

Liberia's Decentralization Program gains support, European Union approves 5.5 Million euros.

In support to the Liberia's decentralization program, the European Union says it has approved a contribution of 5.5 million Euros, for disbursement to the Liberian government.

The contribution, under the European Development Fund (**EDF**) Program, is aimed at supporting the efforts of the Liberian government in implementing the adopted National Policy on Decentralization and Local Governance from 2013 to 2017.

The amount, which is a little over 7.3 million United States Dollars, focuses particularly on the five-year Decentralization Implementation Plan led by the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

According to a communication to Internal Affairs Minister Morris M. Dukuly, signed by EU Ambassador AttilioPacfici, the program represents an important contribution to strengthen inclusive socio-economic growth, sustainable political harmony, right-based and responsive development.

Details are being worked out for signing of the financing Agreement which will facilitate transfer of the funds through the UNDP to the Liberia government.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Hon. Morris M. Dukuly, has praised the European Union, on behalf of the Liberian Government, for what he called the Ambassador's strong facilitation and the EU's substantial initial contribution to the Decentralization Program.

Minister Dukuly said he was personally grateful to the EU for supporting one of the critical reform pillars of the Government.

The Internal Affairs Ministry Boss said he looks forward to continued cooperation and support of EU member-states to the Government of Liberia, particularly on the Decentralization Program.

The EU's decision is a key milestone because it provides the key factor of timely mobilization of sufficient financial and technical resources by Government estimated to exceed USD 60 million to ensure the program's success.

Other contributions to the critical financial mass needed to rollout the Decentralization Program include USD2.5-million from UNDP and an expected USD10-million from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA).

In a related development, the EU Ambassador and members of his staff yesterday paid a courtesy call on the Internal Affairs Minister.

During the visit, the Ambassador and the Minister discussed wide-ranging issues covering Decentralization, Reconciliation and Peace-building among others.