

REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS OF LIBERIAN
INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS)

PREAMBLE

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

RECALLING that since the free, fair, and democratic and internationally credible Presidential and general elections were held on 19th of July A.D. 1997 and a constitutional government inaugurated on August 2, 1997 in consonance with the Abuja Peace Agreement of August 1995 and its schedule of implementation as revised in August 1996;

CONVINCED that the democratically elected government ushered in August 1997 is creating conditions for reconciliation, lasting peace, stability and social economic progress in Liberia;

RECOGNIZING our constitutional responsibility and obligation as a state and government to provide protection for our citizens and foreign residents within our borders;

ACKNOWLEDGING that as a result of LURD Terrorist's attack on Liberia in 1999 and that as a result of said Terrorists' activities in Liberia causing the massive and multiple internal displacement of over 1,000,000 Liberians who have sought facilitative relocation in various IDP camps within the Republic of Liberia and nearly 100,000 Liberian Refugees in various nearby countries within the sub-region;

RECALLING the current state of humanitarian disaster in the country which is the direct result of the ongoing LURD Terrorists' activities;

COGNIZANT of the 1981 African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights and the UN principles relative to the Internally Displaced Populations as well as other relevant International Human Rights instruments guaranteeing every person the right to leave and return to their habitual places of residence;

RECOGNIZING the positive partnership between the Government of the Republic of Liberia, the Munor River Union (MRU), ECOWAS, African Union (AU), United Nations (UN) and other International organizations with the desire of enhancing the aforementioned partnership and thereby protecting IDPs;

RECALLING the statutorial obligation of the Ministry of Justice as custodian of said authority and the desire to draw upon the support of the United Nations and the

International community in the quest to deliver on the said mandate of protection of citizens and residents generally;

AWARE that large numbers of women and girls in IDP camps are victims of sexual gender based violence (SGBV) perpetrated by a cross section of camp and non-camp residents; and the urgency for redress, AND

DESIROUS to take further confidence building measures to promote the expeditions voluntary and/or organized return and reintegration of Liberian IDPs in safety and dignity;

SECTION 1: HEREBY DECLARES its commitment to respect the rights of all Liberians in IDP camps to return to their places of origin or habitual residence with the full protection of the Law;

CALLS upon, invites and encourages all IDPs to reside in camps provided by the Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC) in collaboration with our international partners; until such appropriate time when normalcy shall have returned to their respective counties of origin or habitual places of residence or in other parts of the country enabling them to participate fully in the process of national reconciliation, rehabilitation, reconstruction and consolidation of peace, democracy and socioeconomic development;

AFFIRMS its commitment and obligation to the observance and respect for all National and International legal instruments and covenants which guarantee the basic rights of all persons without distinction/discrimination as to ethnic origin, religious or political beliefs or gender;

SOLEMLY DECLARES that no internally displaced Person(s) shall suffer any form of harassment, intimidation, Discrimination, Prosecution or any form of punitive action on account of having fled his or her town or county of origin or place of habitual residence and sought facilitative relocation;

SECTION 2: CAMP MONITORING THAT the United Nations agencies in Liberia; and all relevant International Humanitarian Agencies in close collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and other relevant partners shall cooperate in monitoring, protecting and managing the treatment of IDPs in accordance with International Humanitarian and Human Rights laws and standards, including the implementation of commitments contained therein;

SECTION 3: ACCESS TO LAND THAT ALL IDPS shall have rights to their original land being restored upon their return. In addition, IDPs will have access to land for settlement and agricultural use in accordance with the laws and tradition of Liberia;

SECTION 4: RECOVERY OF PROPERTY THAT all measures shall be taken to facilitate to the extent possible, the recovery by the IDPS of their land, all- immovable and to the extent possible, movable property which may have lost or left behind.

ATTESTATION

Done at Monrovia this 26 day of Sept. A.D. 2002 in two originals in the English language, both texts being equally authentic.

For the Government of the Republic of Liberia

[signed]

Cllr. Lavela Kobo Johnson
MINISTER OF JUSTICE & ATTORNEY GENERAL/R.L.