

ZAMBIAN ELECTION UPDATE

Count Down to the 2001 Zambian Elections: The Democratic Process and Emerging Issues

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Introduction

This issue of the Zambian Election Update is entitled: *“Count Down to the 2001 Zambian Elections: The Democratic Process and Emerging Issues”*, because it examines the adoption of candidates, attitudes and commitment of the main political parties to gender equality, political conflicts and voter education. Some of the issues that are analyzed in this issue have a bearing on the readiness of the political parties and other stakeholders for the 2001 Zambian elections. Most of the issues also have a bearing on entrenchment of democracy in Zambia. The issues raised and analyzed are thus relevant to the consolidation of democratic practices. They also provide some information, which can allow analysts to judge for themselves with regard to how far away from free and fair elections Zambia is. Apart from discussing the adoption of Presidential, Parliamentary and Local government Candidates, the update has also analyzed financing of Zambian political parties and the role of the press in the 2001 Zambian, as well as politically motivated electoral violence and/ or conflicts.

Adoption of Presidential, Parliamentary and Local Government Candidates

Adoption of Presidential and Parliamentary Candidates for the 2001 Zambian Elections have been controversial and problematic for nearly all the political parties. With regard to the adoption of Presidential Candidates, only the Forum for Democracy and Development (FDD) held competitive presidential elections. However, even these were marred by accusations of massive bribery. The electoral college was moreover made up of mere

volunteers who had not been elected by anyone from their areas of residence. This was, however, due to inadequate time available to the FDD to conduct elections at the lower levels, hold the national convention and prepare for the 2001 tripartite elections. The Heritage Party, which was also formed in July 2001 has not held any elections and has opted to field its interim President, Brigadier General Godfrey Miyanda as its Presidential Candidate in the 2001 elections. Similarly, the Patriotic Front formed only in October 2001 will field its founding leader, Michael Sata, as its Presidential Candidate. The ruling MMD, which changed its constitution to remove restrictions on the Presidential Term of Office way back in June, 2001 and re-elected the incumbent unopposed owing to the forced absence of other aspiring candidates had its presidential candidate selected by the National Executive Committee in “controversial elections” in August 2001. These elections, however, culminated in the resignation of Michael Sata, who was the MMD National Secretary. Sata has since formed the Patriotic Front, as a means of contesting the Republican Presidency.

The election of the Presidential Candidate for the MMD by its National Executive Committee (NEC) was controversial in the sense that the MMD Constitution does not provide for the election of its Presidential Candidate by the NEC. Besides, according to Michael Sata, a losing candidate in the said elections, the contestants did not voluntarily put themselves forward for the elections, but were nominated by the President of the Party who had been re-elected unopposed at the MMD convention, but could not contest the Republican Presidency, because the Zambian Constitution had not been changed to remove the two five year term restrictions on the Republican Presidency. The MMD consequently found itself in uncharted waters and had to find some means of selecting the Party’ Presidential candidate, since the re-elected President was ineligible for the Republican Presidency.

In the rest of the main political parties, the Presidential candidates were elected unopposed, largely because the leaders who were contesting the Presidency were seen as de facto leaders. Challenging the de facto leaders for the Presidency of “their parties” is as a general rule not tolerated, particularly by the so-called “party cadres”, who demand

unflinching royalty to the de facto leader from all the party members. Those who breach this convention by attempting to contest the Presidency more often than not find themselves physically molested, or roughed up by the party cadres. The long term aim of the party cadres in this regard seems to be to deter other would be challengers in the future, while their short-term aim is to frustrate the nominations of any other candidates and ensure that the de facto leaders are elected unopposed. The scenario described above was recently the case in Kabwe, where the United National Independence Party (UNIP) held controversial elections designed to ensure the removal of Francis Nkhoma from the Presidency of UNIP. Nkhoma had previously been suspended pending expulsion by the UNIP Central Committee, which accused him of having failed to reorganise the party. The other charge levelled at Nkhoma was lack of integrity to hold the office of President of UNIP following allegations that he had been implicated in the production of the “black dollar”. Nkhoma, however, successfully challenged the suspension in the High Court and won the case against the Central Committee, because the UNIP Constitution does not give the Central Committee power to remove the President. The recent (November) elections held in Kabwe were thus an attempt to go round the Lusaka High Court ruling, because they were held within weeks of the ruling if not days.

