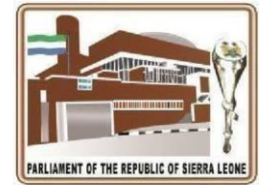




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20<sup>th</sup> June 2022

**PRESS RELEASE**



**PUBLIC HEARINGS ON THE PUBLIC ELECTIONS ACT, 2022, AND THE POLITICAL PARTIES REGULATION COMMISSION ACT, 2022**

The Parliament of Sierra Leone has on Monday 20/06/2022 discussed two bills, "The Public Elections Act, 2022, and The Political Parties Regulation Commission, Act 2022", during the pre-legislative public hearing, at the Committee Room One.

The Public Election Act 2022, seeks to repeal and replace the Public Election Act, 2022 (Act No.4 of 2012), to provide for supplementary provisions to sections 32

and 33 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, 1991 (Act No. 6 of 1991) with respect to the Electoral Commission and to provide for other related matters, whilst the Political Parties Regulation Commission Act, 2022 seeks to provide for the continuation of the Political Parties' Regulations Commission, to provide for the regulation, including the registration of political parties by sections 34 and 35 of the constitution, and to provide for other related matters.

The Chairman of the Legislative Committee in Parliament, Hon. Abdul S. Marray Conteh welcomed MPs, Civil Society organisations and other members of the public for their attendance and assured them on fruitful deliberations.

In his statement the Leader of Opposition in Parliament, Hon. Chernor RM Bah said the two bills are very important in the governance system of the country. He said this is not the first time they are having pre-legislative hearing of this nature "it is normal in any parliamentary process", he said. He said sometimes there are lot of controversies in their deliberations, but always forge ahead. He said since the bills came to Parliament, they ceased to be properties of the Executive Arm of Government. " They are now properties of Parliament" he insisted The Leader said in a pre-legislative hearing, that they allow the public involvement in the process, citing; the cyber bill engagement with the public.

He pleaded for soft copies of both bills to be available for MPs and the general public." Whatever happens in Parliament, it would be in the best interest of the country", He concluded

Leader of Government Business, Hon. Mathew Sahr Nyuma said the Public Election Act 2022, is an amendment, citing, sections 32 and 33 in the 1991 Constitution, which deal with the electoral process and underscored that, the bill is divided into fifteen parts. He acknowledged that Parliament is open to amendment. "Some are using the election process to carry out violence, we will stop it by making tougher laws in the electioneering process in Sierra Leone", He said.

He assured the public that, the process would be carefully looked into and in consultation with the public on elections matters.

He said both bills are in front of them and said they would do due diligence on the documents. He called on civil society organizations and members of the press to cross-check with Parliament and consult them in the process.

Representing the Chief Electoral Commissioner (CEC), Commissioner North, Abubakarr Koroma, commended Parliament for giving them the platform to do their work. He said previous elections laws were used in the election process and said through the recommendation of international organizations on the election process, they as the commission decided, after several consultations to amend a certain portion of the current laws to make it better.

Chairman Political Party Registration Commission (PPRC) Abdulai M. Bangura Esq. said he is in front of Parliament to ask them to pass a law that would regulate political parties in Sierra Leone. He said for the past years, as a commission they had been doing their constitutional mandate to regulate political parties. Chairman said through their engagement with 17 registered political parties and the Election Observer Mission, they decided to add more weight and powers to the work of PPRC.

The Attorney General and Minister of Justice Mohamed Lamin Trawelly Esq. Said election process is transformative and that, laws keep on changing; whilst calling for new laws of elections to match up with international best practices. He said both bills had gone through several consultations with stockholders, in light of processing and advised them to make the procedure open and transparent.

A PowerPoint presentation was made on the Public Election, Act 2022 and during the course, MPs made comments, questions, and contributions which formed part of the pre-legislative hearing process.

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