



# *Independent National Commission On Human Rights*

PRESS STATEMENT



Office of the Chairperson

October 2, 2023

The Independent National Commission on Human Rights is seriously concerned about the violent incident in Foyah District, Lofa County on Friday, September 29, 2023. INCHR condemns the incident and takes note of the claims and counter claims from officials of Unity Party (UP) and the Coalition of Democratic Change (CDC) in the wake of the reported death of two persons, the injuries of several persons including damage to properties. The Commission is calling on the Ministry of Justice to order for an immediate investigation by the joint security.

The Commission is appalled, and therefore describes this has a wanton disregard for rule of law and lawlessness that have become characteristic of the electoral process. The gruesome killings of individuals and injuries of persons on account of political campaigns and party militancy have no place in our emerging democracy and must be totally condemned by all Liberians no matter which political persuasion one subscribes to. INCHR warns that measures such as those taken by the United States of America regarding visa restrictions, need to be strengthened and reinforced by organizations such as ECOWAS, AU and EU on individuals who threaten the peace of Liberia during this electoral process. The Commission believes that action such as those that occurred in Foyah District in Lofa County on Friday are grand designed to intimidate voters not to turn out on the October 10, 2023 Election day. Such action, the Commission avers, undermines democracy and a blatant violation of fundamental freedoms and rights, especially the right to participate in public affairs and to vote in elections.

Additionally, INCHR is greatly worried that limited support for law enforcement agencies by the Government of Liberia to timely respond to violence situation is disastrous. The Commission observes that law enforcement officers are ready to respond to electoral violence, however logistical support remains a major challenge which does not auger well for the security of all Liberians in this crucial period when lawlessness has become the order of the day.

As the Commission mandate is to promote and protect the rights of all Liberians, statements coming from partners such as the UN and ECOWAS are of serious gravity. The commission recommends investigation and prosecution of those responsible.

Meanwhile, the Commission reminds all political actors that they will be held individually accountable for lawlessness that result to the death of innocent persons. Post electoral violence in other parts of Africa such as Kenya and Ivory Coast has led to the intervention of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The Commission asserts that Liberia as a Party to the Rome Statute, it will not hesitate to support investigation and prosecution of individuals who actions leads to gross violation of human rights especially the loss of life.

Meanwhile the Commission has begun an investigation into the situation. After the investigation, the Commission will present its findings that will be submitted to the Liberian Government and publish to the public at large.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

CLLR. DEMPSTER BROWN  
CHAIRPERSON