



PRESS RELEASE

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ELECTORAL VIOLENCE UNDERMINES THE CREDIBILITY OF ELECTIONS:

--Says ECC

August 11, 2020: The Elections Coordinating Committee (ECC) is deeply concerned about the trend of violence that is taking place in the country prior to the official campaign period of October 8, 2020 for the Special Senatorial Election and Referendum. This pattern of violence and political intimidation are early warning indicators of the potential for a violent campaign.

Politically-driven violence runs counter to a fundamental principle of democracy: the exchange and competition of ideas. Violence and political intolerance have no place in our current political dispensation and run the risk of undermining the country's fragile peace and democracy. We therefore call on all political parties, their leaders, candidates, and supporters to demonstrate tolerance and refrain from acts of violence before, during and after the pending elections.

The ECC has also observed pre-campaigning activities related to the referendum with the proposed propositions erected on public facilities. This is a breach of the regulation governing the campaign period which starts on October 8, 2020. The ECC calls on the National Elections Commission (NEC) to work with the relevant state institutions to enforce the election laws and regulations in order to engender public trust in the electoral process.

At the same time, the ECC commends the Board of Commissioners of the National Elections Commission (NEC) for reducing the overall budget for the conduct of the 2020 Special Senatorial Election from 17.8 Million to 13.5 Million. While we welcome this development against the background that funding from international development partners is unlikely, we urge the NEC to inform the public on activities that were shortened which led to the reduction in the amount of 4.3 Million and measures to be put in place to ensure that the outcome and integrity of the elections are not compromised.

With this reduction, the ECC calls on the government to give priority in the disbursement of needed financial resources to the NEC so that electoral activities are implemented in a timely manner that is effective and efficient.



Finally, the ECC admonishes all political parties and their supporters to adhere to the laws and regulations governing the conduct of elections in Liberia.

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The Elections Coordinating Committee (ECC) is a civil society platform, comprising seven (7) organizations that observe elections in Liberia. The members include: Actions for Genuine Democratic Alternatives (AGENDA); Center for Democratic Governance (CDG); Center for Media Studies and Peace Building (CEMESP); Institute for Research and Democratic Development (IREDD); Naymote-Partners for Democratic Development (NAYMOTE-PADD); West Africa Network for Peace Building (WANEP), and the Women's NGO Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL).

The ECC works in partnership with the Liberia Accountability Voice Initiative (LAVI) with support from USAID.

“Promoting Credible Elections to Increase Public confidence in Democracy”