



OFFICIAL STATEMENT

Freetown, 19th March 2018 – Recognizing the potential negative impact of false information and misunderstanding on public perception, the National Electoral Commission (NEC) wishes to clarify:

1. Ballot papers were counted immediately following the closure of polling stations on election day. Ballot paper totals were recorded on results forms and sent to Tally Centres. This is why ballot papers can be found in District Offices. This is in adherence to procedure. They are not being hidden.
2. With regard to one particular story featuring packed ballot boxes, reportedly photographed in a compound at Ogu Farm, the boxes were in fact photographed at the NEC Western Area Rural District Office in Waterloo—exactly as where they should be, according to official procedures.
3. The NEC has permanent IT staff who have been engaged on secondment and worked with the National Civil Registration Authority (NCRA) during the joint voter and civil registration period. These IT personnel, who are still staff of NEC, conduct themselves professionally and remain supportive of the Commission's activities.
4. The Commission regularly engages political parties at the Political Parties Liaison Committee (PPLC) meeting. The Media and External Relations Department staff are also tasked to serve as facilitators between NEC and political parties during such PPLC engagements. The Commission has absolute trust and confidence in their roles and activities in relation to their engagement with political parties.
5. The public is advised to consult the NEC for information regarding elections and to avoid the spread of rumours and unfounded information.

Signed and dated this 19th day of March, 2018

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Mohamed N'fah-Alie Conteh
Chief Electoral Commissioner and Chairman
National Returning Officer