

Resolution of the Liberia Civil Society Forum

WE, the representatives of various Liberian civil society groups participating in the first Civil Society Forum sponsored by TrustAfrica and Humanity United, under the theme: “Strengthening NGOs Through Strategic Collaboration, Coordinated Policy Advocacy and Constructive Engagement with the National Government” convened at the Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports Complex on the 3rd and 4th of April A.D 2009;

APPRECIATING the tremendous and generous technical and financial support of TrustAfrica and Humanity United as well as the insightful initiative of FOHRD, LMC, NAYMOTE, CENTAL, LDI, AGENDA, LDW, FIND for the successful convening of the forum;

ACKNOWLEDGING the valuable contributions of government institutions to the various deliberations and issues arising from this convening;

RECOGNIZING the meaningful and important contributions of hundreds of civil society organizations, networks, consortiums, umbrella groups, trade unions, health workers, the student community, labor unions, general workers’ union, marketing associations, religious institutions, national and international NGOs, teachers, women groups and the civilian population throughout the length and breadth of Liberia in the recovery process and democratization of Liberia;

REFLECTING on the fact that civil society groups have got tremendously underutilized power necessary for the realization of not only legal and political reforms but also socio-economic changes, characterized by the lack of effective and sustained advocacy initiatives.

RECOGNIZING that some civil society organizations are affected by weak governance structures and lack of technical and human capacities which often times results to a passion for insurgent emotionalism and robs them of intellectual respectability;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the recent and contemporary history of Liberia is replete with the abusive use of power, political and economic injustice, wide spread corruption and theft of public resource, political marginalization, economic exploitation and social estrangement, deprivation of our people and denial of access to the benefits of the financial and natural resources of the country;

CONVINCED that only a well informed and effectively mobilized civil society organized around the philosophy of non-violence and peaceful direct actions and guided by unarmed truth and the techniques and methods of Mahatmas Karamchand Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., can constructively influence public policy and challenge injustice in society through negotiation and broader peaceful protest;

REALIZING that “power concedes nothing without demand”; and that the civil society of Liberia urgently needs that cohesive power appropriate, necessary and relevant to make the powers-that-be to say “yes” even when they want to say “no”.

ENCOURAGED by the fact that there are more benefits to be derived in the interest of the country and people when most or all civil society organizations and the poor people of Liberia work together in a well focused creative solidarity for the sole and only purpose of joint, united, coordinated, collective and people-centered advocacy;

HAVE THEREFORE RESOLVED to:

1. Undertake steps for the continuation of an annual convening of civil society organizations to periodically review progress, share experience and strengthen governance arrangement by engaging through the “Liberia Civil Society Forum”;
2. In addition to these steps, CSO Advisory Committee and representatives should work to develop an action plan to fully operationalize the priority action areas contained in this resolution in cooperation with other partners including TrustAfrica;
3. In cooperation with other partner organizations work in designing a comprehensive strategy for capacity enhancement, skills development and strategies for institutional and financial sustainability;
4. Endeavour to instate good leadership practice anchored on the principles of information sharing, peer review and institutional assessments;
5. Work to develop a system for effective monitoring and evaluation of the various activities and processes of governance with the view to constructively contributing to filling gaps and strengthening compliance to policies;
6. Conduct high quality research and documentation of the core areas and issues being worked around with the view of making said research and reports a public document;
7. Utilize lessons learnt from M&E findings of CSOs work with view of stimulating interest in CSOs work by donors and other members of civil society;
8. Establish links with stakeholders and the public and build and/or strengthened strategic alliances with key actors in government and the international community;
9. Share information including research findings with relevant state institutions before making findings public especially where it concerns the workings of these structures;
10. Instate follow-up and follow-thru processes around passage and implementation of legislations, policies, regulations and standard guidelines facilitated by the state and if possible engage new authorities on lobbying already in progress;
11. Strengthen CSOs governance for effective collaboration with the state institutions;

