



## **Christian Churches Monitoring Group Statement on Observation of the 15 September Council Chairperson By-Election in Luangwa District**

**For Immediate Release**

*19 September 2022*

### **I. Introduction**

The Christian Churches Monitoring Group (CCMG) recruited, trained and deployed nine (9) Long-Term Observers to observe the pre-election environment across all the seventeen (17) wards in Luangwa District ahead of the 15 September 2022 Council Chairperson by-election. For election day, CCMG recruited, trained and deployed forty-five (45) election monitors stationed across all the forty-five (45) polling stations in Luangwa District. CCMG's Long-Term Observers also deployed as roving monitors on election day to provide support to their election day monitors, and to report on any critical incidents they witnessed or heard of. CCMG's election day monitors arrived at their assigned polling station by 05:30 hours and remained at their assigned polling station to observe the polling station setup and opening, voting, counting and the official announcement of results. The objective of CCMG's by-election project was to contribute to enhanced **transparency and accountability** of the Luangwa Council Chairperson by-election by providing systematic and factual information on the conduct of the electoral process, and **inclusion** by giving voters the confidence to participate in the electoral process.

### **II. Pre-Election Assessment**

While the electoral environment was generally calm and peaceful, CCMG noted with great concern isolated incidents of violence mainly involving UPND and the PF. On September 8, a CCMG monitor in Feira reported a violent altercation between UPND and PF members, in which a PF member was injured. The incident was reported to the Police, with no arrests reported. On 14 and 15 September, UPND supporters attacked the Socialist Party camp and, in the process, damaged a vehicle belonging to the Socialist Party. This is a violation of Section 4(2) (d) of the Electoral Code of Conduct.

CCMG noted, with concern, acts of voter inducement involving distribution of chitenge material to villagers in Undi village in Chiriwe Ward by UPND cadres contrary to Section 15(1) (h) (iii) of the Electoral Code of Conduct. CCMG's monitors also reported violation of section 15(1) (i) of the Code by a traditional leader in Kanenela village of Chiriwe Ward who was soliciting votes for the UPND candidate during the social cash transfer registration of new members. CCMG believes that these violations undermine the credibility of elections and calls on the ECZ to proactively engage political parties and traditional leaders on the need to adhere

to the Electoral Code of Conduct and to investigate and sanction erring political parties, candidates, and traditional leaders as provided for under the same Code.

Voter education targeting special interest groups, women, youth, and persons with disabilities, was low with only 33% of CCMG's monitors reporting having witnessed or heard of voter information/education activities aimed at youth, 39% reporting witnessing or hearing of voter information/education activities aimed at women, and 33% reporting witnessing or hearing of voter information/education activities aimed at persons with disabilities. CCMG calls on the ECZ, the District Voter Education Committees (DVEC), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), and the media to increase their efforts in future elections to provide accessible information/education to all prospective voters, with a particular focus on marginalised groups and including information on COVID-19 mitigation measures, as CCMG documented incidents of voters being initially turned away from polling stations for non-adherence to COVID-19 mitigation measures. However, in all these instances, voters returned to the polling station and were allowed to vote.

CCMG notes ECZ's effort to develop political campaign schedules with political parties and the police and publicising the same, which reduced party clashes at campaign events as none of CCMG's monitors recorded any contravention in this regard. If continued, this will ensure strict adherence to the agreed to campaign schedules as well as facilitate an equitable campaign environment, including reduced instances of clashes in future elections.

While CCMG's monitors reported that ballot papers for the Luangwa Council Chairperson by-election were subjected to verification by all contesting candidates on 13 September 2022 at the Luangwa District Council, there have been sentiments that stakeholders were not informed of where and when ballot papers for the Luangwa Council Chairperson by-elections were printed, when they arrived in Lusaka, when they were dispatched to Luangwa District, and who was notified to inspect the ballots in Lusaka as well as in Luangwa. CCMG calls on the ECZ to take deliberate measures to promote transparency in the electoral process by communicating such undertakings to stakeholders comprehensively and in a timely manner as has been consistently done in past elections.

