



Press Release

for immediate release

Final Report of EU EOM Liberia 2017 offers 23 recommendations for improvements to election processes

MONROVIA 26 April 2018 – Announcing the release of the Final Report the EUEOM Liberia 2017 Chief Observer Maria Arena, Member of the European Parliament from Belgium, noted: “The elections in Liberia marked a defining moment in the strengthening of Liberia’s democratic institutions.”

The Final Report, which offers 23 recommendations for consideration to the Liberian authorities, notes that despite the delay experienced in the holding of the second round of the presidential race, the election resulted in the first transfer of power from one elected government to another through a competitive multi-party system.

Ms. Arena noted that “While a number of complaints filed in the wake of first round stalled the election process, giving rise to a period of uncertainty, political parties repeatedly called on their supporters, during the resolution of electoral disputes, to remain law-abiding and patient. This bolstered the commitment of Liberian voters and citizens to the rule of law, which allowed for the conclusion of a peaceful voting exercise”. During its five-month presence in Liberia from August 2017 to January 2018, the EU EOM issued two preliminary statements: one after each round of the elections, and one public statement after the final determination of key electoral complaints between the two rounds of elections.

“Of the 23 recommendations contained in our Final Report, six are offered as priority recommendations” underlines the Chief Observer. Among the suggested reform proposals are: removal of the ethnic definition of Liberian citizenship; a review of the constitutional timeline for handling electoral complaints; the adoption of a voter registration system based on a reliable Civil Register; further enabling opportunities to vote for citizens, including, persons turning eighteen, detainees and the hospitalised; measures for enhanced women’s participation; and extending domestic observation to the whole electoral cycle to reinforce the role of civil society in monitoring and reform of the electoral process.

Discussions with political parties, civil society representatives, journalists and other stakeholders are organised by the EU EOM and will be conducted the following days after the presentations of the Final Report.

The Chief Observer noted “The EU EOM came to Liberia after being invited by Liberian authorities. We have looked at how electoral rights under Liberian law and Liberia’s commitments under international law have been upheld. Our report and accompanying recommendations are the result of comprehensive observation of the electoral process.”

All of the mission’s reports and statements can be found here: https://eeas.europa.eu/election-observation-missions/eom-liberia-2017_en

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