

The Gambia for All on the Postponement of the Nationwide Registration of Voters

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)'s postponement of the nationwide registration of voters is a matter of great concern to the GFA because of the potential delay it may cause in the overall electoral calendar. GFA condemns this postponement in the strongest terms, particularly in the absence of any tangible reasons for such a major decision. We consider it important and urgent for the IEC to meet with the stakeholders particularly the political parties to discuss the full implications of this decision and the way forward.

We are equally concerned that the IEC continues to operate under laws that are undemocratic and undermine the principles of a level playing field in the political arena. The office continues to function as a government department instead of an independent arbiter of the electoral process. The recent case of the appointment of Mr. Oremi Joiner, a member of the NPP, as the Vice Chairman only demonstrates this fact. The appointment of members of the Commission continues to be the exclusive prerogative of the government, which is just one of the competitors in the electoral race. A process of vetting such appointments should have been in place to allow the key stakeholders (political parties and civil society) a say in the governance structure of the IEC. Rescinding the appointment of Mr. Joiner demonstrates, once again, the clumsiness and lack of due diligence that characterize this Government when it comes to taking important decisions affecting the lives of Gambians. We will always remain vigilant to ensure that the past does not repeat itself through either ignorance or deliberate attempts to misuse or abuse power.

Gambia has decided and the sooner the Government recognizes and accept this basic fact the better for the nation.

WAATO SIITA!

Comcell

GFA