

SIR DENNIS BYRON

**Sir Dennis Byron,
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6th November 2022

Mr. Lennox Linton
Leader of Opposition
Roseau
Commonwealth of Dominica

Dear Mr Linton:

I greet you respectfully, and assure you that I am working towards expediting the presentation of my Recommendations for the improvement of the Electoral Process in the Commonwealth of Dominica. I will be presenting my report in two phases. Phase I will deal with the Registration of Electors and Phase II with the Election Process. I am in the final stage of the Phase I report.

It is in this context that I present to you, under confidential cover, a draft Registration of Electors Bill, and draft Registration of Electors Regulations and invite you to study these drafts and be available for a consultative meeting regarding them, at a time to be agreed. These drafts should not be presented to the public. Publication should be the responsibility of the Hon Prime Minister only after I have made a formal presentation to him of my report.

I have been mindful that my engagement carries the expectation of bridging the sharp divisions of opinion that have handicapped the completion of this reform exercise. Against this background, legislative support is required to give effect to the recommended reforms. The existing legislation relating to the registration of electors as well as the electoral process is quite old, and it has been a flashpoint for political disagreement and community dissatisfaction. Merely amending the existing laws would not satisfy the goals of the reform exercise: new legislation is needed to modernise the electoral system and to bring it in line with international best practices. The preparation of the new legislation has benefited from the expertise of Dr Beverley Pereira, Legislative Drafting Specialist.

It was also considered that consensus resulting from consultation with the Electoral Commission would increase the probability of acceptance of the proposed reforms. Consultation took longer than anticipated as it was characterised by robust discussion and even resulted in several modifications to drafts of the proposed legislative

instruments. I am pleased to report that the draft legislation now presented to you has the consensus of the Commission.

I do not present accompanying information but am willing to respond to your enquiries and submit any information you may request.

Finally, my proposals as to the time- lines going forward are as follows:

1. I will present Phase I report during the month of November 2022
2. Parliament tables the Register of Electors legislation in December 2022 with the plan to enact it in January 2023, so that the Register of Electors could be compiled in accordance with the recommendations during that calendar year.
3. I will present Phase II of the Report, after a consultation process similar to that undertaken for Phase I in February/ March 2023
4. Parliament tables and enacts the Phase II legislation in March/ April 2023.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dennis Byron', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Sir Dennis Byron

Copied to: Mr. Duncan Stowe, Chairman of the Electoral Commission