially during questions and answers period. Supporters of some candidates were asked by moderator remain orderly.

**a. Debate Disrupted**

Midway into the debate one of the three disqualified members, Orland Cooper, disrupted the debate for at least 30 minutes on grounds that he had been denied his voting rights by the Election Commission. He brought a rival public address set on the Congress ground and tried taking it into the hall with a loud music. His effort was thwarted by Congress Preparatory officials and others. Cooper argued that he voted in the last election two years ago and renewed his membership, but he was declared unqualified. The Election Commission justified its disqualification on the lack of document (membership form) at the PUL to verify that Cooper is a full member of the Union. Scores of other journalists supported Cooper's claims, but argued that his approach (to disrupt the debate) was wrong. Cooper finally abandoned his protest after the intervention of veteran journalist Stanton Peabody.

**4.5 Day Two of Congress**

**Electoral Session 2**

Election Day began at 9: am with journalists queuing to cast ballots. The process remained peaceful until poll closed at 2:30 pm as scheduled. Journalists waited up to nearly 6pm for the results. Turnout was estimated at 70%, based on statistics released by the Election Commission. Out of the total of 273 eligible voters, 193 cast ballots with six invalid ballots reported.

Independent observers described the entire electoral process as "very credible, transparent and free" and noted that the Liberian media has set the pace for the country's second postwar democratic election next year.

**4.6 Closing Session**

**a. Report of the Financial and Operation Review Committee**

Following a day's work, the Financial and Operation Review Committee requested a three-month extension period to complete its work. The Committee reported that the document was capacious and it needed time to thoroughly read and comprehend it before making comments and recommendations. Congress overwhelmingly agreed to the request through vote. Therefore, Congress is expected to meet in three months in Kakata City, Margibi County.

**b. Election Results**

For the position of Assistant Secretary General, Star Radio's legislative correspondent Julius Kanubah received 128 (68.8%) of the total valid votes of 186, leaving the remaining 58 (31.2%) for Winnie Saywah of the Inquirer Newspaper.

ELBC Legislative Bureau Chief Charles Coffey was elected Secretary General after he collected 110 votes (58.8%) against Smart Media Liberia's Siatta Scott-Johnson who polled 77 (41.2%) of the total valid votes cast for the position.

Assistant Secretary Melissa Chea-Annan defeated the incumbent Vice President Jacob Parley by 113 (59.8%) to 76 votes (40.2%) for the position of Vice President.

Peter Quaqua clinched 138 (72.6%) of the 190 valid vote cast for the presidency, leaving just 52 votes (27.4%) for Augustus Fallah, former Managing Editor of the Forum Newspaper.

Independent observers from the Federation of Liberian Youth and the Liberia National Student Union said Liberian journalists have 'put democracy to test' by holding violent and corrupt-free elections. A spokesman of the observers said this development now puts the media in the position to properly and carefully monitor the 2011 elections, when Liberians would go to the polls to elect their leaders.

Father Borwah said his commission was very careful and scrupulous at all levels of the electoral process and has set an example from which the National Election Commission can take cue ahead of the 2011 general and presidential elections in Liberia.

### **C. Congress Resolution**

After the deliberations, the secretariat and an ad hoc committee drafted a communiqué, which was adopted as the official declaration from the congress. Among other things, the Congress challenged members of the Press Union to be professional, think about Liberia, and take advantage of opportunities to strengthen the media's role in enhancing democracy and peace building in Liberia. (see appendix)

## **5. Challenges & Obstacles**

While the Congress ended as a resounding success, there were nonetheless a number of circumstances that threatened the very success. These ranged from issues as diverse as tardiness to limited time for the preparation. In specific terms, the following issues were highlighted:

- ***Lateness of participants:*** Participants were late in attending the first day of the congress. This came about despite the fact that buses were routed to convey members to the congress site. More than a hundred persons participated in the pre-registration exercise that took note of residential locations. This aided the routing of the buses.
- ***Disinterest in the debates:*** For the duration of the Congress, the lectures and debates were mostly attended by nearly a half of the members present. Most delegates were out in the halls, discussing various issues, including the pending elections
- ***Late beginning of preparations, including fundraising:*** There wasn't enough time for the Congress Committee to prepare. This constrained preparation, and limited opportunities for fundraising. As a result, there was only one sponsor, limiting funding and activities in various ways.
- ***Cooperation of committee members:*** Some of the members originally named to the

committee did not show up. Luckily, there were some volunteers, who came in handy.

## **6. Recommendations**

Reference the issues raised during the congress and the challenges cited, the following recommendations have been proffered to ensure greater results in future events.

- The Congress Committee should be selected early enough- at least three months in advance. Members should commit to serving the committee for the period, and the work of the committee should include fund raising;
- The committee should carry out more public awareness among members of the PUL, about the significance of the congress;
- The initiation of the agenda should be a pre-congress activity involving members of the congress;
- The membership roster of the union should be confirmed at the time of the selection of the Congress Committee, and only members confirmed then should be certified to participate in the Congress and elections;
- Likewise, the Elections Committee should be confirmed within the Congress Committee, as stated in the constitution of the PUL;
- Members of the union should contribute to the holding of the Congress, through the payment of their membership fees and dues;
- All efforts should be applied to ensure that the Congress is held over a three-day period.

