

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, CULTURE & TOURISM**  
CAPITOL HILL-P.O. BOX 1-9021  
MONROVIA, LIBERIA

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

JANUARY 1, 2006 – DECEMBER 31, 2006

This report covers activities of the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism (MICAT) for the period January 1, 2006 – December 31, 2006.

Unlike the 2005 – 2006 budget period under the transitional government when there were many problems growing out of its composition and mandate, the Ministry of Information Culture and Tourism, was able to carry out its statutory functions of promoting the policies, programmes and activities of this first post-war Democratic government, promoting and maintaining the cultural heritage and touristy advancement of the country.

In fulfilling its statutory mandate, however, budgetary constraints inherited from the past government, especially in the first half of the fiscal year, partly impacted negatively on the overall capacity of the Ministry to deliver.

Nevertheless, in compliance with the Legislative Act of 1965 and the Executive Law of 1972, that established the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, this new democratic government has been able to an appreciable level removed some, if not all, of the hindrances to free speech and freedom of the press.

Although this Ministry is empowered by legislation to levy regulatory fees on media institutions, including newspapers, radio and television stations, cinemas, video clubs and video centers operating in the country, enforcement was not vigorous as in previous years. This facilitated a conducive media environment, one, which gave especially the news media, a breathing space in the face of the high cost associated with the running of such entities.

During the period under review, the news media experienced a substantial increase in number (radio, television stations and newspapers) by 80% over the previous year, and requests for additional establishments are being considered.

Thus, it can proudly be said that the upsurge in media activities following the inauguration of this post- conflict democratic government is the result of the

Demonstrated resolve of this administration not only to promote freedom of the press and speech, but to also help build the capacity of media practitioners.

A good number of these media outlets may be sub-standard, but several training programs through the assistance of donor institutions have shown some improvement.

The Public Affairs Division which is the nerve center of government information dissemination registered and accredited 600 foreign journalists; about 40 percent of these journalists representing various media organizations in United States of America, Europe

and Africa were here to cover the inauguration of Africa's first democratically elected female leader, Her Excellency President Ellen Johnson –Sirleaf, and the first post-war government of Liberia.

The rest of these journalists came to Liberia at different times and for selective coverage of unfolding developments under this democratic government, some coming at the invitation of UNMIL and other United Nations agencies, national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private volunteer organizations (PVOS).

The Public Affairs Division also liaised with the information sections of various government ministries and agencies to ensure that information disseminated from there were in line with government policies, programmes and activities.

In an effort to ensure the effective coordination of government information dissemination, the information Services Wing of this ministry on 30 November 2006 held a one-day consultative for public relations officers of all government ministries and agencies. A recommendation made by participants called for the holding of more of such interactive forum with ample time to enable government PROs better understand how their duties can enhance overall national reconciliation, reconstruction and healing processes.

The Division, under the direct supervision of the Assistant Minister designate for Information services, kept Liberian missions abroad abreast about government policies, programmes and activities through the transmission of press releases and other information materials via the internet other means.

During the year under review, the Assistant Minister-designate, Hon. Gabriel I. H. Williams, traveled with President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf to the United States where she addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations, and attended a forum of African Information Officials in Beijing, the People's Republic of China. During the year, Director of Public Affairs and Editorial Consultant of the New Liberia, Mr. G. Kparcon Nardoh, accompanied the Liberian Government delegation led by Her Excellency President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, to the ECOWAS Summit on the crisis in neighboring Ivory Coast held in Abuja, Capitol of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

The **NEW LIBERIA** Newspaper, in the absence of a budgetary appropriation, published 29 regular and three special editions during the period under review. The editorial policy of the official journal drawn when it was established in 1978, remains the same to promote, interpret, analyze and explain government policies, programmes and activities for public understanding and acceptance, and to publish the views, comments and suggestions of the public for government's attention and action, and countering misinformation, distortions and negative propaganda about the government and its functionaries.

The **NEW LIBERIA** Newspaper during the year featured various programmes and activities of the government the Emergency Power Project that restored electricity to Monrovia, the Monrovia pipe borne water restoration project, the campaign to rid Monrovia of makeshift structures and the relocation of street peddlers to market sited, etc.

During the year, as in the crisis years, the paper published once weekly between eight (8) and twelve (12) pages which provided inadequate space for the full coverage of government activities. It is hoped that this trend will change with the availability of capital. Before the outbreak of the civil war in 1989, paper published four editions weekly.

The Motion Picture Review Division is responsible to censor by previewing and issuing clearances for the screening of all locally produced and imported movies in addition to issuing permits for the operation of movie entities in the country. During the period under review, the division assessed 297 movie entities operating in Monrovia and its environs. The lack of logistics made it impossible for the division to assess movie entities in the leeward counties.

In April of this year, then Minister Johnny A. McClain wrote some institutions requesting their representation on the Movie Censorship Board. These institutions have, up to the time of this report, yet to submit names for inclusion on the Movie Censorship Board.

During the year, the Tewor Community Cultural Center in Tienne, Grand Cape Mount County, was turned over the government of Liberia through the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism. Construction of the cultural village was carried out by LCIP with funds provided by USAID on 10 acres of land surrendered to government by Passewe Clan in Tewor District.

The Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism during year also drafted a national policy on culture with the assistance of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The draft policy is slated for national consultation leading to legal framework for legislation. The Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism received a US \$20,000.00 grant from the government of the United States of America for the renovation of the National Cultural Center, Kendeja. Plans are underway for the renovation project.

During the year, the Culture Bureau in collaboration with UNMIL successfully held “A Star is Born” under-20 National Talent Search Competition in the 15 counties of Liberia to identify young people with natural talents in singing and comedy with the objective to promote and preserve Liberian culture.

Activities of the other components of the Ministry of Information, Culture are narrated in the main text of this report, including the Central Printing Incorporated (CPI), Graphic Arts Section, Audio-Visual Section, Planning and Research Section (Resource Center), Technical Services Division.

Finally, we are saddened to inform you that during the month of the Director of the National Museum, Caesar Harris met his untimely death after a period of brief illness. The Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism played a major role in assisting the bereaved family give Honorable Harris a befitting burial.

**PRESENTED BY:**

Honorable Laurence Konmla Bropleh, PhD  
MINISTER