



THE CARTER CENTER



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ARRIVAL STATEMENT BY THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE / CARTER CENTER OBSERVER DELEGATION TO THE 2005 LIBERIA ELECTIONS

International delegation co-led by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and former President of Benin, Nicephore Soglo

MONROVIA, LIBERIA...The National Democratic Institute (NDI) and The Carter Center today announced the arrival of their delegation to observe the October 11 presidential and legislative elections in Liberia.

The 38-member multinational delegation is co-led by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and former President of Benin, Nicephore Soglo. The delegation will include elected officials, electoral and human rights experts, regional specialists and political and civic leaders from 13 countries in North America, Europe and Africa.

The purposes of the delegation are: to express the international community's interest in and support for the development of democratic governance in Liberia, in particular for the organization of a democratic election process; and to provide an impartial and accurate report on that process to the Liberian people and the international community. These polls offer the people of Liberia an opportunity to further overcome a history of civil conflict and authoritarian rule. The establishment of democratic governance offers the best hope, and a difficult challenge, for attaining sustained peace and development in Liberia. The elections can be an important step in that direction.

The delegation will draw upon the findings of the ongoing joint election observation mission of NDI and The Carter Center. NDI and The Carter Center organized a pre-election delegation in early September, and have maintained a continuous election monitoring presence in-country through resident staff and long-term observers. They will also monitor developments in the immediate post-election period.

The reports of the pre-election delegation and other materials are available on the NDI web site at www.ndi.org and The Carter Center web site at www.cartercenter.org. The joint election observation mission, including the present delegation, is supported by a grant from USAID.

From October 6 - 9, the delegation will meet in Monrovia with representatives of the major political parties, officials of the National Elections Commission, government officials, civic leaders, journalists and representatives of the international community. Teams of delegates will then deploy to different sites in 11 counties across the country. The day before the elections, each team will meet with local election officials, party representatives, civic groups and others to assess the election environment at their deployment sites. On election day, the teams will visit polling places and remain to observe counting centers in their respective counties.

The teams will then reassemble in Monrovia for debriefing and to prepare a preliminary delegation statement, which will be released on Thursday, October 13.

The delegation will conduct its activities in a nonpartisan, professional manner in accordance with applicable law and international standards for election monitoring set forth in the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation. NDI and The Carter Center will remain in close communication with other international observer delegations.

NDI is a nonprofit organization working to strengthen and expand democracy worldwide. Calling on a global network of volunteer experts, NDI provides practical assistance to civic and political leaders advancing democratic values, practices and institutions. NDI works with democrats in every region of the world to build political and civic organizations, safeguard elections, and to promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government. In Liberia, the Institute is providing assistance to civil society organizations to conduct voter education and election monitoring activities across the country. These programs are supported by USAID and the National Endowment for Democracy. For more information, please visit www.ndi.org.

The Carter Center is a not-for-profit, nongovernmental organization, founded in 1982 by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, committed to advancing peace and health worldwide. The Carter Center began working in Liberia in 1990, observed the 1997 Special Elections, and supported local human rights, rule of law, and press organizations from 1998-2000. The Carter Center's separate long-term election observation project is supported by the Government of Ireland. In addition, the Carter Centre UK is implementing an electoral assistance program along with the Electoral Reform International Services, supported by the European Commission. The Carter Center's current work began in July 2005, and Carter Centre UK began its activities in Liberia in March 2005. For more information visit www.cartercenter.org.

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