



Republic of Liberia
National Elections Commission (NEC)



STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NEC

15 November 2005

10:00 am

☐ PROGRESSIVE RESULTS FROM TALLYING

100% of the polling places have reported. Results from Samuel T. Kun Voting precinct in Montserrado are quarantined.

Based on these reports, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has received 478,526 votes corresponding to 59.4% and George Weah has received 327,046 votes corresponding to 40.6%.

The recorded turn out for the polling places which have reported amounts to 825,716 voters or 61%.

Please be advised that detailed reports will be distributed at the end of the press conference and will also be posted on the NEC's official website, www.necliberia.org

☐ ANNOUNCEMENT OF FINAL RESULTS

The NEC wishes to advise that the above figures are to be considered preliminary until they are certified by the Board of Commissioners and declared final. Signed preliminary results are being submitted by all County Electoral Magistrates. To date, 6 County declarations, signed by political party representatives, have been submitted to the NEC. These declarations are from Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Gedeh, Margibi, Gbarpolu and River Cess Counties.

The media will be duly invited to attend the Commission's declaration of final results.

☐ HEARINGS ON COMPLAINTS

Hearings pertaining to complaints laid out by CDC relating to the November 8 election are open to the public and will follow the procedures established for hearings conducted by the NEC in connection with complaints filed after the 11 October elections. Media representatives who attend the proceedings may take notes but may not record, use video cameras or take photographs during the hearings. Although there is limited space in the hearing room, a specified number of seats will be reserved for journalists, which will be allocated on a "first come, first served" basis.



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Please be advised that rulings are generally not issued on the day of the hearing itself. Once the rulings have been completed, they will be announced through our usual press conferences and press statements.

☐ RESULTS OF GBARPOLU SENATE RACE

As stated in earlier press releases, an initial review of the Senate Race in Gbarpolu County was conducted after some discrepancies were noted that indicated there may have been some errors in the counting. After investigating the matter further, the NEC adopted Decision No. 2005-056 on 5 November 2005 which required the Magistrate to apply the procedures contained in the Tally Exception Procedure. The votes cast (along with the ballots and all related materials) in those Polling Stations where the discrepancies were noted were quarantined and the total votes cast for the Senate Race were recalculated, excluding the quarantined ballots.

We are now able to announce that Samuel Sumo Tormetie of the National Reformation Party (NRP), obtained 4,693 votes, constituting 22.2%, and Daniel Flomo Naatehn of the Unity Party (UP), obtained 3,016 votes, constituting 14.3%.

☐ OBSERVER REPORTS

Observer reports have been received from IRI, NDI/Carter Center, the EU, ECOWAS, EU, AU, NACEM, Visions in Action. All observers in their preliminary reports found the run-off election to be generally peaceful, well administered, transparent, peaceful, orderly and smooth. Most reports mentioned a higher level of professionalism, and understanding of their tasks based on lessons learned from the previous round, resulting in shorter queues and a more expeditious process. The security presence was considered adequate, as were the measures for crowd control. The NEC thanks all the Observer groups for their statements and recommendations.

Please refer to the different Observer Organizations for copies of their full statements.

☐ SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Asked for her reaction to calls by the CDC for the results of the November 8 Presidential Run-Off to be overturned, the Chair said she has no authority to overturn results that reflect the will of the Liberian people. "No one has that authority," she added.

On the statement by the NEC Board of Commissioners reaffirming confidence in the Chair in the wake of a request by CDC that she steps aside from the electoral process because the party doubted her neutrality, Cllr. Johnson-Morris said the CDC letter was addressed to the Board of Commissioners and they had responded accordingly.



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On whether she would stay clear of the investigation into the CDC complaints of election irregularities, the Chair said nobody has the right to request her to recuse herself from the process. She said as Chair of the Commission she has original jurisdiction in the matter, and it is her right to preside over the proceedings, unless she decides to delegate that responsibility. She disclosed that the NEC Legal Department, with support from the legal team at UNMIL Electoral Division, are making arrangements to hold hearings into the CDC complaints.

Asked whether it was legally prudent for the CDC to engage in street demonstrations while NEC was preparing to investigate a formal complaint submitted by the party, the Chair said that question should be referred to the Ministry of Justice. She said under the laws of the Republic of Liberia it is illegal for anyone or any group to take the law into their own hands, such as by blocking traffic. She however restated that the Ministry of Justice was the proper authority to address this matter.

Asked why the NEC has not yet announced the final official results of the Election now that all polling places have reported their Preliminary Tally Results, the Chair explained that there are procedures in place and the NEC must ensure that the results go through all the required stages before being declared as final. She said the Board of Commissioners will have to certify the results before the NEC can announce the final results by November 23, as required by law.

Regarding when the Board of Commissioners is scheduled to meet in order to certify the results, the Chair said the Board has to meet before November 23, 2005, which is the deadline established by the Election Law for the announcement of final results.

Asked whether UP Presidential Candidate Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf can declare herself winner of the election going by the results that have been announced by the NEC, the Chair clarified that Mrs. Johnson-Sirleaf has no right to declare herself the winner. Only NEC has the authority to declare a winner, she emphasized.

On what action will follow if Representatives and Senators elected on the CDC ticket refuse to take their seats in Parliament, the Chair said the decision would lie in the hands of those who elected these legislators. She however noted that prior to the October 11, 2005 Elections, all candidates signed a declaration stating that they would accept their seats if elected. She also indicated that there are procedures under the Liberian law for the holding of by-elections.

On what the NEC will do if the investigation finds that CDC claims are false, the Chair said "The law will take its course."

Responding to a question about why the media will not be allowed to use video cameras or take photographs during the hearings into the CDC complaints, the Chair this restriction was required to protect the integrity of the hearings. She said NEC does not



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want anyone to prejudice the results of the hearings through sensational reporting. On whether allowing journalists to take notes during the proceedings would still not open room for the results to be prejudiced by media reportage, the Chair said she expect journalists covering the hearings to behave professionally and refrain from prejudicing the results.