



Office of the National Secretariat
1629 K Street NW Suite 300
Washington, DC 20006
Telephone: 1-866-592-4480; 202-688-2792

Contact: Arthur Weah Doe
National General Secretary
Tel: 240-505-2685
E-mail: worwinweah@gmail.com

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ULAA CONDEMNS LIBERIA'S BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT AND CALLS THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO RESUME THE PEOPLE'S BUSINESS

WASHINGTON, September 1, 2016 – The attention of the Union of Liberian Associations (ULAA) is drawn to the continuous disregard for the rule of law by Liberia's three (3) branches of Government. ULAA is taken aback to the continuous dereliction of duties by the three branches of Government to play politics on the Liberian people, who, on the daily basis, cannot struggling to make ends meet.

Report from Monrovia reveals what appears to be an act of Legislative obstruction is seriously holding the Country stagnant. The fact that Speaker Alex Tyler refused to recuse himself from the helm of the speakership should not be grounds to obstruct the business of the House of Representatives, yet the National Legislature. ULAA agrees that while it does not support Speaker Tyler involvement in the Global Witness report of bribery, it is not in support of the dereliction of responsibilities of undermining the Legislative rule of law regarding the removal of any of its members, including the Speaker.

The Doctrine of Separation of Power injected in the Liberian Constitution is to provide checks and balances for each branch of Government. It is placed in the Constitution to ensure that no one branch of the Government becomes too powerful. Also, the delegation of powers also known

as the delegation doctrine says that when an administrative agency is created, it is delegated certain powers; the agency can use only those legislative, judicial, and executive powers that are delegated to it. But only in Liberia, from time to time that the Executive Branch headed by the President, continues to be so powerful to the extent that it even has influence over and continues to meddle in the operations of the Legislative and Judiciary. The act of President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's intrusion into the body politics of the House of Representative operations is preposterous. This act of play to recognize certain block of the House of Representatives to obstruct the people's business by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf is not only disgraceful, but also compromises the intrinsic constitutional Doctrine of Separation of Powers and administrative delegation doctrine.

Additionally, the Judicial Branch, which has the authority to examine the acts of the other two branches of government becomes too weak and plays to the Executive Branch. For example, in the case involving the accused Speaker Tyler's involvement the Global Witness bribery case, the Supreme Court failed to make a judicial decision to remedy whether the Speaker is actually involved or not, thereby adding continuous stalemate in the House of Representatives.

Today, ULAA receives information that Liberian women and mothers in Liberia have taken to the Capitol Building in a nonviolent march to call on members of the National Legislature to return to work and conduct the people's business. "We elected them to work for our interests; they are getting fabulous pay, yet they don't want to do our work," one mother said in a Facebook video.

ULAA finds it unconscionable that some members of the House of Representatives will so easily compromise their roles in that august body to form alliance with the Executive Branch to remove a constitutional speaker because of mere accusation. ULAA believes that until a person can be found guilty, he/she must be found guilty through a judicial system and due process. Recuse, according to the Webster's Online Dictionary, means to disqualify oneself as a judge, of course, as in the case of the Speakership. This means Speaker Tyler can only do so on his own term or if he so desired. If Speaker Alex Tyler is accused in the bribery case reported by Global Witness, and when some of his colleagues request his removal from office based on accusation without due administrative procedure, for example, following through with Legislative Rules that require removal, it becomes troublesome and threatens Liberian young democracy.

Accordingly, ULAA, hereby, places the **House of Representatives (HR)** on notice for its abandonment of the people's business, and says **ENOUGH IS ENOUGH. ENOUGH IS ENOUGH**, when the HR chooses to place their personal interests over our hospitals that lack basic diagnostic and other essential equipment while corruption walks the corridors of power. **ENOUGH IS ENOUGH**, when the HR chooses to place their personal interests above health workers, ordinary police officers, teachers, and firefighters who are poorly paid, and when many primary school students are placed in different grade levels and are crammed in a single classroom, while the HR are awashed in ill-gotten wealth. **ENOUGH IS ENOUGH**, when the HR chooses to place their personal interests above schools, hospitals, roads, and bridges, and while these infrastructures either non-existent or in serious disrepair amidst the wanton waste in national budget for paid and so-called salaries and benefits of the top one percent of high

government officials. **ENOUGH IS ENOUGH**, when the HR chooses to place their personal interests above Liberians dying from curable diseases while they seek medical treatments abroad.

Meanwhile, ULAA is calling on all Liberians not to despair at this point in the fight against corruption and the flagrant abuse of public office that have now become routine in our land. This is an existential fight for our motherland, and we hail the bravery of Liberian women, student groups, civil organizations, etc., for staging nonviolent marches throughout Monrovia and on the grounds of Capitol Building.

As ULAA holds its 42nd General Assembly in Buffalo, New York, we promise to place education, corruption, health, the Global Witness report, etc. on the table, and results therefrom will be sent to the various media institutions, the Government of Liberia, US Department of State and important stakeholders. ULAA remains firmly confident that **TOGETHER, WE STRUGGLE FOR A BETTER LIBERIA.**

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