



## **Christian Churches Monitoring Group (CCMG) For Free and Fair Elections**

*April 2019 Bahati and Roan By-Elections Pre-Election Statement  
10 April 2019*

### **1.0. Introductory Remarks**

As part of its ongoing mission to support democratic development and promote free, fair and credible electoral processes in Zambia, the Christian Churches Monitoring Group (CCMG) consortium has undertaken a non-partisan monitoring of the April 2019 parliamentary by-elections in Bahati and Roan Constituencies. CCMG's observation of the parliamentary by-elections included pre-election observation and will also include Election Day monitoring in Roan constituency.

CCMG's mission is to strengthen electoral processes and encourage citizen participation in democratic governance in Zambia. Through civic and voter education, non-partisan election monitoring, electoral reform advocacy and capacity building of civil society organizations, CCMG promotes democratic development and good governance.

CCMG created the Electoral Process Monitoring Project partnership to effectively monitor the 2015 presidential election, 2016 general elections and now the 2019 parliamentary by-elections. CCMG partner organizations include: the Council of Churches in Zambia (CCZ), Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ), Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) and Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops (ZCCB) through Caritas Zambia.

In preparation for the 2019 parliamentary by-elections and to observe the entire by-election process, CCMG recruited, trained and deployed three Long-Term Observers (LTOs) in Bahati and three LTOs in Roan to observe the pre-election period. The CCMG LTOs are using customized observation checklist with a series of key questions about the pre-election environment. They completed and sent observation reports each week to the CCMG Secretariat. On April 11, that is tomorrow, CCMG will deploy 27 trained and accredited stationary observers to polling stations in Roan Constituency, in addition to three mobile observers in Roan and three mobile observers in Bahati.

Overall, so far, during the limited observation, CCMG LTOs noted four critical incidents. One related to political harassment and intimidation, one case involving the destruction of campaign materials, and two incidents of vote card buying by political parties.

### **2.0. The Main Findings**

#### *Preparatory Activities by the Electoral Commission of Zambia*

CCMG observed preparations by the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) in Bahati and Roan Constituencies. These preparations included recruiting staff,

accrediting election monitors and political party poll watchers as well as receiving the official ballots from the ECZ Head Office.

#### *Voter Education/Information*

CCMG observed the ECZ and local media conducting voter education/information in both Bahati and Roan Constituencies. CCMG observed voter education/information targeting women, youth and people with disabilities in Bahati. The primary types of voter education/information observed were billboards/posters/flyers and radio discussions.

#### *Political Parties' Activities*

CCMG observed campaign activities taking place in both Bahati and Roan Constituencies. CCMG LTOs reported hearing of handouts being provided to encourage voters in both Bahati and Roan Constituencies, and in two instances witnessed handouts being provided. In addition, CCMG observed state or government vehicles used for a campaign activity in Roan and Bahati during CCMG's first and second pre-election reporting periods, respectively.

#### *General Election Environment*

In Bahati, CCMG did not observe any instances of a political party or candidate being prohibited from conducting a campaign activity in a public place or any form of government restrictions on campaign activities. However in Roan, the CCMG observed the cancellation by local authorities of a planned political party public event under the Public Order Act because of a visit to the area by the Vice President. CCMG observed that police have been present during campaign meetings/rallies in both Bahati and Roan.

CCMG did not observe any instances of inflammatory language designed to incite violence or the use of tribal, ethnic or religious means to incite violence in Bahati and Roan. CCMG did not observe any instances in Bahati or Roan of youth in combat/military attire or wearing berets/masks. However, in Bahati a CCMG LTO noted that constituents from the neighboring Mansa Central Constituency within Mansa District were ferried to a rally in Bahati.

Overall, CCMG is encouraged by the nonviolent pre-election environment to date in Roan and Bahati and urges eligible citizens in these two constituencies to exercise their right to vote. CCMG appeals to all candidates and parties to publicly call for calm and restraint on the part of their supporters. We appeal to all Zambians, regardless of their affiliation to remain peaceful, to reject violence, and to respect the rights of their fellow citizens.

The CCMG Steering Committee would also like to thank the volunteers from our four organisations that deployed in Roan and Bahati as Long-Term Observers and we look forward to the upcoming work of our Election Day Monitors on 11 April.

God Bless Zambia.



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