



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**4 September 2019**

### **Heading: National Electoral Commission with Support of the European Union Launches Newly Adopted Gender and Disability Policies**

Today, 4 September 2019, the National Electoral Commission with support of the European Union launched the Gender and Disability Policies at Golden Tulip Hotel conference hall in Freetown.

The NEC takes significant efforts to promote the participation of women and persons with disabilities in the electoral processes and make the Commission gender and disability responsive institution. The newly adopted policy documents demonstrate commitment of the NEC to mainstream gender and disability perspectives into the NEC's strategies, electoral procedures, guidelines and monitoring processes and timely engage with state institutions, political parties and electoral stakeholders to ensure more women and people with disabilities' involvement in forthcoming elections as voters, contestants and electoral staff.

To further promote gender and disability mainstreaming in public and electoral processes and create awareness, the NEC with support of the European Union will roll out the gender and disability policies in regional centres of Sierra Leone with participation of wider spectrum of electoral stakeholders. These events will be held in September in Freetown, Kenema, Bo, Makeni and Portloko. These events will help to galvanise public interest to encourage their representatives to move towards ensuring that relevant legal reforms are pursued to entrench the full participation of women and persons with disabilities in representative positions.

Support to the NEC is an integral part of the financial agreement signed between the European Union and the Republic of Sierra Leone in October 2017 to ensure continuation of the partner support to the NEC in post-election period. Funded by the 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund, Hulla and Co. Human Dynamics KG was contracted by the European Union to implement the EU Support to the Governance Sector Technical Assistance to Sierra Leone in the areas of Civil Service Reform, Parliament and the Electoral Cycle programme with the overall objective to strengthen democracy in Sierra Leone. The purpose of the programme is to assist the beneficiary country to deliver specific results in support to the electoral cycle, parliament and civil service sector.