## **7. Appendix**

### **7.1 Congress Program Order**

#### **ORDER OF PROGRAM**

##### **PRE- CONGRESS ACTIVITIES**

###### **PRE-REGISTRATION:**

Monday - Friday, November 1-5, 2010 - Press Union of Liberia Headquarters

###### **ARRIVAL OF OUTSTATION DELEGATES**

Thursday, November 11, 2010

###### **DAY 1: Friday, November 12, 2010**

7:00am Buses departs for Congress Center  
(PUL Hqtrs & other designated locations)

7:00am -9:00am: Accreditation



7:00pm Departure from Baptist Seminary

**DAY 2: Saturday, November 13, 2010**

7:00am Departure from Press Union of Liberia Headquarters

9:00am **Electoral Session II: Polls Open**

2:00pm Polls Close  
Elections Committee retires to tabulate results  
LUNCH

4:00pm **Closing Session**  
 Adoption of Congress Declaration  
 Announcement of Election Results  
 Inauguration of Officers  
 Keynote Address  
 Inaugural Address  
 National Anthem

7:00pm **Departure from Baptist Seminary**

## 7.2 Communiqué

*The Press Union of Liberia* convened its First National Congress on 12 & 13th November 2010 at the Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary in Paynesville, Liberia in keeping with the dictates of the revised constitution of the union;

*Members gathered in* the two-day session under the theme: ***Positioning the media to strengthen democracy*** and discussed issues relevant to the media leadership & development; reviewed administrative and financial reports and procedures of the union; as well as rights and opportunities for the media;

*The Congress further* hosted two electoral sessions wherein candidates for the 4 offices laid out their plans for providing leadership to the union; and members voted for the candidates of their choice to steer the affairs of the union for the next three years;

*During the deliberations* the Congress heard from the United States Ambassador to Liberia Linda Thomas Greenfield; the Civil Society Advisory Committee; the National Elections Commission; and Trust Africa relative to the significance of the Congress and its themes towards improving the media landscape;

*In further deliberations,* delegates drew attention to the following:

- Limited information and understanding of media development opportunities for journalists and the media scene;
- The role of the Press Union of Liberia in effecting opportunities for media development in Liberia, vis a vis the role of media development organizations;
- The absence of quality data on media circumstances in Liberia;
- Stronger moves by the Press Union of Liberia to stand up for the rights and responsibilities of media practitioners; and

- Stronger resolves to remove impediments from the path of the media.

**Towards finding appropriate** resolutions to those issues, the Congress came forth with the following recommendations:

**To Media and Journalists**

- Recommit to ensuring professionalism and the highest degree of ethical standards in all that you do;
- See your role in journalism as fully professional, and not transitional;
- Enhance respect for the rule of law and emulate virtues to promote peace and understanding within the greater Liberian community;
- Seek opportunities to improve capacity as a journalist, and make this vocation worthy of emulation; and
- Make your journalism reflect the creed that journalists commit to;

**To Leadership of Press Union of Liberia**

- Strengthen role in partnerships for the upliftment of the Liberian and media community;
- Show transparency in partnerships, especially through the Liberia Media Center, to inspire confidence among members;
- Engage civil society partners to show the media more as a member of the greater Liberian community;
- Make activities in the PUL more participatory, ensuring that all members, including women, feel proud of associating for their mutual benefits; and
- Engage the Government of Liberia to begin the process of giving form and effect to the Freedom of Information Act.

**To Government of Liberia**

- Continue empowerment opportunities and strengthen laws and policies that make the environment media friendly and supportive of democratic virtues;
- Support initiatives to strengthen the operating environment of the media, including ensuring the appropriate commercial arrangements and freedom and justice issues;
- Work towards decriminalizing speech offences and other laws that deliberately affect freedom and justice so as to open opportunities for greater media freedom; and
- Effectuate the Freedom of Information laws, so that journalists and the public at large can see and feel the ultimate benefit;

**For the success of the Congress:**

- Participants acknowledged the support of Trust Africa, as well as for its general support to civil society in Liberia and thanked Ambassador Greenfield and other speakers for their insightful contributions; and
- Noted the kind gesture of the Management of the Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary for permitting the congress at their facility; and
- Named Kakata, Margibi County as the site of the next Congress in 2013;

Done in Paynesville, Liberia, this 13th day of November 2010.

