



# ***Institute for Governance Reform-IGR***

*Bridging knowledge and policy*

[www.igr-sl.org](http://www.igr-sl.org) | [info@igrsl.org](mailto:info@igrsl.org)

31A Wilkinson Road 078-399 388

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## IGR DISASSOCIATES ITSELF FROM MALICIOUS PUBLICATION TARGETING RADIO DEMOCRACY'S ASMAA JAMES

FREETOWN - The Institute for Governance Reform (IGR) distances itself from a malicious publication titled "A Fake Sierra Leone Journalist Exposed by Civil Societies for Stealing Public FM Radio" on one 'The Organiser.net' website/online newspaper that, among other things, makes outlandish claims against the Station Manager of Radio Democracy, and attributes those false assertions to civil society organizations including the Institute for Governance Reform.

IGR would like the public to know that it enjoys a strong relationship with Radio Democracy since we were established six years ago. During this period, our institutions have fostered a partnership that is built on a culture of mutual trust and our shared mission of improved transparency, democratic accountability and good governance.

We also wish to state that at no point has the Institute, singularly, or in collaboration with the named organizations, or any other organizations for that matter, written a letter or made any statements, questioning the management of Radio Democracy. Not only would that be outside our mandate, we have had not had any cause to question the independence, professionalism or impartiality of Radio Democracy or its Station Manager.

Furthermore, we believe that Radio Democracy is overseen by a governing Board that has adequate competency to deal with any institutional leadership or management concerns.

This is not the first time unscrupulous individuals are using the name of IGR and its leadership to pursue their nefarious agendas. Fake news is emerging as a major threat to national cohesion and Sierra Leone's democratic aspirations. Thus, this is an issue of concern not just for IGR and Radio Democracy, but to our democracy in general.

The IGR remains committed to supporting democracy and will continue to stand by those institutions which have established themselves over the years as promoters of democracy and good governance in Sierra Leone. We are particularly heartened that at a time when many Sierra Leonean women have been consigned to the back in national conversations on politics and development, Mrs. Asmaa James is demonstrating admirable leadership through her work at

Radio Democracy, serving as a towering figure of inspiration for many young Sierra Leonean women and girls.

We therefore wish to assure the public that in our pursuit of a just society, we shall remain unfazed by calumnies and mischievous misinformation campaigns aimed at undermining democratic institutions.

Finally, we encourage the Management of Radio Democracy to carry out a full-scale investigation into this vitriolic and cowardly attack with the aim of holding the perpetrators to account.

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