



Joint Statement by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations (UN) on the electoral process in Liberia

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations (UN) are closely following the progress towards Liberia's presidential and legislative elections scheduled to take place on 10 October 2023.

The Head of the ECOWAS Observer Mission to Liberia, Professor Attahiru Muhammadu Jega and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), Leonardo Santos Simão, undertook a joint mission to Liberia from 3 to 4 October. The objective of the mission was to assess Liberian stakeholders' political perspectives and to convey messages of peace and inclusivity in the context of the electoral process.

The Joint Mission consulted with political stakeholders and national institutions. They also interacted with members of the Diplomatic Corps and the United Nations Country Team.

The Mission acknowledged the progress in the preparations towards the elections, and underscored the need for peaceful, credible, transparent and inclusive polls in an atmosphere of tolerance that promotes unity in Liberia.

In particular, the Mission urged political actors to refrain from incendiary rhetoric that incites violence and encouraged all actors to exercise restraint, and assiduously safeguard the hard-won peace and maintain national cohesion in the country. The delegation highlighted that political leaders have the responsibility to adhere to democratic values and the rule of law. They further urged political leaders to send clear messages to their supporters and the public that they stand for peace and reject violence.

The delegation strongly condemned acts of electoral violence, in particular, the violence, loss of lives and destruction of properties that occurred in Foya, Lofa County on 29 September. They called for swift investigation and accountability of the perpetrators. They reiterated that violence had no place in democratic processes.

The delegation urged political parties and candidates to uphold their commitment to peaceful elections and seek judicial resolution of disputes in accordance with the Farmington River Declaration 2023. They called on the people of Liberia, and their leaders, to continue to demonstrate a high sense of responsibility and preserve its values of tolerance and peace at this historic moment of democratic consolidation.