



The West African Examinations Council

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**PRESS STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION AND
CHIEF GOVERNMENT NOMINEE OF LIBERIA ON COUNCIL, HON. DR.
ROMELLE A. HORTON, AT THE END OF THE 2017 SERIES OF WAEC
COMMITTEE MEETINGS IN MONROVIA**

The Registrar to Council
Government Nominees on Council
Honorable members of the Liberia National Committee
Head of National Office
Staff of WAEC
Distinguished members of the Fourth Estate
Ladies and Gentlemen

I welcome you all most heartily to this interactive session where we shall once again have the rare opportunity to present on a few issues that should be of interest to all stakeholders in education.

The meetings of the various Committees of the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), Liberia started in Monrovia on Monday, 13th November 2017 have ended successfully today Friday, 17th November 2017. The Committees of the Council that met during this period included the Liberia Examinations Committee, the Liberia Appointments Committee, the Liberia Administrative and Finance Committee and the Liberia National Committee. The Liberia National Committee is the highest decision-making organ of the Council in Liberia. Members of the Committees include Government nominees, representatives of the Ministry of Education, Association of Liberian Universities, National Association of Liberia School Principals, National Teachers' Association of Liberia, and other interests. The Statutory Chairperson of the Committees is the Deputy Minister for Instruction, who is the country's Chief Government Nominee on Council, Hon. Dr. Romelle A. Horton.

The Liberia Examinations Committee received reports on the examinations conducted by WAEC in Liberia in the 2016/2017 reporting period. It considered reports on irregularity cases and applied appropriate sanctions against all the candidates with proven involvement in examination malpractice. The Committee expressed delight that there was no leakage of question papers in Liberia during the reporting period, and urged the Government to take urgent steps to prevent the rogue websites that operate as distribution centres for examination fraudsters in some member countries from taking root in Liberia. The Committee congratulated the Government and people of Liberia on the country's full adoption of WASSCE, which has now given the Liberian child the opportunity and confidence to compare and compete with his/her mates internationally. It urged that the statistics of performance in the 2017 LSHSCE and WASSCE be taken as a wake-up call for concerted efforts by all stakeholders towards improving the teaching/learning process in the school system. It commended WAEC for constantly providing guidance through the production of Statistics and Chief Examiners' Reports on all the subjects examined, and advised the relevant stakeholders to embark on full implementation of the chief examiners' recommendations for improved performance in the years ahead.

At its meeting, the Liberia Administrative and Finance Committee considered, among other matters, the Reports of the Internal and External Auditors on the Accounts of the Liberia National Office. The Committee commended the Management for prudent management of resources and strict adherence to the Council's monitoring mechanisms for the prevention of waste and fraud. It expressed appreciation to the Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Education for the support and assistance that the National Office had continued to receive towards the successful execution of the Council's mandate in the country. The Committee expressed profound appreciation to the Government of Liberia for taking over from parents the payment of examination fees for all the WASSCE candidates in public schools during the piloting period from 2013 to 2017, in addition to the payment of Contribution to WAEC Headquarters and Subvention to the National Office.

WAEC is a non-profit organisation that collaborates with the relevant government departments/agencies on the implementation of government educational policies and initiatives. The Council's WASSCE is an international examination which presents member countries with a myriad of advantages and opportunities while also placing on stakeholders certain responsibilities. One major responsibility of the WASSCE candidates is the payment of fees to cater for the conduct of the examination. After diligent consideration of the current costs of materials, printing, airfreighting, goods and services, the

minimum amount required to conduct WASSCE in Liberia has been calculated and estimated at USD\$60.00 per candidate. The examination will be taken by all 12th Graders in the country with effect from 2018.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, it has become absolutely necessary to sensitise stakeholders in education to the need for individual and collective efforts at providing funds for the examination, particularly the payment of examination fees at the registration stages by both school and private candidates. Considering the students' population and the huge costs involved, the Government of Liberia is obviously no longer in a financial position to shoulder the responsibility of paying examination fees for any group of candidates at WASSCE level in view of the various financial commitments currently competing for the very lean resources available to the Government. We therefore, appeal to parents, corporate organisations, international donor agencies and philanthropic private individuals to braze up towards the payment of WASSCE fees for their children and wards or the provision of scholarships for the indigent students.

The week-long series of meetings ended with the meeting of the Liberia National Committee. At the meeting, the Committee received reports from the various committees and expressed gratitude to all the stakeholders who made it possible for the Council's scheduled activities, particularly the conduct of examinations, to be carried out successfully during the period under review. The Committee commended the Management of the National Office for its continued efforts at decentralising the Council's operations, which started with the creation of the WAEC Regional Office and Printing Press, Tubmanburg, Bomi County. The Committee appealed to all stakeholders in education to offer all necessary assistance to the National Office towards the establishment of another Regional Office and Examination Hall in Gbarnga, Bong County.

Distinguished guests, members of the Liberia National Committee, I thank you all for your attention.