



Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO)

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PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF THE EC, ENSURE BROAD-BASED APPROACH IN THE APPOINTMENT OF NEW COMMISSIONERS – CODEO TO PRESIDENT AND COUNCIL OF STATE

The Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) has followed, with keen interest, public reaction following the announcement by the Office of the President on June 28, 2018 that the Electoral Commission (EC) Chairperson, Mrs Charlotte Osei, and her two deputies, Mr. Amadu Sulley and Mrs. Georgina Opoku Amankwah, had been removed from office. CODEO notes that the removal was based on the recommendations by the Committee established by the Chief Justice, pursuant to Articles 44(2), 44(3), and 146(4) of the Constitution, to investigate certain allegations contained in certain petitions submitted to the President in July 2017, asking for the removal from office of the Chairperson and two deputy Chairpersons of the EC. CODEO acknowledges that the President's action in removing the three officers of the Commission is in accordance with the process prescribed by Article 146 of the Constitution. In the interest of transparency and accountability, CODEO calls on the President and the Chief Justice to make available the full report of Chief Justice's Committee.

With the constitutional process regarding the petitions now concluded, CODEO respectfully entreats all Ghanaians and stakeholders, particularly political parties, to refrain from actions or public utterances likely to inject partisan politics and other improper considerations into this outcome. CODEO hopes that the constitutional resolution of the petitions brought against the members of the Commission would lead to the strengthening of the Commission and make it better able to deliver on its mandate of organizing free, fair and credible elections in Ghana. CODEO further hopes that the publication of the Committee's full report will inform the review and reform of the EC's future operations.

In view of the partisan discussions that has already ensued following the removal, CODEO strongly recommends to the appointing authorities – the President and the Council of State – not to restrict themselves to the minimum constitutional provisions for appointing leadership to constitutional bodies, such as the Electoral Commission. Rather, CODEO urges a broad-based consultative approach, involving multiple stakeholders, including civil society, in the search and subsequent appointment of new officeholders. CODEO believes an inclusive and consultative process is in line with good governance practice and necessary to instill confidence among stakeholders in the next set of leadership of the Commission and foster national cohesion. In addition to the requirements under Article 44 of the 1992 constitution, we recommend the following additional criteria for consideration by the appointing authorities:

- Nonpartisanship and impartiality
- Proven integrity
- Team player
- Independent mindedness
- Rich experience and professional maturity

Public and multi-stakeholder confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the Electoral Commission is a necessary condition for the continued development and progress of Ghana's democratic and electoral politics. It is CODEO's hope that all parties involved will be guided by this fundamental understanding as we work collectively to inject renewed confidence and reconstitute our Electoral Commission.

Long live the Electoral Commission! Long live Ghana!!