



## CCMG's Expectations Ahead of the Luangwa Council Chairperson, Kabushi and Kwacha Parliamentary By-Elections Slated for 15 September, 2022

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### **Introduction**

The Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) has prescribed Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2022 as the date on which to hold the Luangwa Council Chairperson by-elections in Luangwa District of Lusaka province, and Kabushi and Kwacha parliamentary by-elections in Ndola and Kitwe Districts of Copperbelt Province.

CCMG will monitor the forthcoming by-elections by deploying Long-Term Observers who will monitor and report on the pre-election environment including, voter education activities by stakeholders, adherence to the Electoral Code of Conduct by political parties/candidates and media coverage of political party/candidate campaign activities. For election day, CCMG will recruit, train and deploy election day monitors to monitor adherence to election day procedures including opening and setup, voting, and counting procedures, and the official announcement of results.

CCMG has several expectations of stakeholders as follows:

1. **Monitors/Observers Accreditation and Access:** CCMG expects the ECZ to provide sufficient kits and time for accreditation of monitors, observers and party agents, and the media. In its Mongu By-Election Statement, CCMG called on the ECZ to deploy sufficient kits and staff to conduct accreditation of monitors and political party agents as a measure to decongest accreditation centres, as well as to issue accreditation cards on time to avoid the issuance of cards late in the night as was the case for the Mongu by-election. Additionally, the ECZ should consider accrediting political parties, the media, and CSOs/FBOs on separate dates to avoid congesting accreditation centres.
2. **Electoral Code of Conduct Enforcement:** CCMG noted with concern the lack of enforcement of the Electoral Code of Conduct by both the ECZ and law enforcement agencies in previous by-elections. CCMG expects strict enforcement of the Electoral Code of Conduct by the ECZ and law

enforcement agencies. We also expect the ECZ to deploy monitors to monitor and document any code of conduct violations in order to effectively implement code of conduct provisions.

3. ***Appointment of Ministers as Campaign Managers:*** While the ruling party may be free to appoint its members who are Ministers as campaign managers or members of campaign teams, CCMG expects that where Ministers are appointed as campaign managers or members of campaign teams, they should take unpaid leave from their official government duties. This will ensure that they are not drawing a salary for the time they spent serving their party and not the people of Zambia. Further we expect that where such leave has been sought or given, a public record be kept and a public notice be issued for avoidance of doubt and in the interest of transparency.
4. ***Civil Servants and Government Agencies:*** Civil servants are required to be politically neutral and not take part in partisan politics. CCMG expects that all civil servants will remain politically neutral and not engage in partisan politics. Further, we expect that government agencies such as the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU) will suspend all its activities of service to the Zambian people in areas where by-elections are taking place. DMMU was in the past seen to be active in areas where by-elections were being held and, in some cases, its senior staff were spotted at political party events.
5. ***Campaign Schedules:*** It is CCMG's expectation that all political parties, and specifically the UPND, will factor into their campaign schedules any foreseen and planned campaign activity by the party President who is the Head of State and the Vice President to avoid instances where the Head of State's campaign activities outside of the agreed to campaign schedule affect other political party campaign activities. We expect that all political parties and candidates for the three (3) by-elections will work with the ECZ and the Police to develop campaign schedules and will adhere to the same in order to facilitate an equitable and even campaign environment.
6. ***Accessibility by Persons with Disabilities (PWDs):*** For the recent Mongu Council Chairperson by-election held in April, CCMG noted that at 81% of polling stations, PWDs had to go up steps/stairs to reach the polling station. Our expectation, therefore, is that the ECZ will make reasonable accommodation for PWDs to access polling stations as CCMG has repeatedly recommended. In addition, CCMG expects the ECZ to conduct voter education and information targeted at PWDs and to provide this information in the correct format. Furthermore, we expect the ECZ to take practical steps towards the implementation of the Court Judgement of 2011 in the case of Sara Brotherton and the People Vs ECZ.
7. ***Disaggregation of Data:*** It is CCMG's expectation that ECZ will take necessary steps towards providing disaggregated voter turnout data to the public which is critical for assessing stakeholder participation in the electoral process. CCMG calls on the ECZ to intensify the use of voter

verification devices that proved to be useful in the provision of disaggregated data on voter turnout for the August 12 general elections.

