



diversity. transparency

# AGENDA

Actions for genuine democratic alternatives, (inc).

Participation. Innovation. Technology. Change

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## Press Release

**Monrovia, Liberia, 28 April 2008:** The **Actions for Genuine Democratic Alternatives (AGENDA)**, a collaboration of local and international activists seeking the promotion of citizens' participation, transparency, accountability, and democracy in the governance process has written the Houses of Senate and Representatives of the National Legislature to demonstrate support for the proposed Freedom of Information bill which was submitted to both Houses a fortnight ago by the Media Law Reform Working Group and Civil Society Organizations.

Article 15 (c) of the Liberian constitution guarantees citizens' access to information about the government and its functionaries; however, there has been no legislation since the constitution was written to say how citizens can exercise this right. The "Freedom of Information Act 2008" encapsulates all of the ideas and aspirations of this constitutional provision within the spirit and intents of the law. The proposed act does specifically articulate and elaborately detail the actualization of the constitutional provision as alluded to in the Liberian constitution. It gives citizens the opportunity and sets forth a mechanism that compels public officials to respond to citizens' request for information about government operations. It also provides citizens an opportunity to seek redress through appropriate mechanism for denials of any request for information from public offices.

**AGENDA** has called on the Law makers to speedily pass this bill so as to enhance both citizens' participation in the governance process as well as promote the government's fight against corruption, because corruption thrives in an environment where people have little or no access to information about the use of their resources.

Meanwhile, **AGENDA** has also called on other Civil Society organizations including the **National Coalition of Civil Society organizations of Liberia (NACCSOL)** to rally around the bill so as to bring pressure on the government to speedily pass this bill, which is intended not only to help to curb corruption, but also increase public confidence in the governance process.

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