**7.3 Election Results**

Candidates	Position	#of votes	Percentage	winner
<b>Julius Kanubah</b>	Asst. Secretary-General	128	68.8%	*

<b>Winnie Saywah</b>	Asst. Secretary-General	58	31.2%	
<b>Charles Coffey, Jr.</b>	Secretary General	110	58.8%	**
<b>Siatta Scott-Johnson</b>	Secretary-General	77	41.2%	
<b>Jacob Parley</b>	Vice President	76	40.2%	
<b>Melissa Chea-Annan</b>	Vice President	113	59.8%	***
<b>Peter Quaqua</b>	President	138	72.6%	****
<b>Augustus Fallah</b>	President	52	27.4%	

#### 7.4 Congress Preparatory Committee

K. Abdullai Kamara—**Chairman**

Nah Davies

Sheriff Z. Adams

Rose Kaiwuh

John T. Monibah

Ahmed Jallanzo

Darlington Poka

D. Kaihenneh Sengbeh

Melody Mezay

Eddie Harmon

#### **Elections Committee**

Fr. Anthony Borwah—**Chairman**

Joseph M. Cheeseman

Zoe Horace

Torwon Sulunteh-Browne

Martin F. Kerkulah

## 8. ANNEX

### 8.1 Opening Address – US Ambassador

#### **Remarks by Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield At Press Union of Liberia First National Congress**

Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary, Paynesville

November 12, 2010, 9:00 a.m.

Mr. Abdullai Kamara, Chairman, Congress Preparatory Committee,

President Peter Quaqua, Press Union of Liberia,

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning:

Let me first congratulate the officers and members of the Press Union of Liberia for your service and accomplishment in the past three years. Thank you for inviting me and I am delighted to be with you at the opening of your first annual National Congress. The theme that you have selected, “Positioning the Media to Strengthen Democracy in Liberia” could not be more timely and appropriate for your country. You are positioned to strengthen democracy in Liberia by effectively supporting the upcoming elections. I wish you success in your deliberations and in electing leaders with dedication, professional commitment, and with leadership skills to transform the union into a responsible voice for the people of Liberia.



You continue to serve your country by lending a voice to those without voices. You are the vital source of important information for your people and you have the ability to reach people in urban and rural locations, practically the entire country. You air and write about issues that affect the lives of ordinary people. Through your reporting, people can be educated and forewarned of problems and issues, so they can make better choices about their future. This is a huge job and with it comes a huge responsibility that demands codes of ethics and fairness in the profession that you have chosen to pursue.

I may have shared with you in the past that I first visited Liberia some 30 years ago as a student to conduct research. My recollection is that the press was relatively free at that time. Unfortunately, a great deal of strife and devastation has taken place since then, which has deeply affected the country, including your profession. Rebuilding takes enormous efforts and progress is slow in coming but is being made every day, including in the Fourth Estate. Today, there are more newspapers, radio stations and television stations covering the national scene and the quality and content of the news, editorial, and investigative reporting has improved markedly. Let me add that I appreciate your work in general and your interest and engagement with the Embassy in particular.

You play a crucial role in shaping and strengthening your democracy. Through print, radio and television you make Liberians aware of social, political and economical activities taking place in their communities, in the nation, and in the world. When you report on corruption whether it is in government or business, you expose the culprits who abuse public trust. This is the first and most important step in getting to the bottom of the truth and deterring corruption. Also, the fact that you're reporting on such sensitive issues without fear or intimidation by government demonstrates the steady progress that Liberia is making collectively.

Today, respect for freedom of speech, freedom of the press is vibrant in your country. Last month, your government passed the Freedom of Information Act, the first in West Africa. It did not come easy. For two years, the Press Union of Liberia and others pressed on to have the law passed. It is a victory for Liberian democracy and you deserve to be congratulated. These gains in your profession are in line with progress that is being made in strengthening the security system, democratic institutions, and economic growth in Liberia. Consolidating these gains will contribute to the long term development and prosperity of your country. Hence, these efforts must continue and these gains must be guarded.

After I accepted an invitation to speak before you, I reflected on one important message that I would like to convey which relates closely to your theme for this Congress, "Positioning the Media to Strengthen Democracy in posit that you have the most important role. I want to encourage you to redouble your efforts to support the upcoming elections. As the National Elections Commission (NEC) works to carry its mandate for the 2011 elections, your role to provide timely and accurate information to the public should intensify. Unlike previous elections, this one will mark a crucial chapter in your history.

The news media will be at the center of this important time. Let me offer some advice, if I may. Don't assume. Find out from the people about the most important issues on their minds and have the politicians address those issues. Unbiased, accurate information will help the electorate make informed choices when voting. A plurality of opinions and ideas enrich the public debate about important issues of public policy and help define with what party or candidate voters identify.

During your 2005 elections, I came as an observer to Liberia. The international community, particularly the United Nations, played a central role in facilitating the elections. Due to the devastating effects of the civil war, local institutions did not have capacity. And the role of the Liberian news media was limited. However, during the 2009 Montserrado senatorial bi-elections, which the NEC conducted, I observed a more engaged Liberian news media. The press, radio, and television accurately reported on what worked and on the short comings for example, when ballots were not delivered to the polling situations in a timely manner. During the run-off elections, some of the glitches were corrected. As observers, my colleagues and I visited several polling stations and what we saw was an orderly process.

