



Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law (CARL)

...fostering human rights through accountability

145 Circular Road, Freetown Sierra Leone

Tel: +232 76 365499, Email: infocarl-sl.org

Web: www.carl-sl.org

PRESS RELEASE

AHEAD OF THE COMMENCEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS, CARL CALLS FOR EXPEDITIOUS AND TRANSPARENT TRIAL OF DR. SAMURA KAMARA AND OTHERS

Freetown, 8th December, 2021: As the trial of Dr. Samura Kamara and his co-accused is scheduled to start on Tuesday, December 14, the Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law (CARL) has urged the judiciary to ensure an expeditious, fair and transparent process. In November 2021, the Anti-corruption Commission (ACC) indicted Dr. Samura Kamara and five others on several counts of corruption offences, including failure to comply with procurement procedures and guidelines, abuse of office, misappropriation of public funds meant for the renovation of Sierra Leone's chancery building in Manhattan, USA. Dr. Kamara, a Presidential candidate for the main opposition All People's Congress (APC) in the 2018 elections, faces two counts of deceiving a principal and misappropriation of public funds in the sum of \$2,560,000 (Two million five hundred and sixty United States dollars).

CARL urges the court as well as the Prosecution and Defence to work cooperatively in ensuring an expeditious, transparent and fair trial. To that end, we call on the Chief Justice of the Republic of Sierra Leone to assign a Judge and support staff who will conduct the trial in an uninterrupted manner until it is completed.

"As every accused is presumed innocent until proven otherwise, it is important that their right to a speedy, impartial, and transparent trial is respected", said Ibrahim Tommy, Executive Director, Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law, adding that "Since Dr. Samura Kamara has made no secret of his intention to contest the 2023 elections as a Presidential candidate, it is important that the proceedings are conducted as expeditiously as possible to afford him and his co-accused an opportunity to make a decision as to their future role in public service".



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If convicted, Dr. Kamara and his co-accused may face a jail term or fine or both. They may also be barred from running for elected office under the laws of Sierra Leone.

CARL commends the leadership of the Anti-Corruption Commission in the fight against corruption, even as we acknowledge that persistent challenges confront our collective efforts to address the scourge of corruption in Sierra Leone. We are particularly pleased for the improvement and consolidation of Sierra Leone's performance in major international anti-corruption indexes, including the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) indicator on corruption in the last 3 years. We urge the Commission and the Government of Sierra Leone to build on these gains by strengthening the Commission's prevention and investigation capacity to respond to be able to respond to every credible allegation of corruption in the country. We note that corruption remains a binding constraint to our country's development, and urge every Sierra Leonean to play a part in the fight.

##THE END

For more information:

Contact: Mary-Magdalene Kelfalla at mabri2829@gmail.com or +23234656751