

RESOLUTION

Of the

**5th Anniversary Jubilee of LIHEDE
Held on the Campus of North Carolina A & T State University
Greensboro, North Carolina
August 21– 22, 2009**

WHEREAS, the officers and members of the Liberian History, Education, and Development, Inc. (LIHEDE), in commemoration of the Fifth Anniversary celebration of the Organization resolved to host a two-day Jubilee on Liberian History and Culture on the campus of the North Carolina A & T State University in the City of Greensboro, North Carolina;



L-R Peter Ballah & Dr. Somah

WHEREAS, the Jubilee, featuring scholarly presentations, panel discussions, poetry readings, Liberian cuisines, folklores, music, and drumming, and an honoring program for distinguished personalities in several categories, convened in Greensboro, North Carolina on the weekend of August 21- 23, 2009 under the theme: “Understanding Ourselves and Our History: A Call to Unity & Collective Development in Liberia;”

WHEREAS, the Jubilee brought together Liberians, including officials of the Government of Liberia, and non-Liberian professionals of diverse background to take a critical review of Liberian history and culture, to derive solutions that promote unity and reconciliation among Liberians to

correct the gaps embedded in Liberian national history as well as discuss other social issues that impact developmental efforts in Liberia;

WHEREAS, the panelists and presenters made presentations and shared thought-provoking ideas that engendered a dialogue of intellectual exchanges within the atmosphere of mutual respect and passion for Liberia's future intended to support development initiatives that impact the lives of the Liberian people, to ensure that the mistakes of the past do not continue to derail progress and serve as stumbling block to development and unity in Liberia;

NOW THEREFORE, the presenters, panelists, and organizers of the LIHEDE 5th Anniversary Jubilee, after careful, comprehensive, and candid dialogues, interactions, and other exchanges arising from the presentations made during the Jubilee, have resolved on the following core issues to wit:

- Cultural Reconnection: The Jubilee participants pledge to establish and/or support an environment that fosters on-going shared dialogue between Africans on the African Continent and Africans in the Diaspora to recognize their common heritage and promote sustainable relationships based on shared benefits and mutual respect with the ultimate goal of reconnecting with themselves and African culture and traditions as people of a common African descent.
- Documentation of Liberia Ethnic History: The Jubilee participants implore the Government of Liberia and international cultural institutions to invest funds in scholarly research by Liberians on Liberian history and culture in order to document the history of the diverse ethnic groups of Liberia, and to ensure that the country's history embodies the true meaning of the diverse peoples of Liberia in an attempt to create a common national identity for all Liberians.
- The Jubilee participants also recognize that in order to engender respect for the rights of every Liberian ethnic group to self-identity and self-determination in Liberia, research findings into the history and traditions of each Liberian ethnic group should be developed into educational materials for inclusion in the national educational curriculum, such as a Liberian Studies Curriculum, to educate Liberian students, working adults, and future generation of Liberians about themselves and the history of Liberia as written in civic and geographic books by Liberian authors. Particular emphasis was placed on the reconceptualization of the national curriculum to include accurate traditional Liberian history and culture and accurate Liberian settler history and culture as a way to promote peace, unity, mutual respect, and cooperation amongst all Liberians regardless of original migration history.
- The participants also hail LIHEDE for providing a forum for the discussion of Liberian history and culture during the Jubilee, to lead to future publications of a Liberian historical journal and repository by LIHEDE, and agree that the collection, documentation, and publication of Liberian ethnic history would serve numerous functions to include honoring Liberian ancestors, producing important knowledge about Liberian history and culture, and re-locating and re-connecting Liberians in America with Liberians at home in Liberia.

