

**REMARKS BY**  
**H.E. AUGUSTINE KPEHE NGAFUAN,**  
**MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA**  
**AT PROGRAM MARKING THE HONORING AND INVESTITURE OF**  
**DR. WALTER T. GWENIGALE,**  
**FORMER MINISTER OF HEALTH OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA,**  
**AT THE C.CECIL DENNIS MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM**

**26 JUNE 2015**

**MONROVIA, LIBERIA**

Madam President,

Members of the Diplomatic & Consular Corps,

Members of the Legislature,

Members of Cabinet,

Members of the Press,

Distinguished Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

As Dean of the Cabinet, I have had the distressful burden of paying tributes in honor of fallen sons and daughters of Liberia who, while alive, contributed immensely and selflessly to the peace and progress of our beloved motherland. But today, we have come to give honor to someone while he is alive and still standing tall. So I exude with exhilaration to, on behalf of the President's Cabinet, pay a well-deserved tribute in recognition of the dedicated service to country and people, of a professional surgeon, a patriot, a respected son of Bong County and above all a distinguished citizen of Liberia and the world, Dr. Walter T. Gwenigale.

For the better part of his life, Dr. Gwenigale devoted his time, his mind and his energies to the wellbeing and protection of the lives of the people of Liberia and all those within our borders. From the dawn of his professional career as a Medical Doctor to what appears its twilight, spanning more than 40 years in both private and public service, he has exhibited outstanding competence and professionalism.

Dr. Gwenigale's departure means a lot to all of us Cabinet members of today; but for the tiny minority of present Cabinet Members including myself who sat along with him in the first Cabinet Meeting of the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Government in early 2006 at the Executive Mansion , this farewell occasion has a profound and emotional significance. Over these nearly ten years of exceptional service to country, Dr. G has been that one person in the Cabinet who would give himself the license to state his perspective and vent out his spleen on issues as clearly and pointedly as he could. Dr. G had his own diplomacy, and the ethos of his diplomacy was not to have tolerance for the niceties and protocol of diplomacy. Maybe his knack for cutting through the chase and saying it as is was due to his results-driven conditioning as a surgeon.

Being the oldest member of Cabinet and one of the longest serving Cabinet members at the same time, Dr. G had a certain mastery for stabilizing or diffusing tense situations by infusing some comic relief into the air which put wide grin on the faces of everyone. This was his way of subjecting us

to some sort of therapy as a respite from long periods of hard thinking and haggling.

Dr. Gwenigale leaves this family at a time when we have just begun the recovery process from the worst health crisis ever to visit the shores of our country. He gave his best to his country throughout the Ebola crisis and was one of the reasons why Liberia, the worst of the three worst affected of countries, could be the first to conquer Ebola. Ebola bent us but did not break us thanks primarily to the indefatigable and courageous leadership demonstrated by President Sirleaf but also because of the effective and tenacious frontline supervision demonstrated by Dr. G.

At the twilight of what has been an illustrious career, Dr. Gwenigale can safely take comfort in the fact that he stood up for humanity and marched forward answering the Nation's call from age to age.

So, Dr. G., on behalf of current and past members of the Cabinet with whom you worked from 2006 up to present, I salute and congratulate you for being a public servant and a patriot par excellence. We are filled with

fond memories of our interactions with you -sometimes light and sometimes tough. We say farewell to you, taking comfort in the fact that although you retire today, you certainly are not tired; as it is often said, doctors do not go out of service, they just wait for a call.

Thank you.