



# **LIBERIAN TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION PROJECT**

## **FORMS AND INFORMATION FOR INDIVIDUALS TO SUBMIT A STATEMENT TO THE TRC**



## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING YOUR STATEMENT TO THE TRC**

1. Read the “Important Information for Giving a TRC Statement” Form (2 pages).
2. Determine how you would like your statement treated. Would you prefer to give an anonymous statement?

### **If you choose to provide your name and contact information to the TRC with your statement:**

1. Print and sign your name on page 1 of the “Important Information for Giving a TRC Statement Form.”
2. Complete both the contact and demographic information pages of the “Personal Information Form.”
3. Complete your narrative, opinions, and recommendations using the guidelines included.
4. Complete page 2 of the “Important Information for Giving a TRC Statement” Form regarding how you would like your statement to be treated and what kind of follow up you would like.
5. Include in your envelope to Minnesota Advocates:
  - Your signed and completed “Important Information for Giving a TRC Statement” Form (2 pages).
  - Your completed “Personal Information” form with both contact and demographic information.
  - Your completed narrative, opinions, and recommendations.
6. Send sealed envelope to:  
Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights  
Liberian TRC Project  
650 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South, #550  
Minneapolis, MN 55402

### **If you choose to give an anonymous statement:**

1. Do NOT sign your name on page 1 of the “Important Information for Giving a TRC Statement Form.”
2. Do NOT complete the “Contact Information” page of the Personal Information Form
3. DO complete the “Demographic Information” page of the Personal Information Form.
4. DO complete your narrative, opinions, and recommendations using the guidelines included.
5. DO complete page 2 of the “Important Information for Giving a TRC Statement” Form regarding how you would like your statement to be treated and what kind of follow up you would like.
6. Include in the envelope:
  - Your completed page 2 of the “Important Information for Giving a TRC Statement” Form.
  - Your completed “Demographic Information” page of the Personal Information Form.
  - Your completed narrative, opinions, and recommendations.
7. Send sealed envelope to:  
Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights  
Liberian TRC Project  
650 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South, #550  
Minneapolis, MN 55402



### **Important Information about Giving a TRC Statement**

Thank you for giving your statement today. You are playing an important role in helping Liberia to heal and build a better future. Giving a TRC statement is a chance for you to tell YOUR story.

#### **What will happen to your statement after you give it:**

- The volunteers taking your statement will not give any identifying information about you or what you say to the media or other members of the public.
- All of the statements taken in the U.S. will be gathered in a confidential manner and entered into a password-protected database; every effort will be made to safeguard the confidentiality of the information contained in the statements.
- When statement-taking in the U.S. is completed all the information in the database will be sent to the TRC in Liberia along with a final report summarizing Minnesota Advocates' findings.
- The TRC in Liberia will conduct investigations into information from statements, will hold public hearings, and will write a final report that will be submitted to the government and people of Liberia.
- The archives of the TRC shall remain in the public domain except those records or documents classified by the TRC as "confidential" which shall remain classified for 20 years following the retirement of the TRC.
- If you have any concerns about your name being linked to your statement for any reason, you should give an anonymous statement, meaning that no individually identifying information about you will be included with your statement. Less weight may be given to anonymous statements.

**Immigration issues:** If you have any concerns about potential immigration consequences of giving a statement, you should talk to your immigration lawyer first. If you don't have an immigration lawyer, please contact Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights.

**Amnesty from prosecution:** Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights does not have the power to grant amnesty from prosecution to anyone.

**Mental health questions:** Counselors, pastors, and others trained in helping survivors of trauma have volunteered to talk with statement givers who want to debrief after their statement. If you would like a follow up call, please check the appropriate box on the next page.

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**I understand the information above and I promise to provide an accurate and truthful statement to the best of my knowledge and recollection.**

---

Print your Name (do not print if this is an anonymous statement)

---

Sign your Name (do not sign if this is an anonymous statement)

Date



## Important Information about Giving a TRC Statement

### 1. How do you want your statement treated?

*Please check off all options that apply.*

- I choose to give an anonymous statement. My name and contact information will not be included with my statement. I am aware that the TRC may give my statement less weight because it is anonymous.

--- OR ---

- I choose to provide my name and contact information to the TRC for purposes of its investigation and analysis. I understand the archives of the TRC shall remain in the public domain except those records or documents classified by the TRC as “confidential” which shall remain classified for 20 years following the retirement of the TRC. However:

- I do not want my name released in the TRC’s final report.
- I do not want to testify at a public hearing in Liberia.
- I do not want to testify at a public hearing in the United States.
- I want my statement to remain “confidential” as described above.

### 2. What kind of follow-up would you like?

*Please check off all options that apply.*

- I have questions about my immigration status and would like an immigration attorney to call me for a brief consultation.
- I would like to talk with someone about the memories and emotions that have come up during the statement giving process. Please have a trained counselor call me.
- I have general questions about the TRC Project. Please have a staff member from Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights call me.
- I DO NOT want to be added to Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights email and mailing lists related to the TRC.

