



Institute for Research and Democratic Development

Post Elections Conference

Musu's Spot Conference Room, Tubman Boulevard

March 23, 2018

Conference Resolution

Over the course of March 23, 2018, the Institute for Research and Democratic Development (IREDD) with financial support from the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), organized an electoral conference under the theme “ *Sharing Lessons Learnt: Liberia’s 2017 Legislative and Presidential Elections and Way Forward to improve further elections*”. The conference which brought together diverse actors drawn from political parties, national elections commission, Liberia national police, civil society, youth groups, as well as international actors deliberated and reflected on challenges attending the 2017 elections, examined activities that could lead to democratic consolidation and theorized on potential entry points that could lead to reform of electoral management. As a consequence of the deliberations and reflective of the complex nature of the recently held elections, we the participants at this very critical conference have so resolved on the following:

I. CHALLENGES

That:

- The lack of a finalized, sanitized final registration roll (FRR) created some semblance of doubt about the authenticity of elections results and fueled speculations about partisan nature of the elections
- Minimal interagency coordination amongst actors involved either peripherally or directly with elections management created some degree of confusion and disorderliness for the elections
- The limitation or inadequacy of logistics to address all phases of the elections from start to end affected predictability and contributed to a sense of external influence on elections results

- The chaotic nature of the voter registrations process as well as the information surrounding the sourcing/contracting process also contributed towards voters' skepticism

2. ADVANCING DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION

That conduct of the 2017 General Elections:

- Improved political tolerance in our democratic participation and provided a profound and necessary test for our Judiciary
- Greatly improved the participation of youths in our democracy as established by the increased participation of young people in the democratic process either as direct participant or as surrogates
- Contributed immensely to a greater understanding and appreciation of the role of the judicial system in a democracy as well as a broadening of the general understanding of the electoral process and legal
- Led to the creation or bolstering of a more robust picture of democratic consolidation and image of Liberia in the community of Nations and also emphasized the peaceful environment that has evolved over the last 12 years of democracy

3. ENTRY POINTS FOR REFORM OF THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

That:

- The National Elections Commission be provided financial autonomy in order to stem the tide of political influence
- The National Elections Commission ensures adequate, long-term civic education be provided at the county and a process of decentralized recruitment be emphasized
- The Government prioritizes the establishment of an Independent Elections Complaints body that is divorced from the administrative aspect of the elections commission