



National Electoral Commission (NEC)
OAU Drive, Tower Hill,
Freetown, Sierra Leone



**PROFILE OF MR. MOHAMED N’FAH-ALIE CONTEH (OOR)
CHIEF ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER AND CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL ELECTORAL
COMMISSION, SIERRA LEONE (NEC/SL)**



Mr. Mohamed N’fah-Alie Conteh is a Sierra Leonean; born on the 1st September, 1958 in a small village called **Komrabai** (Futha Section) in the Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District, North-Western Sierra Leone. His parents (Amadu Conteh and Nkaima Salaymatu Kamara) moved to the southern town of Yamandu Station (along the Bo-Kenema highway) in search of diamonds in the mid 1950’s.

He had his Primary Education at the Roman Catholic Primary School (1964-1970) Yamandu, Baoma chiefdom, Bo district; Secondary School Education at the Ahmadiyya Muslim Secondary School Bo (1970-1976) and Christ the King College in Bo, (1976-1977) Sierra Leone. He received his BA degree in History and Political Science, and post-graduate Diploma in Education from Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone in 1983 and 1984, respectively. He also holds a Post-Graduate Diploma (with distinction) in International and Electoral Law from the Institute of Advanced Management and Technology (IAMTECH) Sierra Leone (2008).

Mr. M.N. Conteh taught in Secondary Schools for 7 years (1978-79, 1984-1990) before becoming an elections administrator for nearly three decades, continuously. He began his career in election administration with the National Electoral Commission (NEC) of Sierra Leone in April 1990, where he rose through the ranks from District Electoral Officer (DEO) and became Director of electoral operations from November 2007 to April 2009.

He became **Electoral Commissioner** from 21st May, 2009 to 20th May, 2014; with oversight responsibility, inter-alia, for the Northern Region and Legal Affairs. He was reappointed as Electoral Commissioner on the 20th June, 2014. He is currently the **Chief Electoral Commissioner and Chairman** of NEC, effective 12th February, 2015.

Since 1990, he has participated in the organization and conduct of all public and paramount chieftaincy elections in Sierra Leone (i.e. Presidential, Parliamentary, Local Government Elections, etc.) He was Chairman of the Elections Management Body (NEC and Returning Officer) that conducted Sierra Leone’s multi-tier Presidential, Parliamentary and Local Council elections held on the 7th March 2018 and the transfer Presidential run-off election of 31st March 2018; elections widely acclaimed as free, fair, peaceful and credible (both by national and international elections observation missions).

In collaboration with his colleagues, Mr. Conteh (with the support of the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) and International Development Partners) was very instrumental in the transformation of Sierra Leone’s Electoral Commission and the system of administering democratic elections in the country from the worst structure and managed system in the 1970s and 1980s, to a model public institution and election administration system in Africa from 2005 to date.

He has attended many elections related courses, and conferences; and participated in elections study tours and Elections Observation Missions, both within and outside Africa. Mr. M.N. Conteh led the ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), pre-election fact-finding mission to Nigeria from 1st – 15th November 2018, ahead of the Nigeria elections held in February and March 2019. He also led the ECOWAS Network of Electoral Commissions (ECONEC) Peer Support and Learning Mission in the aforementioned 2019 Nigeria elections. The Mission comprised six Chairpersons (or their representatives) from ECOWAS member states in West Africa.

He is an accredited **BRIDGE** facilitator/trainer (i.e. **Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections**- a course in Elections Administration founded by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), and the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division (UNEAD)).

Mr. Conteh is also a Commissioner of the Political Parties Registration Commission (PPRC) as per Law; the body responsible, inter-alia, for registering and regulating the conduct of Political Parties in Sierra Leone.

Mr. Conteh was awarded the National Honour of “**Officer of the Order of the Rokel-OOR**” on the 28th April, 2014 by His Excellency, the then President of Sierra Leone, Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, in recognition of 24 years of diligent and dedicated service to NEC and Sierra Leone.

