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# U.S. Does not Support Any Political Party or Candidate in Liberian elections

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Washington, D.C.- August 1, 2017: As Presidential and Legislative elections are scheduled to be held in Liberia in October 2017, an official of the United States Department of State says the U.S. does not support any political party or candidate in the country. Mr. Robert K. Scott, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Regional Affairs and West Africa, spoke at the diplomatic reception commemorating the 170th independence anniversary of the Republic of Liberia in Washington, D.C. on Wednesday, July 26, 2017. According to a dispatch from the Embassy of Liberia in Washington, D.C., Mr. Scott stated that the United States supports free, fair and peaceful elections so that all Liberian voters can freely elect their new leaders. "We do not support any particular candidate or party, rather we support a fair and transparent process and stand ready to work with whoever is fairly elected," the State Department official noted. Mr. Scott indicated that the October 2017 Presidential and Legislative elections will mark a historic moment in Liberia. He added that Liberians will have the great opportunity to see the peaceful transition of power from one living, sitting president to another, both elected by the people. The U.S. official said Liberia has made great progress in the face of challenging situations, some 14 years after the civil war and a few years out from the Ebola crisis. He added that the U.S. is fully invested in Liberia's success and wants Liberia's democracy to thrive. Recounting areas of U.S. support to Liberia, Mr. Scott noted that the United States and Liberia signed a US \$257 million Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact in 2015. The Liberia Government, he stated, has made extensive progress in implementing the compact, which has focused on rehabilitating the Mount Coffee Hydroelectric project and support road maintenance infrastructure. Mr. Scott said the United States' commitment to Liberia's success, and Africa's broader success, is shown by the U.S. support for initiatives such as the Young African Leaders Initiative. He added that Africa's youth are its single greatest resource and they hold huge potential. Mr. Scott said that as a steadfast and longtime friend of Liberia, the United States and the American people remain committed to partnering with the Liberian people to create a healthy, peaceful, and democratic future for Liberia. Speaking earlier, Honorable Jeff Gongoer Dowana, Charge' d'Affaires at the Embassy of Liberia in the U.S., said since the end of the civil crisis, Liberia has enjoyed nearly 14 years of uninterrupted peace and has been on a trajectory of progress and development. Honorable Dowana underscored U.S.-Liberia relationship, dating back to Liberia's founding in the early 1800s. As a manifestation of the significance of the relationship between both countries, he indicated that Liberia and the United States reaffirmed their friendship in a joint statement of the U.S.-Liberia Partnership Dialogue, held at the U.S. State Department in Washington on January 10, 2017. Honorable Dowana pointed to a number of areas of successful collaboration between Liberia and the U.S., particularly the energy sector. "Through the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the United States Government has provided strong support for the massive rehabilitation of Mount Coffee Hydropower Plant, which is a milestone in the Liberian Government's effort to make Liberia electricity efficient," he said. Charge' Dowana also indicated that in alignment to the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Two, Liberia has strived to achieve food and nutrition security by investing in agriculture, specifically in more sustainable farming systems, encouraging women in farming to ensure gender parity in the sector, and developing farm to market roads. Hon. Dowana also lauded the signing of the Farmington Declaration of June 4, 2017 by 20 political parties in Liberia, committing themselves to violence-free elections in October and a peaceful transition to a new government. In Washington, celebrations marking the 170th independence anniversary, held under the theme, "Sustaining the Peace," included a day-long Cultural Extravaganza/Family Day, Intercessory Worship Service, and Diplomatic Reception. The celebrations were kicked off on Saturday, July 22, 2017 on the grounds of the Embassy, where hundreds of Liberians and friends



of Liberia gathered to showcase Liberia's rich and diverse cultural heritage. The Cultural Extravaganza/Family Day, started with the parade of flags of the 15 counties (political sub-division) and the National Flag of Liberia, led by Hon. Dowana. The well-attended Intercessory Service, hosted July 23 by the Association of Liberian Christians Ministers of Washington, D.C., Metro Area, was held at the New Hope Worship Center in Laurel, MD. Apostle Edward Mouphouet, Founder and Pastor, Global Revival Missions Churches, was the keynote preacher. Apostle Mouphouet said change will come about in Liberia when Liberians embrace change. "If the nation is to change, we have to change," said Rev. Mouphouet. "We have to change our perspective and how we do thing." On Wednesday, July 26, 2017, the Diplomatic Reception, held at the residence of the Ambassador, was attended by U.S. and Liberian government officials, members of the diplomatic corps, Liberian community, business and religious leaders, friends of Liberia and well-wishers.

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/A partial view of worshipers at the Intercessory Worship Service

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