



Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJPZ)

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CCJPZ 26 MARCH 2022 BY-ELECTION MID-DAY STATEMENT

Delivered at Africa Synod House, Harare by the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace Zimbabwe (CCJPZ)

The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJPZ), deployed 208 observers for the 26 March 2022 By-Elections for vacant National Assembly and Local Authority seats across the country.

Below are the findings based on what we have observed as from opening of the polling stations to mid-day.

The Church notes that:

- The voting day has been characterised by a relatively peaceful atmosphere throughout the country.
- Most polling stations opened on time and the Church, commends the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) for the timely opening process.
- Polling officials have been impartial and professional, particularly the Police who are maintaining peace and order.
- Covid-19 protocols are being adhered to in all polling stations.
- ZEC has provided mobile ablutions and first aid personnel and this is quite commendable.
- Turnout in the morning was generally low and it picked up as the day progressed.
- The Church acknowledges the participation of other Faith Based Organisations and Civil Society Organisations in the By-Elections observation.

Recommendations:

- Voting process has been slow and waiting time in some queues has been long particularly in highly populated areas. The slowness of the process has been largely attributed to inadequate copies of the voter's roll.
- As Church, we urge people to be patient and be at the polling station before close of voting at 7pm. Any voter on the queue by that time of closure shall be allowed to vote.
- A number of people have been turned away because their names were not appearing on the voters roll.
- Most polling stations were not accessible for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). The Church recommends that ZEC should ensure that all polling stations be accessible to any eligible voter.
- Voters roll should be displayed outside the polling station a day before the elections.
- ZEC should ensure there is power back-up at polling stations to ensure polling officials are able to charge their gadgets to provide real time information to ZEC.
- We urge voters to confirm their details with polling officials in the event that the name is not found amongst those displayed.

The Church has also noted some incidents, which have been reported to the police, and the police have taken action. We encourage citizens to report all cases of misconduct to relevant authorities.

The Church will continue to observe the voting process until the results are announced.

May God Bless Our Nation

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Paul Muchena
CCJPZ National Coordinator