Mr. Conteh’s published books and article include:

Books:

1. “**PARAMOUNT CHIEFTAINCY IN SIERRA LEONE: HISTORY AND ELECTORAL PROCESS**” (2016);

ABSTRACT

This book on Paramount Chieftaincy in Sierra Leone is a result of the lack of adequate reading materials on such an important, resilient and centuries old traditional institution of governance in provincial Sierra Leone, especially its electoral process. The book provides the History of Chieftaincy from pre-colonial to post-independence era. It examines some of the factors responsible for the decline in the authority and powers of contemporary Paramount Chiefs. The various stages involved in the conduct of a Paramount Chieftaincy election at chiefdom level are discussed in detail. The book also deals with the Pre-colonial governments of the Mende and Temne and the general functions of traditional rulers beginning from pre-colonial to post independence periods. Of more significance, the monograph contains detailed list of ruling houses which are qualified to present candidates for paramount chieftaincy elections at chiefdom level. The book will be useful to, among others, Elections Officials, Provincial Administrators, Paramount Chiefs, aspirants who want to contest paramount chieftaincy elections at chiefdom level, stakeholders and other researches.

Publisher Name: **LAMBERT Academic Publishing, Germany.**

Print ISBN: **978-3-659-85596-2**

Email: **info@omniscryptum.com**

(2016)

2. "THE MANAGEMENT OF SIERRA LEONE'S ELECTORAL PROCESS: AN INTRODUCTION" (2016);

ABSTRACT

"The Management of Sierra Leone's electoral Process" is written to solve the problem of adequate reading materials relating to the management of credible elections in Sierra Leone and its related political and electoral developments. It is an introduction to the country's experiment with electoral democracy and related matters from 1951 to date. These include the development of political parties and their role in the electoral process; brief history of the country's elections, local government structures and best practices in the administration of credible elections. It provides in a single volume a detailed survey and readable account of Sierra Leone's historical, political and electoral development from colonial days to present day, using the most extensive research materials. The book is intended to serve as a useful guide to electoral managers, political parties in Sierra Leone, researchers and other stakeholders.

Publisher Name: **LAMBERT Academic Publishing, Germany.**

Print ISBN: **978-3-659-87624-0**

Email: **info@omniscryptum.com**

(2016)

According to **Habib M. Sesay (DR.)** Senior lecturer, Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Science and Law, Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone; *"...the book is an ideal text for undergraduate courses in government and politics in Sierra Leone, post graduate seminar crash courses on elections, comparative study of elections in Africa and indispensable current reference material for advanced post graduate students and tutors. The scholarly documented book is complimentary to Fred Hayward, Elections in Africa (Boulder: West view Press, Inc 1980)"* (Journal of Social Science and Management: A Bi-annual Publication of the Faculty of Social Science and Law, Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone, Volume 1, Number 2, February 2019).

3. "HISTORY OF THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF SIERRA LEONE: -1961-2010" (2016);

ABSTRACT

This monograph is an introduction to the history of Sierra Leone's Electoral Commission (NEC). It is written specifically to provide, inter-alia, general information on the history and electoral developments which took place within the Commission from 1961 to 2010. Much emphasis is laid on the process of transforming the Commission, from a poorly equipped and dependent body on the Executive arm of Government (i.e. Ministry of Internal Affairs, from 1961 to 2004, with little capacity to conduct credible democratic elections), into a credible independent and professional public institution by 2010 and beyond. As it provides useful information on electoral development in the country, the monograph is particularly useful to Election Administrators, NGOs and researchers on electoral democracy and

Electoral Management Bodies in Sierra Leone, political parties, politicians and the general reader.

Publisher Name: **LAMBERT Academic Publishing, Germany.**
Print ISBN: **978-3-659-92348-7**
Email: **info@omniscryptum.com**
(2016)

**4. “GOVERNMENT FOR WEST AFRICAN SENIOR SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES”
(2017).**

ABSTRACT

This book on Government, as an academic field of study, is prepared for Senior Secondary School Pupils preparing for, and taking, the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE), and other similar examinations. The book is also useful for students of Government in tertiary institutions in West Africa. It treats in detail the basic elements of Government with sample question at the end of each and every chapter.

