

PRESS RELEASE

October 8, 2023.

LIBERIA'S FORTHCOMING GENERAL ELECTIONS SHOULD UPHOLD PUBLIC TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN ELECTIONS AND MULTI-PARTY POLITICS

As Liberia goes to the polls on October 10, 2023, the West Africa Democracy Solidarity Network commends the efforts of all stakeholders including national and regional actors supporting the conduct of the elections, the fourth successive election since 2005.

The Network notes the gains and emerging threats ahead of the election. The 2023 election is very crucial in many ways, notably being the first Liberian general election in full control of the country's national security without the supervision of international actors such as the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), as witnessed in previous elections. The UNMIL provided security and logistical support for the transition elections of 2005 and the following two elections. The Network commends the Liberia National Police and the Joint Task Force for its coordination of security arrangements in the lead up to the election.

However, some worrying violent incidents have been recorded since the commencement of the political party campaigns that could undermine the peaceful conduct of the elections if not addressed. As the election draws closer, WADEMOS encourages all stakeholders including political parties, to use their platforms to promote peace, in line with the Farmington River Declaration, and urge their supporters to respect the regulations and laws governing election day and the post-election period with respect to voting, counting, declaration of results and post-election disputes and complaints resolution.

Lessons must be drawn from the recently conducted elections in the sub-region, particularly, in relation to transparency in the vote tabulation and results declaration process and the growing disillusionment with elections and multi-party politics in Africa, as reported by Afrobarometer. This is essential to boost public trust and confidence in the electoral process and the final results to be declared by the National Election Commission.

The Network further calls on stakeholders to conduct the voting process in a manner that guarantees inclusion and participation of all registered voters including first time voters, women, persons living with disabilities, and local and international observers.

Our fervent hope is that the October 10 election will be transparent, peaceful and credible, and will contribute to efforts towards building democratic resilience on the continent, particularly for the sub-region, which is facing many forms of decline and political instability.

WADEMOS will join the Election Coordinating Committee (ECC) in Liberia to observe the presidential and legislative elections in solidarity with civil society in the sub-region. This activity is a follow-up to the pre-election mission by WADEMOS to Liberia in September.

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WADEMOS is a non-partisan, independent civil society-led transnational democracy solidarity network. The WADEMOS Network consists of over 30 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) located in 15 countries in West Africa. WADEMOS mobilizes, coordinates, and leverages the collective power of civil society and other pro-democracy actors, resources, and opportunities within the West African sub-region to advance, defend, and reinvigorate democracy and promote democratic norms and reforms.

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