



**MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
6TH FLOOR YOUYI BUILDING, BROOKFIELDS, FREETOWN**

Ref: MLG/43/01

Mrs Yvonne -Aki-Sawyer
Mayor of Freetown City Council
Bi-Centenary House
17 Wallace Johnson Street
Freetown

8th March 2021

Madam Mayor,

With the Ministry having studied and reviewed the content of audio recordings released on Friday, March 26th, I am writing to express deep and serious concern over these recordings in which you were clearly heard making disparaging ethnic comments regarding transferred Freetown City Council's core staff. Your words appear to suggest not only clear employment bias by your Administration against members of a specific ethnic group but management practices that are totally not in tandem with the norms of congenial working environment required for efficient service delivery.

These remarks were completely unacceptable, unfortunate and fly in the face of the spirit of peace and reconciliation which should be the bedrock of political discourse in our nation – and indeed contradict both the letter of the law and the National Constitution. They have therefore deeply shaken public confidence in your Administration. It is little surprise then that my office has been inundated with calls expressing outrage over your comments. The content of your letter to me dated March 29th stating an unacceptable position; knowing the motive behind your stance indicates that you're yet to fully grasp the ramifications of the hurt you continue to cause. As such, I urge you to make a full and unequivocal public apology.

Notwithstanding any apology your comments lend credence to previous allegations of ethnic discrimination in employment practices levelled against your Administration and the extent of marginalization as a result. This matter cannot be left to stand as it is without further investigation.

I am therefore authorizing the establishment of a formal Independent Administrative Inquiry into the recent employment practices of Freetown City Council and how they have impacted on its administrative and fiduciary management. This will include a review of hiring practices since you took office to determine whether or not there is any further evidence of discriminatory

practice. This action is in line with the expectations of the Ministry as outlined in Section 97 of The Local Government Act 2004.

I trust that this inquiry will receive the full cooperation of your Administration.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Tamba J. S. Lamina', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Amb. Tamba J. S. Lamina
Minister

Cc:

1. Hon. Vice President-Chairman of Inter-Ministerial Committee