



## Press Release

UNMIL/PR/2807-17

Friday, 28 July 2017

### **JOINT STATEMENT BY AU, ECOWAS AND UNMIL ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL COMMENCEMENT OF ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN BY POLITICAL PARTIES AND CANDIDATES ON 31 JULY 2017.**

MONROVIA – As Political Parties and Candidates for the 10<sup>th</sup> October Presidential and Legislative elections are about to enter the official electoral campaign period, from the 31<sup>st</sup> of July to 8<sup>th</sup> October 2017, the African Union Liaison Office in Liberia (AU), the Office of the Special Representative of the President of the ECOWAS Commission in Liberia and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) call upon all stakeholders to spare no effort in their pursuit of peaceful elections in Liberia.

These elections, and the subsequent transition, will mark a significant milestone whereby a sitting President will hand over power from one elected President to another. As Liberians enter into the final phase of this historical process, we remind political parties of their obligations to peaceful campaigning in compliance with the country's electoral laws, international standards and the landmark Farmington River Declaration that parties signed on 4 June 2017.

During the past 14 years of uninterrupted peace, Liberians have demonstrated their determination to reconstruct and move forward together, in their diversity, to build a prosperous and democratic society. The 2017 elections represent an opportunity for all Liberians – government officials, political parties, religious and traditional leaders, civil society, the media, and citizens from all walks of life -- to reaffirm their love of country, and their commitment to fair play and moderation in the interest of the common good.

We encourage all Liberians to support national authorities, including the National Elections Commission, the Liberia National Police and the Judiciary, in carrying out their responsibilities for conducting the elections, providing security and handling any electoral disputes, in accordance with the law and relevant regulations. We call on the NEC, security agencies and other relevant stakeholders to continue to uphold the electoral laws and create an enabling environment for all political parties and candidates to guarantee free, fair and peaceful elections.

We further call on Liberians to make their choices in the upcoming elections on the basis of ideas and platforms, in the best interest of society. Such choices should be devoid of negative tendencies including personal attacks and provocative statements that can incite violence.

To this end, the AU, ECOWAS and UNMIL are following these developments closely, as we urge all stakeholders to encourage their supporters to avoid the use of inflammatory language and exercise restraint in words and deeds.

Finally, we call on the political parties and actors to prioritize national interest, participate actively in the electoral process and, where necessary, utilize available legal means and options in seeking redress for any electoral grievances.

We wish Liberia successful elections.

Media contacts:

**K. Leigh Robinson (Ms)**

Head, Strategic Communications and Public Information

M: +231 (0)77 031 9145 | E: [robinsonkl@un.org](mailto:robinsonkl@un.org)

**Shpend Bërbatovci (Mr)**

Public Information Officer

M: +231 (0)77 031 9156 | E: [berbatovci@un.org](mailto:berbatovci@un.org)