



Pre-Election Observation Statement for the Mfuwe Parliamentary By-Election

7 August 2025

For Immediate Release

The Christian Churches Monitoring Group (CCMG) is conducting a non-partisan observation of the Mfuwe Parliamentary by-election, with a focus on the pre-election and election day processes. The by-election, scheduled for today, 7 August, was triggered by the conviction of the incumbent MP, and in line with Article 57(1) of the Constitution of Zambia, which mandates that a by-election be held within 90 days of a vacancy in the office of a Member of Parliament.

To support transparency, integrity, and accountability in the electoral process, CCMG recruited, trained, and deployed six (6) Long-Term ward-based Observers (LTOs) in Mfuwe Constituency. These observers monitored the pre-election environment from 13 July to 6 August, focusing on political party activities including campaigns, voter education, Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) preparedness, and compliance with the Electoral Code of Conduct, including issues such as hate speech, intimidation, voter inducement, use of state resources, and media coverage.

Key Findings

1. Voter Education

CCMG's observer reported that Mpika Community Radio aired voter education messages on 7 and 30 July in Lupembashi Ward. These messages encouraged voters to bring their National Registration Cards (NRCs) and voter's cards to polling stations and warned them against surrendering these documents in exchange for handouts such as money or goods, which could disenfranchise them.

2. Political Party Campaign Activities

CCMG's observers across all six wards in Mfuwe Constituency recorded active campaign activities by the United Party for National Development (UPND) and the National Congress Party (NCP) under the Tonse Alliance. The campaign environment was mostly peaceful throughout.

3. Voter Inducement

CCMG's observers reported two concerning incidents:

- On 15 July, unidentified individuals reportedly offered community members ZMW 20 in exchange for personal voter and NRC card details in Mwendachabe Village, Lupembashi Ward.

- On 28 July, UPND officials reportedly distributed foodstuffs and cash to residents at Chifinshi Catholic Church in Lupembashi Ward. Congregants received ZMW 10 each, and youth conveners were given ZMW 100.

These incidents contravene several provisions of the Electoral Code of Conduct, specifically Paragraphs 3(1)(b), 15(h), and 15(k), as well as Regulation 39 of the Electoral Process (Registration of Voters) Regulations, 2020.

Recommendations to Key Stakeholders

- *Electoral Commission of Zambia:*
 - Strengthen enforcement of the Electoral Code of Conduct by investigating reported violations and taking appropriate and timely action, interpreting electoral laws with impartiality.
 - Collaborate with stakeholders, including media and civil society, to ensure a level playing field for all candidates.
- *Political Parties and Candidates:*
 - Adhere strictly to the Electoral Code of Conduct by refraining from voter inducement, intimidation, and disruption of opponents' activities. Party members or officials found wanting should be sanctioned through the parties' disciplinary structures.
 - Encourage supporters to engage peacefully and respectfully throughout the electoral process.
- *The Zambia Police Service:*
 - Remain impartial and proactively address election-related violations, particularly incidents of intimidation and voter inducement, in collaboration with the ECZ.
 - Provide adequate security during the voting process, and ensure all campaign activities in future elections occur in a peaceful and lawful manner.
 - Investigate any reports of harassment and interference with political activities, and take appropriate action.
- *Residents of Mfuwe:*
 - Exercise your democratic right to vote on 7 August and do so peacefully.
 - Refuse to participate in or accept any form of voter inducement or intimidation.
 - Report any suspicious or unlawful electoral activities to the relevant authorities.

Conclusion

CCMG commends the engagement of citizens and stakeholders in the electoral process so far and urges continued commitment to peaceful, credible, and transparent elections. Political parties, the ECZ, law enforcement, and citizens all have a role to play in ensuring that the Mfuwe Parliamentary by-election upholds democratic values and the rule of law.

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