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PRESS RELEASE

PARLIAMENT APPROVES NORTHWEST ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER

The Eight Report of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service, chaired by the Leader of Government Business, Hon. Matthew Sahr Nyuma, has on Tuesday, 14/02/2023, been approved with unanimity by Parliament.

The below mentioned Presidential Nominee was approved by Parliament:

1. Mr. Albert Samba Kanu - Electoral Commissioner, Northwestern Region.

It could be recalled that, the previous Government created the Northwest Region and the current Government recently amended the Constitution, in order to have an Electoral Commissioner that would preside over elections in that area.

Presenting the Presidential Nominee, the Acting Leader of Government Business, Hon. Bashiru Silikie stated that, the Nominee was interviewed on Tuesday, 07/02/2023, in Committee Room One, Parliament Building in Freetown. According to the Acting Leader, the nominee was interviewed based on specified criteria and procedures, not excluding the strict consistency on his educational background, track records, tax obligation, and vision for a nationally productive tenure amongst others.

Seconding the motion, the President of the Parliamentary Female Caucus in Parliament, Hon. Veronica Kadie Sesay, commended President Bio for appointing someone on national cohesion on the electoral platform. "His appointment is merely a national cohesion", she stated. The MP assured all that, she has no doubt in the Nominee, based on what transpired during his interview. She used the opportunity to advise the Nominee to seriously consider Gender Equality and Women's Employment, relative to women's participation in elections.

Deputy Whip of Parliament, Hon. Alusine Kanneh, acknowledged the appointment of the Nominee and admonished him to fairly work well on the predicate of peace. The MP advised the Nominee to do the needful.

Hon. P.C. Bai Kurr Kanagbaro Sanka III said that the appointment is a testimony of fulfilling the requirements of the upcoming election. He used the opportunity to advise the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone (ECSL) and all, to conduct peaceful elections for the development of Sierra Leone. He thanked the President for appointing the Nominee and admonished him to use his conscience.

Acting Leader of C4C, Hon. Musa Fofana confirmed his appreciation for appointing a Nominee with teaching experience, in tandem with working in Social Security. The MP described the nomination as a symbol for national cohesion. He expressed assurance over his performance.

Hon. Dr. Mark-Mahoud Kaloko joined other MPs to adopt the approval of the Nominee. The MP urged the House to approve him to go and rehabilitate the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone. He used the opportunity to recall the lackadaisical attitude of ECSL and vehemently admonished them. "Mr.Speaker, we wanted consistency at the ECSL", he stated and pointed out that, Sierra Leone is a fragile State. He advised ECSL to work independently in the conduct of the upcoming elections.

Hon. Dr. Sorie Upha Koroma said that, the Nominee's approval is done at a critical moment and explained the nature of his job, in light of electoral activities. "It is a divine responsibility" he stated and praised ECSL for the fair conduct of recent by-elections. The MP admonished the Nominee to do the needful.

Hon. Joseph Williams-Lamin said that, the Nominee has a state responsibility and emphasized that he would be serving mankind. He said that, the Nominee studied abroad and compounding with his wealth of experience, it is hopeful that he would perform.

The Leader of NGC, Hon, Dr. Kandeh Yummkella, said that, the Nominee has a task to perform and underscored the necessity of having a strong leader to build strong institutions. The MP said that, the Electoral Commission is one of those institutions, where good leaders can be placed to do the needful.

Hon. Keikura Vandy described the day as a fine one. The MP recalled some relevant information about the region. He dilated on the wealth of experience of the Nominee. The MP debunked the previous speaker for suggesting rehabilitation of ECSL. He used the opportunity to assure the fears of the opposition for free and fair elections in June 2023.

Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Chernor R. M. Bah recalled their position during the interview and said that they voted for the Nomination. He advised the Nominee to be a referee and not a player. He used the opportunity to express hope that, they are going to win the upcoming elections.

The opposition Leader reiterated that, the consultation was not followed, in lieu of the nomination, but they as opposition supported the approval of the nominee.

The Acting Leader of Government Business Hon. Bashiru Silikie recalled that, during the previous General Elections, they were constrained to have an Electoral Commissioner for the Northwestern Region. He denounced the position of the previous speaker on criticism of ECSL. He spoke well of ECSL. The Leader said on the premise of consultation, the main opposition does not have leadership and with whom they would consult. He used the opportunity to say that, they are going to win the forthcoming election as the people of Sierra Leone are pleased with the performance of the Government. He admonished the Nominee to work in the interest of the State.

In his felicitation, the Rt. Hon. Speaker Hon. Dr. Chernor Abass Bundu, told the House that, he knew the Nominee and expressed that the latter has positive characters. He expressed hope of his performance and wishes him well in his pursuit

In another development, also, the Acting Leader of Government Business, Hon. Bashir Silike has raised a motion to summon the minister of Internal Affairs to Parliament for him to explain to the House, the agreement signed in relation to the passport and 25% tax paid by passengers on air ticket.

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