

CONSORTIUM OF PROGRESSIVE POLITICAL PARTIES (COPPP)

c/o National Grand Coalition Head Office
14 Naimbana Street,
Freetown

Tel: +23276641154/+23230748961

Or

Unity Party Head Office,
4 Pademba Road,
Freetown

Tel: +23277582363

PRESS STATEMENT ON GOVERNMENT'S IMPOSITION OF MRS ZAINAB MORSERAY AS COMMISSIONER AT THE NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION

The Consortium of Progressive Political Parties (COPPP) wishes to inform the general public and Development partners that all political parties that are members of COPPP have unanimously decided to oppose the decision by Government to impose Mrs. Zainab Morseray as NEC Commissioner in charge of the Western Region.

The Constitution of the Republic of Sierra Leone clearly stipulates in section 32 (3) that appointment of members of the Electoral Commission shall be done by the President “**after consultation with the leaders of all registered political parties** and subject to approval of Parliament.”

Typically, Government did not consult with any of the opposition parties in the Consortium and is now seeking the approval of Parliament for this controversial appointment. Had the political parties been consulted the President would have had the opportunity to know the reasons why over 50% of registered political parties in Sierra Leone consider Mrs. Morseray to be most unsuitable for a position at the Electoral Commission that demands the highest level of integrity, fairness, impartiality and professionalism. The fact that in her previous employment at the Political Parties Registration Commission (PPRC) she worked for over a decade in an acting capacity without being confirmed speaks volumes of successive Governments' hesitation to confer full responsibility to her. And currently, there are unresolved issues at the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) in which she faces serious allegations of wrongdoing.

It is unbelievable that with all this background the SLPP Government is insisting on assigning the sensitive role of Commissioner for Western Region to an individual with such negative credentials.

COPPP views this with the utmost suspicion and considers the imposition of Mrs. Morseray as one further step in their on-going efforts to capture the institution and prepare for the worst elections in the history of our country.

COPPP is on record for giving maximum support to the drive for women's empowerment in Sierra Leone and wishes to state that our objection to Mrs. Morseray's appointment would have been exactly the same for any male appointee with a similar baggage.

To this end, COPPP has asked all members of Parliament representing parties in the Consortium and those who would like NEC to be a credible and independent institution to protest by walking out if there is any attempt to bulldoze this appointment through Parliament.

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