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Liberia: Transparency over the airwaves

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After two decades of conflict, Liberians go to the polls next week (11 October) as the first presidential and legislative elections since the fighting ended two years ago. On election day, Liberians will vote in three separate ballots for the President and Vice-President, for 64 members of the House of Representatives and for 30 members of the Senate.

The recent situation in Liberia has not been easy - the pace of reform has been painfully slow, exacerbated by funding shortfalls. This has impeded progress in addressing threats of violence and impunity. The armed forces, police, judiciary and prison services all suffer from insufficient resources and training and a lack of qualified personnel.

Amnesty International has called on candidates of all political parties to demonstrate that human rights are central to their vision for Liberia. Candidates must show clear commitment to the establishment of, and respect for, the rule of law; to the promotion of human rights; and to an end to impunity for human rights abuses by all sides to the conflict.

Out of these stark circumstances has emerged an innovative radio project that has aimed to bring long-overdue transparency and openness to the Liberian political situation. Talking Drum Studios have, for the last few months, hosted a program called "Presidential Debate", which has offered voters an opportunity to get to know the different candidates.

Listen to an audio package about the "Presidential Debate" on **news.amnesty**:

<http://news.amnesty.org/index/ENGAFR340052005>