If you are giving an anonymous statement but would like a follow-up, please enter a phone number or email address below. This information will not be connected with your statement.

Tel/Email: \_\_\_\_\_



**STATEMENT GIVER'S PERSONAL INFORMATION: CONTACT**

**(DO NOT COMPLETE THIS FORM IF YOU ARE GIVING AN ANONYMOUS STATEMENT)**

1. First Name \_\_\_\_\_
2. Middle Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_
3. Last Name \_\_\_\_\_
4. Generation (Jr., Sr., III) \_\_\_\_\_
5. Any other Name (nickname, combat name, alias)  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Telephone Numbers:  
Work: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Apartment #  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip
9. Email address: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Other contact information or persons that would enable the TRC to contact you if more information is needed (Name, address, telephone, relationship to you):  
\_\_\_\_\_



## STATEMENT GIVER'S PERSONAL INFORMATION: DEMOGRAPHICS

(ALL STATEMENT GIVERS SHOULD COMPLETE THIS FORM)

1. Sex: [select one]

Male

Female

2. Marital Status: [select one]

Married

Widowed

I do not wish to respond

Single

Separated

Divorced

Other

3. When did you leave Liberia:

Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

*Do not record day.*

4. When did you arrive in the United States: Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is your **COUNTY** of Origin [select one]

Bomi

Lofa

River Gee

Bong

Margibi

Sinoe

Gbarpolu

Maryland

Not Liberian

Grand Bassa

Montserrado  
(Monrovia)

I do not wish to respond

Grand Cape Mount

Grand Gedeh

Grand Kru

Nimba

River Cess

6. What is your tribe/ethnicity: [select one]

Bassa

Grebo

Mende

Belle

Kissi

Sargo

Congo/Americo  
Liberian

Kpele

Vai

Dei

Krahn

Multiple tribes

Gbandi

Kru

Other tribe

Gio

Lorma

I do not wish to respond

Gola

Mano

Mandingo

7. What is your education level: [select one]

No Education

College graduate

Elementary

Post graduate

Junior High

Other

High school

I do not wish to respond

College student



### NARRATIVE

*The purpose of the TRC statement is for you to clear your heart and tell the TRC what you would like them to know.*

**Please write your narrative, opinions, and recommendations on separate paper using the questions below as a guideline.**

- The TRC is most interested in human rights and humanitarian violations that occurred between 1979 and 2003. The TRC would also like to know your opinion about the roots of the conflict in Liberia, and your recommendations for the TRC and the government. You may want to talk about some or all of the following topics:
  - What happened to you between 1979 and 2003
  - What happened to friends, family, and others you knew then
  - What happened to your property during the conflict
  
- When you are describing specific events, the TRC would like to know:
  - Who were the victims?
  - What happened, when and where?
  - Who committed the violations?
  - How were the violations committed?
  - Why were the acts committed?
  
- Please include as many details as are known.
  - **Details About People**
    - Victims
      - Full name
      - Date of Birth
      - Sex
      - Relationship to you
    - Perpetrators
      - Full name
      - Nickname/alias
      - Age
      - Sex
      - Tribe
      - Language spoken
      - Physical identifiers including scars, clothes, insignias
      - Was the perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of the attack acting alone or in concert with others? Was there a chain of command?
    - Witnesses
      - Full name
      - Date of Birth
      - Sex
      - Current whereabouts



- **Details About Events**
  - Location
    - County
    - Town
    - If Monrovia, which neighbourhood/quarter and street
    - Names of buildings, checkpoints, major landmarks
  - What Took Place
    - *Full details:* If you are willing, please include as many details as possible. For example, do not simply document an incident of torture, but document how the torture was carried out, for how long, etc.
    - Targeting: Was the victim of the event specifically targeted? Did the perpetrator know the victim? For what reasons were the victim targeted: tribe, religion, affiliation, political, etc.?
    - Attack: Was the attack deliberate or spontaneous? Was it systematic? Did the attack fit a modus operandi?
  - Other details the TRC would like to know
    - At the time of the violation/abuse were you a member of any organization, faction, or group?
    - Were you sick, injured, captured or surrendered at the time of the violation?
    - Did anybody witness the violations and abuses you suffered?
    - Would they be willing to make a statement to the TRC?
    - Are you able to confirm that other people have suffered human rights violations and/or abuses with you in the same incident?
    - Did you sustain any physical or mental injury, damage or loss as a result of the violation or abuses?
    - Have you received any compensation for the loss or damage you sustained?
    - What impact did the human rights violation have on you?





## OPINIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

*The TRC has been charged with making recommendations about reconciliation and restitution, and is responsible for investigating the root causes of the conflict in Liberia.*

### ○ **RECONCILIATION & RESTITUTION:**

- Have you taken part in any traditional healing or reconciliation ceremonies?  
Yes    No
  - If so, how? Where?
- Would you be willing to reconcile with the person(s) who committed violations against you?  
Yes    No
- What do you think would be necessary to restore you to the full social and economic life of the community? Are there any ways that the perpetrator could assist?
- What types of processes or services would help Liberians in the United States achieve truth & reconciliation?

