

ZIMBABWE ELECTION SUPPORT NETWORK



Inclusive national dialogue key to finding solutions to prevailing political and socio-economic challenges- ZESN

Harare – 25 January 2019 – The Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) has noted with concern the recent violent protests characterised by looting, vandalism of property and infrastructure as well as the heavy handed response by the security forces resulting in deaths and injury of civilians. While ZESN acknowledges the right to demonstrate as part of freedom of expression as enshrined in the Constitution, the Network does not condone violence and infringing of other citizen’s rights.

ZESN reiterates the call for an inclusive national dialogue to find lasting solutions to the challenges bedeviling the country. These calls are in line with calls by President Mnangagwa, political parties, civic society and recommendations by the Monthlathe Commission for nation building and reconciliation including an initiative for multi-party dialogue and cooperation.

Furthermore, ZESN calls upon the government to invest in efforts that promote national healing, peace and justice in light of the residual mistrust amongst some election stakeholders as a result of contested electoral outcomes that has played out through violent post-election demonstrations.

The Network urges the government to set up an Electoral and Political Reforms taskforce comprising Parliament, political parties, CSOs and churches to closely monitor the implementation of recommendations by local, regional and international election observers to ensure that they are effected timeously before the 2023 elections. The taskforce must deliberate on political, administrative and legal reforms that are needed to enhance the credibility of Zimbabwe’s electoral processes. For instance, the taskforce should spearhead reforms such as enhancing the independence of ZEC and other Chapter 12 institutions, reviewing provisions around the delimitation of constituencies, tightening provisions on the role of traditional leaders and streamlining election dispute mechanisms.

In addition, it is imperative that the process of national dialogue results in setting up of mechanisms that ensure conformity of electoral processes to the Constitution as well as regional and international standards to avoid disputes in future elections.

ZESN remains committed to promoting democratic elections in Zimbabwe.

PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS IN ZIMBABWE

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