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Joint Statement by the African Union (AU), Carter Center, Commonwealth, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), European Union (EU) and Women's Situation Room (WSR) Election Observer Missions on the 2012 Sierra Leone National and Local Council Elections

Freetown, 21 November 2012

The Election Observer Missions of AU, Carter Center, Commonwealth, ECOWAS, EU and WSR to the 2012 Sierra Leone National and Local Council Elections, headed by His Excellency Dr Amos Sawyer, His Excellency Rupiah Banda, Mr Olara Otunnu, Air Vice-Marshal Christian Edem Dovlo, Mr Richard Howitt (MEP) and Ms Barbara Bangura respectively, have observed the voting and counting process across all 14 districts of the country.

We are pleased that the voting and counting took place largely in an atmosphere of peace and transparency and that the people of Sierra Leone demonstrated strong commitment to their democratic process by turning out in significant numbers to cast their vote in a peaceful manner.

We call on all stakeholders of the Sierra Leone electoral process to ensure that this peace and transparency continues to inform the remainder of this process. We further call on political party leaders to encourage their supporters to conduct themselves with the highest responsibility.

We urge all electoral stakeholders to respect the official election results announced by the National Electoral Commission with serenity and in full respect of the Constitution of Sierra Leone and the democratic process. In this regard, we appeal to all political parties and candidates that have concerns to follow the legal process laid down in the Constitution and the Electoral Code for the resolution of any disputes related to the electoral process.

A special responsibility lies with the political leaders of Sierra Leone to continue to abide by their pre-election commitments to peace.