The hastily organised elections, however, also proved equally controversial, because a longstanding senior member of UNIP, Kenneth Ngondo was attacked by the supporters of Tilyenji Kaunda, the Secretary General of UNIP who had usurped the Presidency during the “illegal suspension” of Francis Nkhoma. Kaunda had usurped the Presidency, because the UNIP Constitution requires the Vice President to perform the functions of the President during his/her absence, or whenever the President was not able to perform his/her duties. Mr. Rabbison Chongo, the UNIP Vice President should therefore have been the Acting President during the so-called suspension of Nkhoma as President of UNIP. The Secretary General, Tilyenji Kaunda could only have legally taken up the mantle of UNIP President, perhaps in the absence of the Vice President as well.

The political parties due to contest the 2001 Zambian elections have hardly held any genuinely free and fair elections for selecting their presidential candidates. This raises

questions about the entrenchment of democracy in Zambia and about the role of personal ambition in the formation of new political parties and in undermining the party constitutions. The tendency to have de facto leaders in most of the Zambian political parties to some extent explains the proliferation of political parties, because nearly all the presidential candidates have had to form their “own” political parties to allow them to contest the Presidency. The exceptions to this are perhaps UNIP, MMD and to some extent the FDD. Thus, political parties in Zambia seem to be mere means for ambitious individuals to have a go at the Republican Presidency.

The controversy surrounding the selection of Presidential candidates for the 2001 Zambian elections was also extended to the selection of parliamentary candidates, but not to the selection of candidates for the local government elections. It should, however, be noted that nearly all the main political parties have avoided holding primary elections. Even UNIP, which seem to have had primary elections in many constituencies seems not have consistently held them in all the constituencies. Thus, in some instances, even UNIP seem to have opted for the adoption of candidates accepted by the local constituency party. In general, however, most political parties have adopted candidates largely through selections by their National Executive or Management Committees. The selections in most cases have been based on the short lists of applicants accepted by the local constituency parties. Involvement of the National Executive Committees in the selection of parliamentary candidates has in most political parties, however, led to uproars and protests. The uproars and protests have, however, perhaps been loudest in the MMD, UPND and to a little extent in the FDD.

In the case of the MMD the uproars and protests were so loud that the National Executive Committee of the MMD had to re-examine some of its adoptions. The re-examinations were, however, only effected in three constituencies. The three being: Matero Constituency in Lusaka; Chililabombwe in the Copperbelt; and Luapula Constituency in the Luapula Province. The latter was a particularly significant re-examination, because it involved the current Member of Parliament, Dan Pule, who has also been a Deputy Minister since 1991. His adoption by the NEC caused so much controversy within the

constituency party that the NEC was forced to re-examine his adoption. In a few cases, however, the NEC has not re-examined the adoptions despite the opposition of local party officials. One of these cases was the adoption of Patrick Katyoka for the Mandevu Constituency in Lusaka, where an apparently popular local official was overlooked for adoption.

Protests over adoptions of parliamentary candidates have not been confined to the ruling MMD, the United Party for National Development (UPND) is also reported to have upset local constituency officials in Livingstone and in a number of its so-called safe seats in the Western Province. In Livingstone, the adoption of Sakwiba Sikota, one of the two Vice Presidents of the UPND who lives in Lusaka ahead of some preferred locally based candidates raised tension in the UPND, and especially in the Livingstone Constituency Party. As a result, of the imposition of candidates from Lusaka on the constituency party in Livingstone and a number of constituencies in the Western Province, there have been reports of some disappointed aspiring candidates switching political parties with a number of their supporters from the UPND to other newly formed parties, such as the Heritage and the FDD. Some of these defections are likely to affect the performance of the UPND in the Western Province and probably other areas as well.

