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## PRESS RELEASE

The All Political Parties Association (APPA-SL) wishes to inform the general public that following the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development's media engagement in a National Press briefing held at the Ministry of Information and Communications by the Minister and subsequently on radio and other media platforms, stating Cabinet's approval of the New National Decentralization Policy, some members of the Association jointly signed a press release dated 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020 requesting government to abandon with immediate effect the policy of 'making Local Council Elections Non-Partisan'.

In view of the foregoing, APPA would like to take this opportunity to again inform the general public that;

1. Following recent engagement with the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development by registered political parties in Sierra Leone, APPA hereby resolve that making Local Council Election Non-Partisan will enhance Transparency and Accountability and further promote the devolution of functions that will enhance democratic good governance.
2. Making Local Council Elections Non-Partisan will be of greater advantage to citizens, taking into consideration that community development starts at the local level and should not be politicized.
3. Following recent APPA-SL meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> December 2020, political parties present were overwhelmingly in support that, Local Council elections should be non-partisan.
4. APPA-SL has come to the conclusion that non-partisan Local Council elections will strengthen the Administrative and decision making capacity of Mayors, Chairpersons and Councilors which will enhance quality representation, effective and efficient service delivery at the local levels.
5. APPA-SL further notes that non-partisan Local Council elections will put to a stop the tendency of political parties' interference, as to who should represent the people at the local levels and will create a level playing field that will allow potential persons to compete for elective position. This system will also encourage more Women, Youths and Persons with Disabilities to compete for elective positions.
6. The non-partisan election will lessen the burden and pressure on political parties to manage the nomination process and campaigns and subsequently help to minimize political tensions at local council level and discourage the culture of voting on political party symbol rather than competency and merit basis.

In view of the above, APPA-SL is of the view that the introduction of the Non-Partisan clause into the National Decentralization Policy will be more appropriate in our electoral process, and we therefore call on government for a timely intervention on the following concerns:

1. To review the composition of the committees to be charged with the functions of shortlisting potential Candidates to be totally independent.
2. That the process of shortlisting must be transparent and credible
3. That Government should expedite the ongoing electoral legal reforms that will enhance the Sierra Leone 1991 Constitution Review Process that will ensure that all laws are consistent with the Constitution.
4. That Government should ensure that the process of nominations will be free from fear of intimidation.
5. That nomination fees for Presidential and Parliamentary elections be reduced to a reasonable amount that will ensure free, fair and credible elections.
6. APPA-SL call on government to provide subvention to political parties, as these will foster the democratization process in Sierra Leone.

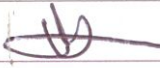


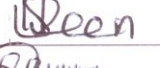
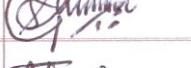
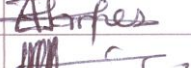
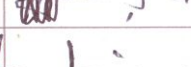

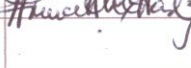
As Sierra Leoneans, it is imperative that we work together to enhance national development and strengthen peace and stability for development to thrive in our nation. It is therefore important to undertake the necessary reforms to enhance the Local Council governance system to make it better and efficient.

APPA-SL therefore calls on all registered Political Parties and the people of Sierra Leone to put the country first in everything we do, as this is the only way we would be guarantee of sustainable progress for the development of Sierra Leone.

Long Live APPA-SL

Long Live Democracy

God bless Sierra Leone.

NO	NAME	PARTY	DESIGNATION	SIGNED
1	Prince Coker	PDP	Nat Chairman	
2	Isaac Tambamongo	RUEP	Nat. Chairman	
3	Alhaji AK. Sesay	RENUP	Dep chairman	
4	Halimatu Deen	LIDM	Actn Chairpsn	
5	Gabriel Samuka	UNPP	Nat. Chairman	
6	Augusta James-Temu	NDA	Nat Chairman	
7	Nabieu Musa Kamani	PLP	Nat. Chairman	
8	VICTOR KINCA	CDP	Nat. sec. General	
9	Dr. Prince Alex Harding	SLPP	National chairman	
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