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LIBERIANS LAUDED FOR PEACEFUL, ORDERLY ELECTIONS

The Head of the 150-member ECOWAS Election Observation Mission to Liberia, Professor Attahiru Jega, has commended Liberians for their peaceful and orderly conduct during the country's presidential and legislative elections held Tuesday, 11th October 2011.

Speaking to journalists after visiting a number of polling stations to monitor balloting and also observing counting of votes at the end of the exercise, Professor Jega expressed his satisfaction with the general conduct of the electoral process.

"We saw Liberians in their numbers defying the early morning rain and determined to exercise their civic duty", he said, adding: "We saw orderliness of voters on queues, disciplined party agents and we also saw professional conduct by electoral officials; and reports from across the country point to a largely peaceful and orderly balloting".

During the tour of polling stations in Greater Monrovia and Careysburg area, some 40-minute drive from the centre of the Liberian capital, before returning to witness counting of ballots at the R.C. Lawson Institute in Congo Town, Professor Jega interacted with voters, some on queue in an early morning rain, as well as with polling officials and party agents.

He and his team which included the ECOWAS Special Envoy to Liberia, General Seth Obeng and the ECOWAS Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, Major General Mahamane Toure, also visited the office of Liberia's National Elections Commission (NEC), where they met with the Commission's Chairman James Fromayan and discussed some issues related to the conduct of the polls.

ECOWAS observers were deployed to Liberia's 15 counties where they monitored the balloting. The observation mission is expected to issue its Preliminary Declaration on the election on Wednesday, 12th October 2011,

Some 1.7 million registered Liberian voters, out of an estimated population of four million people, went to the polls on Tuesday to elect a president, senators and members of the National House of Representatives.

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Sixteen presidential candidates, including the incumbent President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, who was elected Africa's first female president in 2005, are vying for the country's highest office.

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