

# Iconic and Historical Opening of the Supreme Court

----As New Female Chief Justice Takes Seat



Liberia's Supreme Court opened on Monday, October 10, 2022 for its October A. D. 2022 Term in a more iconic and historic fashion as the High Court witnessed the seating of the third female Chief Justice in 175 years since the country was founded in 1847.

The program was a colorful one and graced by lawyers, members of the diplomatic corps and top government officials including President Dr. George M. Weah and his wife, Vice President Dr. Cllr. Jewel H. Taylor, House Speaker Bhofal Chambers, and Senate Pro-tempt Albert Chea among others.

The program which began at 10:00AM also witnessed the seating of Her Honor Sie-A-Nyene G. Yuoh, Chief Justice of the Honorable Supreme Court of Liberia.

During the program, Her Honor Jamesetta Howard Wolokolie, Senior Associate Justice, ordered the Marshal to cry the opening of Court. After performing this duty, the Marshall was again ordered to proceed to the Robing Room along with the Minister of Justice/Attorney General, and the Dean of the Supreme Court Bar, and the President of the Liberian National Bar Association from where they escorted the Chief Justice, Her Honor Sie-A-Nyene G. Youh to Her Seat of Honor on the High Court Bench.

Upon the seating of the Chief Justice, she ordered the Marshal to escort His Honor Joseph N. Nagbe to His Seat of Honor on her immediate left and His Honor Yussif D. Kaba to His Seat of Honor on the extreme right.

Her Honor Sie-A-Nyene G. Yuoh, Chief Justice, delivering her opening address described the opening of the October A.D. 2022 Term of the Supreme Court as iconic, because it is the third time the High Court will have a woman serving as Chief Justice within 175 years of independence.

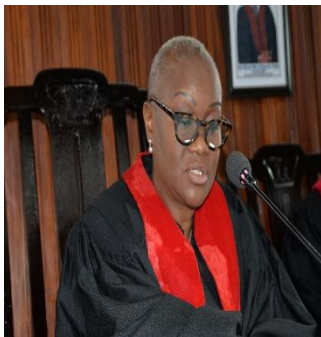
Chief Justice Yuoh explained that the Bench has been graced by ninety one (91) Justices and of this number, only seven (7) women have been appointed and commissioned to serve as Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of Liberia.

The Chief Justice stated that it was worth nothing, that out of the seven, only three (3) have been elevated to the pinnacle of the High Court to serve as Chief Justice. She further noted that, the data prove

that the legal profession is still male dominated, thereby encouraging her female counterparts (lawyers) to put aside timidity and embrace confidence; strive for excellence and be assertive.

The Chief Justice expressed acknowledgement with respect to the recent change in the administration of the Supreme Court (from the Korkpor's Bench to the Yuoh's Bench), counting diverse expectations from all sectors of the society, including the international community, and even within the Judiciary. This means that all are interested in knowing the plans of the third female Chief Justice.

She mentioned that as Chief Justice she is fully conscious of the challenges facing the Judiciary and have felt and knows the pinch of the diverse issues affecting this branch of government.



She quickly pointed out that while it is true that the lack of adequate support to the Judiciary is erosion to the rule of law, peace and security of the Republic, notwithstanding, these challenges should never deter judicial officers from the core duties that they, as judicial officers, have sworn to perform. She acknowledged the immense contribution made by the international partners and the unwavering stand with the Judiciary in promoting the rule of law and access to justice in Liberia.

According to her the full Bench, have agreed in principle to foster an unprecedented consensus in tackling these challenges; by building a strong coordination between the Supreme Court and the other two Branches of Government.

Chief Justice Yuoh promised to work with the Liberian National Bar Association and the Fourth Estate to develop judicial policies that will adequately explain, ‘in layman terms,’ the function of the courts in the justice system in order to remove the clouds of misconceptions, false innuendos, and vicious criticisms that are tainting the image of the Judiciary.

“To achieve this, we are determined to administer justice without fear or favor pursuant to Article 11 (b)(c) of the Constitution which states “all persons, irrespective of ethnic background, race, sex, creed, place of origin, or political opinion, are equal before the law and therefore entitled to the equal protection of the law,” She stated.

She reiterated plans to work with the Liberian National Bar Association (LNBA) and the National Association of Trial Judges of Liberia (NATJL) to review and conclude on the draft rules for the ethical investigating bodies in order to eliminate unethical law practitioners in a swift and decisive manner rather than giving warnings in their opinions.