12. CSOs agree to engage and reasonably seek to inquire and request audience with appropriate authorities on emerging disagreements before making these disagreements a public affair;
13. Engage government on the development of a strategy that would facilitate direct state financing of CSOs development and advocacy work through a clearly defined mechanism for fund administration backed by legislation and design to insulate CSOs from government interference;
14. CSOs Advisory Committee should be strengthened through institutional capacity building opportunities;
15. Undertake to take steps to encourage private sector financing of CSOs through a clearly defined mechanism for fund acquisition design to insulate CSOs from private sector control;
16. Encourage harmonization of CSOs approach to public policy formulation and engage Government to involve CSOs in the policy formulation process from the word “go”;

DONE THIS 4TH DAY OF APRIL, 2009 A. D. 2009 AT THE SAMUEL KANYON DOE SPORT COMPLEX

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|-----|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. | K. Bobah Kolli | CEDE |
| 2. | Harris H. Barley | Humanist |
| 3. | Oretha Bureh | Forum for the Rights of Women |
| 4. | Joseph Hinneh | RECEIVE |
| 5. | Helen Kulue | FOP |
| 6. | Emmanuel Lavela | FOP |
| 7. | Prince Immanuel | WOPIO |
| 8. | Abdul M. Tunis | FOP |
| 9. | J. Sylvester Roberts | NOUD |
| 10. | E. Sele Mulbah | Governance Commission |
| 11. | Moses Brosius | NUOD |
| 12. | Ellis G. Gbor | HRPF |
| 13. | Joseph O. Kennedy | TJWG |
| 14. | James Roberts | GFFHR |
| 15. | Duwana Kingsley | NACCSOL |
| 16. | J. Aldophus Woods | FIND |
| 17. | Dan Saryea | LDI |
| 18. | J. Lavella Massaquoi | PBRC |
| 19. | Maurice Lankah | MARWOPNET |
| 20. | Wiyata J. Nimley | Rights and Rice Foundation |
| 21. | Jimmy B. Zinnah | UMWAEO |
| 22. | John S. Acqeaq | CALIC |
| 23. | James Kpandeh | COHA |
| 24. | Aaron Wayee | EARS |
| 25. | Augustine Menyongai | RHRAP |

26. Caroline Toe	FORHD
27. Kerian N. Pelenah	LUEHW
28. K. Johnson Borh	NEPI
29. Sampson Boymah	RADO
30. Isaac Brown	LINNK
31. Nelson B. George	NEPI
32. Jam M. Yauh	RRF
33. Lindora Diawara	WIPNET
34. Yeatel Salebia	NIDPAL
35. D. Siaffa Morris	FDL
36. W. Huhnah Jerema	FDL
37. Jerry Garto	SOLESEH
38. Muna Lewis	WOPIO
39. Kpan Casby	GL
40. J. Kofa Torbor	LUEHW
41. J. Kolee Ndorbor	WAI
42. Winifred D. Chea	FIND
43. James Morlu	Star Radio
44. Rose Edward	LETCON
45. Atiliean W. Gibson	NAPUL
46. Siafa Kiawu	CMND
47. Herron Gbidi	FOHRD
48. Ben Tarnue	NACCSOL
49. Sam M. Nimely	CDF
50. Abraham S. Kimber	Liberia Civil and HR Alliance
51. Roland Wollor	ROCHR
52. Rameses Porte	Governance Commission
53. T. K. Wialison	NUOD
54. Omaruh V. Kamara	LDW
55. Conway W. Gartayn	Peal Center
56. Barward Johnson	LDW
57. Malcolm Joseph	CEMESP
58. T. Estella Nelson	LIWOMAC
59. Jasper Cummeh	AGENDA
60. Lawrence Randall	LMC
61. D. Maxim Kubeh	IPC
62. Frank Gbanya	LWHR
63. Adeoa Fomoh	NACCSOL
64. Christina T.L. Peal	LIPO
65. J. Aloysius Toe	FORHD
66. Thomas Nah	CENTAL
67. Jawolee Geegbe	RAL
68. A. Saydee Monboe	CETCCOR
69. Adama Tombekai	LCC
70. James F. Kamanda	CESP
71. Beatrice Mathias	CESP
72. Eddie Jarwolo	NAYMOTE
73. George Williams	LDW