



ELECTORAL REFORM COALITION (ERC)

C/o Mr. Johnson Boston – Tel: 767-276-0387; Email: ercdominica25@gmail.com or bossojb@yahoo.com

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Honourable Mia Mottley
Prime Minister of Barbados and Chairman of CARICOM
Bridgetown
Barbados

Dear Prime Minister Mottley,

I have the honour to write to you in your capacity as Chairman of the Caribbean Community on behalf of the Electoral Reform Coalition of Dominica, a coalition of civil society organizations committed to comprehensive electoral reform in Dominica.

The fifteen-year campaign led by civil society organizations for comprehensive electoral reform in Dominica has been characterized by a high-level of indifference by the Government to a fair and equitable process, and violent responses from the Commonwealth of Dominica Police Force being meted out to people peacefully advocating for reform of our antiquated electoral framework.

The Electoral Reform Coalition (ERC) wishes to underscore that two elements deemed most critical to the integrity of the reform process, campaign finance reform, and the re-registration of voters as the only accountable mechanism towards a new voters register, have been excluded from the 3 Election-related Bills, which were introduced in the House of Assembly of Dominica on 16 December 2024. These two elements recommended by electoral reform consultant, Sir Dennis Byron, were deliberately rejected by the Government of Dominica thereby undermining the sanctity of the electoral reform process.

We hereby seek clarification for the people of Dominica of the Government's expressed view that the Caribbean Community is preoccupied with developing a regional approach to campaign finance for adoption in the wider CARICOM. This is the reason the Dominica Government has stated as the basis for not including this most pivotal provision. Further, as effectively demonstrated in other CARICOM States, we believe that only a re-registration of eligible voters can bring about an accountable voters register.

It was our hope that our electoral reform process would have culminated in a national consensus on all the elements contained in the draft legislation, and that their adoption would become the new electoral regime that would bring about future elections of integrity which stand the test of international best practice. The ERC is very concerned that the current process and this final stage of legislation being adopted by the House of Assembly will only bring about a flawed outcome, especially with an electors list that exceeds the population of the Commonwealth of Dominica.

Dominica ratified the 2001 Inter-American Democratic Charter which specified that all Governments of the Western Hemisphere have an obligation to promote and defend the right to democracy for their people. What we have witnessed in Dominica since 2009 is a total disregard by our government of the provisions of this very Democratic Charter.

Further, Dominica has also ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights which are instruments that protect civil and political rights. It should be of great concern to the Caribbean Community that Dominica is not adhering to these instruments that should complement the provisions of the Dominica Constitution, especially as they pertain to the legal framework conducive to free and fair elections.

We are of the view that passage of the Bills in their current form which were tabled before the House of Assembly in Dominica on 16 December 2024 will not contribute to the desired level playing field for free and fair elections.

We therefore recommend that the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community become seized of this emerging reality and retrogressive step in our country that has the potential to bring about political instability of a proportion that will not augur well for the democratic development in our Caribbean sub-region.

We thank you in advance for bringing our concern to the attention of our Heads of Government.

Sincerely yours,



Johnson Boston
Chairman

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