

Liberia, August 12, 2010 - President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has submitted to the National Legislature for ratification, the African Youth Charter. According to an Executive Mansion release, the Charter was submitted on Monday, August 9, 2010.

It outlines the rights, duties and responsibilities of African Youth and Member States of the African Union, and establishes a foundation upon which to build policies, programs, and actions for youth development in the Member States.

The Youth Charter, among other objectives, aims at preserving basic rights afforded to Youth, which include the right of development, privacy, protection of family and property, freedoms of movement, expression, and association, and freedom from discrimination based on race, ethnic group, color, sex, origin, language , religion, status, activities, or expressed opinions or beliefs.

The Youth Charter also aims at ensuring youth development and employment in key strategic areas where youth have traditionally been marginalized by society, specifically in the areas of education and skills development, poverty eradication and socio-economic integration, employment and sustainable livelihoods, health, peace and security, dignified treatment by law enforcement, environmental protection, and preservation of cultural values.

The Youth Charter, to which Liberia is a signatory, provides a strategic framework for youth development at continental, regional, and national levels. It originated from the need to address the situation of the Youth in Africa, many of whom have been marginalized by society through wealth and power inequalities, poor quality of education, limited health care, unemployment, and exposure to violence.