



**LIBERIA MEDIA FOR DEMOCRATIC INITIATIVES**

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*Dialoging for Peace, Democracy & Development in Liberia*

## LEGISLATIVE PRESS POOL



### PRESS RELEASE

ZEE-MAANEH-----ZEE-MAANEH (PEACE AND ENJOYMENT)

***LMDI / LEGISPOL Event...THE LMDI AND LEGISPOL HOLD AN HISTORIC FIRST DEBATE FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF THE LIBERIAN LEGISLATURE AS ALL BUT ONE ASPIRANT OF HE BOTH HOUSES LOFA COUNTY'S STEVE ZARGO ATTENDS AND LECTURES LIBERIA ON HIS PLAN TO REBRAND WHAT HE CALLS A STAINED LIBERIAN LEGISLATURE COMING FROM THE ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF REGIME, ACCUSES COLLEAGUES OF WANTING TO MAINTAIN THE OLD ORDER OF A CLOSED and UNTRANSPARENT LEGISLATURE AT THE DETRIMENT OF THE ELECTORATE ...THE LMDI/THE DIALOGUE/DUCOR DEBATES-ZEE-MAANNEH--ZEE-MAANNEH (PEACE & ENJOYMENT)...PLEASE VISIT AND VIEW OUR NEW WEBSITE AND FSCEBOOK PAGE AT [www.lmdilib.org](http://www.lmdilib.org) and [www.facebook/lmdilib.org](https://www.facebook.com/lmdilib.org). PLEASE FOLLOW AND KNOW ALL ABOUT US AND LIBERIA AND ALL THAT WE DO TO SUSTAIN LIBERIA'S POST CONFLICT DEMOCRACY.***

ZEE-MAANEH-----ZEE-MAANEH (PEACE AND ENJOYMENT)

Monrovia Liberia Liberia...Sun. January 14, 2018...The pace was set to be the historic first ever debate for aspiring leaders of the both houses of the Liberian Legislature the House of Representatives and the Senate at the weekend (on Friday).

The Liberian Media for Democratic Initiatives the facilitator and owner of Liberia's only sustained flagship platform for People top People Town hall dialogue style debate forums "DUCOR DEBATES" and the Legislative Press Pool, the Association of Reporters (LEGISPOL) the debate planners had announced that two debates had been arranged for both the House of Representatives and the Senate and that the aspirants were agreeing to attend.

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All seemed set that all four final aspirants BOFAL CHAMBERS of Maryland County and HANS BARCHUE of Grand Bassa County for the House of Representatives and for the Senate, ALBERT CHEA of Grand Kru County and Lofa County's STEVE ZRAGO would attend to give Liberians their plan for the 54<sup>th</sup> Legislature coming from the 53<sup>rd</sup> under ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF.

But as Friday the day for the debates drew near, all but one of the aspirants started to sound declining, claiming that there was no precedent for any of such debate here in Liberia or anywhere else in the World.

Speakership aspirant, BHOFAL CHAMBERS, a hard talking self proclaimed purported intellectual and former friend of President ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF now turned her critic , harsh and openly vocal of her is on record in a telephone conversation to LEGISPOL President MUSAH KENNEH that unless he's shown a precedent of any of such debate anywhere in the World, he simply would not attend. He did just that . But CHAMBERS has been the man most harshly critical of president SIRLEAF since he broke ranks with her that she's been running a closed and secretive government.

CHAMBERS is said to be campaigning to his colleagues behind the scenes that he will run an open, transparent and accountable administration if he wins as speaker of the Liberian House of Representatives, a paradox to his absconding from the Friday debate.

CHAMBERS' contender, Grand Bassa County Representative and current Deputy Speaker HANS BARCHUE told LMDI Director John Kollie in telephone conversation that he would have attended if his supporting legislators allowed him to do so. Last minute attempts garnered no fruit as HANS BARCHUE just did no answer. He also is reported to been campaigning on open, transparent and accountable administration, in his case a contrast also to the intent of a debate for leadership.

