the current executive officer of Liberia, will be a future recipient of the Ibrahim Prize.

Born in 1938, President Johnson Sirleaf was baptized in politics at an early age. While still a young girl, Johnson Sirleaf's father became the first indigenous Liberian to sit in the national legislature. This noteworthy position of her father awarded her the opportunity to study in the best educational facilities in Liberia. After completing her education, Johnson Sirleaf traveled to America in 1961, where she earned a Masters in Public Administration at Harvard University (Britannica, 2013). Following a short time within the private sector, Sirleaf reentered the political realm; she achieved the position of assistant minister of finance under Liberian President William Tolbert from 1972-1973, and later became the finance minister under Samuel Doe's military dictatorship from 1980-1985 (Britannica, 2013; Keil, 2013).

Despite her civil service to the infamous leaders mentioned above, Johnson Sirleaf consistently upheld her personal integrity; she often disagreed with her administration on the question of how to handle government funds. This continual moral disagreement came to a head under Doe's military regime, where she was imprisoned twice. Despite a near escape from execution during her second imprisonment, Johnson Sirleaf ran for senate. During her campaign, staying true to her moral fiber regardless of the very real dangers of the Liberian dictatorship, she openly criticized the military government. For this, Johnson Sirleaf was thrown back in state prison, and eventually exiled to Kenya and the United States for a period of 12 years (Executive Mansion, 2013).

While in exile, Johnson Sirleaf became a world-renowned economist within the banking community (i.e. the World Bank, Citibank, etc.). As a result of her success with these financial institutions, she was offered the position of Director of Regional Bureau for Africa of the United Nations Development Program. Between 1992 and 1997, Johnson Sirleaf actively worked to help the United Nations solve many of the issues within the African continent (Britannica, 2013). It was during this same time that Liberia entered into its First Civil War. With a truce in the war in 1997, Johnson Sirleaf ran for President under the Unity Party (which

aimed for a unified Liberia to promote internal development and avoid factionalism). However, after being defeated in the election by infamous Warlord Charles Taylor, she was once again exiled for "treason" (Executive Mansion, 2013).

Charles Taylor was exiled from Liberia in 2003 by a more democratic arm of the Liberian government. As a result, Johnson Sirleaf returned to her native country and immediately became an active voice in the political society therein (Britannica, 2013). In 2005, Johnson Sirleaf ran for President on the same platform she had the first time, seeking to end corruption within all levels of governance and promote the development of the nation's infrastructure. By late 2005, after a fair election, Johnson Sirleaf became the first female head of state of any African nation (Keil, 2013).

At present, President Johnson Sirleaf is serving her second term of office in Liberia—she was reelected after her first term in 2011, in what the Carter Center declared to be a democratic and fair election (Keil, 2013). During her service as president over the last eight years, President Johnson Sirleaf has truly kept to her political party's foundation: unity. After her election, Liberia's Civil War was completely ended, and the leaders of future resistance were handled diplomatically, rather than militarily, by the Sirleaf government. Moreover, President Johnson Sirleaf has ensured economic development through the rebuilding of the nation's tarnished infrastructure. By moving funds into domestic development, rather than military expansion or internal corruption, the Sirleaf government has dramatically improved public roadways, educational facilities, and urban housing (Britannica 2013; Keil, 2013). Further, the Sirleaf government inherited a political system which was ranked 162nd for corruption, by the United Nations, in the world. At present, following only eight years of governance, the sovereign of Liberia is ranked 90th for corruption (Keil, 2013).

While the government has become increasingly fair and democratic, and the infrastructure of the nation has significantly improved, human rights have also been emphasized by the Sirleaf Administration. In 2011, resulting from the Sirleaf government's policies, only one person died in the campaign and election processes;