

Foundation for Women Press Release

"President Sirleaf seeking Power to promote the people's interest," Vice President Boakai

Monrovia, Monday, March 29—Liberia's Vice President Joseph N. Boakai says the driving force behind the President's second term bid is primarily to promote the interest of the citizenry.

He observed that the last five years have been productive for the country, and that the Unity party-led government would want to continue this momentum to bring development to the war torn country.

Speaking Monday, March 29, when a seven-member delegation headed by the Founder and Executive Director of the U.S based Foundation for Women, Madam Deborah Lindholm, paid a courtesy call on him at his Capitol Building Office, Vice President Boakai observed that the President wants to complete the good job she has started. "It is not about power or popularity. She has already made history by becoming the first elected female president not only in Liberia, but in Africa as a whole," Vice President Boakai further observed. He said the leadership of the Unity Party-led Government is working around the clock to bring relief to the many impoverished, uneducated population and the large number of kids of school-going age who are out of school, and to build good roads and develop the minds of the citizenry.

Meanwhile, Vice President Boakai has described the **San Diego, California based Foundation for Women** as a true partner in the government's effort to transform the lives of the Liberian people. He noted that in just three years of operation in Liberia, the Foundation for Women through its micro-credit loan has touched the lives of many rural women.

"This is a project that is very dear to us. The President is aware of it and holds it very dear to her heart, knowing very well that her own grand mother was also marketer," the Liberian Vice President said. He observed that said the small monies given out as loans to marketers, especially rural women, have performed miracles because they have enabled them to manage their families and build their own homes.

Vice President Boakai further noted that the program not only helps to empower the women, but also to establish some integrity among people borrowing money. The Liberian Vice President thanked the Founder of the Foundation to Women for reaching out to Liberian women, noting, "There couldn't be a better program for rural women".

Briefing Vice President Boakai earlier, Madam Lindholm said the primary purpose of the visit was to bring major donors who have committed substantial amounts of support for the micro-credit program in Liberia and who have never been in the country, so that they can get a feel of the work of the FFW in the country. She said the delegation comprising two women from the Stop Hunger Foundation based in California and two Rotarians from Calvary, Canada and another group from Arizona, U.S.A, will visit several micro-credit centers in Buchanan, Bong County and Monrovia before departing the country. According to Madam Lindholm, these three groups have committed a quarter of a million dollars (US\$250,000) to the micro-credit program of Liberia.

Madam Lindholm disclosed that the delegates will participate in a three-day African-Middle East Micro-credit Summit to be held in Kenya from April 7-10. According to Madam Lindholm, one thousand persons from over 60 countries will attend the summit which will highlight best practices and best programs in micro-credit work in Africa and the Middle East. The Founder of the Foundation for Women further disclosed that the Director of the Liberia Micro-Credit program, Madam Emily Peal has been asked selected to present a paper on the Liberia micro-credit program because of the success it has scored in just three years of its operation.

Also in remarks, Madam Peal said the Foundation for Women is currently operating in seven counties and that it has concluded plans to extend the program to the eighth county shortly. She added that the program has about 3,000 members, 1,000 of whom have been extended loans.

Signed: Terrence Sesay (PRESS SECRETARY)