Since BOFAL CHAMBERS and HANS BARCHUE refused to attend, the planned debate for the speakership of the 54<sup>th</sup> Legislature did not happen.

### **DEBATE FOR SENATE PROTEMPORE**

For the debate for the Senate Pro-tempore, it partially happened with Lofa County Senator STEVE ZARGO attending. All efforts to get his contender, Grand Kru County Senator ALBERT CHEA failed.

CHEA was said to be bent on the same argument and tactic of BHOFAL CHAMBERS; that there is no precedent anywhere in the World and he would therefore not attend the debate. He too is reportedly campaigning behind the scenes on open administration and paradoxically stayed away from a debate that would set the basis for their preached open and transparent leadership.

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While CHEA stayed away, his colleague, STEVE ZARGO took a stern advantage of the debate. ZARGO with access to a network of at least 45 National and Rural Community Media outlets across Liberia literally lectured Liberia on his plan for the leadership of the Liberian Senate.

ZARGO began with an argument to reconcile Liberia in the context of regionalizing national governance, a swift reference to spreading the branches of the Liberian government to the politically perceived regions of Liberia, North, West and South-East.

ZARGO proffered that in the ELLEN JOHNSON administration, the holding of two the three branches of the government, presidency or executive, the House under ALEX TYLER and the Senate Pro-tempore under ARMAH Z. JALLAH all from the West of Liberia was counter-productive to the needed regional balance desired for the reconciliation of the nation which ZARGO quotes president SIRLEAF as admitting to have failed on.

ZARGO said with president SIRLEAF admitting to have failed under the circumstance, giving the both Speaker and the Senate Pro-Tempore to the South East of Liberia under president GEORGE MANNEH WEAH who is a South Easterner, would be a repetition of the same error that made President SIRLEAF to fail on reconciling Liberia.

Though ZARGO's contender, CHEA was absent, the debate proceeded as designed and so when ZARGO was asked about the downside of CHEA, he claimed that CHEA is a trained Geologist while he's a trained criminal justice practitioner and lawyer, insinuating that he's more prepared to lead people than CHEA. Jokingly, ZARGO said CHEA is trained to manage and work with rocks while I am trained to manage and work with people, I should therefore be given this job that has to do largely with people.

ZARGO said as a lawyer and law enforcement student he felt better prepared to lead the senate than CHEA, appealing to Liberians to prevail on their senators to have him voted.

ZARGO also presented that the 54 Legislature is incurring a stained reputation of bribery and non performance and that he is coming to clean up the senate and rebrand it for a better Liberia.

Senator STEVE ZARGO challenged his colleague ALBERT CHEA to an open, transparent and accountable Liberia senate beginning with what he called the historic first debate which, ALBERT CHEA, BHOFAI CHAMBERS and HANS BARCHUE failed to attend.

STEVE ZARGO the only appearing Liberian legislative leader at the historic first Legislative Debate set the basis and precedent for future debates for legislative leadership aspirants, so that when debates are called in the future, aspiring leaders will not claim precedent for not attending.

Held in the joint chamber of the Liberian Legislature the historic debate organized by the LEGISLATIVE PRESS POOL or LEGISPOL in partnership with the Liberia Media for Democratic Initiatives (LMDI) under the LMDI town hall style People To People flagship

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platform DUCOR DEBATES, also realized a frank exchange of views between Senator STEVE ZARGO and an audience of 137 people.

As ever, the deliberations from our forums are being broadcast on our partner network 45 National and Rural Community Radios around Liberia.

Please also follow us on our website at [www.lmdilib.org](http://www.lmdilib.org) and also visit our face book page at Liberia Media for Democratic initiatives-LMDI You can send comments to [info@lmdi.org](mailto:info@lmdi.org) and [john@lmdi.org](mailto:john@lmdi.org) THE DIALOGUE & DUCOR DEBATES at this time are generally in association with the PEACE ACTION NETWORK (PAN) funded by the SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (SID, the UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID) and the UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (UNDP) across Liberia.

Signed:



John O. Kollie

DIRECTOR