



**Association of Firestone Residents in the Americas (AFIRA)**  
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7/30/2022

**Annual State of the Association of Firestone Residents in the Americas (AFIRA) Report**

Mr. Hassan Tall, Keynote Speaker, 7<sup>th</sup> Annual National Convention of AFIRA

Reverend George M. Warner and members of the Advisory Board of AFIRA

Madam Cecelia Brown-Badio and members of the Executive Committee

All chairpersons of Standing and Ad-hoc Committees

My Fellow dignified and respectable members of AFIRA

Brothers and Sisters

Fellow Liberians

I have the honor and utmost privilege today to speak to you on the state of affairs of our dear Association of Firestone Residents in the Americas (AFIRA). Exactly 1 year and 20 days ago, you entrusted us with the responsibility to steer the affairs of our beloved AFIRA. Standing on the legacy of our predecessors under the able leadership of Mr. Arthur B. Welwean, we have and continue to endeavor to justify the confidence that you reposed in our knowledge, skills, and abilities to lead this organization of very competent and able men and women. We recognize that anyone of you has the capacity to lead this organization, however, you gave us the opportunity to provide leadership of the association at this time. We have taken our responsibilities very seriously and it is in that context that I am proud and delighted to report to this convention and to all our supporters, well wishers and benefactors that **THE STATE OF AFFAIRS OF AFIRA IS STRONG AND IMPRESSIVE.**

**WHY IS THE STATE OF AFFAIRS OF AFIRA ‘STRONG AND IMPRESSIVE?’**

During the installation of our administration on July 10, 2021, in the great state of Minnesota, city of Brooklyn Park, we presented this leadership’s platform contained in the Four Point Plan of Action aka 4 Pt. POA. Let us hold ourselves accountable by scoring the progress we have made on the POA:

**1. COMPLETION OF AFIRA’S SIGNATURE PROJECT – THE COTTON TREE PUBLIC LIBRARY IN AN APPRECIABLE TIMEFRAME IN 2022.**

You will hear the detailed description of the progress we have made towards achieving this top priority of this administration. The current state of this project is that windows and doors are being installed as of the convening of this assembly. At the time of our ascendancy to the leadership of this organization, the able and dynamic past leadership had commenced the construction of the library around the March 2021 timeframe and the construction was almost at the completion of the superstructure phase. We seamlessly continued the construction from there to

Web address: <https://www.afirausa.org/>

E-Mail: [afiraorg@gmail.com](mailto:afiraorg@gmail.com)

completing the superstructure, roofing the building, installation of buglar bars and safety metal doors, plastering of the interior and exterior of the building, construction of exterior platforms and stairs as well as handicap accessibility. Our projection is that in the next weeks, installation of windows and doors will be completed, and tiling and flooring phase will subsequently begin. Following the completion of the flooring phase, plumbing fixtures will be installed, the building will be painted inside and out and then furnishing and equipping will be the final phase of our signature project. When that is all said and done, the planning process for the delegation of the library will begin. Stay tuned as we will be greatly honored and delighted to have as many of you as possible to make the trip to Liberia for the grand occasion of delegating the library.

As some of you might recall, we declared to our members and informed our bosses in AB that this leadership has no other priorities to finance besides the construction of the library. As such, this administration did not submit a budget to the AB and the general membership. Anything outside of the library spending is generally underwritten through the generosity of so many of you. You all have shown so much generosity of your time, efforts, your finances since we started this journey together. On behalf of the LT, I extend to all of you sincerest thanks and appreciation for all you have and continue to do as we all strive to complete this project.

In the interest of transparency, our administration through the requisition process from the Project Committee and approval of the Advisory Board has transferred \$23,100 to Liberia in the last year. Details of how this money was expended will be provided by the Project Committee. Talking about the fulfilment of this top priority – none of this will be possible first of all without your financial contributions. I thank all of you once again for your continuous sacrifices to finish this work. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to the entire PC for their commitment of time, energy, financial and human resources to bring this work to its current status.

2. CONTINUE CONTACTS /CONSULTATIONS WITH EDUCATIONAL AND OTHER FOUNDATIONS THAT AID IN FURNISHING AND EQUIPPING LIBRARIES AND OTHER LEARNING CENTERS IN 3rd WORLD COUNTRIES (Edutopia. MDT Foundation)

Contacts and consultations remain ongoing as these entities will require verifiable evidence that the physical infrastructure is completed before they assess and determine how much assistance they can provide. Stay tuned...

3. UNDERTAKE A VIGOROUS RECRUITMENT EXERCISE TO INCREASE OUR MEMBERSHIP BY AN UPPER TRESHOLD OF 25% WITHIN THE FIRST 90 DAYS OF OUR ADMINISTRATION

Our many thanks to Ms. Esther Garwo and all the members of the Membership and Mobilization Committee as well as each one of you who heeded the administration's call of 'each one bring one.' At the time that this exercise was launched, the target was to recruit 7 new members in order to meet the 25% realization. We remain very

proud to report that in less than 60 days of the administration, we met and exceed the target of 7 new members. The Membership and Mobilization Committee will provide exact details of the number of new members who have been recruited in the last 1 year. Please let us continue to our membership as this organization belongs to all of us and the more people we bring on board, the more help we could be to our brothers and sisters back in Firestone by undertaking more projects of consequence.

4. SOLICIT AND DEVISE IDEAS ON ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INCOME/REVENUES TO SUSTAIN THE ASSOCIATION AND UNDERTAKE OTHER FUTURE PROJECTS

This administration is indelibly grateful to the Planning and Social Committee especially Dr. Beyan Sana who has suggested and led many successful activities such as the 'Christmas Gift' to AFIRA project that was instrumental in raising some money for the association. We also express deep debt of gratitude to Marie Scott who initiated the 'birthday donations to AFIRA' Project that has helped raise some money for the organization. However, none of these would have been possible without the generous support of all our members. THANK YOU ALL VERY MUCH. Detailed information on how much was generated from these efforts will be contained in the financial report...

Fellow Members, with this scorecard of all our priorities headed in the right direction, I have the honor and privilege to report to this general assembly of the Association of Firestone Residents in the Americas (AFIRA) that the state of our Association is **STRONG AND IMPRESSIVE. LET US CONTINUE TO EXHIBIT COMMITMENT TO OUR COMMON HERITAGE – FIRESTONE AND REDEDICATE OURSELVES TO REACHING BACK AND GIVING BACK TO OUR LESS FORTUNATE BROTHERS AND SISTERS BACK HOME IN FIRSETONE. LET US FINISH THIS LIBRARY THIS YEAR AND CONTINUE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OUR COMMUNITY.**

**LONG LIVE AFIRA, MAY GOD BLESS THE WORKS OF OUR HANDS AS WE STRIVE TO CHANGE THE LIVES OF MANY BY EXPANDING THEIR POSSIBILITIES.**

**MAY GOD BLESS EACH OF YOU.**

**THANK YOU!!!**

Samuel S. S. Kieh  
President - AFIRA