

**CHARGE OF HIS HONOR JAMES N. GILAYENEH,
ASSIGNED CIRCUIT JUDGE, EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT
OF NIMBA COUNTY FOR THE OPENING OF THE AUGUST
A.D.2017 TERM OF COURT, SANNIQUELLIE CITY, NIMBA
COUNTY**

I would like to extend my thanks to the Almighty God for the opportunity to serve as a judge within the Judiciary and the Chief Justice, His Honor Francis S. Korkpor, Sr. who has mandated that we preside and hold over the 8th Judicial Circuit Court, Nimba County, during the August Term, A.D. 2017.

We want to give the Chief Justice the assurance that we will discharge this duty without favor, to the glory of the almighty God and to build confidence in the judiciary.

Today as we open the August Term of this Circuit, I will like to briefly speak to you on the topic

“ THE ROLE OF THE JUDICIARY IN PEACE BUILDING PROCESS OF LIBERIA”.

Most of us if not all of us, living in Liberia were affected one way or the other by the 14 years civil unrest which devastated and ruined the fabric of our country. During this period we witnessed the absence of law and order as the country was plunged into a state of lawlessness with militia officers performing judiciary function without right of appeal from their ruling and decisions.

During the period , we observed dissatisfaction of the Liberia people because they could not get redress, when this happened in any country , the people resort to lawlessness and jungle justice and those who do not have the ability to fight or pay back when they are offended often live with such dissatisfaction and look up to god for comfort.

Today with all the courts constitution empowered, capacitated to function within the frame work of the constitution statute laws, we as judicial officers must discharge our duties so that the citizen can build confidence in the judiciary.

If the peace we all have been praying for must be sustained, the courts must be seen playing its role without favor, without regard to the political and economic standing of any individual and with the knowledge that we ourselves stand to be judged by the almighty God for decisions we rendered in the discharge of our duties; because the court is the last place of hope for mankind on earth.

The citizens of a country must see the court as a place where they go for redress and expect to enjoy the cool neutrality of the court irrespective of status , ethnicity ,economic and social background if individuals appearing before the court.

When the court fails to discharge its functions to the expectation of its citizen, the citizen also loses confidence in the government because the judiciary which is a branch of government has failed to protect their right. A situation which most often leads to social disorder and anarchy, a situation we cannot afford to see in our country again

Justice is often denied people because they cannot afford to pay exorbitant fees charged by lawyers, court's officers and even judges when they come for justice. This is why it's often said that a poor man cannot win a case in our country. Sometimes we do not explain court procedures to people when they come to court.

Lawyers and judges must refrain from unnecessary delay tactics and unreasonable procedure which delay the hearing of cases. When we do these things judicial officers and lawyers, we will contribute to peace building process, build confidence in the judiciary and the civilian will see the court as a friend and not a foe.

The court must also be seen as meting out strong punishment for those who commit crime against their fellowman and their country as a means of deterring criminal activities and insuring that citizens live in a peaceful atmosphere.

The courts cannot do these things alone without the assistance and willingness of state security who have the responsibility of investigating and arresting those who commit crimes and lawyers should practice in keeping with their oath.

To conclude, let me warn judges of courts not of records, magistrates and justices of the peace that I will not hesitate to take stringent measure to correct irregularities committed by them which affect the substantial right of our citizens.

To our lawyers, you can count on my cooperation but you must know that this judge will not condone unnecessary delay of cases because we are expected to speedily try cases and give relief to our citizens.

MAY GOD BLESS THIS COURT, THE SUPREME COURT AND SAVE THE STATE.