

Preface

From 1979 to 2003, more than 1.5 million Liberians were forced from their homes to escape from the violence and destruction of a protracted civil conflict. Hundreds of thousands became refugees and many eventually made their way to countries of resettlement including the United States and the United Kingdom. Most of their stories have never been told. This report on the experience of the Liberian diaspora, entitled *A House with Two Rooms*, is the culmination of three years of work in the United States, the United Kingdom and Buduburam Refugee Settlement in Ghana. The report has been submitted to the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the body charged by the Liberian government with determining the facts of the human rights violations that occurred during the civil war. The Liberian TRC officially completed its mandate June 30, 2009.

A House with Two Rooms documents the experience of human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law that forced Liberians to leave the country. It is based on an analysis of more than 1600 statements, fact-finding interviews, and witness testimony at public hearings held in the U.S. The report also tells the story of the “triple trauma” experienced by members of the diaspora during their flight through Liberia and across international borders, while living in refugee camps in West Africa, and in resettlement in the U.S. and U.K. In addition, the report summarizes the views of Liberians in the diaspora on the root causes of the conflict and their recommendations for systemic reform and reconciliation.