

Statement by His Excellency Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr. President of the Republic of Liberia on The Official Launch of the Employee Status Regularization Program and Unveiling of Consultants

Special Press Briefing

Ministry of Information Cultural Affairs and Tourism (MICAT)

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Today marks a significant milestone in our administration's journey. It is a day of immense pride and progress as we gather to launch one of our leading programs, the Employee Status Regularization Project (ESRP), dedicated to enhancing employment and payroll transparency and accountability in the government. This project is a significant step forward for my administration and a leap towards a more efficient, transparent, and accountable civil service.

Our government's ARREST Agenda, rooted in transparency and accountability, is the cornerstone of our actions. The launch of the Employee Status Regularization Project (ESRP) is a testament to this commitment. By cleansing the bloated payroll system we inherited, we aim to create a more productive workforce with improved wages for our hardworking civil servants. This initiative is not just a part of our agenda, but a significant stride towards its realization.

The ESRP is a testament to our dedication to these principles. This comprehensive employee headcount and physical verification exercise will not only identify and remove ghost names, double dippers, and unqualified individuals from our payroll system, but also significantly improve the wages of legitimate civil servants and provide opportunities for qualified professionals to deliver efficient and effective services. This is a major step towards a more productive and efficient civil service.

This initiative aligns perfectly with our ARREST Agenda, promoting transparency and accountability across all sectors. I am pleased to report that the ESRP has

already made significant strides, covering 26 out of the 103 government Spending Entities. Progressive reports have revealed huge numbers of ghost names, double dippers, unqualified and inefficient employees, duplicate names, and National Identification Numbers (NIN) on the payroll.

These discrepancies and inefficiencies are not just numbers on a balance sheet. They represent a significant loss to our government, amounting to millions monthly. The Employee Status Regularization Project (ESRP), designed and implemented by the Civil Service Agency (CSA), is our robust response to this financial drain. By addressing these issues, we aim to not only strengthen and manage our payroll system but also significantly reduce these financial losses, ensuring it operates with transparency and efficiency, and improving compensations for qualified employees.

By identifying all legitimate government employees and improving payroll data collection, we aim to minimize waste and abuse of government resources and ensure the effective utilization of public resources.

The ESRP is a response to the current challenges we face: the accumulation of ghost names, incomplete Personnel Action Notices (PANs), and outdated information that have compromised the integrity of our government payroll system. This comprehensive clean-up is essential to ensure the accuracy and transparency of our payroll system.

The scope of the ESRP encompasses all government Spending Entities, focusing on verifying and updating employee records across all 103 Entities.

The methodology includes thoroughly auditing the existing payrolls, cross-referencing current employee records, and implementing a robust data collection and management system to prevent future discrepancies.

We envision three key deliverables from this project:

- An updated and accurate payroll system free of ghost names and incomplete Personnel Action Notices

- A streamlined process for ongoing payroll data management and verification
- A depoliticized, professional workforce maintaining payroll integrity
- An improved and capable workforce

These goals will be achieved over three months, July to September 2024, with key milestones, including the initial audit and assessment, data verification and updating, system implementation, and training, culminating in a final review and report. I want to personally thank the Civil Service Agency for undertaking this major national reform initiative, which will bring integrity to the national payroll system, save the government millions, and strengthen and improve the workforce.

Fellow Liberians, it is vital to inform you that by July 2023, this time last year, the previous administration had already hired about 1,000 so-called consultants, primarily casual laborers, who did not significantly contribute to bridging the human resource and institutional capacity gaps and advancing our governance system overall.

In sharp contrast, today, we proudly announce the recruitment of 97 highly qualified professionals and experts through a rigorous vetting process consistent with the National Consultancy Policy Guidelines I launched on April 30, 2024. Many of the consultants present here today include legal, human resource, management experts, and specialized doctors. We extend special thanks to the leadership of the Civil Service Agency for instituting these consultancy reform measures, ensuring effective utilization of consultancy resources, and delivering value for money.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, I hereby officially launch the Employee Status Regularization Project (ESRP) under the auspices of the Civil Service Agency with great pride and anticipation. This project represents a pivotal step towards a more transparent, accountable, and efficient government committed to serving the people of Liberia with integrity and dedication.

Always remember to Think Liberia, Love Liberia, and Together build Liberia

Thank you, and may God bless Liberia.