

REVISED POLITICAL PARTIES CODE OF CONDUCT

PURPOSE

- a. Guide the actions of all political parties in Sierra Leone before, during and after the Elections;
- b. Outline acceptable and non-acceptable actions by parties, candidates and their agents;
- c. Facilitate conditions conducive to the conduct of free, fair and democratic elections within a climate of democratic tolerance in which political activities may take place without fear of threats, intimidation or revenge.

PROMOTION OF THE CODE

- a) Actively promote this Code among its members and electorate at each opportunity and specifically during the campaign period;
- b) Distribute copies and facilitate discussion on the Code
- c) Display the signed original at their parties Headquarters and campaign offices.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE

All Political Parties that have subscribed to this “Code” Shall:

- a. Be bound by the Code, and instruct its leaders, officials, candidates and members to adhere to the terms of the Code; and discourage its supporters from breaching the Code;
- b. Instruct the party’s officials, candidates, members and supporters to observe the Code and ensure compliance;

CONT.COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE

- c. Maintain one colour for use so as not to confuse supporters and voters. Those with multiple colours should select one before the campaign period begins;
- d. Institute internal measures and steps within their party structures to ensure full adherence to the Code and its provisions;
- e. Inculcate respect for human rights, the pursuit of liberty; and tolerance of different opinions amongst the citizenry.

COMPLIANCE WITH ELECTORAL LAWS

- a. Adhere to existing laws, rules and regulations regarding the conduct of elections;
- b. Co-operate with election officials to ensure the safety and security of electoral officials, party agents, accredited election observers and election materials such as ballot papers, ballot boxes, etc., before, during and after the polls;
- c. Respect and co-operate with officials or accredited election observers in maintaining the secrecy of the ballot.

RIGHTS OF PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

- a. Present their political principles and ideas without intimidation or threat;
- b. Disseminate their political ideas and principles without let or hindrance;
- c. Equal access to the state media;

RIGHTS OF PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

- d. Organise and hold rallies and public meetings for the purposes of campaign;
- e. Canvass for membership among the electorate in accordance with the law;
- f. Erect billboards, banners and other campaign material within the confines of the law. However, the posting of these handbills, leaflets, and posters must be with the consent of the owners of the properties;

CONT. RIGHTS OF PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

- g. Participate in public debates and other such-like fora with other contestants and parties without fear of intimidation, character assassination and other deplorable actions;
- h. Enlist the full participation of all its members including youth and women and protect them from any gender-based discrimination, violence and abuse;
- i. Equal opportunity for youth and women candidates in particular to contest and campaign in a conducive and violence-free environment and with full access to and support of all party machinery;

CONT. RIGHTS OF PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

- j. All Political Parties that have subscribed to this code shall in accordance with the Public Order Act of 1965 notify the Inspector General of Police/Paramount Chiefs of any meeting or rally.
- k. All Political Parties that have subscribed to this code shall respect the right and freedom of other political parties to campaign. Journalists who are engaged in their professional activities shall have a free hand to do so without any intimidation

RESTRICTIONS OF PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

In pursuit of creating a conducive environment for free and fair elections, subscribers to this Code shall refrain from:

- Indulging in any activity which may create or aggravate tension on the grounds of race, gender, ethnicity, language, class, region or religion;
- Unsubstantiated criticism

CONT. RESTRICTIONS OF PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

- Unfounded criticism of any aspect of private life, not connected with public activities of the leaders or workers of other parties;
- Criticism of other parties or their workers based on unverified allegations or distortion
- Displaying oversize banners that obstruct those of other parties and candidates;
- Obstructing, disrupting, breaking up or causing to be broken up, meetings or rallies organized by other political parties and candidates;

CONT. RESTRICTIONS OF PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

- Interrupting or preventing speeches made by other parties and their candidates during the campaign period or public debates;
- Singing of derogatory songs about candidates and other political parties at rallies and other such-like gatherings;
- Destruction of handbills, leaflets and the defacing of posters by other political parties and candidates;
- Denying other parties access to venues for rallies through financial inducements or other means;

CONT. RESTRICTIONS OF PARTIES AND CANDIDATES



- ▶ The Police/Paramount Chief should ensure that no preferential treatment is accorded to one political party or particular candidate to the detriment of other parties that have subscribed to this code of conduct;
- ▶ The use of State power, privilege or influence or other public resources for campaign purposes;

CONT. RESTRICTIONS OF PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

- ▶ Coercing or offering financial or other kinds of inducements to individuals or group of individuals to vote for or against a particular party or candidate, or to abstain from voting;
- ▶ a. Displaying and wearing of party regalia and symbols within stipulated radius of polling stations on polling day and during counting of votes;
- ▶ Making use of the radio/television stations or convene or hold political activity twenty –four hours prior to polling day.

