



Republic of Liberia
National Elections Commission (NEC)



PRESS RELEASE
(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE)

(NEC: Monrovia, June 23, 2010) - The National Elections Commission (NEC) has pleaded with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) to name a full time Country Director for Liberia.

According to NEC, at such a critical period when Liberia is gearing up for the 2011 elections; and growing out of the NEC's present engagement with boundary delimitation and the upcoming National Voters' Registration exercise, the need for IFES , a key partner to be represented at the level of a full time Country Director given the seriousness and enormity of the task at hand, cannot be overemphasized.

A NEC release quoting a dispatch from Chairman James Fromayan and delegation currently in the United States, says, the appeal to IFES was made during a meeting in Washington D.C. with the organization's Vice President, Michael E. Svetlik and Abigail Wilson, Deputy Regional Director for the African Region.

During the meeting, Chairman Fromayan also made a passionate plea to IFES for an International Electoral Consultant in person of Dr. Afari Gyan, Chairman of the Electoral Commission of Ghana, to be contracted on a short term basis, to assist with the planning of the pending electoral process.

As part of the ongoing visit to the Unites States, the NEC delegation met and held discussions with Ambassador Nathaniel Barnes and Senior Liberian Embassy Staff. Chairman Fromayan also held teleconferences in Boston, Massachusetts, and in Delaware, in which he addressed inquiries and concerns about the 2011 elections bordering on the chances of Liberians in the diaspora to participate in the elections outside the country; the eligibility of TRC indictees and claims that a particular party won the 2005 elections, but was cheated.

In response to these issues, Chairman Fromayan and delegation maintained that there is no law that allows for Liberians to vote outside the country and importantly noted that Liberia does not have the resources and the infrastructure to undertake such venture at this time.

Furthermore, on claims that a particular party was cheated in the 2005 elections, Mr. Fromayan stated clearly that in the democratic architecture, there are mechanisms through which aggrieved parties can channel their grievances, i.e., the due process and observed that there was nothing that prevented those with grievances to have exhausted the legal options available at the time. He was however quick to sound the caveat that no political party has the power to announce the results of or to declare itself winner of any elections, saying: 'That authority lies with the National Elections Commission under our law.'

On The TRC question, Chairman Fromayan made it clear that there is no legal instrument that obliges the NEC to ban any Liberian indicted by the TRC report from participating in the 2011 elections.

Chairman Fromayan and delegation, the release noted held a town hall meeting with Liberians in Newark, New Jersey on last Saturday; and a bigger town hall forum in the Philadelphia area will be held on July 2, 2010 before the delegation returns to Liberia.

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