In the Forum for Democracy and Development (FDD) major uproars over the adoption of parliamentary candidates have been reported in Munali and Kaoma Constituencies, where Edith Nawakwi, and Fridah Luhila, the Vice President and Treasurer of the FDD respectively were preferred by the National Management Committee (NMC) over a number of other party members who had organized the party in these Constituencies in an attempt to endear themselves to the local constituents and the general membership of the party well ahead of the primary elections, which were expected to be the means of selecting candidates in a political party formed with the promotion of democratic ideals as the fundamental motivation. Unfortunately, the FDD like other major parties avoided the primary elections opting instead for selections by the Party's NMC.

The United National Independence Party (UNIP), which has suffered a number of defections to other parties, because of its incessant conflicts over the management of the party had generally opted for primary elections in all constituencies where it had more than one aspiring candidate. Recent press reports, however, suggests that the primary elections have not been used in all the constituencies. In Livingston, for example, one of the aspiring candidates challenged the Secretary General of UNIP, Basil Kabwe to explain how his would be opponent in the primary elections had been adopted before the primary elections had been held.

Failure to use primary elections as the major means of selecting candidates for elections in all the main parties seems to demoralize the local party membership, because they are in many cases given candidates whom they are not enthusiastic about. In some instances, the imposition of candidates on the local constituency parties has resulted in massive loss of members as the aspiring candidates join other parties, which promise to adopt them as candidates. This trend is likely to adversely affect the election results of some of the major parties, such as the MMD, and the UPND in particular. Imposition of candidates has however helped some of the new political parties to acquire candidates they may not have had. The movement of aspiring candidates from one party to another over not being adopted by one's most preferred party raises questions about how political parties are perceived and understood in Zambia's Third Republic, firstly by the candidates and secondly amongst their followers and the electorate at large. It also raises questions about what voters are expected to vote for.

Do voters vote for individuals or political parties? The answer to the above question cannot be answered beforehand. However, it should be noted that in the 1991 and 1996 elections the voters seem to have voted for change and consolidation of change respectively. As a result, the MMD, which was seen as the party with the potential to bring about and consolidate change was widely voted for throughout the country. In consequence, some very good individual candidates lost these elections purely on account of the political parties they contested the elections on.

Emerging Issues in the Run Up to the 2001 Zambian elections

This section of the election update discusses some of the emerging issues, which have a bearing on the entrenchment of democracy and a democratic culture. The issues that have been isolated for discussion include: Financing of political parties; commitment of political parties to gender equality in decision making; Determination of Election Date; Political violence and Citizenship Status of Presidential Candidates' Parents.

Financing Political Parties

The question of how political parties ought to be funded has been a subject of intense debate in Zambia since 1991 when the country reverted to a multi-party political system. The debate has not, however, been systematic, because it has not been championed consistently by any agency. The Zambian constitution is moreover silent about how political parties might be funded. It is also silent about how much a political party or a candidate might spend in pursuit of political office. The question of how political parties are funded, however, comes up all the time, especially in discussions aimed at leveling the political playing field and also on whether it is acceptable for political parties seeking the reigns of power to solicit and receive foreign funding.

The issue of how political parties are funded has again become a major issue following press reports to the effect that the Forum for Democracy and Development (FDD) had solicited and received financial support from friends of the party in neighboring countries and beyond. These reports evoked different responses. For those in the ruling party, that was enough evidence to brand the FDD unpatriotic and even treacherous, because in their experience foreign aid always goes with strings attached to it. As a result, the MMD Presidential Candidate, Levy Mwanawasa demanded the terms on which the FDD received the foreign support observing that any genuine foreign support should have been directed at poverty reduction or employment creation rather than the forthcoming elections. The Zambia Republican Party also took a similar stand, while most political parties have ignored the debate. However, a spokesman for the newly formed Patriotic Front, Edwin Lifwekelo, attributed the political parties quest for foreign funding to unfair access to public resources for political parties. He consequently, called on the

Government to begin funding political parties to avoid a situation where they might receive funding from unacceptable sources, such as from drug barons, money launderers and indeed many other sources, which could compromise the integrity of the country.