### ○ **DIASPORA INFORMATION:**

- How were you able to get out of Liberia and come to the United States?
- Do you want to return to Liberia to live? Under what conditions?
- Has your experience in the United States changed your perspective on the Liberian conflict?  
How?
- How would you like to participate in the TRC process from this point forward?

### ○ **RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE TRC AND GOVERNMENT:**

- In your opinion, what caused the conflict in Liberia?
- How can reconciliation be achieved?
- What is your opinion about reconciliation?
- What recommendations do you have for the TRC?
- What recommendations do you have for the government of Liberia?



Dear Statement-Giver,

On behalf of the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, thank you for giving your statement to the TRC. Your courage in telling your story to the TRC makes you a leader in Liberia's healing process.

The TRC has been charged with the responsibility of investigating the root causes of the conflict in Liberia, amplifying historical truths and thereby undermining falsehoods that have overtime assumed the status of historical truths. The TRC is also to establish an independent and accurate record of human rights violations and abuses occasioned by the conflict and form the basis for justice and reconciliation, foster national repentance, and strike the delicate balance between accountability and forgiveness in order to heal the land and unite the people of Liberia.

In order to achieve the goals of the TRC of Liberia, the statements gathered in the United States will be compiled and sent to the TRC in Liberia for analysis and inclusion in the TRC's historical record. These statements will be the basis for a final report compiled by Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights which will include recommendations to the TRC and the government of Liberia. This report will be presented to the TRC, the Liberian community in the U.S., and other project partners. This report also will form the basis for public hearings in the United States, mirroring those held in Liberia. The TRC's final report will be made available to the Liberian people and the Liberian government in print and on the internet.

**We hope that you will continue to participate in the TRC process now that you have given your statement. Unless you have specified otherwise, you will receive notice about public hearings and other TRC events via the contact information that you provided to the statement-takers. You can also find out when TRC events are upcoming by calling Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights at 612-341-3302 or by visiting the Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights website at [www.mnadvocates.org](http://www.mnadvocates.org). Please do not hesitate to contact Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights if you have any questions. To find out what the TRC is doing in Liberia, visit [www.trcofliberia.org](http://www.trcofliberia.org).**

Thank you again for sharing your story with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia. We are honored to have your participation.

Sincerely,

Cllr. Jerome J. Verdier, Sr.  
Chairman  
Truth & Reconciliation Commission

Robin Phillips, Esq.  
Executive Director  
Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights



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If you are giving an anonymous statement but would like a follow-up, please enter a phone number or email address below. This information will not be connected with your statement.

Tel/Email:

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**Liberian Truth & Reconciliation Commission**  
**Appointment Request Form**

1. Return the completed form to:
  - a. Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights  
650 Third Avenue South #550  
Minneapolis, MN 55402-1940  
Fax: 612-341-2971
2. OR Email to Liberia-trc@mnadvocates.org.
3. OR Call the TRC Appointment Line at 612-776-7788 or 1-800-799-3688

**Statement-Giver Information**

1. First Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_
2. Family Name/Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Name you would like to be called: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Apartment #  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip
5. Telephone Numbers:  
Work: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Email address: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Contact Person Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Dates & Times you could be available to give a statement:  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Are you:      Male                  Female
10. **Language Information** – Please indicate your preferred language for the statement giving process.

I am most comfortable giving my statement in:    ENGLISH                          LIBERIAN-ENGLISH  
Another language: \_\_\_\_\_



## About Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights

The mission of Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights is to implement international human rights standards to promote civil society and reinforce the rule of law. Minnesota Advocates was founded in 1983 by a group of Minnesota lawyers who recognized the community's unique spirit of social justice as an opportunity to promote and protect human rights here at home and worldwide. We are a non-profit, volunteer-based organization that investigates and exposes human rights violations; represents immigrants and refugees in our community who are victims of human rights abuses; trains and assists groups that protect human rights; and works through education and advocacy in Minnesota to engage the public, policy-makers and children about human rights and cultural understanding. Minnesota Advocates holds Special Consultative Status with the United Nations.

## TRC Project Staff Contact Information

**Minnesota Advocates Office:** 612-341-3302

Robin Phillips	Executive Director	ext. 109
Jennifer Prestholdt	Deputy Director	ext. 111
Michele Garnett McKenzie	Refugee & Immigrant Program Director	ext. 117
Rosalyn Park	Staff Attorney	ext. 106
Ahmed Sirleaf	Program Associate	ext. 134
Laura Young	Wellstone Legal Fellow	ext. 128
Kim Babine	Program Assistant	ext. 113

**Minnesota Advocates Website:** [www.mnadvocates.org](http://www.mnadvocates.org)

**TRC Project Website:** <http://liberiatrtrc.mnadvocates.org>

**TRC Project E-Mail:** [Liberia-TRC@mnadvocates.org](mailto:Liberia-TRC@mnadvocates.org)