Publisher Name: **LAMBERT Academic Publishing Germany**
Print ISBN: **978-3-330-05002-0**
Email: **info@omniscryptum.com**
(2017)

5. “LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PARAMOUNT CHIEFTAINCY IN SIERRA LEONE”.

ABSTRACT

This monograph titled “Local Government and Paramount Chieftaincy in Sierra Leone”, is an introduction to Sierra Leone’s institutions of governance at local and grassroots level dating from colonial and pre-colonial times, respectively. It is written as a result of the author’s practical experience with Local governance and chieftaincy matters (especially local Council / government and Paramount Chieftaincy elections for nearly three decades) and the lack of adequate current reading materials on such important, resilient and centuries old institutions of governance. In spite of the enormous challenges faced by both institutions over the years (i.e. Local Councils and the institution of chieftaincy), they have been resilient to survive as main institutions of governance, from especially colonial days, through post-independence period to modern times. For instance, throughout the periods under review elective local governance has often been suspended and replaced with “Management Committees”; while Paramount chiefs, who in pre-colonial times were called “Kings” and ruled large Kingdoms, no longer in modern times enjoy the power and dominance they enjoyed in precolonial time. Yet still both institutions are an integral part of the institutions of national governance in Sierra Leone. Both topics in this monograph are revised versions in two books earlier published by the author.

The monograph treats in detail the histories of both institutions, their structures, legal frame works, electoral processes and related issues. The book thus provides a comprehensive and readable account, in a single volume, of the management of the Local Councils and Chieftaincy, especially their electoral process and related issues.

This monograph will be useful to, amongst others, elections managers, Paramount Chiefs, aspirants who want to contest local Councils and Paramount Chieftaincy elections, officials of the Ministry of Local Government and local Councils in Sierra Leone and the general reader. It is thus hoped that this work by the author will stimulate other researchers and intellectuals to engage on research on the two resilient institutions of local governance (i.e. Local Councils and Paramount Chieftaincy) in Sierra Leone.

**Published by the author.
(2019)**

Mr. Conteh is currently writing a book on:

6. “SIERRA LEONE’S ELECTIONS OF 2018: MANAGEMENT, SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES”;

ABSTRACT

This book is on the recently conducted Sierra Leone’s presidential, general and local government elections, conducted simultaneously on the 7th March 2018, and the presidential run- off election held on the 31st March 2018; it is written specifically to broaden the horizon of elections officials, Sierra Leonean politicians, civil society organizations with a focus on elections, and the general reader, on the complexities of conducting credible democratic elections in emerging democracies like Sierra Leone- a process (i.e. elections) that has been described as “the largest logistical operations in peace time”. The entire book provides a comprehensive and readable account of the management of Sierra Leone’s 2018 multi-tier elections, including the challenges and successes involved. In short, the book informs the reader that an election is a process and not an event, as most Sierra Leoneans usually think that polling day(s) is the election. The book is also written to assist university students reading political science and other related disciplines (with a focus on electoral developments in Sierra Leone), researchers on political and electoral activities in Sierra Leone, Politicians and practicing elections administrators, get easy access to readable materials, in a single volume, on elections in Sierra Leone.

Publisher Name: **TO BE PUBLISHED SOON.**
(2019)

Article:

- ✓ **“Legal Electoral Reform in Africa: a case study of Sierra Leone” (Lead Author); Paper presented at the colloquium of Legal Electoral Reform in Africa, Pretoria, South Africa, 7th to 8th July, 2014 (published by International IDEA on ACE Practitioners Network).**

The first four publications (books) were published by LAMBERT Academic Publishers in Germany and are available at www.get-morebooks.com and www.morebooks.de

He is still the Chairman of Sierra Leone's Elections Management Body (EMB) called the National Electoral Commission (NEC). He is married with three children (all ladies).

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