



Saturday, October 14, 2023 (5:00 PM)  
Monrovia, Liberia

**LEON'S ELECTION OBSERVATION:  
COUNTING AND RESULTS TABULATION SITUATIONAL REPORT**

*LEON commends the National Elections Commission (NEC) for implementing election day counting procedures that supported a transparent process.*

*NEC is demonstrating results tabulation practices at 19 tally centers that enable political party agents and domestic and international observers ready access to the display and processing of counting forms, which also supports transparency and trust in the process.*

*LEON implores all political parties and voters to not make any pronouncements on results and to be patient and respect the legal mandate of the NEC to tabulate, certify, and announce official results from the 2023 presidential and legislative elections.*

*LEON appeals to all political party agents, officials, and supporters to allow the NEC tally centers to operate without undue disruption or obstruction and to comply with the electoral law, regulations, and procedures for filing any complaints about the tally process.*

The Liberia Elections Observation Network (LEON)<sup>1</sup> provides the following statement on its initial findings during observation of the counting process that followed the close of the polls on Election Day and the ongoing results tabulation that is taking place at the 19 tally centers operated by the National Elections Commission (NEC) and supervised by the NEC's magistrates.

In the spirit of maintaining a stable electoral environment, LEON expresses its deep concern about representatives from political parties making premature pronouncements on the outcome of the elections before the NEC completes its tabulation and certifies official results. LEON also calls on political party agents assigned to NEC tally centers to remain civil and professional and not disrupt, obstruct, or interfere with the operations to avoid unnecessary delays in the tabulation process.

All political parties, stakeholders, media outlets, and other groups are advised to refrain from speculation and not make projections based on unofficial calculations from polling place counting forms or other sources. The NEC has established a transparent and professional system for displaying original counting forms to political party agents and domestic and international observers so that all results can be verified and certified by NEC magistrates at the tally centers. Multiple layers of integrity measures by the NEC are in place to provide public confidence in the results.

Furthermore, any unofficial claims of winning an elected seat can raise expectations among supporters that may or may not be confirmed by the NEC's official results. LEON views any unsubstantiated claims or allegations by political parties as a form of interference with the electoral process and attempts at applying undue pressure on NEC officials, which can undermine the electoral commission and lead to heightened tensions following a peaceful set of elections. LEON implores

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<sup>1</sup> LEON is a network of the Liberia Crusaders for Peace (LCP), Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (JPC), Federation of Liberian Youth (FLY), and National Union of Organizations of the Disabled.

all Liberians to remain calm and patient and allow the NEC to carry out its legal mandate to verify, tabulate, certify, and announce the official results from the 2023 presidential and legislative elections.

### LEON's Observation Methodology

During the 2023 national election, LEON deployed 73 long-term observers (LTOs) and 53 field coordinators to supervise and support a statistically based observation from 904 short-term observers (STOs) at randomly selected polling places from all 73 electoral districts.

As of Friday, October 13, 2023, at 12:00 PM, LEON has verified observations from 853 of 904 STOs to provide findings from 94.4% of polling places observed from all 15 counties.

### Opening, Voting, and Closing Observations

In LEON's opening of polls statement, issued on October 10<sup>th</sup>, observers reported that most polling places open on time and with electoral materials present in Liberia. In LEON's voting and closing of polls statement, issued on October 11<sup>th</sup>, observer data affirms NEC officials generally performed their duties in accordance with electoral regulations, policies, and procedures to deliver timely presidential and legislative elections. Apart from logistical challenges due to weather and road conditions in some counties, minor procedural issues during the voting process, and tensions and delays stemming from queue control difficulties due to a high turnout of voters, LEON assessed that the NEC largely adhered to its opening of polls, voting, and closing of polls procedures and they were conducted professionally and transparently.

### Counting Procedures

LEON's observers reported that six main counting procedures were implemented by the NEC at rates ranging from approximately 97% to 99% at the polling places observed. Notably, LEON observers reported that party agents/poll watchers for top vote recipients signed the presidential counting forms approximately 97% of the time and that the presidential counting forms were published for public view at the polling places approximately 98% of the time.

LEON notes that party agents/poll watchers signing the counting forms is a clear sign of acceptance of those results. This high rate of procedural compliance during the counting process provides further confidence that NEC officials carried out their duties in a professional and transparent manner among the polling places where LEON observed.

	Yes	No
<b>Reconciliation Done Before Counting Started</b>	99.5%	0.5%
<b>Sorting of Ballot Papers Done Correctly</b>	99.2%	0.8%
<b>Presiding Officer Worksheet Filled Correctly</b>	99.2%	0.8%
<b>Top Vote Recipients Signed Presidential Record Count</b>	97.3%	2.8%
<b>Presidential Record Count Published for Public View</b>	98.2%	1.8%
<b>Materials Packed and Sealed Correctly at End of Counting</b>	98.2%	1.8%

## **NEC Tally Center Observations**

LEON reminds the public that NEC is processing 17,670 counting forms – one each for the presidential, senatorial, and representative seats from 5,890 polling places. NEC must ensure accuracy in tabulation and aggregation, as credible results are essential to a genuine electoral outcome, and thus the process takes time, as NEC takes care as it certifies and announces the results.

LEON's initial findings from observing the results tabulation process in NEC's 19 tally centers are based on reports from LTOs in all 15 counties:

- Party agents/poll watchers and domestic and international observers are being provided access to observe the results tabulation process in all tally centers:
  - Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC), Collaborating Political Parties (CPP), and Unity Party (UP) agents/watchers appear to be present in nearly all centers.
  - Domestic observers and international observers are present in most centers.
- Counting forms are projected for public display per NEC procedures in most cases.
- Party agents and observers are consistently given a copy of results sheets in most cases.

## **Tally Center Incidents**

LEON's tally center observers reported that disruptions at the Montserrado tally centers delayed the tallying operations on October 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> due to disagreements among political party agents.

At the Grand Cape Mount county tally center in the morning of October 14<sup>th</sup>, the NEC magistrate announced that the October 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> results tabulated from counting forms was wiped out because of their computing system being upgraded. As a result, all tabulation will be repeated from the beginning. LEON notes that the only county not reporting results on NEC's results portal – <https://results.necliberia.org/> – is from Grand Cape Mount.

LEON will continue reporting its observation findings during the NEC's tabulation and certification of electoral results at the magisterial tally centers across the country.

## **Conclusion**

LEON encourages NEC to continue adhering to its results tabulation and certification policies and procedures and complete the process in due time. LEON also appeals to all political parties and stakeholders to allow tabulation to proceed unobstructed and maintain patience and respect for the NEC's electoral mandate so that Liberia can serve as a model for genuine, credible, transparent, safe, and inclusive elections in Africa.

Thank you and for further information, please contact the LEON Head of Secretariat and Spokesperson.

## **CONTACT**

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