



Civil Society Organisations Coalition on the National Referendum and Election of MMDCs

For Immediate release

July 29, 2019

Amend Article 243 (1) to pave way for the election of MMDCs

It has come to the notice of the Civil Society Organizations Coalition on the National Referendum and election of MMDCs, (CSO -CoNaFEM) that the Bill to amend Article 243(1) of the 1992 Ghana Constitution will be considered by Parliament this week. The Bill, when amended, will take away the power of appointing MMDCs from the President to allow citizens to elect their own MMDCs.

As a non-entrenched provision of the constitution, per Article 291(3), amendment of the Bill requires two-thirds majority of all Members of Parliament (MPs) to vote in favour of the Bill. Since none of the two political parties represented in Parliament; the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC) command the two-thirds majority in Parliament, a bi-partisan consensus would be required to pass the Bill.

In view of this, the CSO-CoNaFEM is calling on both political parties to ensure a bi-partisan consensus to amend this provision to get MMDCs elected in order to improve local democracy and popular participation in governance at the local level.

The proposal to give power to the people to elect their own Chief Executives is long overdue. Electing MMDCs is key to improving grassroots democracy, ensuring popular participation and improving accountability and governance at the local level. In past elections, almost every political party promises to ensure MMDCs are popularly elected. Many stakeholders and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have been advocating for it. Above all, majority of Ghanaians, 69% want their MMDCs elected (Afrobarometer Round 7 survey).

The coalition therefore, sees this as a great opportunity to amend Article 243(1) to ensure MMDCs are elected by the people. The time is now. The coalition urges our honorable MPs – both the NDC and NPP, to put the national interest ahead of all other considerations and fulfill the wishes of the people by voting overwhelmingly in favour of this amendment.

We believe this will be the beginning of democratic synergy between the mode of electing national and local leaders.

Let Ghana win!

Long live Ghana!

Signed

Civil Society Organizations Coalition on the National Referendum and election of MMDCEs

Leading members:

The Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana)

Centre for Local Governance Advocacy (CLGA)

Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG)

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