



West Africa Network for Peacebuilding

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS FOR PEACE

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Liberia's Voter Registration Exercise – “Associated Challenges – A Recipe for Highly Contested Elections Results:

The chairman of the National Elections Commission, Cllr. Jerome G. Korkoya has been summoned by the 53rd National Legislature (Lower House of Representatives) to show cause as to why the 2017 nation-wide voter registration process is hugely marked by irregularities. The Honorable House in its communication noted with keen interest that residents, civil society organizations and other international non-governmental organizations have lamented that citizens on daily basis complained of standing in queue for hours only to be told that digital cameras have jumped into other programs, while printers, registration forms and other essential materials are inadequate. Residents have had to wait for hours in some cases for the VRC-Electoral Supervisors to supply materials and or adjust their respective equipment before the recommencement of the exercise. What was also observed during VRC monitoring is the fact that almost 85% of the staff at these centers are not quite trained in using basic equipment. Findings of this hearing are yet to be made public as it was done behind closed door on 22nd February.

Meanwhile the Voter Registration process has been disrupted following a reported fist fight between residents and a man identified as Lusene Yehn and friends. The incident happened in electoral district #3 in Gbarpolu County when residents recognized and reported Yehn was not a resident and citizen of their district. At the heat of the occurrence, the NEC staffers reportedly fled the scene to avoid their equipment being damaged by the angry crowd that emerged a little later. Yehn and some of his alleged accomplices reportedly boarded their vehicles and fled the town to another center in Beatoe Town, a nearby community, where they were as well rejected and chased out of the center. Following the incident, citizens have called on NEC's central administration to assign security personnel in the county at the registration centers to avoid the reoccurrence of such incidents that have the potential to undermine the entire electoral process.