Governments and people from around the world will be watching closely on how Liberians conduct themselves before, during, and after the upcoming elections. Your country will be under a microscope. Your role in contributing to free and fair elections is paramount despite the capacity weakness that you experience in your profession. We know that community radio stations are the number one source of information across Liberia. However, the sector is hurting for lack of capacity and is plagued with recurring technical problems that could be addressed by provision of equipment and technical training for its use and maintenance, and one on one mentoring. In the print media, limited capacity, lack of resources, equipment and the basic necessities to perform their tasks presents limitations. There is a need to help the news media prepare to effectively cover the 2011 elections. Organizations such as the Press Union of Liberia are uniquely positioned to advance the professionalism of the media, help improve conditions of service, and play an important role in the continued restoration of peace and good governance in Liberia.

We are contributing to media and civil society development in Liberia. USAID is implementing a five-year, \$11 million dollars Civil Society and Media Program in Montserrado, Bong , Nimba, Lofa, Grand Bassa, River Gee and Grand Gedeh. The goal is to empower civil society to play an important role in democracy and good governance for the provision of essential services, promotion of the public interest and advocacy, and serve as an independent “watchdog” on the government and private sector. All of these activities demonstrate that the news media has come a long way.

As the National Election Commission is making preparations to conduct smooth elections, I urge you to develop a strategy for your media houses. In order for the public to have faith in the process, you must canvass issues important to them; ask candidates hard questions on their behalf; and report correct and truthful information on the registration process, issues, and transparency of candidates. Focusing on issues and not personalities is critical. Nonpartisan reporting is essential to allow the public to make up their minds solely on the basis of what candidates are offering. Begin training your employees on effective election reporting. Some of you participated in the workshops facilitated by Professor Mitchell Land, organized by Press Union of Liberia and our Public Affairs Office.

I implore you to be honest. You owe that to your profession and to the people of Liberia. Corruption is not something that is only practiced by the politicians. It is also in your midst. We regularly hear about “check book” reporters, It is also in your midst. We regularly hear about “check book” reporters, those who will not only print all the news that is fit to print but will also print whatever the highest payer will pay for.

I beg you to be responsible. Do not allow yourselves to be used to bait people into violence by irresponsible individuals who would use violence to promote their own selfish individual ambitions.

I challenge you to be professional. Do your homework! Check the facts and know that what you report has a tremendous impact on people's lives.

In conclusion, I want to stress that you have a job to do and, in the words of a good friend of mine and to Liberia, the SRS, "don't mess it up." The Liberian people will depend on you to offer balanced information; the international community will pay attention to your performance; and your peers will judge you on your contribution to strengthening democracy in Liberia.

I wish you well now and in 2011 because the success of democracy in Liberia is as important to you as it is to the people of Liberia. Press freedom is one of the most important tenets of a strong democracy that is for the people, by the people and of the people. I look forward to congratulating you and the people of Liberia in 2012 for a job well done!

Thank you.

## 8.2 Induction Address

### **Induction Speech delivered by Peter Quaqua, on his second term as President of the Press Union of Liberia held at the Monrovia YMCA – Friday, December 3, 2010**

*Our Guest of Honor, Your Excellency, Mrs. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf;  
Veteran Journalist and Induction Officer, Stanton Peabody;*

*Minister Cletus Sieh, Minister of Information; Pastor Samuel B. Reeves, Jr. of the Providence Baptist Church; Members of Civil Society;*

*Former officials of the PUL; media owners; colleagues; Mrs. Benetta Quaqua and kid; Relatives and friends; Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen;*



There is a theory on the effects of the media called agenda setting. It is the power of the media to influence decisions and attitudes in society. I am convinced that we've set the agenda for the 2011 elections by the peaceful and successful transition from one era to a new age in the life of the Press Union of Liberia. Our desire for institutional reform reached new heights recently as we hosted the first national congress in 46 years from November 12 to 13, 2010 at the Baptist Seminary where we discussed the media and elected our officials. It is pleasing to note that this is an important example for national leaders and politicians to emulate ahead of 2011. I salute the Congress committee headed by Comrade Abdullai Kamara for planning and executing this inaugural event as well as members of the Election Commission chaired by Fth. Anthony Borwah for the peaceful conduct of the elections. Both committees shall however cease to exist by the time this address is over so please join me let's give them a round of applause for this achievement. Congratulations!

I feel particularly blessed and humbled to be the one to take the oath of office for the second term as the team leader at the Press Union of Liberia with the overwhelming mandate of the membership.

This result is a genuine testimony of our leading role in the democratization of our country. I am personally indebted to the entire PUL membership for this honor. I should also like to seize this moment to applaud our colleagues who mustered the courage to compete in the elections – your participation in the process made it unique and all the more memorable. Those of you who did not win, we acknowledge your individual strength and energy and shall not hesitate in calling on you to provide services to our Union- we are all winners. To those of us who are being inducted tonight, we should remind ourselves of the biblical saying that to whom much is given, much is expected. We have been chosen at such a time as this, to uphold the values and vision of our Union with dedication as we together seek to protect the space in which we operate. We cannot afford to betray their trust.

