



Press Release

for immediate release

The European Union Election Observation Mission to Liberia presents its final report with 22 recommendations; the EU stands ready to support Liberia in their implementation

MONROVIA, 05 March 2024 – Announcing today the release of the final report of the 2023 EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) to Liberia, its Chief Observer Andreas Schieder, Member of the European Parliament, noted: *“These were the first general elections since the departure of UNMIL solely organised by the Liberian institutions and they marked an important milestone in further strengthening democracy”*. He further acknowledged that the timely concession by the incumbent president after the closely contested elections significantly contributed to the peaceful transition of power.

As part of its Final Report, the mission identified several electoral issues where further improvement may be considered by the Liberian authorities. Mr. Schieder said *“Of the 22 recommendations contained in our final report, six are offered as priority recommendations. The six priority recommendations point to the need to (1) review the legal framework to address loopholes, ambiguous and contradictory provisions related to candidate registration, campaign finance and adjudication of complaints and appeals, (2) provide the NEC with requisite and timely allocated financial resources to ensure its independence and efficiency, (3) decentralise the voter registration process and increase the number of registration centres, (4) empower the NEC to enforce the campaign finance regulations, (5) adopt quotas to achieve gender equality in the legislature, and (6) adjudicate the election complaints more expediently”*.

The conclusion in the mission’s final report is that despite numerous challenges (including budget constraints), the National Elections Commission (NEC) efficiently managed the preparations leading to successful election days. The mission observed the largely peaceful and vibrant campaign with political freedoms being respected; the Liberian people demonstrated their commitment to the exercise of democracy and, in general, the election process was positively assessed by the EU election observers. However, the use of state resources by the incumbency and lack of oversight of campaign finance by the NEC distorted the level playing field.

The Chief Observer explained that *“the return visit is the EU EOM’s final activity and, from here onwards, the EU Delegation and the EU member states will support Liberia’s authorities and civil society in efforts to implement the recommendations. The EU EOM’s final report is a comprehensive assessment of the entire electoral process that builds on the initial findings of the preliminary statements which were issued shortly after both rounds of presidential elections”*.

The EU EOM was deployed in the country following an invitation by the Liberian authorities to observe the 2023 General Elections. It was present in the country between 27 August to 10 December and comprised 104 observers from 27 EU member states, as well as Canada and Norway. Observers were deployed in all 15 counties of Liberia.

All of the mission’s reports and statements can be found here: www.eueom-liberia2023.eu

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