

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, December 22, 2011 1:24 PM
To: H
Subject: FW: President Sirleaf Makes Renewed Pitch For Secretary to Attend Liberian Inauguration

From: Carson, Johnnie
Sent: Thursday, December 22, 2011 10:04 AM
To: Sherman, Wendy R; Toiv, Nora F; Verveer, Melanne S; Abedin, Huma; Wells, Alice G
Cc: Sullivan, Jacob J; Mills, Cheryl D; Mull, Stephen D; Neville, Colleen C; Elliott, Maria B; Yamamoto, Donald Y; Brooks, Russell K
Subject: President Sirleaf Makes Renewed Pitch For Secretary to Attend Liberian Inauguration

All:

I spoke this morning (12/22) with President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia. I said the Secretary was in route to the funeral of former Czech President Vaclav Havel and that I had been asked to call her on behalf of the Secretary. President Sirleaf said the purpose of her call to the Secretary was to make a strong appeal for Secretary Clinton to come to her inauguration on January 16. Sirleaf said it would be a clear signal of continued USG support if the Secretary attends. The Secretary's absence, Sirleaf said, would be read as a sign of dissatisfaction with the elections and with President Sirleaf herself. Sirleaf also noted that former Secretary Rice had attended her first inauguration ceremony. I replied quickly that President Sirleaf should have no doubt as to the extent of the Secretary Clinton's strong and unequivocal support for her, or the Administration's continued solid support for Liberia and the job she has done in promoting economic progress and consolidating the peace. I said "the Secretary supports you 150%, she thinks very highly of you." I told Sirleaf that at this point I don't think the Secretary's schedule will permit her to attend the inauguration but I would bring her appeal to her attention. I also mentioned that the Secretary and the Department have been pushing the WH for an impressive and influential Presidential delegation led by a cabinet member. I promised to follow-up on the composition of the delegation and let her know as soon as possible who would be coming.

President Sirleaf said "very well but please pass along my strong appeal to Secretary Clinton" nevertheless.

The President also said she looked forward to seeing me at the Inauguration and discussing a range of issues. I said I would be there and I looked forward to meeting her. I also congratulated her on her Nobel Peace Prize speech which I said was very well received here.

Johnnie