Distinguished guests, my kindness cannot allow me to go forward with this speech without stopping to acknowledge the pioneering role of our veteran colleagues and forefathers, who gave birth to this child that we celebrate tonight. Please join me stand for a moment of silence to pay homage to their sainted memories for their contributions to our profession and country. [Silence...THANKS]. We also praise God for those who are still around providing wisdom and good example for the new generation of journalists. May you live forever, Stanton Peabody.

My friends, two years ago when we stood before you to deliver similar message, we spoke to you about the challenges of institutional reform and development, we spoke about capacity building and training, we spoke about improving the working conditions and safety of journalists, the economy of the media, transparency and accountability, standard and ethics, women participation and increased visibility of the Union across the country.

We also spoke to you about the challenge of upholding integrity and combating repression that seeks to trample on freedoms and liberties. I come to report to you that two years down the road, much is desired in reaching all of our goals. As we recount some of the minimal achievements we've made, I am proud to say that we successfully revised our constitution, though stay wanting. This is why we went to congress; this is why we are now a trade union; this is why we have four elected officials and not five this time and this is why this new leadership will serve for three years in office as opposed to two years. We believe this change in tenure will ensure some stability and that measurable achievements are made in the operation of the union.

Comrades, in two years we laid the foundation upon which we can ensure protection for the entire media space and practitioners in Liberia through the establishment of regional offices in Gbarnga, Bong County and Buchanan, Grand Bassa County. In two years, we provoked a debate with support from the International Federation of Journalists/IFJ on the working conditions and safety of journalists in our country. With our trade union status, we have now positioned ourselves to begin social dialogue with media owners on bettering the conditions of service of our colleagues in the workplace. This is a challenge that we can't run away from. The 'bread and butter' issue should be given equal attention as we deal with the question of safety for journalists. This is why we urge our government to place on its agenda investigation of attacks on journalists and take punitive actions against those guilty of abuse. Nobody whether government official or security personnel or member of the public should manhandle a journalist and go with impunity.

Your Excellency and platform guests, ethical journalism remains a huge challenge here and elsewhere in Africa and the world. The temptation thus always exist in countries like ours trying to have a foothold on democracy to exercise coercive control over the media but thank God the idea of self-regulation and peer review has begun making some small sense to our authorities. It is obviously in the interest of the media to either submit to self-regulation or be controlled by the harsh laws and unfriendly regimes. So as we try to watch ourselves, we held journalists accountable to a minimal standard of practice that fell short of their sense of nobility and good taste. I submit to you that ethical conduct is not the responsibility of journalists alone. Everyone who works in a media house and users of media product should get involved. That is why the IFJ out-going Secretary-General Aidan White would say, "The best media managers and owners will spend time not only on profit, but on high quality content."

My friends, there is one thing that few people here will disagree with – the imperfection of mankind. Yes, we all make mistakes. But in spite of the human imperfection, people generally recognize that there are moral limitations that one should never cross. Most of us would also agree that there is a difference between unintentional falsehood and outright slander. Media owners/employers must do everything to insist on quality in their recruitment policies because mediocrity is eating the fabric of our profession. I consider it an attack on journalism to employ people who lack the intelligence to practice as a journalist. This is unfair. We cannot afford to erode our own credibility and thereby lose our relevance.

The out-going IFJ Secretary-General also observes "that there can be no consistent body or quality journalism unless the principles of media freedom are protected by the state. Constitutional rights are more than window dressing for democracy. They must be upheld in practice."

Madam President, the Press Union cannot hide its feelings about your signing into law of the Freedom of Information Act. We maintain that this is the biggest signing in the history of our country. Arguably it is bigger than all the concession agreements combined because the ordinary citizen can demand full disclosure of those agreements and the benefits they accrued to the country; but more than that the signing raises the profile of our government so much so that we are still being celebrated in the sub-region as the first to do so.

We are aware of the problems associated with implementing the law, but we are convinced that the political will and determination shown by the administration to get the instrument enacted will be applied to the implementation. One partner is quoted by one of my colleagues as warning that if the rest of the sub-region does not feel the impact of the law in Liberia, the country will be blamed for whatever resistance other countries may develop to the passage of the law. This means we have to do everything to maintain this good example by implementing the law.

But your Excellency let me quickly call your attention to the remaining anti-speech laws on our books that could hinder the implementation of the FOI.

Reference is made to the law on sedition, Criminal Libel against the President and Criminal malevolence. They are all counterproductive to the spirit and intent of Freedom of Information. We should combine efforts to abolish them. These laws are not any less repugnant than the infamous decree 88A.

The PUL already has a bill in circulation to repeal the instruments and is waiting to be introduced in

the legislature. We shall share with you the bill for your comments and input. The bill was drafted free of charge by Former Solicitor General Tiawan Gongloe. It will interest you to know that he finished the draft while serving as Solicitor General.

