

**Remarks by  
H.E. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf  
At Launch of Law Reform Commission's Five-Year  
Strategic Plan  
C. Cecil Dennis, Jr. Auditorium  
Friday, September 2, 2011**

Cllr. Banks and Commissioners of the Law Reform Commission;  
Members of the National Legislature;  
Members of the Judiciary and Legal Practitioners;  
Ministers and Other Officials of Government;  
Development Partners;  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

We have, on many occasions, spoken of the need to improve our legal framework and chart a course for sustaining the rule of law in Liberia. Our nation's sustained development goals are contingent on maintaining the rule of law, keeping the peace, and dispensing justice to all our people.

Yet, we lacked the institution that could propel the momentum towards achieving these objectives. Our justice system had malfunctioned in the course of the armed intervention into the constitutional democracy and the ensuing civil conflict.

Much of the problems, we were told, were the result of our not attending to the critical justice needs of the nation; our laws remained outdated and could not meet, in many instances, international scrutiny. There was need to embark on a reform process.

Our friends and partners recognized these shortcomings in our system and, following the cessation of hostilities, began studying the factors leading to the conflict. The result was the preparation of a comprehensive Report.

In May 2006, just months after we came into office, the Special Rule of Law Task Force, after extensive work on the problems that led to our civil conflict, submitted its Report to us. Among the factors cited was the malfunctioning of our justice system and the inadequacy of our laws.

The Report recommended, as an immediate solution to the problem, the creation of a Law Reform Commission, an institution that would be responsible for redesigning the laws of Liberia to meet the growing needs and expectations of our people, especially as those relate to the justice sector.

The Ministry of Justice after review, and acceptance of the Report, constituted, with my approval, a Special Law Reform Commission Task Force. That body, after further study, not only endorsed the recommendation of the Rule of Law Task Force, but went further to prepare a draft Act for submission to the National Legislature. The Governance Commission, too, after studying the relevant documents, recommended the establishment of a Law Reform Commission.

Thus, as the Commission itself has recognized, its establishment was not by accident, but a deliberate and conscious act by the Government to bring order, coordination and progress to our law formulation pursuits.

We are pleased that as part of executing its many mandates, the LRC has undertaken the preparation of a Five-Year Strategic Plan, to serve as a road map in pursuing certain goals. As a vital institution to our nation, the Law Reform Commission must not only attend to coordinating the law reform process, but working with the Ministry of Justice and our partners, it must help bring our laws up to date, to international standards, and meet the needs of our people. The strategic Plan meets this requirement.

I am therefore very pleased that, within the two years of its existence, the LRC has formulated this Plan, consistent with Government's Five-Year Development Plan, which will ensure that the Government meets the needs of the justice and other related sectors for the promotion of justice and the rule of law in Liberia.

Commissioner Barbu has presented a detailed overview of the Strategic Plan and the many stakeholders involved in the process. This is a great step for the Commission. We are therefore pleased to launch this Five-Year Strategic.

I thank you.