



ADDRESS BY PROF. PAI OBANYA
CHAIRMAN, GOVERNING COUNCIL OF
THE WEST AFRICAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL (WAEC)

ON THE OCCASION OF HIS COURTESY VISIT TO
MADAM ETMONIA DAVID TARPEH
HON. MINISTER OF EDUCATION, LIBERIA

ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 30, 2012

The Honourable Minister of Education,
The Deputy Minister of Instructions (Chief Government Nominee of
Liberia on Council),
Other Government Officials
Ladies and Gentlemen

I feel highly honoured and very delighted to be here today.

On behalf of Council – the Governing Board of the West African Examinations Council (WAEC)- and on my personal behalf, I want to congratulate both the Honourable Minister of Education and the Deputy Minister of Instructions of the Republic of Liberia on their respective appointments and to wish them God's guidance in the discharge of their responsibilities.

Honourable Minister, the records have it that since Liberia became the fifth member-country of the West African Examinations Council in 1974, it has continued to identify with the organization. It is on record that when the Convention establishing the Council was ready in 1982, Liberia, without any reservation, signed the Convention just as it also signed the Revised Convention in 2003. From 1974 to date, the Council has continued to enjoy tremendous patronage from the government and people of Liberia. I have it on the authority of the Secretariat that the relationship between the Ministry of Education, Monrovia and the Secretariat, at both the National Office in Monrovia and the Headquarters in Accra, has, over the years, been very cordial. We are

confident that your administration will give the necessary support to further strengthen the relationship.

Honourable Minister, my visiting you today is primarily in fulfillment of the Council's tradition of formal presentation of the Chairman of Council to the Ministers of Education and the Presidents of the Member Countries of the Council within the shortest possible time.

As you may be well aware, I was elected the 17th Chairman at the 60th Annual Meeting of Council in March this year, following my nomination by the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and in line with the Council's principle of rotation of Chairmanship among Member Countries. However, I must not fail to utilize the opportunity of my visiting you today to table before you the key concerns of the moment in the relationship between WAEC and Liberia. These are the issue of Liberia's arrangement to join the WASSCE system in 2013 and, Liberia's outstanding contribution to the Headquarters.

On the issue of Liberia's outstanding contribution to the Headquarters, Honourable Minister, this address will not be complete if it omits to give expression to the Council's appreciation of the efforts being made in the last couple of years to discharge the financial responsibility of the Government of Liberia to the Headquarters of the Council. We appreciate that for the first time in many years, Liberia paid its apportioned contribution to the Headquarters for 2011 in full. In addition it made some part-payment from the arrears of contribution which stood at **US\$1,121,343.36 as at December 31, 2008**. We

must, however, hasten to point out that with the addition of the 2012 apportionment, Liberia's outstanding contribution to WAEC Headquarters which stood at **US\$1,121,343.36 as at December 31, 2008** has risen to its **present level of US\$1,594,508.75** as a result of accumulating short-payments annually. I have it on the authority of the Secretariat that although this figure was included in the budget presented to the Government for the year 2012 budget, only US\$ 120,000 was approved and the approved amount was not exclusively for payment to the Headquarters!

I therefore want to urge you, Honourable Minister, to use your good offices to see to the offsetting of this lingering backlog of unpaid contribution to the Headquarters.

I have been briefed on the efforts by WAEC and the Government of Liberia, especially from 2008 to date, in regard of the country's arrangements to join the WASSCE system. I have been informed that in February 2009, a letter of formal expression of "Liberia's desire to enter the WASSCE" and invitation to WAEC "to begin the conduct of the WASSCE to candidates in Liberia as of 2011" was received by the Registrar and that there had been several follow-up actions thereafter resulting in the change of the target date to 2013. I am told that the maiden edition of WASSCE in Liberia will be written by candidates from a few selected schools. I want to believe that the Government, through the Ministry of Education, has finally selected the pilot schools and that the schools and their students are fully prepared for Liberia's historic maiden attempt at WASSCE.

Let me assure you that WAEC, on its part, is committed to ensuring that it provides as much support as possible to smoothen what would otherwise have been the rough edges. The amendment of the May/June 2013 WASSCE time-table to suit Liberia is evidence of how far the Council is willing to go to support Liberia.

I thank you very much for granting me audience in spite of your very tight schedule. I pray God to bless you abundantly with His grace and empower you divinely for the successful discharge of your leadership responsibilities.

PROF. PAI OBANYA

Chairman of Council

August 2012