

PRESS RELEASE

ONEGHANA MOVEMENT APPLAUDS WITHDRAWAL OF REFERENDUM

OneGhana Movement, which was first to formally appeal for the withdrawal of the December 17 referendum, applauds the decision by President Nana Akufo-Addo.

While we advocated for Ghanaians to vote NO to reject the amendment for the many good reasons, we commend the President for listening to the groundswell of the voices of reason.

It must be noted that the No-Campaign was started by well-meaning Ghanaians who showed exemplary citizenship.

Their selfless service and tenacity brought light to the referendum and enabled majority of Ghanaians to make informed decisions and opt for the NO campaign before the opposition joined.

We commend these Ghanaians.

We believe the purpose for Article 55(3) is even more relevant today than at the time the framers deemed it necessary to insulate local governance from the ills of unbridled partisanship.

The wisdom was reechoed by the 2010 Constitution Review Commission.

We refer to portions of the Commission's report advising against partisanship at the local government level.

“53. The Commission, however, observes that where local elections are held on partisan bases, nomination rules determined and deployed by national parties can serve as impediments to accountability. It also weakens local government systems.

54. The Commission observes that as a result of the corruption in Ghana’s body politic, partisan politics in local elections may lead to the erosion of popular support for local assemblies.

55. The Commission observes with concern that, in jurisdictions where political parties play a role in the elections at the local level, without clear rules that stipulate the inclusion of certain disadvantaged or minority segments of society, the system may easily engender dominance by majority groups, more powerful social groups and persons who have enough money to spread around for the purpose of attracting votes.

56. The Commission observes that the Committee of Experts which drafted the proposals for the 1992 Constitution noted that the non-partisan nature of the District Assemblies has the potential to facilitate the mobilization of the people at the local level and is more conducive to consensus formation, factors that are crucial to development efforts at the grassroots level.

57. The Commission further observes that at the Consultative Assembly, —the mode of elections at the local level was one of the topical issues that engaged the minds of the members of the Public Services Committee of the Assembly, tasked to deliberate on the subject matter of Decentralisation and Local Government.

The Assembly ultimately decided to retain a non-partisan local government system as first established in 1988.”

We are disappointed that Article 243(1) currently before parliament awaiting a vote to make MMDCs elective has also been aborted.

The **No-Campaign** has never been a **NO** against the election of MMDCs.

It is a **NO** against political partisanship at the local government level.

We urge the President to demonstrate utmost good faith to citizens by laying the amendment bill for Article 243(1) before parliament, knowing fully well that MMDCs can be elected without amending Article 55(3).

OneGhana, Honour the Pledge.

Emily Nyuur
Executive Secretary
(0244897584)

