



**National Electoral Commission (NEC)**  
15 Industrial Estates, Wellington, Freetown, Sierra Leone



**Statement from NEC Chairperson**

**NEC Statement to the Media - 17 September 2007**

At our last briefing, we informed the media and the public that the National Electoral Commission (NEC) would undertake a series of investigations and recounts in order to finalize the results of the presidential election run-off. We are happy to report today that the Commission undertook the field work during the period established and is ready today to present its findings. We at NEC are satisfied with the verification process which was undertaken, and are very confident that the official results we are about to announce are indeed those recorded in the polling stations and accurately reflect the will of the voters.

Nevertheless, it is with regret that we report that, despite all the measures taken to hinder electoral malpractices, there were instances where malpractice and fraud were attempted. The system we have instituted at NEC makes it difficult for fraud to be successfully undertaken, but it cannot completely stop those who are intent on manipulating the results from actually trying. This is the reason why NEC needed to be careful with the tallying of results. We are pleased that we have been able to detect malpractices and have taken appropriate remedial action to limit the influence which such acts would otherwise have.

For example, during the verification process we discovered counterfeit results forms which were sent to NEC from polling stations throughout the country. It was not difficult to detect them as they contained a spelling mistake in the title, the word 'form' was spelled 'from'. Three such cases were identified at polling centres 07131 in Port Loko, 11153 in Moyamba and 13056 in Western Rural. The Commission responded by recovering the original forms issued to the stations that contained the true and accurate results. These were then entered into the tally.

There were also attempts at ballot stuffing and ballot-box swapping, but they were detected thanks to the measures put in place and the investigations conducted. Additionally, through the recounting process undertaken with party agents and observers, we were able to either confirm results or uncover various anomalies which were then addressed to accurately reflect the poll.

As reported earlier, the Commission noted polling station results with turn-outs of over 100%. It is impossible for voter turnout in excess of 100% to have taken place without fraud or illegal action. The Commission has been left with no option but to invalidate all results from polling stations reporting over 100% turnout. In all, 477 stations across the country have thus been invalidated, as follows: Kailahun: 90, Kenema: 65, Kono: 9, Bombali: 17, Kambia: 8, Koinadugu: 12, Port Loko: 2, Tonkolili: 6, Bo: 123, Bonthe: 2, Moyamba: 24, Pujehun: 113, Western Rural: 1 and Western Urban: 5.

It is extremely regrettable to have to invalidate even a single polling station, and it is a decision that the NEC did not take lightly. However, the responsibility for the act of invalidation falls on those who are responsible for the malpractices, it is they who should be held accountable for disenfranchising voters, as there were legitimate votes cast in these polling stations.

There is one important element to highlight: international election standards say that the invalidation of votes does not require a repeat of the polling exercise if the act of invalidation does not affect the outcome of the poll. The National Electoral Commission can confirm that in the case of 8 September poll these invalidations have NOT affected the outcome of the election.

NEC will continue to collaborate with the law enforcement agencies in the investigations of all electoral malpractices reported.

There is a very important message arising from these elections: there is no longer a place for fraud and malpractice in the Sierra Leone electoral system. The people of Sierra Leone deserve to exercise their rights in an atmosphere of freedom, fairness and transparency. This is what NEC strived to provide and will continue to strive for in the future - nothing less will be tolerated. Those who cheated have succeeded in doing a disservice to their respective candidates. They also succeeded in disenfranchising fellow Sierra Leoneans. But they did not succeed in tarnishing either the results or the credibility of the process.

#### The results

- 5,679 polling station results were entered into the results database, representing 100% of all polling stations across the country, excluding those that were invalidated.
- The average national turnout is 68.09%.
- The total number of valid votes cast is 1,740,058.
- There are 43,793 invalid votes, representing 2.45% of total votes cast.
- The general summary of the results, as well as the detailed results, by station and by centre, will be posted on the NEC website: [www.necsierraleone.org](http://www.necsierraleone.org).

#### The presidential run-off results by districts:

	Koroma – APC	Berewa – SLPP
Kailahun	11,631	111,695
Kenema	32,666	160,699
Kono	52,908	74,458
Bombali	125,419	14,095
Kambia	61,250	14,449
Koinadugu	42,178	23,130
Port Loko	132,287	17,789
Tonkolili	101,296	12,958
Bo	37,006	105,459
Bonthe	20,018	28,313
Moyamba	26,485	49,886
Pujehun	2,875	38,107
WA Rural	55,332	22,842
WA Urban	249,056	115,771
<b>National results</b>	<b>950,407</b>	<b>789,651</b>

In exercise of the powers conferred on the Returning Officer by section 37 of the Electoral Laws Act, 2002, I hereby certify that 950,407 valid votes were cast in favour of the candidate Ernest Bai Koroma at that election:

AND Ernest Bai Koroma therefore received the highest number of valid votes cast in the election:

Ernest Bai Koroma has been duly elected President of the Republic of Sierra Leone at the Presidential Election of 2007.

Any citizen of Sierra Leone may challenge the validity of the election of the President by petition to the Supreme Court of Sierra Leone, within seven days after the declaration of the Presidential results.

*Christiana Thorpe, Chairperson, National Electoral Commission*