



Republic of Liberia
National Elections Commission (NEC)



**Statement by Hon. James M. Fromayan
Chairman of the National Elections Commission (NEC) on the occasion
of the official launch of the National Voters Registration Exercise
Friday, August 27, 2010
At the NEC Headquarters**

Consistent with the timetable released last week for the National Voters Registration exercise, the National Elections Commission (NEC) is pleased to inform the people of Liberia through you, members of the Fourth Estate that today marks the official launch of the National Voters Registration which is scheduled to take place from 10 January to 6 February 2011. A Voter Register (VR) or what we call in our jurisdiction the Final Registration Roll (FRR) is the compilation of the official list of eligible citizens that are willing to register and vote. We say here willing because it is an exercise of choice. Equally, it is also a civic duty to register as voters in order to be a part of the decision of electing your leaders come Election Day in 2011.

The 2011 voter registration exercise will be the precursor and the first important indicator of how prepared Liberians are for next year's General and Presidential elections. The voter registration exercise is an essential activity that will afford all eligible Liberian voters the opportunity to once again be registered on the national voters roll.

Who May Register? According to Section 3.1 of the New Elections Law of 1986: 'Every citizen of Liberia who has attained the age of Eighteen (18) years or older may register as a voter except one that has been judicially declared to be incompetent or of unsound mind or who has been disenfranchised as a result of conviction of an infamous crime and has not been restored to citizenship.'

Furthermore, under Section 6 of the Electoral Reform Law of 2004, the following will verify eligibility to register as a voter:

- (a) A valid Liberian Passport;**
- (b) A birth certificate, and where applicable, evidence of renunciation of second nationality proving that applicant is a Liberian citizen;**
- © Certificate of naturalization to be accompanied by all relevant legal documents from the court;**
- (d) Sworn statements by two other registered voters who shall appear in person before the appropriate elections officer, confirming that the applicant is a Liberian citizen;**
- (e) Confirmation by a Liberian traditional leader, who shall appear in person before the appropriate elections officer, that the applicant is a Liberian citizen;**
- and**
- (f) A 2005 voter registration card**

Having said that, the National Elections Commission believes that an overwhelming turnout during the registration will send an early strong message that Liberia is on an irreversible course of building a firm democratic foundation. NEC wishes to loudly send out the message that Liberians are only five months away from another historic moment of exercising their inalienable rights to be freely and willingly registered as voters. A massive turnout will further manifest the collective desire of Liberians to build upon the gains made since 2005 and to look forward to entering the second decade of the 21st century on the mantra of an emerging but yet promising democracy on the African continent.

Ladies and gentleman of the Press, fellow Liberians, a successful VR is crucial because it will be a mirror through which the rest of the electoral process will be gauged. It will be transparent, simple, easily accessible and scrupulously carried out so as to avoid the inclusion of foreigners and minors as practical as possible. Furthermore, the voter register will be as good as much as we all can have a shared ownership of it. This means all Liberians should be far removed from any conception that the voter register is for the NEC, on the contrary, the FRR is for all Liberians. The NEC is only the custodian of the Final Registration Roll.

Lastly, the National Elections Commission believes that the voter registration exercise will be as good as it will be accepted by all stakeholders. The only way this can be achieved is for all Liberians at 18 years or above to participate from January 10-6 February 2011 and claim a collective ownership. When this is done, we all will be proud of a final registration roll that represents the wishes of the eligible voters that will register during the process. The regulations and guidelines for the voter registration process will be published on September 15, 2010. Additionally, the Commission will formally launch the civic education for the national voter registration exercise on September 24, 2010. As we look forward to these activities, the Commission is making considerable progress in collaboration with partners to procure all the logistics needed for the timely and smooth execution of the exercise. Currently, registration centers are being identified across the country and the procurement process for essential implements such as cameras and the VR kits is underway.

Fellow citizens of Liberia, our International and Local Partners, Political Parties, members of Civil Society, the Fourth Estate of the realm, on behalf of the National Elections Commission, I am pleased to declare the National Voter Registration exercise officially launched. I ask all Liberians that are duly eligible under the law (18 years and above) to brace themselves for this national undertaking, to prepare to register their names as voters from January 10- February 6, 2011.

I thank you all.