



COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA  
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**PRESS STATEMENT**  
**ISSUED ON WEDNESDAY, 23<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER 2022**

His Excellency Charles A. Savarin, President of the Commonwealth of Dominica, met with a delegation from the Electoral Reform Coalition (ERC) on Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022 at the Conference Room of the Office of the President from 11:05 a.m. to 1:10 p.m. The ERC had written to the President requesting the meeting. The ERC delegation was led by Dr. Thomson Fontaine, Consultant to the ERC, and included Attorney-at-Law Cara Shillingford, representative of the National Joint Action Movement (NJAM); Mr. Isaac Baptiste, representative of the United Workers Party (UWP); Mr. Bernard Hurtault, representative of the Dominica Freedom Party (DFP); Mr. Kent Vital, representative of NJAM; and Mr. Loftus Durand, representative of Civic Vibe. Also in attendance were the Honourable Attorney General as well as the Solicitor General and the Chief Parliamentary Counsel, who were invited by the President to join him and offer their advice as needed.

Mr. Joseph Peters, representative of the Dominica Public Service Union (DPSU), did not attend.

Upon the invitation of His Excellency the President, the representatives of the ERC expressed their concerns regarding the calling of snap general election by the Honourable Prime Minister without the necessary electoral reform coupled with other issues surrounding Dominica's electoral system. The ERC's representatives therefore sought the intervention of the President and offered recommendations upon which they contend the President could act to help resolve the concerns raised.

Following the ventilation of views and the intervention by the Honourable Attorney General when needed, His Excellency the President sought to address the concerns raised by the ERC's representatives making reference to the relevant provisions of the Constitution and the law which clearly specify the role of the President on occasions when the House of Assembly is dissolved to facilitate the holding of a general election.

In responding to comments that the President had been informed that the Electoral Commission was not and would not be ready to hold the election and that the President in the circumstances, according to Section 19 of the House of Assembly (Elections) Act, Chapter 2:01, could postpone the election for 30 days, His Excellency pointed out that he had received no such communication from the Commission. He had received a letter from Mr. Wayne James who is a member of the Commission, but the President is not advised by individual members of the Commission, but by the Chairman acting on behalf of the Commission.

In response to comments made about the Electoral Reform Process, His Excellency the President stated that with regards to the reports to be submitted by Sir Dennis Byron on Electoral Reform, it was his expectation that the recommendations will be expeditiously acted upon by the Government to include the holding of consultations with the relevant stakeholders.

Towards the end of the meeting, Dr. Thomson Fontaine thanked the Office of the President for affording the ERC the opportunity to meet and engage with the President and to voice their concerns. His Excellency responded that it was a great pleasure interacting with the ERC and assured the group that the Office of the President was always available to accommodate individuals or groups who wish to meet with the President and that if the ERC wishes to meet with him in the future on this matter or any other matter, he would make himself available.

The meeting was very cordial, interactive and fruitful.

  
**DONILLE BLACKMOORE (Miss)**  
**PRESIDENT'S SECRETARY**