



**European Union
Election Observation Mission
Sierra Leone 2007**

European Union Election Observation Mission to Sierra Leone: Preliminary Statement

**Open and genuinely contested elections, organised in a largely professional manner
represent a positive step towards building a sustainable
democracy in Sierra Leone**

Date: 13 August 2007

For immediate release

The European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) concludes that the 11 August 2007 presidential and parliamentary elections in Sierra Leone have so far been generally well administered, peaceful and competitive. If this commitment to the election process continues it will mark a significant and positive development in Sierra Leone's progress towards the consolidation of democracy and peace.

For the first time in the country's post civil war history national institutions have been solely responsible for preparing elections across the country. The National Electoral Commission has so far supervised the elections in a transparent and impartial manner. This has resulted in credibility for the institution across the political spectrum as well as from national observers and civil society groups.

The competitive nature of these elections was reflected in the lively campaign and the largely peaceful campaign environment. The people of Sierra Leone turned out in large numbers to vote, demonstrating their commitment to the further democratisation of their country.

The elections provided voters with an opportunity to elect their leaders in a fairly organised environment. Polling station staff did experience challenges due to the large numbers of voters queuing at the start of polling and a significant number of polling stations did not open on time. Election day generally took place in a calm and orderly manner throughout the country with one notable exception in Freetown where there were several incidents of violence. The polling procedures were generally well supervised and the presence of large numbers of national observers and party agents aided the transparency of these processes.

The EU EOM will remain in country to observe the remaining aspects of the process and it is presently continuing to observe the counting and tabulation of the results. It will issue its final assessment in a report to be issued within two months of the completion of the entire electoral process with recommendations for future elections.

EU EOM Sierra Leone 2007
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