



REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
INDEPENDENT NATIONAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (INCHR)
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Office of the Acting Chairman

PRESS RELEASE BY THE INDEPENDENT NATIONAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (INCHR) ON THE RECENT DRUG INVESTIGATION
JULY 9, 2026

Drugs arrest:

The Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR) commends the Joint Security of the Republic of Liberia, and all collaborating foreign partners, for the meticulous, coordinated, and highly professional manner in which the investigation into the recent alleged drug trafficking case has been conducted.

The Commission recognizes that combating illicit drugs is not merely a law enforcement responsibility but also a fundamental human rights obligation. Drug abuse and illicit trafficking have devastating consequences on the enjoyment of human rights. They destroy lives and families; expose children and young people to addiction, fuel violent crime and corruption, undermine public health, threaten the right to life and security, weaken economic opportunities, and impede sustainable national development. A society overwhelmed by drug cannot fully guarantee the dignity, security, and freedoms of its citizens.

The relationship between illicit drugs and human rights is firmly recognized under international law. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) proclaims that every person has the inherent right to life, liberty, and security of person, health, dignity, and equal protection under the law. Likewise, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) obligates States to protect individuals against criminal activities while guaranteeing due process and fair trial rights. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) recognizes the right of everyone to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, a right severely threatened by the proliferation of illicit drugs. The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, to which Liberia is a State Party, equally obligates States to protect life, dignity, health, security, and the welfare of their citizens.

Domestically, the Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, particularly Articles 11, 20, and 21, guarantees equality before the law, due process, and the protection of the fundamental rights of every person within Liberia's jurisdiction. These constitutional guarantees remain applicable to every individual regardless of the allegations brought against them.

The Commission therefore calls upon the Ministry of Justice to ensure the speedy prosecution of every individual formally charged in connection with this matter. Justice delayed undermines public confidence, weakens deterrence, and risks compromising the integrity of criminal proceedings. The Liberian people deserve timely, transparent, and impartial justice.

However, while demanding swift prosecution, the Commission reminds all State institutions, public officials, media institutions, and members of the public that every accused person remains presumed innocent until proven guilty by a court of competent jurisdiction as provided for under Article 21(h) of the Constitution of Liberia which is linked Article 11(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that every person charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial with all guarantees necessary for his or her defense.

The Commission therefore calls upon the public to refrain from prejudging the guilt of the accused or subjecting them to humiliation, degrading treatment, or public condemnation before the conclusion of judicial proceedings.

The Commission also calls upon the Joint Security to intensify efforts to locate, arrest, and bring before the courts every suspect who has fled justice. The fight against illicit drugs cannot be selective.

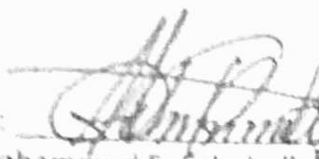
The Commission reiterates that the fight against drugs and the protection of human rights are not competing objectives. They are complementary obligations of a democratic society governed by the rule of law. Liberia can and must remain uncompromising against drug trafficking while equally uncompromising in safeguarding justice, due process, and human dignity.

Landmark Health Equity Fund Bill

The Commission commend the Ministry of Health for the submission of the "Health Equity Fund Bill", and urge the President to endorse and submit it same to the national legislature for enactment. The commission wishes to emphasize that, Access to quality healthcare is a fundamental human right enshrined in our Constitution and the international treaties Liberia has ratified. The Health Equity Fund Bill is a concrete manifestation of the State's obligation to respect, protect, and fulfill the right to health for all Liberians and legal residents, particularly the most vulnerable among us who have long been excluded from quality healthcare due to financial barriers.

Because of the importance of the bill, the commission stands ready to work and support the timely passage of the bill as its seeks to establish the country's first comprehensive national health insurance scheme, designed to significantly expand access to quality healthcare services and accelerate progress toward universal health coverage.

The Commission emphasizes that the LHEF Bill is a critical step toward fulfilling Liberia's domestic and international human rights obligations concerning the right to health.

Signed: 
Cllr. Mohammed E. Fahnbulle
Acting Chairperson



The Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR)
Republic of Liberia