



**SPEECH BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE ELECTORAL
COMMISSION OF ZAMBIA, MRS MWANGALA
ZALOUMIS SC, DURING THE QUARTER ONE
STAKEHOLDER MEETING**

6TH FEBRUARY 2025, LUSAKA.

- Members of the Commission,
- The Chief Electoral Officer and ECZ Management and Staff,
- Distinguished cooperating partners
- Representatives of government institutions,
- Representatives of political parties, civil society organisations, faith based organisations and the media,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning, and allow me to warmly welcome you to this important stakeholder engagement meeting.

This meeting marks our first formal engagement of the year, and indeed our first major engagement following the enactment of the Constitution of Zambia (Amendment) Act No 13 of 2025. It is therefore a timely and significant moment for the Electoral Commission of Zambia to engage openly with all key stakeholders on matters that lie at the very heart of our democratic system.

Let me begin by reaffirming the Commission's commitment to conducting electoral processes that are transparent, inclusive, professional, and anchored in the Constitution. The confidence of citizens in elections is built not only on how elections are conducted on poll day, but also on how foundational processes are undertaken.

Distinguished Guests,

As you are aware, the Constitution of Zambia (Amendment) Act No 13 of 2025 introduced far-reaching reforms to our electoral process. Among these reforms are two particularly significant developments which I will address together with another important activity on the Election Calendar namely:

1. 2026 Delimitation of Constituencies;
2. Implementation of the Mixed Member Proportional Representation electoral system; and

3. Inspection of the Provisional Register of Voters including the revised timelines.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. 2026 Delimitation of Constituencies

First, the Constitution has increased the number of constituency-based seats from one hundred and fifty-six (156) to two hundred and twenty-six (226). This expansion responds to population growth, demographic shifts, and the need to enhance representation across the country. As a result, the Commission is constitutionally mandated to create seventy (70) additional constituencies, which must be completed and published in the Gazette and take effect on 15th May, 2026 as parliament will stand dissolved.

Distinguished stakeholders,

In undertaking the 2026 delimitation exercise, the Commission is strictly guided by the Constitution. The law provides clear factors that ensure constituencies

are created in a manner that is fair, logical, and reflective of Zambia's social and geographic realities.

These factors include respect for the history, diversity, and cohesiveness of communities; consideration of population size, density, and trends; and the need to ensure that constituencies are reasonable in size and accessible, taking into account geographical features and communication networks. Additionally, all constituencies must remain within existing district boundaries, and while we strive for approximate equality of population, this must be balanced with the need to adequately represent both urban and sparsely populated areas.

Allow me to emphasise that delimitation is not an arbitrary or politically driven process. It is a structured, consultative, and evidence-based exercise. Stakeholders at District level will play a central role in proposing how additional constituencies may be created, guided by population data, ward boundaries, accessibility, and geographic continuity. Constituencies must be coherent, connected, and practical for both voters and electoral administration.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Stakeholder participation is a cornerstone of this exercise. The 2026 delimitation of constituencies will begin with stakeholder consultations in each of the 116 districts. The Commission, through the respective District Electoral Officers, will invite Members of Parliament, Mayors/Council Chairpersons, Councilors, Chiefs and Traditional Leaders, Heads of Government Departments, Civil Society and Faith Based Organisations.

It should be noted that district delimitation sittings will be open to members of the general public. In addition, the Commission will engage with the House of Chiefs, recognising its critical role as a key stakeholder in the electoral process.

The district delimitation meetings will run from 16th February 2026 to 20th February 2026. Each district will have a one day delimitation meeting during this week. The full schedule of the dates for each district will be

shared via print media, community radio stations and official Commission social media platforms.

During the forthcoming district sittings, stakeholders will be invited to make oral and written submissions on proposed boundaries and constituency names. These consultations are not symbolic; they are substantive. The Commission expects proposals to be supported by evidence of consultation and consensus at the local level.

Upon conclusion of the district delimitation stakeholder meetings, the Commission will proceed to visit each of the ten provinces to receive the submissions from the districts within respective provinces. The receipt of submissions at the provincial headquarters will run from 23rd February 2026 to 16th March 2026. The full schedule of the dates for each province will be shared via print media, community radio stations and official Commission social media pages.

The Commission will review all the submissions and determine the seventy (70) additional constituencies to be established. The names and boundaries of the new constituencies will be published in the Government Gazette by 15th April 2026, and will be shared via print media and official Commission social media platforms.

The Constituencies will take effect at the next dissolution of parliament, in line with constitutional requirements.

2. Implementation of the Mixed Member Proportional Representation electoral system.

Distinguished participants,

Let me now address the change in the electoral system following constitutional amendments.

The Amendment has introduced a Mixed Member Proportional Representation system for elections to the National Assembly and the Local Councils. This system broadens democratic participation by enhancing inclusivity and ensuring improved representation of women, youths, and persons with disabilities in

Parliament and Councils. It is important to state that the Constitution provides the principles for Proportional Representation and the details of implementation will be prescribed.

In this regard, the Commission, is in the process of amending the Electoral Process Act No. 35 of 2016 to give effect to the implementation of the Mixed Member Proportional Representation electoral system provided under Article 47 of the Constitution of Zambia (Amendment) Act No. 13 of 2025. The draft Bill is ready and will be shared with stakeholders today. Stakeholders are invited to submit written comments on the provisions of the Bill to the Chief Electoral Officer by Tuesday, 10th February 2026. The Commission will also hold a stakeholder engagement meeting on Wednesday, 11th February 2026 to discuss and receive comments on the Bill.

3. Inspection of the Provisional Register of Voters and the revised 2026 General Election Roadmap

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The third area I wish to update you on relates to the inspection of the Provisional Register of Voters and the revised roadmap towards the 2026 General Election. The Commission concluded the Mass Registration of Voters on 29th November 2025, at which point a total of **1,788,405** new registrations were recorded. These were added to the existing **7,073,513** voters bringing the total number of records in the Provisional Register of Voters to **8,861,918**.

The Commission is in the process of consolidating and cleaning the Provisional Register of Voters. Once this process is concluded, the next critical step will be the Inspection of the Provisional Register of Voters by members of the public. In this regard, the Commission will release updated figures on the Provisional Register of Voters.

Online inspection of the Provisional Register of Voters will be conducted from 22nd February to 8th March

2026, while physical inspection of the Provisional Register of Voters at all polling stations will take place from 2nd March to 8th March 2026.

The Commission will thereafter certify the 2026 Register of Voters on 30th April 2026.

Stakeholders should note that the timelines for the inspection of the Provisional Register of Voters have been revised. The revision has been necessitated by the need to align voter registration processes with the delimitation exercise and the implementation of the Mixed Member Proportional Representation electoral system. The rest of the electoral roadmap from Certification of the Register of Voters to the polls remains as earlier shared with stakeholders.

Distinguished Stakeholders,

Let me conclude by indicating that the success of the 2026 Election Roadmap depends on constructive engagement, dialogue, and shared responsibility among all stakeholders represented here today.

The Commission counts on your cooperation and commitment to national interest as we undertake this exercise that will shape Zambia's electoral landscape for many years to come.

On behalf of the Electoral Commission of Zambia, I thank you for your presence, your partnership, and your continued support in the Commission.

I wish you fruitful deliberations.

Thank you.