



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Progress of polling for by-elections and missing names in voter register**

The Malawi Electoral Commission wishes to give an update on the progress of the polling process in Makhwira South Ward, Lilongwe North West Constituency and Karonga Central Constituency. This update also highlights the challenges faced and how they have been resolved.

All polling stations in the three by-election areas open on time with noticeable long queues of voters ready to cast their votes in some stations. The polling process progressed smoothly in all these areas. However, in some polling centres in Lilongwe North West Constituency, it was discovered that few names of new registrants were missing. The Commission has immediately instituted responsive measures to enable such people to vote.

The Presiding Officers have been advised to check with the MEC Call Centre to verify every name of a person not being found in the register but holds a valid MEC voter certificate. The Call Centre is using the original voters' register to verify the queries received. The voters found in the original voter register are allowed to vote while those not found are not allowed.

The Commission has advised all presiding officers to duly assist the few the voters whose names are not found in the register and not send them back until all vetting procedures are finalized.

During the pre-inspection exercise on Monday, 9 November, 2020, it was discovered that the packing list omitted Tamper Evident Envelopes and Pre-printed Khaki Envelopes for keeping valid votes. The Commission has since supplied these envelopes to all centres in the three by-election areas. The Commission is using tamper evident envelopes that were surplus from the 2020 Fresh Presidential Election.

The Commission is using Pre-printed Khaki Envelopes and Tamper Evident Envelopes that were left over from the 2019 Tripartite Elections and 2020 Fresh Presidential Election as a cost-cutting measure.

The Commission is urging all stakeholders to maintain peace and calm as the polling and results counting process progress and to seek clarification from the Commission on any issue.

Should there be any need for clarification on this statement, contact MEC Director for Media and Public Relations, Mr Sangwani Mwafulirwa on 0 999 274 304

Signed this 10<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2020

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sam Alfandika', written over a horizontal line.

Sam Alfandika

**Chief Elections Officer**