

**Notes of Meeting Convened by Parliamentary Elections Office**  
**Thursday, July 6<sup>th</sup>, 1.00 P.M.**  
**Kirani James Stadium, Western Conference Room**

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The Parliamentary Elections Office convened a meeting of stakeholders at the Kirani James Stadium West Conference Room on Thursday, July 6<sup>th</sup>, beginning 1.00 p.m. According to the invitation letter, the agenda was as follows:- Observer Mission Report, New Voter Registration System and Any Other Business. I confessed surprise that the Report in question turned out to be the *CARICOM Electoral Observer Mission (EOM) Report Elections 2022* and not the *OAS Electoral Observer Mission Final Report re Elections 2022*.

The turnout was rather disappointing. Five representatives of 3 civil society organisations attended the meeting. Besides the four persons from the Parliamentary Elections Office, there were only 2 other attendees, one of them representing the New National Party.

In his introductory remarks, the Supervisor of Elections, Mr. Elvis Morain, offered congratulations and thanks to those persons who were present, noting as follows:-

- that the participation/contribution of an empowered citizenry was important to building a system that was serving Grenada well;
- there was never a perfect electoral system; people were developing and the society was evolving;
- While the Parliamentary Elections Office was charged with the responsibility of oversight and management of the Electoral System, the “involvement of all” was needed.

The Supervisor of Elections focussed on the recommendations of the CARICOM EOM noting that recommendations in respect of changes to the legislative framework and the creation of an Electoral Commission would require both electoral and constitution reform.

The Systems Administrator, Mr. Millette, in his presentation, advised on the need for a new Voter Registration system, noting that the current system was 12 years old and that the entity which had designed the system “ had total control of us”. Certain certificates on the system had expired and there was no manual or documentation on what was to be done in that event. The proposed new system would integrate with other departments and would be capable of disaggregating data and doing more analysis of the data collected during the registration process. It would be able to produce information significant to the economic development of the country. A review/audit of the Parliamentary Elections Office was also required to assess whether or not it was “fit for purpose”.

Both presentations generated significant queries and discussion. Among these were :-

- **Costs:** What will be the cost of the new system? Who/what was going to fund it?

- **Revenue Generation:** Did the Parliamentary Elections Office intend to generate revenue by sale of information?
- **Mandate:** Did the PEO have the mandate to engage in such activity?
- **Privacy of Individual’s Data:** Would the privacy of the individual’s data collected by the Voter Registration process be compromised given the proposed larger use of the collected data re generation of information;
- **Data Management and Protection:** Did the recently passed Data Protection Act protect the data generated by the Parliamentary Elections Office?
- **Broad-based stakeholder inclusion and participation:** There should be engagement throughout the country by the Parliamentary Elections Office in respect of proposed reforms and the process to sensitize and obtain input and buy-in.
- **Unresolved CSO Concerns re Online Voter Registration Elections 2022:** The Supervisor of Elections was reminded of concerns brought to his attention by the Grouping of CSOs - via letters of November 2020 and November 2021 - in respect of a government website which invited online voter registration. Notwithstanding the dismissal of these concerns as “allegations” (via letter of July 2021) two of the CSO representatives advised that, in their opinion, this matter was not closed.

The meeting concluded at around 4.00 p.m. The Supervisor committed to sharing both the report of Elections 2022 by the Parliamentary Elections Office and the report of the CARICOM EOM Elections 2022. Stakeholders would be informed of plans/invited to input into plans for island wide stakeholder engagement on the implementation of the proposed reforms.