



# POLITICAL PARTIES REGISTRATION COMMISSION

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## **WORKING UNDER THE THREAT OF EBOLA**

### **Induction Training Workshop For District Facilitators on the Methodology for Engaging in Regional, Districts and Diaspora Consultations**

***"Seeking the voices, views and opinions of SLPP membership at all levels in the Design Process of a Family Dialogue Conference***

#### **STATEMENT DELIVERED BY**

**MS. JOSEPHINE LEBBIE**

#### **MEDIATION AND PROGRAMMES MANAGER-PPRC**

**ON WEDNESDAY 14 JANUARY, 2015 AT THE SIERRA LEONEA PEOPLES PARTY HEADQUARTERS, FREETOWN SIERRA LEONE**

Good morning distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am glad for the invitation extended to the PPRC commission to participate in this induction training workshop, with the primary objective of defining the approaches, methodology and tools on how the Technical Facilitation Team (TFT) can seek the voices, views and opinions of SLPP members in the regions, districts, constituencies and zonal levels, as well as the diaspora branches of the SLPP in the process of designing and preparing for an all-inclusive and comprehensive Family Dialogue and Reconciliation Conference. In this context, it is my humble duty to bring you warm greetings from Justice Tholla Thompson, the Chairman of the PPRC commission, to you all. The chairman has asked me to reiterate in stronger terms, his unreserved trust and confidence in the TFT mediation process for the SLPP.

In addition, in this mist of the EBOLA national threat, the Chairman of the PPRC, sincerely wished to thank those who have traveled from the 14 districts, especially from the provinces to attend this induction training

workshop. Your presence here today, clearly demonstrates your love, commitment and passion to see a united SLPP ahead of the next National Convention, hopefully to take place this year, 2015.

### **Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, participants**

Again, I believe many of you here today have in one way or the other being engaged with the PPRC/TFT Unity and Reconciliation efforts aimed at resolving the current and persistent impasse within the SLPP. I can see family faces at the last July 2014 official TFT launching ceremony, which marked the beginning of the work of the PPRC endorsed Bishop HUMPER lead Mediation Team- the Technical Facilitation Team (TFT). We in the PPRC believe that most of you here today, whether directly or indirectly seem to be genuinely contributing to see the political division that emerged following the National Delegate Conference in Bo, August, 2013, is peacefully resolved in the coming days and months.

Some of you continue to be more directly involved in the actual negotiations than others. We also wish to applaud efforts made by the SLPP diaspora branches in bring key senior party elders together. Some individuals are now more involved in hands-on implementation of the PPRC findings and recommendations, while others are keen observers and advocates of the process. But all of you –the mediators of different categories, the executives, and other stakeholders seem now ready for unity and reconciliation to be the ultimate desire and goal of your party. The credit for the success of the mediation process will honestly be a win-win situation for all SLPP members and the country at large. We want to see a united SLPP. Hence, in your joint effort to bring lasting peace, unity and reconciliation to the SLPP, you all have no option, but bound to be seem working together – like members of an extended family, whether you like it or not!

That is why the PPRC commission is still of the view that it would be productive, one year on, to the Local Government Election, for senior members of the party to try to resolve the current stalemate in the SLPP; take stock of the achievements and shortcomings of the work of the TFT as they continue to work to resolve the challenges within the SLPP. Clearly, we also hope that the second phase of their work, the TFT will help friends and supporters of SLPP to genuinely engage in the spirit of overcoming the challenges confronting the party.

I obviously do not want to pre-empt the details of the training workshop today, I leave that with the workshop facilitators, but hope that participants

will contribute meaningfully to the presentations, discussions, and deliberations to assist the TFT in the process of adopting the right kind of consultation methods and tools, bearing in mind the national EBOLA state of emergency situation. In other words, what can be done to seek the voices and vies of your general membership in setting the agenda for an ultimate, legitimate, inclusive family dialogue and reconciliation conference prior to the next SLPP convention?

**Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, workshop participants:**

Please allow me to once again take your minds back to reflect collectively on efforts aimed at bringing about lasting peace and unity within the SLPP through the mandate and work of the TFT. As many of you are aware, PPRC is the Electoral management Body (EMB) established in accordance with Sections 34 and 35 of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone and complemented by the Political Parties Act (Act No. 3 of 2002), with mandate to a) Register and supervise the conduct of political parties in accordance with the 1991 and the political parties Act of 2002; b) Monitor the affairs or conduct of political parties to ensure their compliance with the constitution of Sierra Leone, the political parties Act; c) Promote political parties pluralism and spirit of constitutionalism among political parties; d) when approached by 'persons or parties concerned, to mediate any conflict or dispute between or among the leadership of any political party or between or among political parties; e) To do all such things as well as contribute to the attainment of good conduct of political parties.