Under the same breath madam President, we like to inform you about the global campaign launched by the World Association of Newspaper to get leaders around the world sign onto the "Table Mountain Declaration." The campaign seeks to repeal criminal defamation laws in Africa and set a free press higher on the agenda. The Director for Press Freedom & Media Development at the World Association of Newspapers is quoting as saying Madam, that there is an opportunity for the first sitting president of an African state to sign the declaration and he thinks madam president you may be that candidate. We ask you therefore to kindly give the campaign a thought.

Distinguished guests, one key outcome of democracy is the holding of elections. In societies where the foundation and practice of democracy are weak, elections are a major source for tension. They can at worst trigger violent conflicts.

This is why the media occupies a very important place in the democratization process –but reference is always made to their susceptibility to manipulation by politicians and big money people. As we prepare for elections next year, we call on the players not to use the media for the wrong reasons. But essentially I implore journalists to keep the integrity of the media in focus and resist any such temptations for the sake of peace.

The World Bank Institute's publication entitled, the "Right to Tell" presents what it calls the ten commandment (plus 1) of decent journalist after communism. This is an article written by a journalist in Poland as the country reflected on its communist past in honor of democracy. I like to quote excerpts from commandments one and the additional 11<sup>th</sup>.

Commandment 1: And God spoke all these words, saying: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house bondage. You shall have no other gods before me." This is how he interprets this commandment: "Our God, who led us out from bondage, has two names: Freedom and truth. To this God we must subornate ourselves completely. This God is jealous. He demands absolute loyalty. If we bow to other gods – the state, the nation, the family, public security – at the expense of freedom and truth, we shall be punished with the loss of reliability. Without reliability, one cannot be a journalist. Freedom means equal liberties for everybody, not only for me, but also for my antagonist, for everyone who thinks differently. We must defend freedom for all, because this is the essence of our profession and vocation. The only limitation to our freedom is the truth. We are allowed to publish everything we write, but we are forbidden to lie. A journalist's lie is not only a sin against the principles of our profession, it is also a blasphemy against our God. A lie always leads to enslavement. Only the truth has liberating power.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that we can feel superior, that we are the repositories of the ultimate truth, and that we are allowed, in the name of this truth, to silence others. Simply put, we are not allowed to lie, even if it is convenient to us or to our friends.

The additional 11<sup>th</sup> commandment says, Do not Mix. Many of us who drink alcohol understand what this means. It says do not mix vodka, beer, plum brandy with champagne, the result is an awful hangover. He says journalism is neither politics nor religious service... each area has its own ethical codes. A politician should not pretend to be a priest; a journalist should not pretend to be a politician. A businessman must seek a decent profit, and a journalist must stick to truth and

freedom.

Corruption can infect all areas of public life. We know politicians who get rich when they should not get rich, we know priest who incite hatred, we know businessmen who steal and give bribes. We also know corrupt journalists who use propaganda instead of information, pseudo-advertisements instead of reliable descriptions and noisy smear campaigns instead of sensible discussions.”

Ladies and gentlemen, experience from the 2005 elections showed that politicians always want to use the media to lie on their opponents, they want unfair advantage – they incite conflict and shape the blame on us. We should resist their machinations in spite of the odds for the sake of our country.

The former president of CBS News Richard Salant is quoted as saying, “Our job isn’t... to give people what they’re interested in... our job is to provide people with basic data that make democracy work...we are engaged in a great moral enterprise.”

Please let’s uphold what the Auditor general referred to as our remaining integrity for the sake of the state and our friends who, through pains and pleasure brought the Press Union to this date.

Wish you all a very merry Christmas and a redemptive New Year.

### 8.3 Keynote Address |



“Building a New Partnership with the Media: A Conversation with PUL”  
Keynote Address by H.E. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf  
At Induction of Officers of the Press Union of Liberia  
YMCA Building, Broad Street, Monrovia  
Friday, December 3, 2010

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Press Union of Liberia:

I find it befitting to start this intervention by paying tribute to Mr. Stanton Peabody, whose personal struggles and boldness led to the creation of the Press Union of Liberia, in 1964. Much has happened since those days. Today, in Liberia, nobody would be arrested for calling

members of any branch of the government “names.” The freedom of expression we enjoy today as a nation is partly a result of the immense sacrifices and unrelenting struggles of members of the press. Those achievements are indeed proof that the “pen is mightier than the sword.”

Mr. Peabody has survived many who have tried to silence him over the years. He lost several colleagues, who were either forced into exile, and others, like Charles Gbenyon, who paid the ultimate price. In the past decades, many of you have come face to face with the challenge of saying things as they are, standing on the side of the truth and the people.

Those challenging moments in the life of a press person are determining as to where you would go. You can use your pen for the general good, or opt for your own survival. In politics as in the media, we are all faced with the same difficult choices every day. How we proceed determines our place in history. And among you, today, there are many uncompromising men and women of the pen whom I would like to salute on this occasion. I would like to salute them on behalf of us, Liberians, who have counted on their honesty, truthfulness and commitment to the ideals of free speech and freedom of the press for the greater good.