INTIMIDATION AND VIOLENCE

All Political Parties that have subscribed to this Code accept that intimidation, in any form, is unacceptable, and leaders of these parties will direct their officials, candidates, members and supporters not to intimidate any person at any time. Specifically, parties shall be prohibited from:

- ▶ Coercing or intimidating Paramount Chiefs or their sub-chiefs, or any other authority to deny any political party the right of access to any chieftom for political functions;

CONT. INTIMIDATION AND VIOLENCE

- ▶ Enlisting Paramount Chiefs or their sub-chiefs to coerce individuals and communities within their jurisdiction to vote for a particular party or candidate;
- ▶ Raising any private force or militia or use the regular army or other forces to intimidate other candidates and parties or the electorate thus gaining political or electoral advantage.

CONT. INTIMIDATION AND VIOLENCE

- ▶ Use of actions or language that may intimidate other candidates and voters and provoke violence throughout the entire electoral process;
- ▶ Use of offensive languages and statements on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability or socio-economic status and region that may cause intimidation and fear or incite violence in any form;

CONT. INTIMIDATION AND VIOLENCE

- ▶ Aiding or tolerating intimidation and violence of any form among its candidates, membership and agents;
- ▶ Sponsoring physical violence or intimidation against opponents and their supporters in any way;
- ▶ Using the youth members of their parties and others to intimidate other candidates or electorate and carry out acts of violence;

COOPERATION WITH THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION



The subscribers to this Code commit to abide by the provisions of the electoral laws and guidelines and shall:

- ▶ Familiarise all their candidates, agents and members with the provision of the Political Parties Act of 2002, the 2012 Public Elections Act and ensure compliance;
- ▶ Familiarise themselves with the campaign calendar and arrange their activities accordingly to ensure full compliance;

COOPERATION WITH THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION



- ▶ Familiarise themselves with the complaints procedures regarding outcome of elections and use them to seek redress;
- ▶ Take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of staff of the Political Parties Registration Commission, and the Electoral Commission from attacks by party members and agents;
- ▶ a. Ensure that after voting, no political party candidate; member or supporter shall loiter around the polling station;
- ▶ Allow timely access to information and comply with other requests from the Electoral Commission to enable it to carry out its mandate.

COOPERATION WITH THE MEDIA

The subscribers to this Code shall engage with the Media responsibly through:

- ▶ Providing access to journalists to rallies and other public fora as well as pertinent information as requested provided this does not prejudice the party or its candidates;
- ▶ Protecting journalists from intimidation, harassment and violence from party candidates, agents and supporters;

COOPERATION WITH THE MEDIA

- ▶ Desisting from making media pronouncements with the intention of causing alarm and inciting violence against other party candidates, agents and supporters;
- ▶ Avoid the use of hate speech and the promotion of such among its candidates, agents and supporters on all forms of media;

COOPERATION WITH THE MEDIA

- ▶ Desisting from using financial inducements for journalists and media houses to publish negative stories or deny access and coverage to other parties and candidates for their own advantage;
- ▶ Desisting from using the Media to make any complaints or allegations against other Parties, PPRC and the NEC without following due process.

COMMUNICATION AND MONITORING ADHERENCE TO THE CODE

- ▶ All Political Parties that have subscribed to this code will make every effort to maintain communications with other political parties that have subscribed to this code;
- ▶ An aggrieved political party, candidate or supporter may submit a written complaint addressed to the Chairman of the Political Parties Registration Commission;

COMMUNICATION AND MONITORING ADHERENCE TO THE CODE

- ▶ A committee, chaired by PPRC and comprising representatives of political parties, a representative of Sierra Leone Police, two representatives from the Media, two from Civil Society, two from the Office of National Security (ONS), two representatives from the National Commission for Democracy, and two from the Inter-Religious Council to function as a forum for discussion of issues of common concern, including breaches of the Code before, during and after the elections;

COMMUNICATION AND MONITORING ADHERENCE TO THE CODE

- ▶ All Political Parties that have subscribed to this Code, civil society and the media shall ensure the dissemination of the issues raised in the Code widely throughout the length and breadth of the country.
- ▶ An aggrieved political party, candidate or supporter may submit a written complaint addressed to the Chairman of the Political Parties Registration Commission;

COMMUNICATION AND MONITORING ADHERENCE TO THE CODE



- ▶ A committee shall be established in the sixteen electoral districts, chaired by PPRC and comprising representatives of political parties, a representative from the Office of National Security(ONS), a representative from the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF), a representative of Sierra Leone Police (SLP), a representative from the National Electoral Commission (NEC), a representative from the National Commission for Democracy (NCD), a representative from the Human Rights Commission Sierra Leone (HRCSL), a representative from the Legal Aid Board (LAB), a representative from the National Commission for People with Disabilities (NCPD), a representative from the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ), a representative from National Elections Watch (NEW), 50/50 Women's Group, a representative from the National Commission for Democracy (NCD); traditional leaders; and a representative from the Inter-Religious Council (IRC) to function as a forum for discussion of issues of common concern, including but not limited to breaches of the Code before, during and after the elections;

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