



POLITICAL PARTIES REGISTRATION COMMISSION

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Commissioner of the Political Parties Registration Commission (PPRC) Alhaji Muctarr B. Williams on Tuesday 21st April 2015 assured the membership of the All Political Parties Women Association (APPWA) of the Commissions support in the realisation of inputs recommended in the constitutional review process.

He made this statement at the end of a two days sensitization on the constitutional review process held in Bo for the south and the eastern regions.

He advised them to ensure that their political parties include in their constitution a gender policy that will allow women to be involved in the decision making process of their parties.

In his statement, the Chairman of the Constitutional Review Committee, Hon Justice Edmond Cowan, appealed to the women to take the information gathered during the two days sessions to the least woman at village and chiefdom level.

Justice Cowan also advised them to share their recommendations with those at the lower levels will also make their inputs in the process.

In her statement, the facilitator who also doubles as the Minority Leader in Parliament Hon Dr. Bernadette Lahai applauded the women for their contributions made during the two days exercise. She also informed the women that not all of their recommendations will be put into the amended constitution as there are existing laws that needs to be strengthened.

Group Discussion and presentation formed the highpoint of the sessions.

In their presentation, group one looked at Political Participation. Their recommendations include:

- 30% quota for women in decision making processes and governance
- PPRC to be given robust powers in ensuring that political parties create a level playing platform for women.
- Candidature fee is too much and women candidature fee should be free

Group two looked at Socio-Economic Empowerment. Below are their recommendations:

- Free and Compulsory Education for all and penalties for violation
- Compulsory training for citizens who can't afford to pay
- Establishment of National Youth Service
- Social Protection for Women
- Emergency Medical Care
- Policy for the Construction of Low Cost Housing for low income earners
- Access to social security benefits by all

Group three looked at Gender Discrimination. Below are their recommendations:

- The heading for Sections 27 in the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone should be changed to Equality and Protection against Discrimination.
- It was also recommended that under discrimination, pregnancy, marital status, health status, age, disability, conscience, language or birth should be added
- To give full effect to the realisation of the rights guaranteed under this Article, the State shall take legislative and other measures, including affirmative action programmes and policies designed to redress any disadvantage suffered by individuals or groups because of past discrimination.
- In addition to the measures contemplated in this article, the State shall take legislative and other measures to implement the principle that not more than two-thirds of the members of elective or appointive bodies shall be of the same gender.

The programme which was held in Bo brought together political party women from the southern and eastern region. The same will be replicated in Freetown for the Western Area and the North on Thursday 23rd and Friday 24th April 2015.

Meanwhile, the Commission in league with Hope Sierra Leone is undertaking a nationwide conflict resolution dialogue. The exercise which was launched in Bo brought together political party representatives, Civil Society and key stakeholders in the fight against Ebola.

In his statement, PPRC Commissioner Alhaji Muctarr B. Williams advised political parties and other stakeholders to be sincere in their discussions for peace and development in Sierra Leone. He says this is the time for all to put party or personal interest aside and work towards the end of Ebola in the country.