### **III. Election Day Key Findings**

Based on reports from CCMG's forty-five (45) Election Day Monitors and nine (9) Long-Term Observers, CCMG finds that the Luangwa Council Chairperson by-election followed the national and regional standard procedures for the set-up, voting and counting processes. All of CCMG's monitors who were deployed to polling stations were permitted to observe. At 100% of the polling stations, polling officials checked the fingers of potential voters for indelible ink prior to voting, and marked the voters' fingers/thumbs with indelible ink prior to voting. At 100% of polling stations, no one voted without the requisite documents such as NRC or voter ID or had ink on their finger. CCMG further notes that 42% of polling stations did not have Braille Jackets for blind voters while all other required materials were present at the start of voting.

At those polling stations where there were voters in the queue at 18hrs, all were given an opportunity to vote. PF party agents were present for the counting of ballot papers at 100% of

polling stations, UPND party agents were present for counting at 100% of polling stations. Additionally, in 100% of polling stations there were other parties/candidate's agents present for the counting process. In all the polling stations, party/candidate's agents all agreed with the results, signed the results forms and each was given a copy. At all polling stations, ballot papers were counted at the polling station where they were cast; all ballot papers were shown to all party agents and monitors present so they could see how each ballot paper was marked; all ballot papers were sorted into individual piles by candidate. At 100% of polling stations, official results were posted at the polling station for the public to see.

### CCMG Results Verification

The table below shows the comparison between the ECZ official results and the CCMG results.

<b>Comparison of the ECZ official results with CCMG Estimates for the Luangwa District Council Chairperson By-Election</b>						
<b>Candidate Name</b>	<b>Political Party</b>	<b>ECZ Results</b>	<b>%ECZ Results</b>	<b>CCMG Results</b>	<b>% CCMG Results</b>	<b>Match?</b>
Shaba Lawrence	PF	4,075	48.8%	4,075	48.8%	Yes
Lungu Arthur	UPND	3,767	45.1%	3,767	45.1%	Yes
Njobvu Christopher	SP	384	4.6%	384	4.6%	Yes
Sikasote Julius	IND	62	0.7%	62	0.7%	Yes
Mumba Geoffrey	LM	60	0.7%	60	0.7%	Yes

In addition, the ECZ total number of rejected ballots is 98 while CCMG's is also 98. The turnout for the by-election for both ECZ official results and CCMG results is 59.1%.

### IV. Recommendations and Conclusion

CCMG will continue to engage with key stakeholders, including the ECZ, the Zambia Police, political parties, media and CSOs, to share its findings and key recommendations below:

#### *Electoral Commission of Zambia*

- Code of Conduct Violations:** CCMG noted several violations of the Electoral Code of Conduct by candidates and their supporters, particularly the UPND and PF. Specifically, CCMG's monitors reported use of insulting language by the PF candidate against the UPND candidate during a campaign rally in Nyaukwindi of Luangwa District contrary to Section 15(1) (a) and (c) of the Code. CCMG also noted with concern the involvement of civil servants (Provincial Permanent Secretary) in political party campaigns of the UPND contrary to Section 15(1) (i) of the Electoral Code of

Conduct. Further, CCMG noted the continued collection and or confiscation of NRC and voter's cards/details by the UPND; this act is in contravention of Section 15(1) (o) of the Electoral Code of Conduct. CCMG believes that these violations undermine the credibility of elections and calls on the ECZ to proactively engage political parties, traditional leaders, Zambia Police, and the Civil Service Commission on the need to adhere to the Electoral Code of Conduct and to investigate and sanction such political parties, candidates, civil servants and traditional leaders as provided for under the Code. Furthermore, CCMG urges the ECZ to report appropriate violations of the Code to law enforcement agencies as is provided for under Section 11(1) (b) of the Electoral Code of Conduct.