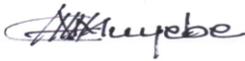
8. ***Inducement of Voters:*** CCMG's monitors reported acts of voter inducement involving distribution of money and food items to voters in the Mongu by-election contrary to section 15 h (iii) of the Electoral Code of Conduct. These violations undermine the credibility of elections. It is CCMG's expectation that political parties and candidates and their supporters will refrain from engaging in any form of voter inducement as this is a direct violation of the Electoral Code of Conduct.
9. ***Administration of the Public Order Act, Equitable Provision of Security and Police Response:*** CCMG expects the Police to enforce the Public Order Act in line with African and international human rights standards and that the Police will provide equitable security to all contesting political parties and candidates during the campaign period according to the agreed to campaign schedules. CCMG also expects the Police to act swiftly and with the same energy when dealing with violations involving all political party and independent candidates without any special treatment for the ruling party as it had been noted in previous elections
10. ***Religious and Traditional Leaders' Political Behaviour:*** CCMG's monitors documented violation of section 15 (i) of the Electoral Code of Conduct by a traditional leader in the Mongu by-election. CCMG believes that these acts exert undue influence on voters due to the authority traditional leaders have over their followers and subjects. Such acts could potentially undermine the credibility of elections. CCMG's expectation is that religious and traditional leaders will refrain from openly declaring their support for a political party/candidate and that the ECZ will proactively engage religious and traditional leaders on the need to adhere to the Electoral Code of Conduct and sanction erring leaders as provided for under the Code.
11. ***Women, Youth and PWDs Participation:*** CCMG continues to note, with concern, the low participation of women, youth and PWDs in previous elections as candidates. It is therefore our expectation that political parties will take practical steps towards creating an enabling environment to facilitate the participation of women, youth and PWDs in the forth-coming by elections through their adoption processes.
12. ***Voter Education:*** While voter education remains a key component of the electoral process to enhance citizen's participation in the electoral process, CCMG monitors in recent by-elections documented very low voter information/education by CSOs during the campaign period and therefore calls on CSOs to increase their voter education and information campaigns particularly those activities targeted to the needs of women, youth, and persons with disabilities. CCMG notes the need to increase sensitization efforts on COVID-19 prevention, including mitigation measures

for political and electoral activities by CSOs, in order to enhance compliance by stakeholders participating in electoral processes.

13. **Role and Conduct of the Media:** CCMG recognizes the role that the media plays in shaping opinion of society and thus expects that the media will remain politically neutral and balanced in their programming related to the by-elections. CCMG expects the media, particularly public media, to provide equal coverage to all candidates in the coming by-elections as provided for in the Electoral Process Act. Additionally, CCMG expects the media to provide voter information to enhance citizens' participation in the coming by-elections.

In conclusion, we would like to encourage eligible citizens to turn out in numbers and exercise their right to vote. CCMG will continue to play its active role in monitoring electoral processes and elections including the Luangwa Council Chairperson, Kabushi parliamentary, and Kwacha parliamentary by-elections and provide information through statements and its social media platforms.

ENDS//



Fr. Alex Muyebe, JCTR  
CCMG -Steering Committee Spokesperson



Fr. Francis Mukosa, ZCCB  
CCMG – Steering Committee Member



Bishop Andrew Mwenda, EFZ  
CCMG – Steering Committee Chairperson



Fr. Emmanuel Chikoya, CCZ  
CCMG-Steering Committee Member

#### Contact Details

**Fr. Alex Muyebe**

CCMG Spokesperson

+260976735208

**Peter Mwanangombe**

CCMG Program Manager

+260977545592