



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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CARL WELCOMES THE COMMENCEMENT OF HEARING INTO THE COMPLAINT FILED AGAINST THE USE OF PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION SYSTEM IN THE 2023 ELECTIONS; CALLS FOR EXPEDITIOUS AND FAIR PROCEEDINGS.

Freetown, 9th January, 2023: The Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law – Sierra Leone (CARL-SL) has welcomed the announcement of a five-member panel of Supreme Court justices to hear a complaint filed by two citizens of Sierra Leone against the use of the proportional representation system in the multi-tier elections scheduled for 24th June, 2023. A statement from the Judiciary said the Court will hold its first sitting on Monday, 9th January, 2023, which will be presided over by Chief Justice Desmond B. Edwards.

“When we urge citizens to use peaceful and legitimate means to resolve electoral grievances, we do so with an expectation that state organs and institutions would resolve such grievances in a speedy, professional and impartial manner,” said Ibrahim Tommy, Executive Director, Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law, adding that “It is gratifying that the Supreme Court will start hearing this matter barely a month after it was filed. This is a positive step forward in our collective advocacy for speedy resolution of electoral complaints”.

On 28th November, 2022, lawyers representing two Sierra Leoneans believed to be members of the main opposition All People’s Congress (APC) filed an application with the Supreme Court seeking, among other things, a declaration that the “Directive” by President Bio to the Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone to conduct parliamentary elections using the Proportional Representation (PR) system is inconsistent with section 38(a) of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone as amended, asserting that there is no legal basis for a proportional representation system where there were subsisting parliamentary constituencies at the time that the declaration was made.



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

An Irish Aid-funded study report on electoral justice released by CARL in November, 2022 identified prolonged delays in proceedings relating to election-related complaints and a general disinclination of the Supreme Court to resolve many of the substantive electoral complaints that come before them. The Report recommended expedited proceedings in respect of election-related complaints and increased willingness on the part of the Supreme Court to address the substantive complaints filed with them.

Accordingly, CARL welcomes this development and urges the parties to cooperate fully with the Court in order that this matter will be concluded in an expedited and transparent manner. We urge the Court to fully consider the merits of the arguments on both sides and hand down a fair and well-thought-out decision.

The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice and the Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone are the defendants in this action.

CARL will assign monitors to follow the proceedings and will provide regular updates from the Court.

##THE END

For more information:

Contact: Mary-Magdalene Kelfalla at mabri2829@gmail.com or +23234656751
and Abu Bakarr Kallay at Kallayabubakarr73@gmail.com