



**FORTRESS**

## **PRNewsWire (via Yahoo! Finance)- May 22, 2009**

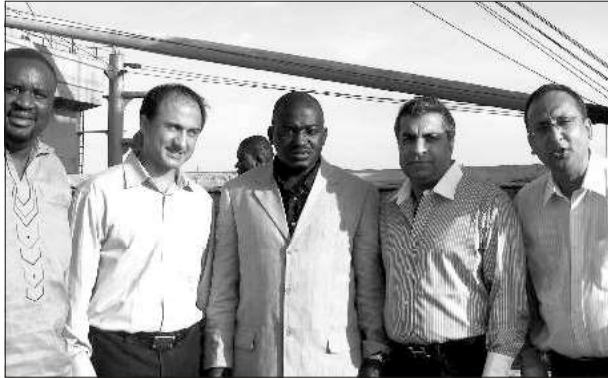
MONROVIA, Liberia, May 22 /PRNewswire/ After more than four decades of dominance of the Liberian cement market by a single company, a milestone was dramatically accomplished in Liberia on Monday May 18, when the first shipment of 12,500 mt of high grade cement entered the Liberian Port, with another shipload of 25,000 mt scheduled to arrive in June and every month thereafter. The deal was made possible under a JV partnership arrangement between Fortress Group of New York & Hong Kong, and Srimex Enterprises of Liberia. The President of Liberia, Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who has strongly advocated for free markets for cement and other commodities in Liberia as part of her Government's efforts to rebuild post-conflict Liberia, was on hand at the Freeport of Monrovia to receive the chartered vessel, along with the Minister of Commerce, Government Officials, the management of both Fortress and Srimex, as well as Ms. Morenike Adepoju, the Managing Director and other staff from Ecobank Liberia who made financing the transaction possible. Beaming with pride, the President firmly declared "...the market for cement is open, and all of our people stand to benefit, this has always been a goal of this Government."

Musa Bility, the CEO of Srimex, who worked diligently with Fortress, echoed President Sirleaf's sentiments by saying, "Liberia can truly be assured that our drive towards development and reconstruction has been enhanced even further, as cement is at the foundation of our rebuilding and construction efforts, and Srimex is proud to have a partner such as Fortress to make this a reality. We could not have done this without them." As a demonstration of commitment, Fortress provided additional credit enhancement to reduce the bank's risk and exposure, as well as agreed to take payment for the freight after arrival of the vessel in Liberia, making the transaction even more possible.

Fortress Group has established subsidiaries in Ghana, Liberia, Cameroon & the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Company has a strategic Pan-African investment agenda and is actively pursuing other market opportunities in Africa, and has established key local partnerships in Africa to enhance the capacity of local partners, while at the same time ensuring profitable returns on investment and successful execution of every trading transaction. A global trade finance & sourcing company for commodities and consumer goods, Fortress has offices in New York & Hong Kong. The primary goal of Fortress Group is to be a strong partner with local business partners and host countries to ensure that the ventures they pursue are successful, and that the products that they supply are affordable and of high standards, thereby helping to improve the quality of lives of the people of those countries.

# Fortress Group in Partnership with Srimex imports 250,000 bags of cement, and another 500,000 on the way

*A Pictorial*



Srimex CEO Musa Bility (center) flanked by Fortress Group executives, including Henrique Caine (far left), the Group's Africa Investment agent, at the Free Port of Monrovia



Fortress Group executives arriving on the pier at the Port



Fortress Group executives and others awaiting the arrival of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf



Mr. Bility (far right) addressing President Sirleaf and Ecobank Managing Director Mornike Adepoju



Srimex CEO Musa Bility greets President Sirleaf upon arrival at the port to view the imported cement



Commerce Minister Miriata Baysolow, Deputy Minister Iderick Norkeh and other ministry officials at the Port



A view of the vessel that brought the cement



A Commerce Ministry official inspection of the imported bags of cement