



**Zimbabwe Election  
Support Network** ■  
Promoting Democratic  
Elections In Zimbabwe

**Press Statement**

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## **ZESN PRELIMINARY STATEMENT ON THE KUSILE WARD 13 AND REDCLIFF WARD 3**

### **MUNICIPALITY BY-ELECTIONS**

**6-APRIL-2024-** In the spirit of ensuring transparency, fairness and accountability crucial to democracy and safeguard election integrity the Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) observed Local Authority by-elections on 6 April 2024 in Kusile Rural District Council (RDC) Ward 13 and Redcliff Municipality Ward 3. The by-elections in which Zimbabwe African National Unity Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) was declared winner in both the Redcliff Municipality and Kusile RDC Ward 13 seats were held to fill in vacancies that arose in the Wards following the death of incumbent Councillors.

#### **Legal Framework**

The by-elections were held in accordance with Section 121 A of the Electoral Act (Chapter 2:13) following the death of the incumbent Councillors for Kusile RDC Ward 13 Councillor Tarcissius Qonda of the Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) and Redcliff Municipality Ward 3 Mayor Alderman Clayton Masiyatsva of CCC.

#### **Nomination Court**

The Nomination Court sat for purposes of receiving nominations of candidates for election as councillors for the vacant Wards on Friday 23 February 2024 in line with Section 125 (4) of the Electoral Act [Chapter 2:13]. The Nomination Court for the Kusile Rural District Council Ward 13 sat at the offices of the Chief Executive Officer, Kusile Rural District Council, Lupane. Redcliff Municipality Ward 3 sat at the offices of the Town Clerk, Redcliff. Overall, the process was very peaceful and calm. There were no reported incidents of violence or intimidation by candidates or their supporters during nomination day and processes. The nominated candidates for Kusile RDC's Ward 13 are Henry Moyo of United Zimbabwe Alliance (UZA), Celani Ndimande (Independent) and Donald Chewareerwa of ZANU-PF were successfully nominated for election as councillors to contest as candidates for Ward 13 of Kusile RDC whilst Rangarirai Sibanda (Independent), Christina Sigauke (ZANU-PF) and Tinei Siziba (Independent) were duly nominated to contest as municipal candidates for Ward 3 Redcliff Municipality.

#### **Observation methodology**

ZESN trained and deployed nine (9) static observers across the two (2) Local Authority Wards. Of the nine (9) static observers, four (4) observers were stationed in Redcliff Municipality Ward 3 whilst five (5) were deployed in Kusile RDC Ward 13. All ZESN observers were duly accredited by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) prior to deployment. This preliminary statement is based on reports received from the ZESN observers and recommendations are made in accordance with the electoral laws of Zimbabwe as well as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Principles and Guidelines Governing the Conduct of Democratic Elections.

### **Polling day political environment**

ZESN observers reported that the political environment was calm and peaceful in both Wards, with the lone exception of heightened tensions at the Collation Centre for Redcliff Ward 3, where large numbers of people gathered waiting for the official result to be announced. The Network commends the candidates and their supporters for observing peace during polling as the cultivation of peace not only cultivates stability and unity but also serves as a crucial deterrent against violence, which is indispensable for advancing the cause of democracy.

### **Set up and opening of polling stations**

Prior to the setting up of polling stations, voters' rolls were displayed outside to enable the electorate to check their names, a good practice that serves to lessen the number of redirected and turned away voters on polling day. ZESN observers reported that the polling stations were opened on time with all the essential polling materials such as ballot boxes, ballot papers, indelible finger markers, voters' rolls and the ZEC official stamps available.

### **Political parties' agents**

ZANU-PF, UZA and independent candidates that contested the by-elections had polling agents in all the polling stations where ZESN observed. ZESN commends the deployment of polling agents as this allows them to track polling processes which in turn enables them to make any interventions where needed.

### **Polling Officials, Voting Process and Procedures**

On average, ZESN observed that there were six (6) polling officers, and the majority being male. Polling procedures were duly followed in accordance with the law, for example checking voters' names on the voters' roll and checking their fingers for ink before they could be allowed to vote. Ballot papers were stamped with an official ZEC stamp before being issued to voters.

### **Assisted Voters**

Section 59 of the Electoral Act provides for assisted voting of illiterate or physically handicapped voters by a person of choice. ZESN observers reported that there were low numbers of assisted voters in the by-elections and that the electoral provisions were uniformly applied by polling officials in the rendering of assistance, whenever a voter required it.

### Voter turnout

A total of 647 persons turned out to vote in Kusile RDC Ward 13, translating to 28,3% voter turnout. Voter turnout in Redcliff Municipality Ward 3 was significantly higher at 47,3%, after 1 431 people turned out to vote.

### Redirected and turned away voters

ZESN observers reported that, across all the polling stations in Redcliff Municipality Ward 3 and Kusile RDC Ward 13 the number of redirected and turned away voters was low. In Redcliff a total of 20 people were turned away and seven (7) people were redirected. In Kusile, 16 people were turned away and six (6) people were redirected. In the majority of instances the affected voters had brought unacceptable forms of identification such as driver's license, names not found in voters roll.

### By-Election Results

ZANU-PF candidates, Christina Sigauke and Donald Chewareerwa were declared winners by the ZEC in Redcliff Municipality Ward 3 and Kusile RDC Ward 13 respectively. The table below shows the results of the 6 April 2024 local authority by-elections.

### BY-ELECTION RESULTS

*The tables below show the results of the by-elections, as declared by ZEC*

<b>KUSILE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL WARD 13</b>			
<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Party</b>	<b>Votes</b>
Henry Moyo	M	UZA	21
Celani Ndimande	M	Independent	303
<b>Donald Chewareerwa</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>ZANU-PF</b>	<b>323</b>
<b>REDCLIFF MUNICIPALITY WARD 3</b>			
<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Party</b>	<b>Votes</b>
<b>Sigauke Christina</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>ZANU-PF</b>	<b>560</b>
Siziba Tinei	M	Independent	484
Sibanda Rangarirai	M	Independent	34

## **Conclusion**

ZESN commends the electorate for peacefully choosing their preferred representative in Council during the Kusile RDC Ward 13 and Redcliff Ward 3 Municipality by-elections. Councillors play pivotal roles in the governance and administrative machinery of local authorities by delivering essential services within their respective communities.

## **Recommendations**

ZESN recommends the following, based on its observations:

- More needs to be done by political parties to encourage the electorate to ensure improved voter turnout in local authority by-elections and the enjoyment of political and electoral rights afforded them by Section 67 of the Constitution.
- Additional voter education is imperative regarding local authority elections, given their critical role in shaping local governance. Local authority elections directly influence citizens' daily lives by addressing essential aspects such as sanitation, public safety, health, infrastructure, and future developmental trajectories.
- Political parties should urge their supporters to exercise patience while they wait for the conclusion of counting, collation, verification and announcement of results.

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### **PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS IN ZIMBABWE**

FOR COMMENTS AND FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT

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