



Republic of Liberia  
**National Elections Commission (NEC)**



**STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NEC**

**25 November 2005**

**3:00 pm**

**□ NEC'S POST-ELECTORAL ACTIVITIES**

As stated by Section 4.14 of the Electoral Reform Law, the National Elections Commission is obliged to announce the final results not later than fifteen (15) days after the elections. Accordingly, the NEC officially announced the results of the November 8 Presidential Run-off Election on November 23. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of the Unity Party was declared the successful Presidential candidate for this race and Joseph Boakai as the successful Vice-Presidential candidate.

As part of its effort to evaluate the conduct of the electoral process, the National Elections Commission will be holding meetings with stakeholders convened by its 18 county offices between Wednesday, November 30, and Saturday, December 3. Findings and recommendations developed through the county-level workshops will assist NEC in examining lessons learned in the conduct of the 2005 elections and in preparing for future elections. The county-level workshops are particularly important in that the experiences of each county are unique, and it is critical for NEC to understand the challenges in conducting the electoral process throughout the country.

The NEC is also preparing to issue certificates to elected representatives for Senate, House of Representatives and the President/Vice President. This certification ceremony will be held in December 2005, date yet to be confirmed. The public will be duly informed of the details of this event.

The regular NEC press conferences will be suspended until further notice.

**□ NEC HEARINGS ON COMPLAINTS**

The NEC is still conducting hearings into complaints lodged by the Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) relating to incidents occurring at specific polling places on November 8. The hearings were adjourned Thursday, November 24 at 1.30pm and are scheduled to resume on Monday, November 28 at 10:00 a.m. A total of 13 witnesses have so far been heard.



## **☐ CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORTING**

The NEC is issuing reminders to Political Parties and Independent Candidates to submit outstanding campaign finance reports immediately to the National Elections Commission. The Campaign Finance Regulations require contesting candidates to submit campaign finance reports by specified deadlines.

Candidates that participated in the presidential run-off election on November 8 are to report no later than fifteen days after the official results of the Run-Off Election are announced. As the final results were announced on November 23, the final campaign finance reports from the Run-Off contestants must be submitted no later than December 8, 2005.

To date, 233 (or 30.6%) of the 762 presidential and legislative candidates that contested the 2005 elections have submitted the first campaign finance reports which were due on October 1, while 127 (16.7%) candidates have submitted the second campaign finance report which was due on October 26. Reporting rates for the successful candidates are significantly higher, with over 60% submitting the first report and over 40% submitting the second report.

Failure to submit a report may result in candidates being subject to penalties such as fines, referral to the Ministry of Justice for enforcement or prosecution, or withholding certificates to take seats, until the requirement is fulfilled.

The NEC's Campaign Finance Reporting Procedures provide instructions on completing the reports. Additionally, the NEC Audit Section is available to answer any queries contestants may have in completing the required reports.

## **☐ SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

Asked why the hearings had so far heard only CDC witnesses, and whether people testifying for NEC are not available, the Chair said the NEC witnesses have been on hand and ready to testify but were simply awaiting the complainants to rest their case before taking the stand to testify.

On whether the NEC had plans to conduct local (chieftaincy) elections now that the presidential and legislative elections are over, the Chair said it was not within the purview of her Commission to determine when and how chieftaincy elections would be held. She said it is the responsibility of the incoming elected government to prioritize the holding of chieftaincy elections in order to complete the government structure.



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On the question of NEC submitting a proposal to international donors to provide funding for the Commission to conduct the chieftaincy elections, the Chair again clarified that this function of holding the local elections does not fall within the mandate of NEC. She said NEC's mandate expires at the end of the transitional period, therefore NEC cannot submit proposals to donors for those elections.

On what the NEC will do if the CDC challenges the election results, and the Supreme Court rules in favour of the party after a protest is filed with the Court, the Chair said the Supreme Court has the authority to mandate the NEC to conduct a re-run of the elections if the Court determines that there were enough irregularities in the elections. She said if this happens the NEC would hold new elections within 60 days as required by law.

Concerning what actions NEC will take against candidates or parties that fail to submit their campaign finance reports as scheduled, the Chair reiterated that they could be fined, referred to the Ministry of Justice for prosecution, or (if elected) have their certificates revoked. She said NEC's insistence on parties/candidates submitting their campaign finance reports was in line with Constitutional requirement and also a measure to ensure transparency and accountability.

Asked whether the Commission had issued new deadlines to candidates/parties that had not yet complied, the Chair said NEC has not given any new deadlines per se, but has been issuing reminders to all those involved.