



# Ballot Update

## Bulletin

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## ZESN OBSERVES JUNE 10 BY-ELECTIONS



ZESN observed the by-elections in Dzivarasekwa, Glen View South, Harare East, Highfield West, Kambuzuma, Kuwadzana, Lobengula, Luveve, Makokoba, Pelandaba-Mpopoma, Pumula, Headlands, Dangamvura/Chikanga, Tsholotsho North, Hurungwe West and Mbizo. ZESN deployed 158 static observers and 42 mobile observers to ascertain the level of compliance of the by-elections to the electoral act and the constitution.

ZESN noted that although the voting procedures were in compliance to the law and the election day environment generally peaceful, the by-elections were marred by a number of challenges. For instance, in a number of constituencies, suspected ZANU PF officials and village heads were recording the details of voters before they arrived at a polling station and after the voter had cast their vote. These reports came from observers in the following areas: Tsholotsho (Zabagwadi Business Centre), Headlands (Nehumba Primary School) and Hurungwe West (Murapa Primary School).

ZESN bemoaned the intimidatory practice of recording the names of voters before and after voting by political parties as this violates section 133B (c)(1) of the Electoral Act which outlaws any attempts to compel voters to vote for a particular candidate or party.

### Major Electoral Highlights in the General Laws Amendment Bill

- The Bill Transfers voter registration, the custody and maintenance of the Voters' roll to ZEC.
- Section 40 provides for the conduct of voter education by persons other than ZEC. However, such persons must submit their voter education material to ZEC 28 days before intended use.
- Section 19 of the Electoral Act has been amended to enable the creation of voter registration officers and voter registration offices.
- The Bill maintains voter registration certificates, this is against the spirit of transparency that ZESN is advocating.

ZESN notes that although the transfer of voter registration and the voters' roll to ZEC is commendable. However, the other changes to the Electoral Act are rather piecemeal and do not address other fundamental issues. The Bill does not address the issue of the right to vote for prisoners, the diaspora vote.



## ZESN CONCERNED OVER PERSISTENT ELECTION FUNDING CONSTRAINTS



ZESN has noted with concern 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.

Over the years ZESN has advocated for adequate resourcing of the Commission for the effective and efficient discharge of electoral processes such as voter education, voter registration and other crucial electoral modalities.

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## PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS IN ZIMBABWE

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# ZESN RECOMMENDATIONS TO ZEC



*ZESN HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE ON 11 JUNE TO SHARE OBSERVATIONS OF THE BY-ELECTIONS*

The Zimbabwe Election Support Network based on the observations of its static and mobile observers to the June 10 by-elections came up with a number of recommendations for ZEC in order to improve the electoral processes in Zimbabwe.

## **Voter Education**

ZESN urges ZEC to invest in more comprehensive and widespread voter education to improve voters understanding of key electoral requirements. ZESN observed that the significant number of turned away and assisted voters. ZEC should partner with civil society and media to ensure that all potential voters are reached.

## **Voter Intimidation**

ZESN calls upon ZEC to enforce the political parties' electoral code of conduct and for the police and the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission to

investigate and prosecute candidates and parties that violate this code.

## **Political Party Agents**

ZESN observed that not all candidates deployed party agents at all polling stations. Political parties must put more effort into observing key electoral processes in order to enhance their ability to speak authoritatively on the quality of the election, and to support improvements of future electoral processes.

## **Presence of Police officers inside polling stations**

ZESN Calls for the removal of police officers from inside the polling stations.