- **Accreditation:** Following public outcry in the manner in which accreditation of monitors/observers was conducted for the 2021 general elections, CSOs in February 2022 submitted recommendations and best practices for accreditation of monitors/observers. CCMG calls on the ECZ to quickly adopt and implement the said recommendations in view of improving the accreditation process.
- **Campaign Schedules:** CCMG encourages all political parties, and specifically the UPND, to factor in their campaign schedules any foreseen and planned campaign activity by the party president who is the Head of State to avoid instances where the Head of State's campaign activities, which are outside of the agreed to campaign schedule, affect other political party campaign activities in the agreed to campaign schedule. Furthermore, in line with the EU Election Observer Mission report recommendation to *'remove from the law undue campaign privileges for the President and Vice President to ensure equal campaign conditions for all candidates,'* it is CCMG's considered view that including the Head of State's campaign schedule into the agreed to campaign schedules will facilitate an equitable campaign environment during elections.
- **Verification of Ballot Papers:** CCMG urges the ECZ to adequately inform the general public about the printing and verification process for ballot papers. The ECZ must invite all key stakeholders to participate in the verification process including civil society organisations, the media, and political parties as a standard practice to ensure transparency in the process.

### *Political Parties*

- **Candidate Nomination and Participation of Women, Youth and PWDs:** CCMG noted adherence to nomination procedures by both ECZ and aspiring candidates in Luangwa District. CCMG further noted the youth candidate for UPND. However, CCMG remains concerned about the lack of participation of women and PWDs in the Luangwa Council Chairperson by-election. We call on political parties to take practical steps towards creating an enabling environment to facilitate the participation of women, youth and PWDs in future elections.
- **Inducement of Voters:** CCMG documented acts of voter inducement involving distribution of chitenge material to villagers in Undi village by the UPND cadres, and

calls on the UPND and other political parties and candidates to refrain from acts of voter inducement as is provided for by law.

### ***Zambia Police***

- **Equitable Provision of Security and Response:** CCMG recommends that Zambia Police provides equitable security to all political parties and candidates during campaigns. The Police must work with ECZ, political parties and candidates in developing campaign schedules which prove to minimise instances of parties clashing during campaigns. Further, as CCMG has noted previously, the Police should enforce the Public Order Act in line with African and international human rights standards and must 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. In this Luangwa by-election security was provided during UPND activities while no security was provided during the opposition party activities; this has been noted in previous elections also. CCMG also urges the Zambia Police Service to arrest and charge perpetrators involved in the attack of the Socialist Party camp, which resulted in the damage of a vehicle belonging to the Socialist Party and injury of a PF supporter.

### ***Civil Society Organisations***

- **Voter Education:** Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) should play a critical role in providing civic and voter education. Fifty-six (56%) of CCMG's monitors confirmed having witnessed CSOs providing civic and voter education in the district. CCMG urges CSOs to step up their efforts in future elections for increased voter turnout and to help ensure informed voting.

### ***Media***

- **Voter Education and Information:** 85% of CCMG's monitors reported having witnessed voter education/information disseminated by the media. CCMG therefore, commends both local and national media for providing civic voter education to voters in Luangwa District. CCMG, however, recommends that the public media ensure equality in their political programming so that all participating political parties/candidates are provided fair coverage and a platform for public outreach.

### ***Traditional Leaders***

- **Traditional Leaders' Political Behaviour:** CCMG's monitors reported violation of Section 15(i) of the Electoral Code of Conduct by a traditional leader soliciting votes for the UPND aspiring candidate. CCMG believes that this act exerts undue influence on voters due to the authority traditional leaders have over their subjects. Such acts undermine the credibility of elections. CCMG therefore calls on traditional leaders to practise political neutrality as being partisan has the potential to be divisive, and the ECZ to proactively engage traditional leaders in this regard and to strictly enforce the Electoral Code of Conduct.

