

***FREETOWN, Sierra Leone, September 19 (Infosplusgabon) - ¶ Former Sierra Leone Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, Alimamy Petito Koroma, on Tuesday declared his intention to run for president of the West African country on the ticket of the ruling All Peoples Congress (APC).***

“I am running because my people have told me to,” Petito told a Freetown radio station on Tuesday. He becomes the eighth person from the APC to openly declare their intention to contest for the presidency.

President Ernest Bai Koroma bows out after presidential election in March next year after concluding his second term. The APC is set to hold its convention next month to elect its candidate for the 2018 vote.

Petito’s announcement does not come as a surprise to many, as he resigned his post and returned home from China early this year. This is to meet the required electoral law that states any candidate standing for public office should not be working for government for at least 12 months before the elections.

Petito was the former Minister of Works Housing and Infrastructure in the country, until he was sacked in 2013. He was sent to China as an Ambassador in 2016.

He hails from the northern where seven out of the eight fellow contenders are also from.

The ruling APC party, which has been in power since 2007, is facing a strong battle to keep itself together ahead of the elections.

FIN/INFOSPLUSGABON/OPL/GABON 2017

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