

## **SLPP, PMDC, APC Support Freedom of Information Bill**

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Public Relation's Officer of Freedom of Information Coalition (FoIC-SL), Daniel N'Bompa Turay Tuesday disclosed that the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP), Peoples Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC) and the All Peoples Congress (APC) have unanimously expressed public support for the Freedom of Information bill.

The bill is to be enacted by parliament as a way of enforcing transparency and accountability within the public and private sectors in Sierra Leone. He made the statement during a press briefing at Stop Press Restaurant in Freetown. Turay said the Freedom of Information drive in Sierra Leone was stimulated during a conference held in Freetown by the world Bank in 2003 on transparency and good governance, but since then, it has not got the required attention from government, but with the continuous effort of FoIC, civil society groups and Non Governmental Organizations(NGOs) they have put hands on deck to ensure that the bill is passed by parliament for the benefit of the people of Sierra Leone.

"Political Parties more especially those who have met the conditionality of the Political Party Registration Commission (PPRC) have given us their support for the enactment on the Freedom of Information bill," he said and maintained that they are seriously going to people across the country to sensitize them on the importance of the bill. "We are going to use two methodologies, sensitization and the collection of the signatories and thumb prints of one million people in order to show that they are in total support of the bill," he said and maintained that his organization has received the sum of 30,000 pounds sterling from the Westminster Foundation for Democracy for the implementation of the programme.

The Secretary General of FoIC-SL Oswald Hanciles also maintained that freedom of information is a very important concept which needs proper understanding for the development of the country adding that the freedom of information will improve the level of accountability of the country. "International Community do access countries as developed, developing and underdeveloped based on the level of it freedom of information," he said and encouraged journalists to lay premium on the enactment of the bill as they are the direct beneficiaries of the bill.

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