

# COALITION OF CONCERNED LIBERIANS

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## **“From Transition to Reconstruction”** - As We Embrace the New Government of Liberia

*Official Statement of the Coalition of Concerned Liberians  
At the End of the Transition Process and Onset of the Johnson-Sirleaf Administration*

After 25 years of intermittent episodes of instability, Liberians have again ventured to take another step in the journey towards peace and democracy through a choice at the ballot box. Regardless of manifested differences in choice, it was made official by the National Elections Commission (NEC), with the concurrence of a host of international observers that on January 16, 2006, the mantle of leadership will be conferred upon Madam Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf as the 24th President of the Republic of Liberia.

In appreciation of the progress made in our path to national reconstruction, the Coalition of Concerned Liberians (CCL) offers due congratulations not only to the President-Elect and Government of Liberia, but also to the gallant people of Liberia and all participants in the elections process. We applaud the determined leadership of ECOWAS, the African Union, United States, the European Union, the United Nations and all of our friends and partners for lifting Liberia from an inferno of chaos to the threshold of peace and reconstruction.

The current process of democratic transition ushered by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which was endorsed by Liberian stakeholders and attested by ECOWAS, with the support of the U.S., AU, EU, the UN, did not come without its shortcomings. The pie distribution of government agencies as an apparent reward to those who wreaked havoc upon the people; the disorganized and consequently non-cohesive activity of an hybrid interim government; and, the attending corruption which ensued at all levels registered the side effects of a bitter pill that Liberia had to swallow to get out of the dungeon of war and human desperation.

It must be noted similarly, that the elections process within itself, as in the case of any emerging democracy, had its shortcomings occasioned by meager resources and prevailing socio-political dynamics. These shortcomings ranged from a failure to seek the participation of a vast portion of the Liberian populace scattered in the Diaspora, to the failure of the electoral governing body to properly vet the qualifications and financial statements of candidates. Other concerns did abound about the abbreviated and restricted campaign schedule and the selection process of poll workers. It is interesting however, that despite these lingering shortcomings, the process was embraced without any complaint by the participating political entities until the aftermath of the results.

With persistent endeavor, Liberians young and old, repeatedly demonstrated great commitment to the ideals of peace and democracy through long hours of endurance at the polls on October 12<sup>th</sup> and November 8<sup>th</sup>, respectively, in their undying quest for a new day of self-determination devoid of indiscriminate violence and destruction.

The great and noble sacrifices of our people invested this time around, should not be squandered or relegated to the gutter of futility. Hence it is incumbent upon the incoming leadership of Madam Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf to ensure that Liberians receive the full entitlements of their nation and government from which they have been deprived for so long. The challenge is given to the new government to unite a battered and divided people, not merely through cosmetic gestures of political window dressing, but rather through the erection of new structures and policies geared towards the elimination of an old culture which created the fertile ground for disenchantment, division, chaos and eventual destruction. The recurrence of the dark chapters of warfare and violence is fully dependent upon the capacity of the new system to recognize, tackle, and eliminate the old symptoms of decay.

To achieve these worthy goals, the new government holds the sacred obligation through its mandate, to seek the service of the best human resources that Liberia has to offer. It must be noted that a certain class of outdated bureaucrats, second-handed technocrats, and recycled politicians have repeatedly proven their inability or limited capacity to solve our national problems. Hence, in this process, a blind eye cannot be given to the pool of young and vibrant professionals abundant both in Liberia and the Diaspora, with enriched potentials of modernized training in an array of disciplines. The infusion and integration of these young professionals into the governance of the new Liberia will also serve as a resource development process for the future leaders of Liberia.

Upon these premises, we call upon Liberians of all persuasions to join in a concerted effort to support the principles of democratic change, not in quest of individual or sectional aggrandizements, but supremely in the best interest of Liberia. We therefore condemn all attempts to incite violence and threats of civil disturbance as a means of self-expression by a disgruntled few.

We remain cognizant that the institution of democracy may bear its own burdens of imperfection, but the opportunity of civility in self-determination as an option to violent change, is indeed a recipe for hope. Our people have suffered enough on a path of futility through confusion and violence. It is now time to turn a new leaf. In this bid, it behooves us all, as PATRIOTIC citizens to put aside sectional persuasions or political inclinations and support the GOVERNMENT OF LIBERIA, regardless who the occupant of the Executive Mansion may be.

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Signed:

*Isaac Vah Tukpah, Jr.*

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Secretary General

Approved:

*John G. F. Lloyd*

John G. F. Lloyd

CHAIRMAN