

SPECIAL ADDRESS BY

HIS EXCELLENCY JOSEPH NYUMA BOAKAI, SR.

President of the Republic of Liberia

On the Fight Against Illicit Drug Trafficking in the Country

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MY FELLOW LIBERIANS:

I come to you this evening to reaffirm a solemn commitment: this Administration will enforce the law without fear or favor while protecting the constitutional rights of every person.

Over the past several days, developments in our country have sparked public discussion, concern, and, in some cases, misinformation. As President, I believe it is my duty to speak directly to you, offer reassurance, and make clear that justice must be pursued firmly, fairly, and independently.

When you entrusted me with the leadership of this country, you did so with a clear expectation: that I would uphold the Constitution, govern with integrity, strengthen our institutions, and ensure that no one is above the law.

Liberia faces serious challenges, but we are making deliberate progress through the ARREST Agenda for Inclusive Development. Yet none of our work in the economy, education, infrastructure, or public institutions can succeed unless it is anchored in one fundamental principle: THE RULE OF LAW.

One of the greatest threats facing our nation is the growing menace of illicit drugs and organized crime. Drugs are destroying young lives, weakening families, fueling violence, and threatening our country's future. Let me re-echo here that this is not simply a law enforcement issue; it is a national security and moral issue.

Consistent with our pledge, my Administration has intensified the fight against narcotics trafficking, money laundering, and organized crime. Our security institutions have been directed to act professionally, independently, and without fear or favor, working with national and international partners to prevent Liberia from becoming a transit point for illegal drugs or a safe haven for criminal networks.

Let me be clear: this campaign is deliberate, coordinated, and unrelenting. It is intended to defend the Liberian people, protect the Liberian character, and safeguard our nation's future.

This national campaign against drugs and organized crime is not directed at any individual, party, or political movement; it is directed at conduct that threatens the safety, stability, and future of Liberia.

In recent days, the arrest and detention of former Vice President Jewel Howard Taylor has understandably drawn national and international attention.

I assure every Liberian, our regional neighbors, and our international partners that former Vice President Taylor is being treated in full compliance with the Constitution and laws of Liberia. She is presumed innocent, has access to legal counsel, and is entitled to due process, which will be upheld.

The former Vice President has been arrested and charged in accordance with our legal procedures. It is not the President's role to determine guilt or innocence. That responsibility belongs to our independent justice system.

Our democracy will be measured not by how we treat those with whom we agree, but by how faithfully we uphold the rights of every person who comes before the law.

To those who have expressed concern, I say this: your concern is legitimate in a democracy, but guilt or innocence must be determined by the courts, not by politics, rumor, conjecture, or public pressure.

My Administration will neither persecute nor shield anyone because of political affiliation, office, status, or influence. Whether one has held high office, served in

government, led a business, or lived as an ordinary citizen, the law must apply equally to all.

I commend the men and women of our Joint Security for their professionalism, courage, and devotion to duty. Despite pressure and attempts at intimidation, and calculated misinformation, they must remain steadfast, impartial, and respectful of the rights and dignity of all citizens.

This fight cannot be won by government alone. I ask parents, communities, schools, religious institutions, traditional leaders, and young people to reject misinformation, support prevention, report criminal activity through lawful channels, and allow due process to proceed.

I call on political and religious leaders, civil society, and public commentators to act responsibly. Differences of opinion are healthy in a democracy, but we must reject words and actions that incite violence, undermine institutions, or seek to intimidate those enforcing our laws.

Liberia has come too far to revert to a culture in which justice is swayed by fear, power, or political pressure. Our nation has endured conflict, hardship, and division, yet we have shown resilience and commitment to peace. Let us preserve that peace by upholding the Constitution and strengthening the institutions that safeguard our democracy.

As your President, I assure you that this Government remains committed to justice, fairness, accountability, and peace. We will govern without fear or favor, protect every citizen's rights, and build a Liberia where peace is preserved, justice is impartial, and accountability applies equally to all.

May God continue to bless you, preserve our peace, and save our republic.

Thank you.