- **Women Empowerment and Education:** The Jubilee participants commit themselves to engaging policy makers in Liberia to support quality education in Liberia through the introduction of new “best practices” in education to expose Liberian students to new technologies in learning and impacting of knowledge, with the goal of reducing the current 70% illiteracy rate in Liberia.
- The Jubilee participants recognize that women empowerment is an indispensable tool of national unity, peace, reconciliation, development, and gender equality in Liberia, and implore the Liberian government to institute policies and programs that increase the enrollment of girls in schools and promote the participation of women in government service as well as in the private sector, to share equally in the responsibility of nation building.
- The participants also agree that organizing regional women’s groups and delegations in Liberia based on the four principles of cultural reconnection, including gender and culture specificity, on-going dialogue, collective action, and participation in Liberian cultural rituals and protocols are key to creating, fostering, and promoting relations with women groups in Liberia and women groups in the Diaspora.
- **Holistic Healthcare Delivery and Malaria Control:** The Jubilee participants recognize that the improvement of Liberia’s healthcare delivery system requires better coordination between Liberian citizens in the Diaspora and Liberian government officials in Liberia in order to facilitate bilateral, multilateral, and private business investments in the medical fields in Liberia. The Jubilee participant also recognize that malaria has a crushing negative effect on the healthcare delivery system of Liberia, and recommend the implementation of an integrated approach to combat malaria and other curable diseases through the utilization of a new measuring tool known as the Multiple Analytic Decision-Making Approach to effectively collect data by tracking all relevant factors that are hampering the control and eventual cure of malaria and other common infectious diseases in Liberia, through a collaborative approach and integrated policy mechanism involving the Liberian Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Liberia Environmental Protection Agency, the Ministry of Gender and Development, and related governmental and non-governmental agencies.
- **Information Technology and the Media:** The need for improvement in Liberia’s communications infrastructure to include the construction of modern farm to market roads, digital communications networks, and modern airports and seaports was stressed throughout deliberations at the Jubilee. The Jubilee participants therefore resolve to encourage and promote the use of information communication technology in Liberia, to build the communication capacity of Liberia in meeting local development challenges and the UN Millennium Goals. But the participants also stress that the development of any type of information communication technology in Liberia must take into account the cultural, economic, and educational realities of Liberia at the design and implementation levels.
- The participants acknowledge that because the local media in Liberia will have a pivotal role to play in the implementation of any communication and information technology infrastructures in Liberia, policy makers in Liberia should endeavor to create an environment that respects the rights of journalists and promotes avenues for the exercise of free speech, free expression, and free press

without censorship and intimidation, so as to engender a healthy dialogue between the governors and the governed. Equally so the participants urge Liberian journalists and other media practitioners to exercise professionalism, prudence, and responsibility in the discharge of their sacred reportorial duties, by adhering to the basic tenets of journalism and media practice within the context of respecting the rights of the public and consumers of information.



(Third from Left) Peter Ballah and members of his cultural troupe

- **Environmental Protection:** Concerns were vehemently raised about the current state of the environment in Liberia, especially about environmental control and protection, and the conservation and preservation of human capital and the natural resources of Liberia. Consequently, the Jubilee participants pledge to secure the commitment of the Liberian Government to implement both national and international policies on the control of environmental hazards and related constraints, in order to improve the quality of life of the Liberian people. The Jubilee participants also recognize that the engine of development in society is driven by healthy citizens, so the government should take steps to engage and partner with Liberian organizations both locally and internationally to ensure full participation of all Liberians in the prevention of environmental degradation in Liberia.
- **Diaspora Liberians and Governmental Collaboration:** The incorporation of grass roots relational development in Liberia, involving Diaspora Liberians and Liberians in Liberia, especially in working partnership with the Liberian government, is important for needs assessment, joint ventures and reentry facilitation in Liberia. Therefore, the Jubilee participants agree that while it is understood that the government of Liberia cannot singularly employ all qualified Liberians, the government should facilitate or provide investment incentives to Liberians in the Diaspora who are willing to return home and contribute their quota in various spheres of national development.

- The Jubilee participants also agree that the creation and development of a data base of professional Liberians in the Diaspora will assist in tracking the diverse professions of Liberians in the Diaspora for maximum utilization of this qualified human resource outside of the country that can effectively participate in the management and equitable distribution of the resources of Liberia, to effectively address the needs of the Liberian citizenry.
- The Jubilee participants also recognize and encourage ongoing national efforts in Liberia to enact a dual citizenship legislation that will permit persons of Liberian origin in the Diaspora to take advantage of the opportunity to return to Liberia to support and participate in the reconstruction of post-civil war Liberia without any legal impediments.
- Future Conference: The Jubilee concluded with a commitment by the participants to continue the dialogue on Liberian history and culture through the holding of similar conferences in the future on Liberian history and culture, either in the Diaspora of the United States or in Liberia, to encourage a broader participation of Liberians in a National History and Culture Conference to be organized and hosted by LIHEDE, in collaboration with other partners, including the Government of Liberia.

DONE THIS 23rd DAY OF AUGUST 2009 IN THE CITY OF GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

PREPARED AND SUBMITTED BY THE RESOLUTION COMMITTEE:

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