



Methodist Church in Zimbabwe Elections Press Statement

Preamble

Inspired by our biblical values of justice peace and dignity The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (MCZ) always endeavours to leave up to its prophetic mandate of working towards abundant life for all citizens (John 10:10)

As our nation move towards harmonized election, MCZ urges Zimbabweans to continue to uphold a peaceful environment where non violent, free and fair elections are experienced. The existence of different parties in the country where diverse political views are shared is healthy in a democratic country but should not be a gateway to violence. The church is not aligned to any political party but speaks in relation to its function of being involved in every facet of the life of the people. Politics affect the day to day lives of the people therefore the church has a role in the promotion of a democratic culture.

The Methodist Church commends Zimbabwe Election Commission (ZEC) and the government of Zimbabwe in the steps that they have taken so far on the road towards elections including upgrading to a more effective and efficient electronic Biometric Voter Registration system to accurately update the voters roll also ensuring that there are no ghost voters. It is indeed commendable that more than five million voters have been registered to date as a result of the work of ZEC, civil society and religious groups in encouraging eligible Zimbabweans to register to vote.

As a church we call for Electoral Reforms which ensure that:

- Systems are effective and efficient as well as free, fair and legitimate.
- Voter registration centers are increased so that all eligible persons in Zimbabwe have easy access.
- ZEC carries out its tasks of the electoral processes smoothly, well-resourced and capacitated and without any bias to any political party
- Zimbabweans in the diaspora exercise their right to vote
- There is equality in participation in the democratic processes.

As a church we appeal:

- To critical bodies with a direct link to electoral processes such as law enforcement agents to carry out their duties without fear or favour.
- To political parties to shun violence and hate speech in their campaigns and to desist from using force to gain votes for their parties and respect the rights of the people.

- To the media to be non-partisan and that all political parties should freely access their services. The journalists should uphold their ethics in carrying out their work where truthful information is disseminated.
- The National broadcasting services should give equal slots to all political parties.
- We call upon traditional leaders as custodians of our culture to be non-partisan.

We call all Zimbabweans to pray for our nation that peace and tranquility prevails throughout the process. May the beautiful people of this country continue to love and respect one another and see each other as equal as stated in Galatians 3:28, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, **for you are all one in Christ Jesus**”. We pray for a society in which all enjoy abundant life and God given dignity.