Since its inception in the early 1960s, the Press Union of Liberia has been at the vanguard of the struggle for the freedom of expression, the primary layer of the foundation of a free and democratic society. Cognizant of the sacrificial role played by the men and women of this august institution, I want to assure you that this Administration will never take any measure nor will it be associated with any measure that would scale back the gains made towards the total freedom of the press. Without a free press, we cannot speak of a free society, because the press is the mirror and the voice of society.

We are here today to honor your new President, Mr. Peter Quaqua, the man you have elected for a second term. We want to congratulate him and his team for a job well done. We also want to congratulate each and every one of you who has worked tirelessly and under difficult conditions to make the Press Union what it is today: a vibrant institution. We live in a very volatile society, where rumors, character assassination and their other associated ills are common. To survive those hurdles and get re-elected by one’s peers can be considered a mark of tenacity, hard work and the capacity to build consensus. These are all true mark of leadership. Therefore, Mr. Quaqua, I want to congratulate you for your stewardship of the PUL and we extend a hand of cooperation and partnership to you and your institution.

Your struggle is our struggle; we are bound together by the communality of our fight for justice, equality, and a free and fair society.

Let me say again: “The Pen Is Mightier than the Sword.”

This is not the first time you hear these words. But I want to use them to describe our historical and political context. For two decades, this nation has been subjected to the scourge of men with weapons of every caliber to run our destiny as they wished. For a short while in our long national journey towards democracy and open society, guns became the ultimate tools for the

control of power. But that control by the sword was for short a time and we have now made great strides. We are now on our way to achieve a pluralistic society, under the rule of the law, with freedom for all. This is what the likes of Charles Gbenyon, Rufus Darpoh, Lamini Warritay, Klon Hinneh, Allen Williams, Kenneth Best Stanton Peabody today represent, and many others have been advocating. Because no one cared to listen to them, because nobody took them seriously, we had that terrible two decades of mayhem and destruction.

The advocacy carried out by the founding members of the PUL still stands as one of the most important aspects of the fight for freedom, justice and free expression in this nation. The sword – or the guns – may have triumphed for short laps – but in the end the pen survived because its work and intents are driven by wisdom and the belief in the peaceful resolution of human issues.

Now that we have found freedom of speech, what do we do with it?

If the pen is mightier than the sword – or the gun – there is no doubt that those who use the pen must learn to use it with great care. I am not going to lecture you about the “responsibility of the press” as that has been done before. In most cases, those words were used mostly to patronize the media, and to try to direct its work and cow it into submission. We believe that the primary responsibility of the press is to inform and educate the public and serve as a conduit for public sentiments. If there were any other responsibilities, they would be to work hard to strengthen your institution, which you must never forget are also business ventures.

Those who fought for political plurality in the larger society also worked to achieve the rule of the pen, which can also be defined as the rule of law. Those who stood against the many forms of injustice and tyranny in our society did so because they also wanted a society where contradictory ideas in their diversity will serve to build consensual society where people are respected for the depth of their thoughts rather than feared because of the size of their weapons.

Because of this communality of purpose, it is incumbent on us to work together to build that new nation that we have all been yearning for.

We are here to talk about partnership between government and the press. Yes, I am well aware that in the past, when leaders stood here and spoke of partnership between the media and the government, what they usually meant was that the press should be subjected to the whims of a particular political group.

That is not what we are seeking. It is actually what we all fought against. That type of conspiracy between government and the press is what leads to autocracy and it is the absolute opposite of the kind of partnership we are here to talk about.

It is our firm belief that the media has the same good intention that everyone has towards the achievement of our development goals.

Our role, as a government, is to create the environment where freedom of expression

flourishes, where people have no fear of expressing their ideas, and a society where nobody goes to jail or is punished for speaking the truth. Our role is to ensure that those fundamentals serve as the foundation upon which our society is built as we carry out the various development projects and social transformation.

As we strive to run an administration, the most important partner we have is the press. It is through the press that we know if what we are doing is right or does not serve the people well. It is through the press that we know what the people think and what they expect from their government. We can only build a strong government that takes care of the needs of the people if we have a clear appreciation of those needs and if we are told that policies we implement make sense or don't. Only the press is capable of playing that role of conveyor of responses. Only the press can convey the balanced reporting that enhances the confidence of investors and partners to promote the development that benefit all.

The partnership I am referring to can flourish between two independent institutions. The independence of the media is one of the cardinal aspects of its freedom. If the press were to be dependent on the government for handouts to survive, it could not fulfill that role of guide and whistleblower.

