

ZIMBABWE ELECTION SUPPORT NETWORK



DELAYS OVER RELEASE OF VOTERS' ROLL IN TIME FOR NOMINATION COURT WORRYING -ZESN

14 June 2018 – The Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) expresses concern over delays by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) in availing the voters' roll especially in time for the sitting of the Nomination Court. Section 155(2)(c) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe stipulates that ZEC must ensure that all political parties and candidates must have access to all material and information necessary for them to participate effectively. In addition, the Electoral Act in Section 21(1) and (3) explicitly states that “the voters' roll shall be a public document and within a reasonable time period after calling of an election, the Commission shall provide it in printed or electronic form as the person may request.”

In the roadmap ZEC shared with stakeholders a few days ago, the production of the voters' roll for nomination in soft copy was scheduled to be finished on 10 June 2018 and hopefully made public before the Nomination Court sat. Access to the voters' roll would have been more useful to political parties before the sitting of the Nomination Court, to enable them to adequately prepare for submission of papers by prospective candidates.

Given that the voters' roll has been a contentious issue in previous elections and there are 46 days before polling, it is imperative that the voters roll be made available to all stakeholders in order to enhance confidence and trust in the electoral process. ZESN reiterates its calls for the Commission to adhere by the principles of the open data policy and transparency at every critical stage of the electoral cycle as this will enhance integrity and credibility as well as address stakeholders' concerns.

ZESN reiterates that upon the proclamation of the Election Day, the ZEC was obliged to avail an analyzable copy of the voters' roll to electoral stakeholders within a reasonable period of time as prescribed by the law, and in any event, before the sitting of the Nomination Court. Sadly, this has not happened. ZESN therefore calls upon ZEC to release the Voters' Roll without further delays! ZESN is observing proceedings at the Nomination Court nationwide and remains committed to the promotion of democratic elections in Zimbabwe.

PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS IN ZIMBABWE

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