



# **NACEM**

**LIBERIA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES BUILDING, 15<sup>TH</sup> STREET, SINKOR, MONROVIA, LIBERIA**  
**Contact: 06-517879, 06-514348, 06-519765**

## **PRESS STATEMENT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The National Committee for Elections Monitoring (NACEM) is a consortium of three major Liberian civil society organizations—the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP-Liberia), the Inter-religious Council of Liberia (IRCL), and the Coalition for Democracy in Liberia (CODEL). These bodies, in collaboration with the National Democratic Institute International (NDI), have been working together and sharing resources in order to ensure that these elections are conducted in a free, fair, and transparent manner, and in line with internationally-acceptable standards.

Pursuant to its objective, NACEM in October 2005 recruited, trained, and deployed over 800 monitors throughout the country to monitor the conduct of the Presidential and Legislative and the November 8 Run-Off Elections. Prior to October elections activities, NACEM has been involved with monitoring voters' registration, voters' roll exhibition audit and political parties' campaign activities. We also have been sharing our monitoring findings with relevant stakeholders in the Liberian transition effort.

Now that the Presidential and Legislative and Run-Off Elections are over, NACEM would like to commend Liberians for the orderly manner in which they conducted themselves during the process. We also like to commend NEC for the professional manner in which the polls were conducted.

## FINDINGS

### 1. Availability of Materials

*There was no problem with the supply of materials to the voting precincts. In 302 of the 349 polling centers visited by NACEM monitors essential polling materials were provided punctually and no shortages were noticed throughout polling. (Based on reports emanating from 349 polling centers, polling materials in 302 polling centers, representing 86.5 per cent, were available on time).*

### 2. Presence of Political Party Representative

Out of 349 polling places visited, 302 of them reported continuous presence of political party representatives. *In some voting precincts there were more party representatives than only those for the Unity Party and the Congress for Democratic Change. This figure represents 86.5 per cent.*

### 3. Timely Start

Out of 349 polling places visited, 288 of them opened on time. This figure represents 82.5 per cent. The late opening of some of the polling stations was mainly due to logistical problems.

### 4. Secrecy of Voting

It was observed that in 286 polling centers visited ballots were marked in secrecy. This figure accounts for 81.9 per cent of the centers being reported on. There were however reports from the rural areas that many voters did not vote in secret because they often cast their ballots without folding them in the full glance of election officials who said nothing.

### 5. Voting Procedures Followed

Our monitors that out of the 349 polling places visited, polling procedures were generally followed in 299 or 65.7 per cent. This attests to the professional manner in which the process was conducted. However, it was reported that in few polling places election workers omitted to stamp ballot papers before issuing them to voters. This situation cause disagreement between NEC officials and political party representatives

### **6. Proper Counting Procedure**

Two hundred ninety-eight (298) polling centers reported counting of ballots in the presence of political party representatives and observers. This figure accounts for 86.5 per cent. Ballot reconciliation was carried out fairly successfully. Decisions of presiding officers on invalid ballots were not contested by political party representatives.

### **7. Posting of Election Results**

Our observation revealed that 272 polling centers posted results after the close of polls. Political party representatives also signed and received copies of results.

### **9. Voter Turnout**

Voter turnout in the 349 polling places monitored were relatively low during the early polling period, but it gradually improved as time went by.

### **10. Security Presence**

There was a high presence of LNP and UNMIL security personnel in the 349 places covered. At least two security officers were present in every polling station. We wish to note that the security personnel in areas monitored behaved well and were vigilant in preempting and arresting disruptions.

## **CONCLUSION**

Generally, NACEM is pleased by the patience and tolerance exhibited by voters, particularly the elderly, youths, and pregnant women. This was reflected in the orderliness and peacefulness of the voting process. Indeed, the fact that Liberians could again turn out for the run-off election is a clear manifestation of Liberians' willingness to see the country return to democratic rule.

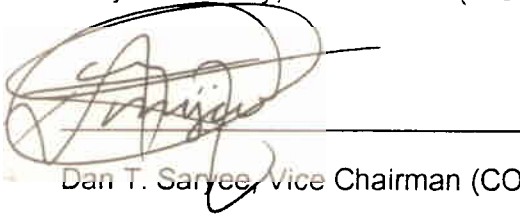
We want to however state that the level of polling day tolerance and maturity is just the first step towards the final announcement of results. NACEM challenges all political parties and their supporters to continue to maintain a sense of political maturity while the results of Tuesday run-off elections are being tallied and announced. We are of the strong conviction that a strong sense of tranquility and respect for law and order would prevail even when the results are finally announced and winners declared.

Within the next few days NACEM will release a second press statement on the overall activities of the elections. A final report covering the elections and post elections activities including the announcement of the final results will be produced and shared with the public.

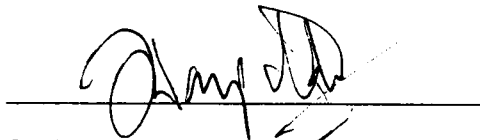
Thanks!



Benjamin Lartey, CHAIRMAN (IRC L)



Dan T. Sanyee, Vice Chairman (CODEL)



S. Tomorlah Varpilah, Secretary (WANEP)