



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **ECOWAS, AU AND UNMIL URGE PARTICIPATION OF POLITICAL PARTY LEADERS AT PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE NATIONAL FORUM**

1. In pursuance of the implementation of their respective mandates of facilitating peaceful, inclusive, credible, free and fair elections, the Office of the Special Representative of the President of ECOWAS Commission in Liberia, The African Union Liaison Office in Liberia (AU) and The United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) support the initiative to hold a National Forum of all Political Parties and stakeholders planned for 31 May 2017 and 1 June 2017 in Monrovia, Liberia. To this end, they jointly call upon Leaders of Political Parties to engage in all processes leading towards this Forum, including the preparatory meeting scheduled to take place on 24 May 2017 at the Lutheran Guest House, Sinkor, Monrovia.
2. The Preparatory Meeting, convened by the two respected religious leaders, Archbishop Johnathan B. B. Hart of the Liberia Council of Churches, and Sheikh Umaru Kamara of the National Muslim Council, will provide an opportunity for Political Leaders to discuss the concept and modalities of the proposed National Forum.
3. The International Community is encouraged by the commitment demonstrated by the Political Party Leaders and Standard Bearers to fully participate in the forthcoming elections. We commend the efforts of the three (3) Arms of Government, the National Elections Commission, Security Agencies, Traditional Leaders, Civil Society Organisations and other local and national stakeholders for their patriotic efforts in ensuring peaceful and credible elections, as well as the transition to a new Government in 2018.
4. The 24 May Preparatory Meeting, facilitated by the two revered Leaders, who co-Chair the National Forum Steering Committee, will be key in making the 2017 electoral process transparent, inclusive and peaceful. In this regard, ECOWAS, AU and UNMIL will participate in and support the process.