

## **First Policy Statement of Mr. Charles Ghankay Taylor, Leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia**

Since the bloody military coup of April 12, 1980, which brought the regime of Master Sargeant Samuel K. Doe to power in Liberia, the Liberian people have endured 10 years of oppression, summary killings, human rights violations, ethnic genocide, gross economic mismanagement and blatant widespread corruption.

In October 1985, despite threats and intimidation, the Liberian people turned out in massive numbers to express their will at the polls for a peaceful change of government, only to see the electoral process subverted by the Doe regime which unilaterally declared itself the winner, despite all independent evidence to the contrary.

Following the aborted elections a popular resistance movement under the leadership of the late Commanding General Thomas Quaiwonkpa sought to overturn the Doe regime with minimal force and restore Democracy to Liberia. The Doe regime brutally put down this uprising and took harsh retaliation against innocent civilians in the northern counties, taking hundreds of innocent lives and forcing thousands of Liberians to flee their homes as refugees.

Having exhausted every possible avenue of reason and having seen every effort to peacefully effect a change of governance by constitutional means crushed by the harshest use of force, we the members of the National Patriotic Front under the leadership of Charles Ghankay Taylor feel it is our right and bounded duty to rid the people of Liberia of this cancerous despotism by whatever means at our disposal with the following objectives:

1. The restoration of full constitutional democracy to the Liberian people through free, fair and open elections to be conducted as soon as practically possible following the conclusion of military actions and the restoration of law and order to the country.
2. The rebuilding of the Liberian economy on the basis of our traditional free enterprise system and the protection of private property, without excessive government bureaucracy and public corruption but with concern for health, education housing, employment and food for the vast majority of our populace.
3. The unification of all Liberian people without regard to class, social status, ethnic origin, religion or political philosophy in the common task of nation-building. The National Patriotic Front is a broad-based, popular, non-sectarian nationalist movement which believes in the right of every Liberian to equal protection and opportunity under the law and which does not subscribe to ethnic and social factionalism or recriminations.
4. The National Patriotic Front is not beholden to any foreign group or power and believes in the maintenance of Liberia's traditional relationships with its close friends and allies, particularly the United States, and intends to work closely with these foreign partners in the reconstruction of the country.

5. The National Patriotic Front believes strongly in the implementation of all fundamental human rights guaranteed to every citizen of Liberia by the constitution, particularly the right of life, liberty and security; the right to freedom of the thought, expression, movement and peaceful assembly; and the right to equal protection and due process under the rule of law.

We, therefore, call upon every patriotic Liberian, including the many truly patriotic elements of the Armed Forces of Liberia, and all freedom-loving peoples everywhere to make every sacrifice and join with us in this right and historic struggle to free the Liberian people and nation of the shackles of tyranny and injustice once and for all.

January 1, 1990