The FDD, on the other hand, noted that there was nothing strange or new about political parties receiving donations from foreign sympathizers. In fact, according to the FDD President, Lieutenant General Christon Tembo, receipt of foreign support by political parties in the Southern African Region as a whole could be traced back to the 1970s when the nationalist movements started waging liberation wars against the racist minority regimes, which ruled most of the countries in the region. For Lieutenant General Tembo the FDD's receipt of financial support from other countries was because its leaders were held in high esteem in those countries. More significantly, however, General Tembo noted that even the MMD had sought and received financial support from the last Apartheid regime in South Africa to finance its 1991 election campaign.

It is not possible to assess the views of the general population on the issue of political parties soliciting and receiving foreign financial assistance in the absence of opinion polls and/or a systematic survey of public opinion on the subject. Examination of letters to the editor in all the major newspapers, however, suggest that the issue has not caught the imagination and concerned of those who express themselves on major issues through the letters to the editor columns. In general, however, most people seem to be surprised that the ruling MMD could make sources of campaign funds a major issue when the MMD itself has not declared its sources of funds. It was, for example, observed that the July Tribunal on the Diversion of K2billion from the National Assembly to the MMD convention held in June, 2001 showed that the MMD did not have any significant amounts of money in its accounts to allow it to mount the convention. Yet the MMD had not only held the controversial convention, but has also recently bought more than three hundred motor vehicles several thousands of bicycles for its campaign. As a result, the MMD has distributed at least two motor vehicles to every constituency for its campaign. It has, however, not revealed its sources of income/funds.

However, the MMD Presidential Candidate, Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, while not providing any information about how the MMD was financing its campaign has taken exception to the admission by the FDD that it had received funds from foreign sympathizers for its campaign. In consequence, Mwanawasa has promised to enact a law, which would outlaw soliciting and receipt of foreign donations by the Zambian political parties. Close observers of the political developments have, however, observed that it is difficult for Zambian political to avoid seeking financial support from foreign sympathizers, because the Government makes it difficult for local firms to support political parties. Firms that are, for example, perceived to be sympathetic to the opposition political parties are targeted and harassed by state agencies including the Zambia Revenue Authority. This makes it difficult for local business firms and entrepreneurs to provide financial support to political parties of their choice. Most firms thus tend to only offer financial support clandestinely.

The problem of raising funds for political campaigns in Zambia is in part made complicated by the tendency of most Members of political parties to expect their “leaders” to give them gifts, while the cost of membership cards is often subsidized to make them affordable by all potential members. Consequently, the membership cards are not a source of income for Zambian political parties. In recognition of failure by some members of political parties to afford membership cards, the newly formed Patriotic Front has even decided not to have any membership cards. However, failure of members of political parties to raise funds for the promotion of political beliefs and ideas they hold dearly is surprising and raises questions about the nature of political party membership in Zambia and indeed other African countries, which reflect similar trends.

The controversy that has surrounded the adoption of Presidential and Parliamentary Candidates in nearly all the political parties seem to have spared the adoptions of candidates for the local government seats. This suggests that many people are probably not vying for these seats. There is therefore an apparent disinterest in the local government seats. The lack of interest can be attributed to lack of power at the local level given Zambia’s highly centralized political system, which has denied both resources and

influence to the local authorities. Consequently, most people find sitting in the chambers of the local authorities unattractive. Zambia thus ought to decentralize some functions and resources to the local level in order to rekindle interest in the local government seats. Any efforts directed at the decentralization in Zambia would also have to address the on going devolution of powers in some of the main line ministries responsible for the delivery of some essential services, such as education and health. Failure to do so would result in lack of consistency and democratic decentralization.

