



**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE NATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS FORUM
HELD AT THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS GUEST CENTRE, TEIMAN-ABOKOBI,
GREATER ACCRA REGION**

WEDNESDAY JUNE 27 -THURSDAY JUNE 28, 2018

PREAMBLE

We, the representatives of Civil Society Organizations drawn from all regions of Ghana participating in the National Civil Society Organizations Forum, convened at the International Students Guest Centre (ISGC) at Teiman-Abokobi in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana after thoroughly discussing and deliberating on the following important issues:

- I. The strategic national decision to amend Article 55 of the Ghana 1992 constitution to enable political parties to fully participate in decentralized local governance and elections;
- II. The potential benefits and costs of this strategic national decision;
- III. Critical consequential reforms necessary for the full and effective participation of political parties in decentralized local governance;
- IV. The technical actions pre-requisite to the successful implementation of this strategic national decision to open up participation in local governance to Ghana's political parties;
- V. The most effective ways to mobilize broad based support of people and national leaders; and
- VI. Strategies of building an all-party support for the decision to provide political parties' entry into decentralized local governance.

HAVE RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

1. We express sincere appreciation to the President of the Republic of Ghana for the bold and transformational decision to widen the frontiers of Ghana's democracy by calling for the amendment of Article 55 of the Constitution to enable political parties participate in local governance and devolve more power and resources for accelerated local development;
2. We appeal to the President, Parliament and the Minister responsible for Local Government and Rural Development to do everything in their power to ensure the timely and efficient

- management of the processes and procedures required to guarantee that the referendum planned for 2019 is held according to schedule;
3. We commend the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG) for the bold and imaginative initiative to convene a forum of Ghana's civil society organizations and forge consensus around this strategic national decision to open up local governance to political parties;
 4. We agreed to commit our collective efforts to ensure the successful implementation of the strategic national decision on party participation in local governance;
 5. We are committed to engage the political parties, national leaders, traditional authorities and other important stakeholders to actively contribute their time and energies to ensure the successful implementation of the President's decision;
 6. We agreed to engage the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), the Media and other stakeholders to disseminate adequate information on the full benefits of the President's decision to Ghana's democracy and appeal to the government to equip the Information Services Department to play an active role in this endeavor;
 7. We agreed to support the amendment of Article 55 not as an end in itself but as the essential first step to broader transformational local governance reforms to democratic development;
 8. We further agreed to support the women of Ghana to participate fully and play leading roles in the devolved local governance system that would result from the proposed reform;
 9. We will collaborate to build an all-party support for the successful implementation of the decision;
 10. We agreed to mobilize and socialize the youth and People with Disability to appreciate the potential benefits of "Agenda 40-75" to them and to secure their support;
 11. We agreed to support the National Peace Council to work actively to maintain the peace before, during and after the referendum;
 12. We commend Ghana's Developmental Partners for their substantial contribution to local governance, democracy and development and appealed to them to sustain their noble effort as local governance undergoes far-reaching reforms; and
 13. We finally resolved to stick together as a Civil Society Coalition with a coordinating committee committed to the successful implementation of the strategic decision to open up local governance to participation by Ghana's political parties.

Issued this day 28th June 2018 at the International Students Guest Centre, Teiman-Abokobi in Accra.