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## PNC mulls contesting 2025 polls without coalition partners – Norton

July 3, 2024

Insisting that the Peoples National Congress (PNC) is superior to the other parties it has coalesced with in the past, newly-elected leader Aubrey Norton revealed that the political grouping is considering contesting the 2025 General and Regional Elections independently.

In fact, Norton has indicated that he is also willing to step aside as the party's presidential candidate for someone, who may have more electability.



*PNC Leader Aubrey Norton during live interview with 104.1 Guyana Lite FM*

However, he explained that any new presidential candidate must be someone from within the PNC.

“In politics, you never say never. You have to analyse the situation, and as it emerges, you make the decisions. We are open to coalition, but we are a strong enough party that if we have to go and be one, we can do that,” Norton disclosed.

The PNC leader was at the time responding to questions posed to him during a live interview on a local radio station.

Meanwhile, when asked about partnering with the Alliance For Change (AFC) for upcoming election, Norton revealed that he is interested in commencing discussions with newly-elected AFC leader Nigel Hughes.

“I think we must. I don’t see no reason why we shouldn’t. I’m prepared to talk with anybody,” the PNC leader said.

The A Partnership for National Unity (APNU), whose largest member is the PNC, had merged with the AFC in 2015 for the elections that year. The two parties had also jointly contested in the 2020 elections.

The Alliance For Change (AFC), however, formally broke its coalition with APNU back in December 2022. The revised Cummingsburg Accord, a political agreement between the two organisations, had provided for this separation.

At the time, Former AFC Leader Khemraj Ramjattan had indicated that the two political organisations would do their political work separately but work in parliament jointly.

### Re-group

Norton said he intends to engage senior and long-standing PNC members to resolve issues that were raised publicly leading up to Congress.

The most recent case was the party’s General Secretary, Dawn Hastings-Williams, who left just days before Congress, citing poor planning for the Congress and lack of transparency, among other issues.

Moreover, Norton’s challengers for leadership, parliamentarians Roysdale Forde and Amanza Walton-Desir just 24 hours before the start of the Congress both withdrew their candidacy – leaving Norton as the sole contestant for the top spot within the PNC.

In making their announcement on Thursday (June 27), Forde and Walton-Desir cited serious concerns and irregularities as well as lack of fairness and transparency as

key reasons for their decisions.

According to PNC leader, the engagements with these individuals are part of the party's primary goal, which is to re-energise, regroup, and refocus the PNC and its membership, given the party's bid to win next year's elections.

"Well, there must be engagement. I consider the PNC to be a party that involves everyone. What I do believe and for my own studies of conflict resolution, one has to handle conflicts in a particular way. In this case, I believe an interlocutor (3:04) may be better... I'm very clear in my mind that all of them have skills that we need (3:24) and that we need to include all the skill sets that exist," he added.

The PNC's 22nd Biennial Delegates Congress was held from Friday, 28th June to Sunday, 30th June 2024, at the party's Congress Place headquarters in Sophia, Greater Georgetown.

Votes tallied saw Opposition Leader, Aubrey Norton returning as Leader of PNC and Shurwayne Holder was re-elected Chairman of the Party while Vinceroy Jordan and Elizabeth Williams-Niles were re-elected Vice Chairpersons.

Elson Low was also elected as Treasurer of the party. (G1)

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