## Conclusion

CCMG remains concerned with the involvement of civil servants, traditional and religious leaders in partisan politics and strongly calls on the ECZ and the Civil Service Commission to take action in accordance with the provisions of the law. Furthermore, CCMG calls on the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and other government agencies to avoid commencing the implementation of social development activities during any election campaign period to ward off the appearance of the use of government programmes for political expediency. Such acts could potentially undermine the integrity and credibility of the electoral process.

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

## Overview of CCMG

The Christian Churches Monitoring Group (CCMG) is an alliance of four faith-based organisations formed to help promote credible elections through non-partisan citizen monitoring. The CCMG partner organisations are Council of Churches in Zambia (CCZ); Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ); Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflections (JCTR); and Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops (ZCCB), formerly the Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops (ZCCB), through Caritas Zambia. CCMG was founded ahead of the 20th January 2015 presidential by-election. CCMG is a member of the Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM) (<https://gndem.org/>) and conducts all of its observation efforts in conformity with the Declaration of Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations (<https://gndem.org/declaration-of-global-principles/>). CCMG is strictly independent and non-partisan. We support no political party or candidate.

-----

## Detailed Findings Addendum

### A. Detailed Findings from Election Day

#### *Setup and Opening of Polling Stations*

- 100% of the polling stations were open by 06:30. 7% of polling stations opened by 06:00 and 93% polling stations opened between 6:01 and 06:30.;
- At 100% of polling stations an agent for PF was present during opening and setup;
- At 100% of polling stations an agent for UPND was present during opening and setup;
- At 98% of polling stations an agent representing other parties (not PF or UPND) or independent candidate was present during opening and setup
- At 100% of polling stations a security officer was present during opening and setup; the ballot box was shown to be empty before being closed and sealed at the polling station; and had a voters' register, the correct ballot papers, the official stamp/mark, and permanent/indelible ink for marking voters' fingers.

#### *Voting Process*

- At 100% of polling stations election officials stamped ballot papers with the official mark/stamp;
- At 100% of polling stations indelible ink was applied to voters' fingers;
- At 100% of polling stations no one was permitted to vote if they did not have their NRC and Voter's Card with them, if they already had indelible ink on their finger, or if they did not appear in the voters register;
- At 2% of polling stations a few (one to five) eligible voters were turned away and not permitted to vote even though they had their NRC and Voter's Card with them, did not have indelible ink on their finger, and their names were on the voters register;
- At 40% of polling stations a few (one to five) men voted on behalf of an able-bodied woman (not physically disabled); and
- At 100% of polling stations no one (other than polling officials) assisted multiple people to vote.

#### *Counting Process*

- At 100% of polling stations all party polling agents present were permitted to observe the counting of ballot papers;
- At 98% of polling stations there was sufficient light during the counting of ballot papers;
- At 100% of polling stations a representative for PF was present during counting;
- At 100% of polling stations a representative for UPND was present during counting;
- At 100% of polling stations a representative for other parties/ independent candidates was present during counting;
- At 100% of polling stations, polling officials showed the ballot papers to all party representatives so that they could see how each was marked;

#### *Party Agents during Counting Process*

- At 100% of the polling stations where PF party agents were present during the counting process, all agreed with the by election results, signed the results forms, and were issued a copy of the form;
- At 100% of the polling stations where agents representing other parties or independent candidates were present during the counting processes, all agreed with the results, signed the results forms and were issued with a copy of the form;
- At 100% of the polling stations where UPND agents were present during the counting processes, all agreed with the results, signed the results forms and were issued with a copy of the form; and

#### *Accessibility of Voting for People with Disabilities*

- 58% of polling stations had Braille jackets for blind voters.
- At 84% of polling stations, voters had to go up the stairs to reach the polling station.
- At 98% of polling stations people with disabilities, pregnant women and nursing mothers were allowed to go to the front of the queue

#### *COVID-19 Mitigation Measures*

- 36% of polling stations had hand washing/sanitizing facilities. For the 14 April Mongu Mayoral by-election, 95% of polling stations had hand washing/sanitizing facilities.
- At 42% of polling stations ECZ officials were using COVID-19 protective wear, such as masks and sanitizers. For the 14 April Mongu Mayoral by-election, ECZ officials were using COVID-19 protective wear at 99% of polling stations.
- At 18% of polling stations social distancing (1 metre) was maintained between all persons in the set-up for the polling station.
- At 2% of polling stations a thermometer/thermo scanner was used to take the temperature of all persons entering the polling station.
- At 1% of polling stations, voters were turned away and not allowed to vote as they did not comply with COVID-19 mitigation measures (handwashing).

