

SOME CONCERNED MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ELECTIONS WATCH (NEW) CALL FOR GREATER INCLUSIVITY IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESS WITHIN THE COALITION.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – 6th JUNE 2022

CONCERNED MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS WATCH (NEW) REPRESENTING THE VOICES OF MANY OTHER COLLEAGUES ACROSS THE COUNTRY CALL ON THE LEADERSHIP OF NEW TO BE MORE INCLUSIVE IN TAKING POSITIONS ON SENSITIVE NATIONAL ISSUES ON BEHALF OF THE COALITION AND BE ACCOUNTABLE TO THE MEMBERSHIP ON DONOR FUNDS RECEIVED FOR OUR ACTIVITIES. WE ARE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED THAT GIVEN THE RISING POLITICAL TENSION AND DIVISION IN THE COUNTRY, NEW SHOULD BE SEEN TO PLAY A NON-PARTISAN ROLE AND WORK TOWARDS GAINING THE TRUST OF ALL SIDES OF THE POLITICAL DIVIDE. THIS RELEASE COMES AS A RESULT OF THE DEAF EARS THE LEADERSHIP HAS PAID TO THE NUMEROUS CONCERNS WE HAVE BEEN RAISING, INCLUDING THE NEED FOR IMPROVED ADMINISTRATION, GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE LAST TWO YEARS

THE PUBLIC COULD RECALL THAT SINCE 2002, NEW HAS BEEN OBSERVING ELECTIONS IN THIS COUNTRY AFTER SOME GOOD THINKING CSOs ESTABLISHED THE NEW COALITION WITH THE MAIN TRUST OF OBSERVING BOTH LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL ELECTIONS AND ENSURING FAIRNESS AND CREDIBILITY. NEW'S MEMBERSHIP OF OVER 100 CSOs THROUGHOUT SIERRA LEONE IS ACCREDITED BY THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF SIERRA LEONE (ECSL). WE ARE GRATEFUL TO THE FOUNDING MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS FOR THE LAUDABLE INITIATIVE TO HAVE ESTABLISHED NEW AND FOR THE PROGRESS IT HAS MADE OVER THE YEARS. NEW HAS OVER THE YEARS EARNED THE TRUST AND CONFIDENCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS AND IT IS IN OUR STRATEGIC INTEREST TO CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN A GOOD REPUTATION. HOWEVER, WITH THE RECENT EMOTIVE 2ND JUNE 2022 PRONOUNCEMENT MADE BY THE LEADERSHIP OF NEW, THE COALITION STANDS THE RISK OF UNDERMINING ITS LEGITIMACY TO SOME KEY ELECTION STAKEHOLDERS

TO REGAIN THE TRUST AND CONFIDENCE OF ALL ELECTION STAKEHOLDERS AND NEW COALITION MEMBERS, WE ADVISE ON THE FOLLOWING;

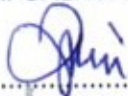
1. THAT THE NEW LEADERSHIP DEVELOP A CULTURE OF TRANSPARENCY AND CONSULTATION WITH ITS MEMBERS, ESPECIALLY EXECUTIVE MEMBERS REPRESENTING THE VARIOUS REGIONS AND DISTRICTS, BEFORE PUBLIC STATEMENTS ARE MADE ON SENSITIVE NATIONAL ISSUES ON BEHALF OF THE COALITION;

2. THAT A COMMITTEE, COMPRISING REPRESENTATIVES FROM ALL THE REGIONS, SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED TO DISCUSS AND AGREE ON THE COALITION'S POSITION ON CRUCIAL NATIONAL ISSUES ESPECIALLY THOSE RELATING TO ELECTORAL REFORMS AND ACTIVITIES.
3. THAT THE SECRETARIAT DEVICE AN ARRANGEMENT ON HOW FUNDS RECEIVED FOR AND ON BEHALF OF **NEW** COALITION ARE ALLOCATED TO CONSTITUENT COALITION MEMBERS THROUGH THE REGIONAL OR DISTRICT EXECUTIVES FOR ACTIVITIES AND THE SHARING OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT WITH COALITION PARTNERS, INCLUDING ASSET MANAGEMENT WITHIN NEW.
4. THAT THERE IS NEED TO CONVENE AN EMERGENCY GENERAL MEETING TO DISCUSS THE ISSUES IDENTIFIED ABOVE IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE CREDIBILITY AND STATURE OF THE COALITION AMONG ELECTION STAKEHOLDERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC. THERE IS ALSO NEED TO TAKE A WELL-THOUGHT OUT AND SOLUTION-FOCUSED POSITION AND APPROACH TO THE CONTROVERSIES RELATING TO BOTH THE 2015 AND THE 2021 MID-TERM CENSUS REPORTS

IT IS HOPED THAT THE LEADERSHIP OF NATIONAL ELECTIONS WATCH (NEW) WILL RESPOND TO THESE CONCERNS WITH THE URGENCY AND IMPORTANCE THAT THEY DESERVE. THE FACT THAT WE HAVE BEEN COMPELLED TO GO PUBLIC WITH THESE ISSUES SHOWS THE LACK OF ADEQUATE INTERNAL CONSULTATION IN OUR COALITION AND THE NEED TO SLOW DOWN AND REBUILD A VIBRANT AND FUNCTIONAL WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ENTIRE MEMBERSHIP.

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF CONCERNED MEMBERS,

LAHAI GALIWA – (MEMBER, NEW)



.....
HEAD, Movement for Resettlement & Rural Development (MoRRD) &
DISTRICT CONVENER – National Civil Society Forum- NCSF, Kenema District