



Republic of Liberia
National Elections Commission (NEC)



STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NEC

15 October 2005

7:00 pm

□ PROGRESSIVE RESULTS FROM TALLYING

As of this evening 2,457 polling places have reported. A total of 829,649 votes have been counted and tallied. The recorded turn out for the polling places which have reported amounts to 74.6%.

These updates have been received from the following Counties: Margibi, Lofa, Upper Nimba, River Cess, Upper Montserrado, Bong and Grand Bassa.

In Montserrado, 827 of the 989 polling places have reported. The total votes counted for Montserrado is 320, 818. This is a significant increase from the 213, 100 from this morning.

Presidential Candidates receiving more than five percent of the vote based on the polling places which have reported are as follows:

CANDIDATE	NUMBER OF VOTES	% PERCENTAGE OF VOTES
1. GEORGE WEAH	237, 790	29.8
2. ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF	157, 055	19.7
3. CHARLES BRUMSKINE	95, 498	12
4. WINSTON TUBMAN	73, 087	9.1
5. VARNEY SHERMAN	67, 314	8.4

Please be advised that detailed reports will be distributed at the end of the press conference.

The NEC has received the declarations of preliminary results from Bomi and Grand Cape Mount signed by the Magistrates and is now reviewing these.

□ RETRIEVAL OF MATERIALS

One helicopter flying to Kolahun in Lofa County experienced technical problems and will continue the retrieval of remaining materials from the polling places in this area on Monday, October 17, 2005.

□ SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

On whether the NEC has given thought to the question of how it will finance a possible run-off election, the Chair said the financing of the run-off was built in the Commission's overall budget for the elections and the funding is available.

Asked whether she believed there could be a first round victory for any of the presidential candidates, the Chair said she would not be drawn into interpreting the results. She noted that it was not prudent to make assumptions especially when the overall voter turnout is unknown at this stage.

Concerning whether the number of invalid votes affects the candidates, the Chair said it obviously could affect all of the candidates, because if a voter marked wrongly and the ballot is declared invalid, it means that a certain candidate has lost one vote.

On the variation in the number of polling places for Montserrado in the presidential race (989) and the number of polling places in the senatorial race (937), the Chair explained that there were additional polling places opened for IDPs who registered to vote in their counties of return but were not repatriated by polling day, and these IDPs could vote only for President.

Responding to a rumour that some party representatives of the Unity Party were thrown out of a tallying centre by NEC staff, the Chair said the Commission had not received any such information or complaint and reiterated that it is NEC policy to have international and national observers as well as party/candidate representatives and members of the media present throughout polling, counting and tallying.

Asked whether there would be special provisions for national observers if a second round presidential election is held, the Chair emphasized the rules that applied during the October 11 election will remain the same in the event of a run-off.
