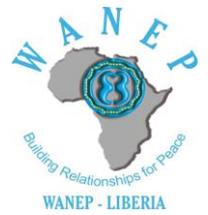
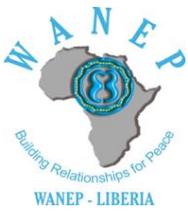


**Press Statement of the Elections Situation Room
Liberia Elections Early Warning & Response Group (LEEWARG)
West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP-Liberia)
December 25, 2017**

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

The West Africa Network for Peace Building (WANEP), in collaboration with partners, has resumed the operations of the “Liberia Elections Early Warning and Response Group (LEEWARG) Election Situation Room(LEEWARG ESR)” for the December 26 runoff election. The Situation Room is one of WANEP’s contributions to a peaceful electoral process in Liberia. The Situation Room is hosted at the ECOWAS Commission Office in Liberia, with the kind support of ECOWAS, the United Nations Missions in Liberia (UNMIL), the Governments of Austria, Sweden and Denmark.

LEEWARG is a Coordinated Election Observation platform for the 2017 presidential and legislative elections of Liberia established in collaboration with relevant stakeholders with the primary objective of coordinating and recommending strategies for the mitigation of threats to the peaceful conduct of the elections.



This process started in April 2017 with the development and validation of a set of elections early warning indicators for the monitoring of violent threats during the October elections in Liberia.

The Group is made up of eminent personalities from civil society, security sector, government, faith-based groups, development partners as well as the media, women and youth groups.

The Platform has deployed 43 monitors in addition to its institutional accredited observers in all the 73 electoral districts across the 15 counties of Liberia. The monitors/observers will use a checklist of 66 questions divided into four sections to report on the electoral process in their assigned areas. The monitors and field observers will send their reports to the Situation Room.

Operations of the Situation Room

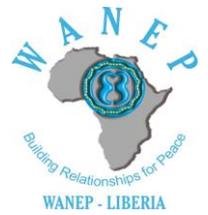
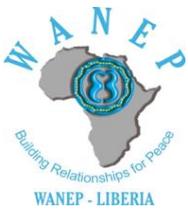
Ladies and Gentlemen:

The “Liberia Elections Early Warning and Response Group (LEEWARG) Election Situation Room (LEEWARG ESR)” is located at the ECOWAS Commission Office in Liberia to facilitate the collation, analysis and response to the reports sent in by the monitors/observers. A total of 25 personnel are deployed in three sections within the ESR.

The “Data Gathering Section” constitutes the “technical room”, and is responsible for direct communication with monitors/observers in the field. They collate all data received for analysis. The Data Gathering Section categorizes and maps the data in order to inform analysis of identified occurrences that may mar the conduct of elections in risk areas. A total of 10 persons work in this section.

The “Analysis Section” is responsible for interpreting the data for response. There are a total of 5 experts in this section comprising, political scientists, peace, security and communication experts.

The “Decision-making Section” comprises of eminent persons who can use their good offices to influence positive responses to identified threats. This section comprises representatives of ECOWAS, the African Union, National Traditional Council, National Civil Society Council of Liberia, Office of the Peace Ambassador of Liberia, Liberia Peace Building Office, the Elections Coordinating Committee, the National Security Council Secretariat, the National Center for the Coordination of the Response Mechanism, and the Inter-Religious Council of Liberia.



These eminent persons may be called upon to also engage in preventive diplomacy when the need arises to address escalating tensions.

The Situation Room has made available the following Hot lines for the public to use when necessary:

0555 – 022 - 320

0777 – 977 - 167

Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of our partners of the Situation Room and WANEP, we wish to thank you for your time and pray that we all do our best to continue to maintain the peace of Liberia before, during and after the scheduled Election.

Signed: _____

Ambassador William R. Tolbert III

Co-Chairperson – LEEWARG