



CCMG Statement on Pre-Election Observation
Second Phase: 29 March to 25 April 2021
18 May 2021

The 330 CCMG long-term observers continued to gather information on the electoral activities that took place during this reporting period. This critical information was gathered from monitoring of activities such as voter education, electoral information sharing, political campaigns, politically-motivated violence, hate speech and use of language to incite violence. The 330 LTOs cover all constituencies, districts and provinces and, following their previous reporting in March on the first phase, have now reported on the second phase of their observation from 29 March – 25 April, 2021.

CCMG has analyzed the observers' reports on issues they witnessed or heard of during the period under review. This analysis helps us to appreciate the prevailing pre-election environment and CCMG shares the following key observations:

Political Violence, Intimidation/Harassment, Property Destruction, Military Attire, Abusive Language and Ferrying of Youths

- **There were 3 incidents of political violence and 3 reports of intimidation or harassment.**
 - These incidents of politically-motivated violence took place in: Muchinga Province, between PF and UPND following the destruction of UPND campaign materials, resulting in four arrests (2 PF, 2 UPND). Six people were hospitalised. In Copperbelt Province police shot and wounded two UPND supporters at a funeral for unknown reasons. In Lusaka Province where PF cadres attacked UPND members resulting in the use of tear gas by police.
 - Three reports of intimidation/harassment took place in Lusaka Province, one involving PF cadres against a government civil servant who was accused of belonging to the opposition. The second incident involved PF cadres blocking the road against UPND supporters. The third incident was a confrontation between PF and UPND cadres.
- **There were 2 incidents of destruction of materials.** In Muchinga Province, there was one report of the destruction of UPND posters by PF cadres, resulting in a violent confrontation between cadres from both parties.¹ In Luapula Province, PF members took down UPND posters and flyers.
- **Two percent (2%) of CCMG observers witnessed or heard of party cadres wearing military or combat-like attire;** by both PF and UPND.
- **Two percent (2%) of CCMG observers witnessed or heard of parties ferrying youths from one constituency to another.** This was done by both PF and UPND.
- **There were multiple incidents of abusive or insulting language:**
 - There were two incidents of abusive and insulting language aimed at women as voters/party supporters.
 - There were three incidents of abusive language among party youths, with PF and UPND youths cited in all three.

¹ This incident is referenced above under politically-motivated violence.



Collection of NRC and/or Voter's Card Details

- **One percent (1%) of CCMG observers witnessed or heard of either buying or collecting NRCs and/or voter's card details, and one report of taking the voter's card itself.**
 - The incident of taking a voter's card in North-Western Province was done by unknown individuals. Five (5) reports of collecting NRC/voters card details were done by individuals associated with PF, while one (1) was by individuals associated with UPND and one (1) report of details collection by an independent candidate. Two (2) instances were in Western Province, and one (1) each in Copperbelt, Lusaka and Southern.

Use Vehicles without Number Plate

- **Two percent (2%) of CCMG observers, for a total of 9 incidents, reported use of vehicles without number plates for party activities, all except for one were by PF and took place in Copperbelt, Eastern, Lusaka and Southern.**

Stoppage of Party Activities

- **There was 1 incident of candidate or party meetings or activities being prevented for COVID-19 reasons.** A CCMG observer reported hearing of a UPND activity in Kasempa (North-Western Province) on April 9 being stopped by officials from the Ministry of Health due to alleged non-adherence to COVID-19 measures.
- **There was 1 incident where a political party activity meeting was stopped for non-COVID reasons.** A CCMG observer reported hearing police stopping a UPND activity in Choma (Southern Province) on March 31, and used tear gas. The reason for the shutdown of the event is unknown.

Inappropriate Party Support by Traditional and Religious Leaders

- **Three percent (3%) of CCMG observers witnessed or heard of instances of traditional or religious leaders using their influence to support a political parties or candidates.**
 - Ten incidents involved traditional leaders in support of PF and two involved a traditional leader in support of UPND were recorded.
 - Two incidents involving religious leaders were recorded, one by a pastor from the Pastors Fellowship Churches and one by a pastor from the Reformed Church of Zambia in support of PF.

Handouts/inducements

- **Multiple political parties and candidates continued to provide handouts to voters, with sixteen percent (16%) of CCMG observers witnessing or hearing of distribution of money, food stuffs or other items/goods as an inducement to support a political party or candidate.** The handouts were witnessed or heard of throughout the country, with reports citing PF (10 provinces), UPND (8 provinces), the Socialist Party (1 province), as well as independent candidates in 1 province as providing handouts.



Campaigning

- **CCMG's observers continued to report multiple political parties engaged in what the observers deemed as campaigning activities outside of the campaign period, including both PF and UPND.**

Conclusions

While CCMG notes that the overall number of violent incidents at this point in the pre-election period continues to be low, any level of politically-motivated violence, abusive language, destruction of party materials and use of military attire, and other violations of the Electoral Code of Conduct or other offenses, is concerning and should be taken seriously by all stakeholders, especially the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ), Zambia Police, Anti-Corruption Commission, political parties, civil society and faith-based organisations. Given the high level of political tension in some areas of the country, even minor infractions have the capacity to escalate to violence. With the launch of the official campaign period this month, CCMG calls on all stakeholders to abide by the Electoral Code of Conduct and for the ECZ to take an active role in its enforcement, including Statutory Instrument 35 of 2020 Electoral Code of Conduct (Enforcement) (Amendment). CCMG calls on all duty-bearers, including political party leaders, to take concrete steps to ensure a credible, transparent and accountable pre-election period.

CCMG expresses grave concern over the use of tear gas by the Zambia Police when they were shutting down the UPND event on 31st March and the wounding of citizens at a funeral associated with UPND. CCMG calls on the police to respect citizens' human and political rights and refrain from using violent tactics in its policing of the pre-campaign and campaign periods.

CCMG is concerned about the number of traditional and religious leaders using their influence to openly support political parties and candidates. We would like to remind traditional and religious leaders to remain politically neutral and instead use their influence to promote peaceful engagement in the electoral process. It is a violation of the Electoral Code of Conduct to abuse a position of power or traditional authority for political purposes.

CCMG has noted that during the period under review, there were no reports of government employees attending political party events and endorsing a particular party or candidate, or using their influence to support a political party or candidate. We urge government employees to maintain political neutrality throughout the campaign period.

As key stakeholders in the electoral process, CCMG calls on political parties to hold their members accountable for any politically-motivated violence and other offenses, including the destruction of party materials, members' collection of voter's cards and use of vehicles with no number plates for party activities. We also urge political players to uphold measures to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in their activities. Medical Officers of Health should help



political parties to bring their activities into compliance with COVID-19 protocols before resorting to any shut downs for non-compliance.

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For CCMG's full report its Pre-Election Observation 29 March – 25 April 2021 please visit CCMG's website at ccmgzambia.org.