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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

DOMINICA BUSINESS FORUM INC. STATEMENT ON THE ROSEAU NORTH BY-ELECTION, VOTER TURNOUT CONCERNS, AND URGENT CALL FOR NATIONWIDE ELECTORAL CONFIRMATION MOBILIZATION

ROSEAU, DOMINICA — September 9, 2026 — The Dominica Business Forum Inc. (DBF Inc.) extends its congratulations to Miss Ashma McDougall (Dominica Labour Party) on her victory in the Roseau North constituency by-election held on Monday, September 7th, 2026. The DBF Inc. looks forward with high expectations to the implementation of her plans for constituents as promoted during her campaign.

The DBF Inc. also commends fellow candidates Mr. Danny Lugay (United Workers Party) and Mr. Sherman Boston (Independent) for their participation. Though unsuccessful, their candidacy demonstrated a vital degree of confidence in our electoral process at a time when it faces severe structural and procedural challenges.

Having successfully organized the historic public discussion among candidates participating in the Roseau North by-election at the Auditorium of the Dominica China Friendship Hospital on July 23rd, 2026, the DBF Inc. is confident that this initiative established a respectful, friendly, and peaceful atmosphere for the conduct of the campaign. All three candidates were seated together and provided equal opportunities to present their constituency platforms and directly address questions from the electorate.

As a nonpartisan business service organization with no political party affiliation, the DBF Inc. has consistently engaged all stakeholders—including government, opposition, trade unions, the church, and the broader private sector—since initiating the civil society electoral reform group in January 2019.

The Roseau North by-election represents a major operational milestone, being the first parliamentary vote conducted under the revised electoral legislation enacted on March 19th, 2025. Initial observations, however, reveal significant concerns regarding:

1. **Implementation & Administrative Readiness:** Serious questions remain regarding the execution of the new legislative provisions and the administrative readiness of the Electoral Commission and Electoral Office in managing national elections.
2. **Sharp Drop in Voter Participation:** Overall voter turnout stood at just **34%**. This result indicates that **more than 50% of voters who participated in the 2019 general elections in this constituency did not turn out to vote on September 7th.**

While political parties must analyse their internal drops in constituent support, nonpartisan civil society organizations must join the DBF Inc. in launching public awareness campaigns to emphasize the importance of electoral participation in securing free, fair, and representative governance.

The DBF Inc. expresses grave concern over the voter confirmation process as the **October 15th, 2026, deadline** rapidly approaches. Currently, **less than 50% of voters from the 2019 elections** and **less than 30% of the 2025 electoral list** have completed their confirmation.

The DBF Inc. believes that a realistic target of approximately **40,000 confirmed voters** represents a genuine reflection of the active electorate in Dominica.

Upcoming Public Discussion & National Appeal

To address these low confirmation numbers and establish a collaborative mobilization framework, the DBF Inc. has formally invited the **Chairman of the Electoral Commission** and the **Chief Elections Officer** to a public discussion:

- **Date:** Tuesday, September 15th, 2026
- **Time:** 7:00 PM
- **Location:** Auditorium of the Dominica China Friendship Hospital
- **Objective:** Present an official status report on the confirmation process and formulate a strategic action plan to mobilize registered voters across the island.

The Dominica Business Forum Inc. issues a direct appeal to political parties, the private sector, the government, civil society organizations, and the general public to unite in encouraging every qualified voter to confirm their status or complete new registration before the deadline.

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