#### *Participation of Women*

- There was an average of 6 ECZ officials in the polling stations, 3 were women;
- 33% of the polling stations had a female security officer; and 44% of party representatives for PF were women, 38% for UPND were women, and other parties /independent candidates representatives' were 36% women.

### *Election Day Critical Incidents*

On election day, CCMG received four (4) critical incident reports as follows:

- A CCMG monitor at Mankhokwe Primary School reported witnessing a violent clash between PF supporters and party agents, and UPND supporters and party agents after a brief confrontation between the two groups. The male police officer and polling officials at the polling station were reportedly hit while attempting to stop the fight. The violent clash later proceeded outside the polling station where a vehicle belonging to the PF was damaged by UPND cadres. Police reinforcements arrived and calmed the situation as the PF and UPND supporters/agents fled the scene. No arrests were reported.
- A CCMG monitor at Maozeka Old Council Checkpoint reported witnessing a violent incident where a polling official was slapped by a UPND cadre for taking pictures of a confrontation between UPND cadres and PF members. The confrontation is reported to have ensued when UPND cadres blocked PF members from entering the polling station on the basis that they were not registered to vote there. The UPND cadres also stoned a PF vehicle in the process while the police officer stationed at the polling station looked on. There was no report of police involvement or arrests.
- A CCMG monitor at Janeiro Primary School reported an incident of a UPND member assisting an able-bodied person to vote.
- A CCMG monitor at Luangwa Primary School reported that at some point during voting, there was an unauthorised person (PF Councillor) inside the polling station who claimed she was there to observe the process but did not have ECZ accreditation. The PF Councillor was eventually asked to leave the polling station by the security officer. In the same incident, CCMG's monitor witnessed a UPND agent insulting and threatening the PF Councillor.

## **B. Detailed Key Findings from the Pre-Election Period**

### *Voter Education/Information*

Voter education, particularly targeting women, youth, and persons with disabilities, was low with only 33% of CCMG's monitors reporting witnessing or hearing of voter information/education activities aimed at youth, 39% reporting witnessing or hearing of voter information/education activities aimed at women, and 33% reporting witnessing or hearing of voter information/education activities aimed at persons with disabilities. CCMG calls on the ECZ, the District Voter Education Committees (DVEC), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), and the media to increase their efforts in future elections to provide accessible information to

all voters, with a particular focus on marginalized groups and including information on COVID-19 mitigation measures.

### ***Election Preparations***

89% of CCMG's Long-Term Observers reported having witnessed or heard of election preparations by the ECZ, while 67% reported having witnessed or heard of training of ECZ officials.

### **C. Critical Incidents**

Critical incidents are incidents that are serious in nature and which are reported immediately by CCMG observers and on which there is follow-up and verification of all available details. CCMG received three (3) critical incident reports in the pre-election period as follows:

- On August 28, a CCMG observer in Feira reported an incident of UPND cadres collecting NRC/voters' card details from villagers in Chiriwe Ward and promised unspecified items in return.
  - On September 8, a CCMG observer in Feira reported a violent altercation between UPND and PF members in which a PF member was injured, the incident was reported to the Police, with no arrests reported.
  - On September 14, a CCMG observer reported an incident of violence in the Soweto area where the Socialist Party camp was attacked by suspected UPND supporters who in the process damaged a vehicle belonging to the Socialist Party. CCMG's observer reported Police intervention but was unable to ascertain if any arrests were made.
-