Within this mandate, in 2013 when we received a complaint from Ambassador Bangura, then aspirant for the chairman and leader of the party and other petitioners, asking us, on behalf of the aggrieved group, to help mediate the crisis in the SLPP, we Knew the task was not going to be easy. However, in response to this request, the PPRC conducted a thorough investigation and on 31st December 2013, published its findings and recommendations. Following this publication, the PPRC was pleased that a group of students, grassroots, women and youth-the Campaign for Unity Team (CUT) movement affiliated with the SLPP took the report and started advocating for the implementation of it's recommendations as soon as possible. This was complemented by a two-week follow up and feedback exercise conducted by CUT; this was followed by the Dr. Peter Tucker, and the Dr. Alpha Wurie led Reconciliation Committee reports.

The main recommendation from these reports is for the PPRC to lead in facilitating an "SLPP Family Dialogue and Reconciliation Conference". The CUT

report particularly recommend the setting up of a Technical Facilitation Team, to assist the PPRC in the design of a framework through which a political consensus aimed at uniting the SLPP can be achieved.

Under the direct oversight of the Political Parties Registration Commission (PPRC), the Technical Facilitation Team (TFT) has continued to work to set the right conditions and framework for a productive and inclusive SLPP dialogue and reconciliation conference to take place. From all signs, the TFT is likely to ensure that the SLPP finds a political consensus and solution to the current stalemate.

### **Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, workshop participants**

SLPP as an opposition party was/and still important both politically and economically to the development of our nascent democracy. Hence, it is therefore crucial that the political stalemate within the party is immediately resolved. From the progress reports received so far from Bishop Humper-TFT, it appears they have been able to bring together the SLPP parliamentarians to work together; they have consulted extensively, back and front with Ambassador Allie Bangura and other petitioners for then to consider a unity and reconciliation drive rather than continue to pursue a legal/judiciary means of ending the current intra-party stalemate. In sum, it appears consensus is emerging to see a united SLPP. The next step/phase two in the design process is to ensure the principle of inclusiveness is adhered to by consulting and engaging with the regional, districts, constituencies and zonal executives as well as diaspora branches and the general membership of the party. We therefore request various factions to join the PPRC backed TFT Mediation Team to accomplish their task as soon as possible, now that the EBOLA crisis seemed to be slowing down.

Before I conclude, let me once again take this opportunity to thank the Campaign for National Unity-Sierra Leone (CNU-SL), a local NGOs working on political parties and electoral system reforms, for continuing to provide funding, strategic advisory support, secretariat and logistical support to the work of the TFT. Without these assistances, it would have been difficult for the PPRC to meet the needs of the TFT. I also want to single out the resilience efforts of CUT- a student, grassroots, women, and youth affiliated movement within the SLPP, for the advocacy role they continue to play to ensure the elders listen to their cry to urgently work to enhance unity and reconciliation at all levels of the party. I particularly like the CUT statements which has kept them focused: **“WE WONT RELENT, WE WILL CONTINUE TO ADVOCATE FOR AN END TO THE CURRENT IMPASSE WITHIN THE**

**SIERRA LEONE PEOPLES PARTY, (SLPP).”... and “ IT IS NOT ABOUT YOU, IT IS NOT ABOUT ME, BUT IT IS ABOUT OUR GENERATION AND THE GENERATION YET UNBORN”...**

With these statements, we must all think through the future of Sierra Leone. SLPP is at a crossroads. The time to act is now. And many of the people who need to undertake the required actions are right here in this room. In some ways, we expect the future outcomes of dialogue and reconciliation conference to lay a solid foundation for the SLPP. So that Sierra Leoneans in general can once more put there hope and trust in the value of multiparty democracracic norms and values in this country: whether as a ruling or opposition party.

Having said that let me make the purpose of this meeting crystal clear. We are not here to wage insults on personalities, neither are we here to replicate the SLPP political battle field during the Bo national delegate conference or its immediate aftermath. We are here as I said at the beginning – to look back and discuss the methods and tools required to overcome the challenges of mistrust, divisiveness, hate and intolerance within the SLPP; and to take stock of where we are in the process of designing an all inclusive dialogue and reconciliation conference.

In closing, I’d like to express the commission’s sincere and profound appreciation to all stakeholders that have so far supported the mediation process lead by Bishop HUMPER and the TFT. I wish to appeal to all of you to continue to do so.

Let me conclude by once more thanking the CNU-SL/CUT membership, both at home and abroad, for you sustained support to the SLPP united and reconciliation drive; without your generous funding, this induction training workshop for District Facilitators would not have been possible.

Thank you.

**END**