



Press Release

for immediate release

Transparent and well-handled election day with a remarkable voter turnout, despite atmosphere of mistrust towards institutions

MONROVIA 12 October 2023 – *“Liberian voters demonstrated commitment to the democratic process by participating in great numbers in the General Elections on Tuesday. The technical preparations and running of the election day were well administered. While the campaign was largely peaceful and vibrant, and the press free to cover all sides of the campaign, the use of government platforms and state resources constituted an advantage to the incumbency”,* said Andreas Schieder, the Chief Observer of the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) and Member of the European Parliament.

He highlighted that *“Our 100 EU election observers reported from over 417 polling places in rural and urban areas in 14 out of 15 counties. The election day was calm and well conducted by the National Elections Commission and their staff nationwide.”* Observation of Election Day showed Liberians’ democratic commitment and was positively assessed by the EU EOM observers. They also noted that voters had to face long waiting time for voting. The high turnout, the cumbersome procedures and their implementation slowed the conduct of polls.

Leopoldo Lopez Gil, Head of Delegation of Members of European Parliament added: *“As democratically elected politicians, my Parliamentarian colleagues and I, urge all political leaders to accept the elections outcome and address peacefully any disputes via the courts”.*

“It is also important to note that the results tabulation is still underway”, said the Chief Observer, adding that *“the EU EOM will remain in the field to observe the process, including the handling of complaints and appeals.”*

Mr Schieder underlined that overall, Liberia’s legal framework provides a reasonable basis for the conduct of democratic elections; however, it does not fully guarantee voters’ right to an effective legal remedy. Campaign freedoms were mostly respected in terms of freedom of assembly, of speech, of opinion and of media despite some minor incidents. Unfortunately, the campaign was also characterised by a high level of monetisation and bartering. The respect of campaign finance regulations by contestants is limited, and there is no enforcement of the regulations by NEC.

The EU EOM will present a Final Report with recommendations to the public at a later stage. The EU EOM was invited by the Liberian authorities to observe the 2023 General Elections. Based on its methodology of long-term, independent and impartial observation, bound by a strict code of conduct, the first members of the EU EOM arrived in Liberia on 27 August. The mission strictly adheres to its principle of non-interference.

For media enquiries, please contact:

René SCHULTHOFF, Press Officer.

Mobile +231(0)7720862981 Email: rene.schulthoff@eueom-liberia2017.eu