

ZIMBABWE ELECTION SUPPORT NETWORK



ELECTORAL PROCESSES MUST BE INCLUSIVE AND RESPONSIVE TO NEEDS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES - ZESN

27 July 2018 – Harare – The Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) notes with concern the dismissal by the High Court of an application seeking to compel the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) to print braille ballot papers for visually impaired voters.

The Constitution of Zimbabwe upholds the rights of persons with disabilities including in electoral processes. Section 155 of the Constitution also compels the state to facilitate voting by persons with disability or special needs. Although ZEC has stated that special attention will be granted to person with disabilities (PWDs) on Election Day, the dismissal of a case in which Advocate Mateta was seeking an order to compel ZEC to ensure that visually impaired persons vote using braille ballots or a tactile ballot system is regrettable.

ZESN believes that electoral processes must be inclusive to ensure that people with disabilities and other special needs groups can effectively and fully participate in electoral processes on an equal basis with others.

In addition, it is imperative for ZEC to publicize mechanisms that are in place to ensure the secrecy of the vote for persons who require assistance in casting their vote on Election Day as stipulated in Section 59(5)(a) of the Electoral Act.

ZESN is committed to promoting democratic elections in Zimbabwe.

PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS IN ZIMBABWE

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