Commitment of Zambian Political Parties to Gender Equality in Decision-Making

The commitment of Zambian political parties to gender equality in decision-making was the other burning issue in the run up to the 2001 Zambian elections. It should be noted that one of the SADC Heads of State Summit had observed that women had been excluded from the decision-making ranks in Southern African Development Community as whole. In an attempt to reverse this negative trend, a protocol on gender equality was signed by all the member countries of SADC including Zambia. The SADC Protocol on Gender Equality called on all its member countries including Zambia to raise the proportion of female parliamentarians to at least 30% by 2005. For Zambia to attain that objective, all the main political parties ought to field at least 30% of female candidates in the 2001 elections. Failure to field at least 30% female candidates would entail Zambia not being able to achieve or meet the requirements of the SADC Protocol on Gender Equality by the deadline, which falls in the year 2005, because the next regular elections would not be due until 2006, which is a year after the deadline by which the 30% proportion ought to be reached.

Examination of lists of parliamentary candidates adopted by the major political parties for the 2001 Elections suggests that Zambia will not be in a position to reach the 30% proportion of female parliamentarians by 2005, because the main political parties have failed to field at least 30% of female candidates. Table 1 below shows the proportion of female candidates adopted for the 2001 parliamentary elections.

**Table 1: Proportion of Female Parliamentary Candidates adopted by the main
Zambian Political Parties**

Political Party	Number of Female Candidates	Proportion
Agenda Zambia	01	-
FDD	29	19%
Heritage	-	-
MMD	16	11%
NCC	36	55%
NLD	16	-
Patriotic Front	04	-
Social Democratic Party	03	-
UNIP	19	13%
UPND	26	17%
ZRP	13	9%

Source: Interviews with Secretariat Officials of the Political Parties. Adoption of Candidates for the NCC was still going on, while the ZRP had not yet announced the list of adopted candidates.

It is evident from Table 1 that only the National Citizens Coalition (NCC) had adopted a significant proportion of female candidates at 55% of those adopted by the time of the interviews. The United Party for National Development (UPND) whose manifesto like that of the NCC commits the party to gender equality in decision-making organs had adopted only a paltry 17% of female parliamentary candidates. The UPND leadership has, however, attributed failure to adopt at least 50% of aspiring female candidates to failure by women to apply for adoption as parliamentary candidates. The UPND Publicity Secretary, Godfrey Nabulyato was in this regard reported to have noted that only 50 women had applied to the UPND for adoption as Parliamentary Candidates. Press reports, however, suggest that about 700 women had applied to various political parties for adoption as parliamentary candidates. It is therefore surprising that the UPND had problems of inadequate female applicants, while the NCC, which was yet to complete the

adoption of parliamentary candidates did not seem to have had a shortage of female Parliamentary Candidates, because 55% of those already adopted were women.

The rest of the political parties do not seem to have committed themselves to any specific milestones in the pursuit of gender equality. Their commitment to gender equality especially in decision-making is thus questionable. This is very disappointing. However, the MMD is perhaps the most disappointing in this respect, because the SADC protocol on gender equality came into existence under its rule. Yet the MMD has not given any reasons for adopting only 11% of female candidates. However, given the resignations the MMD has experienced over the last one year, it is probable that it might have experienced a shortage of quality female applicants like the UPND. The party workers who were interviewed at the secretariat did not, however, seem to be bothered about the small proportion of female candidates adopted by the MMD. Thus, gender equality in the MMD does not probably have a very high status or is not a priority.

