



POLITICAL PARTIES REGISTRATION COMMISSION

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PPRC NEWS BRIEF

The Chairman of the Political Parties Registration Commission (PPRC) has asked executive members of political parties to own the constitutional review process, in a bid to ensure that the views of the people are heard.

Speaking in Bo over the weekend at a one-day consultation meeting for executive members, district and regional executives of the ten registered political parties, Honourable Justice M.E. Tolla Thompson emphasized the significance of their role in the constitutional review process and how it relates to the political development of the country.

In his remarks, the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, Frank Kargbo, assured political parties of Government's commitment to the entire process. He said the Constitutional Review Committee will be given a free hand to carry out its work and that the Government will not interfere in the process and will uphold the outcome of the entire process. He commended the PPRC for taking the bold step in organising such consultation.

Representing UNIPSIL, Moses Orogade said UNIPSIL's support towards the process complements the work of the Constitutional Review Committee. He assured they will provide political parties an opportunity to pursue their common objectives of further entrenching political pluralism, good governance and promotion of the rule of law and human rights, ensuring social and economic justice for all. He noted that constitutional is a rare opportunity which must be seized and taken seriously by all.

Honourable Justice Edmond Cowan, Chairman of the Constitutional Review Committee admonished political parties to forget about their personal interests and work for the good of the people. He said political party members should come into the process with open minds.

In his presentation on the 1991 Constitution and the Political Parties Act of 2002, Mohamed Pa Momoh Fofanah Esq., said the review of the Constitution is very important and that it must be taken very seriously because when once amended it will not be amended for a very long time.

He said political parties must be organized as legal entities and structured along set principles outlined in their constitutions. Mr Fofanah noted they should be transparent in their operations and dealings with their members and the general public; as well as be disciplined and democratic.

Recommendations by political parties formed the high point of the meeting. These recommendations and talking points included, qualification to contest for the presidency, stipulation of number of years in a term for the presidency, management of national resources endowment, separation of the Office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice, augmenting the mandate of the Political Parties Registration Commission, reviewing the powers of the National Electoral Commission, appointment of Commissioners and heads of Commissions and compulsory child education.

Other proposals included, enhancement of judicial independence and fundamental human rights and freedoms.

It is expected that these interactions and joint deliberations will reduce continuing tensions between parties.

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