

STATEMENT FROM THE DOMINICA CHRISTIAN COUNCIL

Issued on Monday November 25, 2019

On Tuesday 19th and Wednesday 20th November, the Dominica Christian Council met jointly with the Dominica Association of Evangelical Churches.

The volatility of the current climate, and the need for the arrest of the situation to avoid further eruption, were the foci of the discussion.

The Dominica Christian Council met with the President of the Commonwealth of Dominica, His Excellency Charles Savarin, on invitation, on Thursday 21st November 2019 at the State House. Also invited was the Attorney General.

The President expressed concern over the existing hostile environment. He shared among other matters, the call for electoral reform, providing information in this regard. The platform was then laid for verbal exchange.

In summary, the DCC endorsed again the need for electoral reform for the continued shaping of our democratic process. Inquiries were made as to what could be realistically achieved towards this end, within the ambits of the law, in the limited time frame before General Elections.

Though suggested, it was recognized that the use of a piece of identification (passport, social security card, driver's license) could present challenges.

There is the need for the Electoral Commission to use the remaining days to disseminate information to, and educate the public on the electoral process ahead, and offer the assurance of free, fair and transparent elections.

It was noted that as the intensity of the campaign increases, many will turn their ears only to the candidates on the platform and every effort should be made by the leaders of both parties and their candidates to transmit a message for the preservation of the peace.

Coming out the meetings, with less than two weeks before the electorate goes to the polls and given the heightened tension which has raised concerns among many both locally and abroad,

The DCC recognizes and accepts the right to peaceful protests and equally recognizes and accepts the obligation of the police to uphold the law and protect and preserve the safety of the citizens of this country. We urge that all parties exercise rights in a responsible manner.

In the throes of continued campaigning, we appeal to citizens and residents to focus on issues rather than personalities. We impress upon candidates to avoid denigration of character of their opponents, their families and supporters; to avoid offensive assaults or intimations directed at campaigners or their family members because of their political affiliations and to refrain from language that could incite violence.

We urge the media in informing on the campaign and any other election related activity, to do so honestly and unbiased and to avoid the temptation for sensational reporting that could contribute to resultant rippling negative effects.

Each person has a right to his or her own views and to support the candidate he or she prefers. Respect must be maintained for the opinion of others. Each voter has a responsibility to obey the law and to promote the upkeep of the law and order throughout the land.

We call on believers throughout this nation to join daily in prayer for a peaceful journey to the polls, and beyond, to the results of the polls, as we seek to continue building one Dominica under God.

Pray that a holy fear of God will sweep across our nation, leading to a place of godly wisdom which is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere" as found in James 3:17 and that justice, truth, morality, decency, integrity, fairness and trustworthiness will guide our nation.

The peace of God be with you all.