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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

INCHR Commends AFL Leadership for Dismissing Soldier Accused of Brutalizing Female Civilian, Demands Full Medical Support for Victim and Expedited Criminal Proceedings

Monrovia, Liberia | October 21, 2026

The Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR) strongly condemns the reported brutalization of a young female civilian by a member of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL). The Commission considers any act of violence, abuse, intimidation, or degrading treatment against civilians by security personnel a serious affront to human dignity, the rule of law, and the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under Liberia's Constitution and applicable human rights instruments.

The Commission commends the leadership of the Armed Forces of Liberia for its reported decision to dismiss the officer implicated in the incident. This action represents an important step toward institutional accountability and sends a clear message that misconduct by members of the security sector must not be tolerated. However, **dismissal from military service must not be treated as the end of accountability.** The AFL leadership must take further concrete measures to ensure that the victim receives comprehensive medical care, psychological support, and appropriate rehabilitation, with all necessary costs fully covered by the AFL.

This responsibility must extend beyond any immediate treatment to include follow-up medical care, psychological and psychosocial support, trauma-informed services, and rehabilitation for any physical injuries or emotional and mental harm arising from the incident.

The Commission also calls for effective measures to protect the victim from intimidation, harassment, retaliation, or any further harm throughout the investigation and judicial proceedings. Her dignity, privacy, safety, and well-being must remain central to every action taken by the authorities. Furthermore, appropriate remedies and reparations must be pursued in

accordance with the law to address the harm suffered and support her recovery.

Zero Tolerance for Abuse by Security Personnel

The INCHR reiterates that members of the security sector bear a heightened responsibility to respect, protect, and uphold human rights. They are entrusted with the duty to protect the public, not to subject civilians to violence, humiliation, intimidation, or degrading treatment. Any abuse of that authority undermines public confidence in security institutions and weakens the rule of law.

The Commission therefore urges the Government of Liberia, the AFL leadership, the Liberia National Police, and the relevant prosecutorial and judicial authorities to translate their obligations into decisive action: ensure a credible and timely criminal process, provide comprehensive support for the victim, and strengthen institutional safeguards against future violations.

The INCHR will continue to monitor the situation within its mandate and advocate for accountability, effective remedies, and the protection of the victim's rights. The Commission expects the relevant authorities to demonstrate, through concrete and timely action, that allegations of abuse by security personnel are treated with the seriousness they deserve.

Signed _____

Cllr. Mohammed E. Fahnbulleh

Acting Chairperson.

Independent National Commission on Human Rights
Office of the Acting Chairperson