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**CHOOSING THE HERO
My Improbable Journey and the
Rise of Africa's First Woman President**

by K. Riva Levinson

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"This book is a deeply moving story of two extraordinary women from very different backgrounds, who worked together through thick and thin, and achieved so much not only for Liberia, but eventually for the whole continent of Africa . . ."

—Joyce Banda, former President of the Republic of Malawi

**CHOOSING THE HERO –
New Book by Washington Lobbyist K. Riva Levinson,
Chronicles her Journey in Support of
Africa's First Woman President, to be Published in June**

The rise of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to become the president of Liberia and the first woman elected to lead an African nation is one of the most inspiring stories of our time. But Sirleaf could not have done it alone. Among the people who worked tirelessly to help her achieve her victory was Washington, D.C.-based international consultant and lobbyist K. Riva Levinson.

CHOOSING THE HERO: My Improbable Journey and the Rise of Africa's First Woman President (June 2016; Kiwai Media) is Levinson's compelling account of her life and career, and how she joined forces with the exiled Sirleaf to fight for a cause bigger than either of them. It is the story of two women warriors intent on changing the fate of a nation and its people.

Levinson's book is filled with gripping anecdotes. She describes her difficult childhood, the inspiration she drew from her grandmother, and her adventures working in some of the

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most dangerous places on earth from Mogadishu to Baghdad. But it is her efforts on behalf of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf that form the heart of **CHOOSING THE HERO**. Sirleaf was working at the United Nations when they first met twenty years ago. A Harvard-educated economist, a mother and grandmother, Sirleaf had once served as the Liberian Finance Minister, but had been imprisoned, threatened with death, and forced into exile. She was determined to return to Liberia to run for the presidency against the warlord Charles Taylor.

In **CHOOSING THE HERO**, Levinson chronicles her behind-the-scenes lobbying for Sirleaf in Washington, D.C. as well as her on-the-ground efforts supporting the presidential campaign in Liberia. It took three tries for Sirleaf to finally win the presidency in 2006. As she says in the book's Foreword, *"Of all of my friends, and staff, my family and colleagues, my constituents and supporters in Liberia and around the world, few believed in me like Riva did."* Since her inauguration, President Sirleaf, who won the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize, has transformed her war-ravaged country, turning it into one of the world's post-conflict success stories.

CHOOSING THE HERO is a truly unique book that can be read on many levels. It is an exciting narrative about Sirleaf's struggle to create a future for Liberia. It's a bird's-eye view of the inner workings of the lobbying/public relations business in Washington, D.C. and the making of U.S. foreign policy. But most of all, it is Riva Levinson's personal story of how she found a hero, fought for a worthy cause, and in the process, discovered her soul.



About the author:

K. Riva Levinson is the President and CEO of KRL International LLC, a Washington communications and government relations firm that focuses on the world's emerging markets. A top strategist in managing international policy issues, Levinson has been profiled in *The Hill* and quoted in *The Financial Times*. She has served as a long-time advisor to Liberia's President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and her firm is the consultancy of record for Liberia in Washington, D.C. Levinson, who has a bachelor's degree from Tufts University and a master's degree from Georgetown University, has managed highly complex and sensitive projects in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, South Asia, and Europe.

Kiwai Media (www.kiwaimedia) is an international publishing house launched by David Applefield, designed to give voice to new authors and thought leaders on Africa.