

ZIMBABWE ELECTION SUPPORT NETWORK



ZESN CONCERNED OVER PERSISTENT ELECTION FUNDING CONSTRAINTS

Harare- 4 June 2015- The Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) has noted with concern the move by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) to centralize accreditation of observers to the June 10 parliamentary by-elections to Harare and Bulawayo. This contravenes provisions of the electoral framework and significantly increases the financial and logistical burden on organizations which seek to deploy observers. The unintended consequence of this action may be the reduction of the number of citizens that will be able to observe the elections.

Over the years ZESN has advocated for adequate resourcing of the Commission. However ZESN makes the point that there is need for ZEC to streamline election processes. The cost of providing accreditation to Citizens could be reduced if the Commission eliminates the need for observers to physically present themselves to the accreditation center. ZEC should consider processing requests for accreditation that are submitted by post or email.

ZESN understands that ZEC received only 4 million from Government instead of projected 32 million. ZESN is concerned that the available funding is grossly inadequate and might compromise the effectiveness of ZEC preparedness for the by-elections. Adequate funding and resourcing of ZEC is critical for the successful management and administration of elections. ZESN calls upon the Government to ensure that the resourcing of ZEC is done expediently to enable them to fully prepare for the by-elections and other key electoral processes. The Network calls upon ZEC to be more transparent and to enhance engagement with key electoral stakeholders on electoral preparedness and challenges, for instance the reduction in the number of polling stations in Harare by 18 percent has not been explained.

We regret that funding constraints continue to hinder the effective and efficient implementation of electoral processes. ZESN notes the apparent lack of commitment by Government to address ZEC's perennial funding challenges which were noted by local observer groups, the AU and SADC election observer missions to Zimbabwe's previous elections.

PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS IN ZIMBABWE

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