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PRESS STATEMENT - FRIDAY NOVEMBER 5, 2021

RESPONSE TO THE EUROPEAN UNION ELECTION FOLLOW-UP MISSION PRESS RELEASE

The All Political Parties Association is a legally constituted body comprising 11 registered political parties in Sierra Leone. The APPA was formed to foster greater cooperation amongst legally registered political parties in Sierra Leone, serve as the platform for constructive engagement with government and to also deepen national discourse in a civil and democratic manner.

The Association read with rapt attention the European Union Elections Follow-Up Mission's Press Release and has the following comments:

1. The APPA wishes to thank the European Union for its support to the Government and People of Sierra Leone over the years and notes with appreciation their interest in improving the democratic space in the country;
2. The APPA notes that even though institutions are faced with enormous challenges, this has not impeded them from performing their mandates and has strived towards the promotion and protection of our democratic credentials and values.

3. Notwithstanding, the APPA has serious concerns with the recently published Press Release of the European Union Follow-Up Mission to Sierra Leone as it is bias and misleading to the people of Sierra Leone and the world at large.
4. The Press Release is not truly reflective of the democratic progress and credentials the country has carved in recent times, and efforts made by the Elections Management Bodies to address the recommendations made by the EOM after the 2018 Elections;
5. The APPA want it to be known that the EU Elections Follow-up Mission did not engaged APPA and its membership to know the progress that has been made so far on the recommendations made by the EOM on the 2018 elections;
6. The APPA is of the opinion that the press release may have the tendency to create strong mistrust and low confidence in State Institutions such as NEC, PPRC, Judiciary and members of the Security Sector. This will also put at risk the life and safety of staff of NEC, PPRC, Judiciary and members of the Security Sector;
7. Furthermore, the APPA believes that this may have the potential to create chaos in the aftermath of the 2023 elections for both the winner and the losers.

Generally, APPA would like the public to know that election observation mission reports are not uncommon with our country and that similar exercises have been conducted over the years and recommendations made. These recommendations are not imperative on the government to implement as government has the authority to scrutinise them and accept those that it deems suitable to the country.