As we strengthen our institutions of governance, we look forward to the press growing stronger and more independent. Economic strength is a vital aspect of the growth of the media just as it is for the state. If you are only able to go to press sporadically, depending on the numbers of advertisements, or if a station can only go on the air whenever it can afford fuel for the generator, the impact of your work will be minimal. Of course, competition breeds quality work, but sometimes, when you look at the headlines, you see the same stories on and on. That is when we wish sometimes that we had stronger media institutions capable of carrying out the type of analytical stories that can guide all of us. But that will come in time, and we are sure that many of you are working to get together.

For the media to do the kind work it is expected in the new socio-political environment we live in, it must have the means to produce quality work and carry out studies, investigations and research. Those of you who have lived in the West or other African countries can testify to what I am alluding to. For example, if you want to help government tackle an issue, you must have the means to study that issue, you must have the personnel to research the topic, you need good editors to put the stories together, and you must also have the resources to follow up. This is why we all need to look at the media also from an economic perspective, see it as a business venture that needs to prosper and provide decent living wages for its practitioners. Media institutions must have the same access to credit and loans as any business. And, as any business, they must build their own credibility.

You all know that upon assuming the leadership of this nation in 2006, we declared "corruption" as enemy number one. We recognize that the press has been very helpful in exposing cases of malfeasance in the government. It has spoken up when there were cases that needed to be brought to the public attention. However, in many instances, the press fell short

on two counts: one, it rarely carried out the kind of investigative reporting that would allow the public to clearly understand what went on; and at times it failed to get the other side of the story, something that is crucial in fair reporting. I am sure those aspects will be corrected as the press becomes a stronger institution.

Speaking about corruption, we think the press would have also been helpful if it looked at how our administration kept the promise in removing that cancer from our public institutions. We came into power after years of mismanagement and bad governance, with the corollary abuses of power. In our attempt to fight corruption, we were not going to revert to those instruments of abuse that almost destroyed our society. We sought to build institutional capacity to deal with the issues. First, we raised salaries so that people are less vulnerable to petty corruption. And second, we created institutions such as the General Auditing Commission, the Anti-Corruption Commission, and the Public Procurement and Contracts Commission. We passed laws such as the Freedom of Information Act and the Whistle Blower Act. We are now strengthening the judiciary to ensure that the prosecutorial branch of government is more capable. We think that any discussion of corruption must take those developments into account. We must also recognize and point to this societal problem which goes beyond government. Sometimes, it is important to shift paradigms in a debate to have a clear and total view of things.

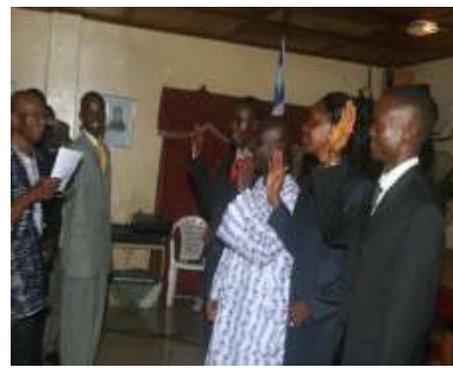
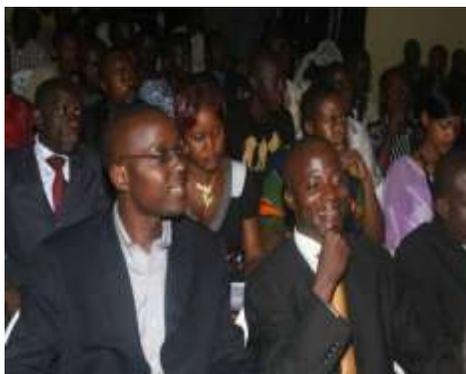
Before I end, I would like to speak to an issue that has been in the media recently, and that is the \$100,000 which we received from friends who want to help the media and we passed it on to you. A lot has been written on it. I just want to say that our intention has never been to influence the media in its reporting. This was a friendly response from a friendly partner to a need expressed by the media. We hope that you will find a way to resolve that issue and that very soon we will all see that modern, state-of-the-art press house.

All of this is to say that we must look at the media from a different perspective than we usually do. It can and it must work in partnership with government, not as a dependent but as one of the pillars of the democracy that we are attempting to build. One can say without hesitation that the press is one of the most important pillars of a free and democratic society.

PUL has great challenges before it. You must not only serve as watchdog for society, you must also regulate yourself. You must set your own guidelines, to become your own judges and serve as a mirror of the larger society. In doing so, you will help us who are in government, and that is the kind of partnership we seek, the unity of purpose, all efforts towards a common national goal, to strengthen our institutions so that together we can build that vibrant society and set the pace. The press will serve as the best reflection of the renaissance we have all been yearning for and which is just starting to point at the horizon. Together, we can make it. Having come so far, for all of us there is no turning back.

I thank you.

# A Pictorial of the Induction



Kaino Gbala of Trust Africa



Pastor Reeves of the Baptist Ch



S. Freeman of IFES



PUL V.P Melissa C-Annan



Zoager Jaynes & Prof Wolo



Stanton Peabody, induction officer



Abdullai Kamara, Congress Chair



Info Min. Sieh & Pres. Sirleaf