



CCMG's Expectations Ahead of the Petauke and Pambashe Parliamentary By-Elections Scheduled for 6 February 2025

For Immediate Release

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Following the Electoral Commission of Zambia's announcement of 6 February 2025 as the date for the Petauke and Pambashe Parliamentary By-Elections, CCMG will deploy Long Term Observers (LTOs) and Election Day Monitors to monitor both the pre-election period including candidate nominations and campaigns, and the poll day. The Petauke seat fell vacant following the long absence of the incumbent Member of Parliament (MP) from the National Assembly while the Pambashe seat was declared vacant following the conviction and sentencing of its MP.

CCMG will observe the pre-election environment and monitor the election day processes to help ensure transparent and credible elections. In the upcoming Petauke and Pambashe Parliamentary By-Elections scheduled for 6 February, CCMG will apply its Process and Results Verification for Transparency (PRVT) methodology on Election Day to assess the conduct of the voting and counting processes and to verify the official results as announced by the ECZ. CCMG will recruit and train a total of one hundred and sixty-one (161) PRVT Monitors, 109 for Petauke and 52 for Pambashe, who will monitor the opening, setup, voting and counting and announcement of results at all polling stations in the two constituencies.

In order to ensure credible elections, CCMG has several expectations from stakeholders as follows:

1. ***Leave for Ministers Appointed as Campaign Managers:*** CCMG reiterates its expectation for the ECZ to enforce Paragraph 3 (1) (b) of the Electoral Code of Conduct and ensure that all Ministers involved in campaigns for the two parliamentary by-elections do not use state resources to campaign for the benefit of a candidate. CCMG urges the ECZ to demand from the Secretary to Cabinet proof that all Ministers involved in the said elections have taken unpaid leave accordingly. By doing so, the ECZ will not only ensure that the electoral environment is level but will demonstrate strict enforcement of the Code of Conduct. CCMG acknowledges and welcomes the ECZ's sentiments in the News Diggers Newspaper dated 27 December 2024 in which the ECZ stated that ***"the law is clear by stating that only the President and the Veep are allowed to use state resources when conducting campaigns."*** CCMG expects that the ECZ will engage with the ruling party and the Secretary to the Cabinet on this aspect for the Pambashe and Petauke by-elections.
2. ***Electoral Code of Conduct:*** Following the multiple violations of the electoral code of conduct documented and reported by CCMG through its various election monitoring efforts such as vote buying, voter inducement and intimidation among others, CCMG urges the ECZ to effectively enforce the Electoral Code of Conduct and ensure any violations are dealt with promptly. CCMG further urges all political parties to adhere to the Code of Conduct by

refraining from hate speech, vote buying, voter intimidation, or engaging in acts of violence, and conduct their campaigns in accordance with the law established.

3. **Monitors/Observers Accreditation and Access:** CCMG expects the ECZ to pay particular attention to ensuring that accreditation of monitors, party agents, observers and the media will be done in a more coordinated manner and within reasonable working hours to avoid inconveniences as was experienced in the Kawambwa Parliamentary By-Election. CCMG urges the ECZ to develop and publicize an accreditation timetable detailing when various stakeholders will be accredited during the prescribed accreditation period.
4. **Voter Cards Replacement:** CCMG expects that the ECZ will establish a clear timetable of operation for voter registration centres for the purpose of voter card replacements particularly in Chipata, Lundazi and Petauke Districts which serve as voter registration centres in Eastern Province, and Mansa, Nchelenge and Samfya Districts which serve as voter registration centres in Luapula province. Unlike in Nchelenge where the ECZ operated the centre outside established working hours (08:00 to 17:00), the ECZ should ensure that voter card replacements are done within the normal working hours. Any adjustments to working hours must be clearly and publicly communicated, with justification.
5. **Campaign Schedules:** CCMG is pleased with the adherence to campaign schedules by all parties and candidates in the just-ended Kawambwa by-election, and CCMG expects that all political parties, candidates and supporters will adhere to the campaign schedules for the Petauke and Pambashe by-elections. Further, as we have noted in the past, we expect that the UPND will keep in mind any foreseen and planned campaign activity by the Head of State and the Vice President to avoid instances where the Head of State's campaign activities are outside of the agreed campaign schedule.
6. **Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) Participation:** CCMG noted that 70% of polling stations in Kawambwa Constituency had steps/stairs, making it difficult for PWDs to independently access polling stations. CCMG therefore expects that the ECZ will conduct an accessibility audit of all polling stations in Petauke and Pambashe Constituencies and ensure that temporary or permanent ramps are erected before poll day. By doing so, the ECZ will demonstrate compliance with the Cabinet Minute No. 30 of 2024 on ensuring accessibility of public buildings and Section 51 of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 2012 as well as the Sela Brotherton vs ECZ case judgement which, among other things, directs the ECZ to enhance access to the electoral process for PWDs. Further, CCMG expects that the Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities (ZAPD) will enforce the Cabinet Minute No. 30 of 2024 and the Persons with Disabilities Act of 2021 in relation to polling station access.
7. **Disaggregation of Data:** CCMG expects that ECZ will take necessary steps towards providing disaggregated voter turnout data for stakeholders to analyse and promote greater participation in the electoral process. CCMG calls on the ECZ to intensify the use of Voter Verification Devices that prove to be useful in the provision of disaggregated data on voter turnout.
8. **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 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 campaign schedule. CCMG also expects the police to act swiftly and equitably and employ de-escalation methods when dealing with violations involving all political parties and candidates without any special treatment to the ruling party, as has been noted in previous elections.
9. **Religious and Traditional Leaders' Political Behaviour:** CCMG expects the ECZ to proactively engage religious and traditional leaders on the need to adhere to the Electoral Code of Conduct and refrain from endorsing candidates or parties thereby exerting undue influence

on voters. This is in recognition of the influence that religious and traditional leaders have on their followers and subjects respectively.

10. **Role and Conduct of the Media:** CCMG recognizes the role that the media plays in shaping society's opinion and thus expects that the media will remain politically neutral and balanced in their programming. 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 use its coverage to provide voter education and information. CCMG also calls on political parties and police to ensure that journalists are free to carry out their duties without harassment or violence.

In conclusion, CCMG calls on citizens to avoid exchanging their NRCs and/or voters' cards with any gifts including refusing to have their NRCs/Voters' card numbers recorded by candidates or their supporters. Citizens/voters are encouraged to report any such acts to the Zambia Police and ECZ as these are violations of the Electoral Code of Conduct. CCMG would like to encourage eligible citizens to turn out in numbers on 6 February 2025 to uphold their democratic rights and vote in the by elections.

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