Determination of Election Date

Failure by the President to announce the date for the 2001 Elections has brought about considerable debate about who should have the power to determine when regular elections are held. The present constitution has vested the power of deciding when the regular elections are held in the incumbent Republican President. These powers are designed to give the incumbent some in built advantage. However, most commentators on the subject seem to be of the view that the present arrangements are unfair and undemocratic, especially to opposition political parties with inadequate resources for prolonged campaign periods. Those who hold this view are consequently suggesting a number of alternatives. The first and perhaps most popular option is to have the date of the regular elections fixed in the constitution. Given the transport problems associated with the rainy season in Zambia, such a date would have to be during the dry season. In that regard, the last Friday of October of the election year has been widely mooted as a good date. The main advantage of a fixed election date for regular elections would be allowing all stakeholders including the Electoral Commission and political parties to have a date to work towards. It would also make it possible for the ruling political parties to be

more honest in handling public affairs as they cannot choose a convenient date designed to conceal or deceive the electorate about their performance or ability to make sensible decisions relating to some specific political or economic events.

The second suggestion is to give the power to decide the election date to the Electoral Commission. This suggestion is based on the fact that it is the Electoral Commission, which advises the President about its readiness to hold elections and should thus be given the mandate to determine when the regular elections should be held. Giving the power of determining the election dates for regular elections to the Electoral Commission could, however, bring the Commission into conflict with some political parties. Accusations of selecting dates favorable to the ruling political party could not be ruled out, as the political parties would be trying to influence the selection of the election dates. The option of fixed dates for regular election thus seems more favorable.

The debate on having a fixed election date has by and large been one sided, because those who support the present constitutional arrangements have not come out in defense of the current system. The MMD Party Spokesperson, Vernon Mwaanga, for example, has merely drawn the attention of the critics to the fact that the Zambian Constitution has given the power of deciding the election dates for the regular elections to the Republican President. Given the attitude of the ruling MMD, it is unlikely that any ruling political party would easily give away the power to determine when the regular elections are held. Those who would like to see fixed election dates for the regular elections, therefore, have to put up an incessant campaign for that cause.

Political Violence and Conflicts

Political violence has come back on the list of burning electoral issues after having been on the agenda in the run up to the last few by elections, but the very last one. In general political violence or conflicts can be divided into intra and inter-political party violence. The former refers to political violence within a given political party or amongst members of the same political party. Intra-political party violence has been quite uncommon. In the

run up to the 2001 Elections, it has in fact been confined to three political parties, the ruling MMD, UNIP and the FDD.

Intra-party violence within the MMD was generally reported during the controversial Extra-ordinary and Ordinary Conventions held in Kabwe in June 2001. The main culprits were the so-called “party cadres” who presented themselves as the most loyal to the President of the Party and the Republic. They demonstrated their loyalty by harassing and even causing actual bodily harm to anyone who was considered to have been opposed to changing the MMD and Republican Constitutions to make it possible for President Chiluba to seek re-election for a third term of office. The party cadres were so violent that even then Republican Vice President who enjoyed the personal protection of the state was forced out of the site of the convention, because the police could not guarantee his safety. As a result, all the MMD officials who had been opposed to making constitutional changes to allow President Chiluba to seek a third term of office could not attend the Extra-Ordinary and Regular Conventions of the MMD held concurrently in June 2001.

In the UNIP intra-party violence has generally been between the pro-and anti-Francis Nkhoma factions. In general, those who have been opposed to the Presidency of the Francis Nkhoma have been harassing and attacking not only Francis Nkhoma (the elected President of UNIP), but those believed to have been supporting his presidency. As a result, Francis Nkhoma and his supporters have not been able to use Freedom House, the official UNIP Headquarters. Those who attempted to defy the anti–Francis Nkhoma faction, such as Muhabi Lungu, the Member of the Central Committee responsible for Finance were physically attacked, causing them actual bodily harm. More recently, Kenneth Ngondo, a longstanding senior member of UNIP and an aspiring Presidential Candidate at the recently held National Council designed to “legally” depose Francis Nkhoma as President of UNIP was attacked by UNIP cadres believed to be loyal to Tilyenji Kaunda, whom the party cadres wanted to go through the so-called elections unopposed. To avoid the wrath of the UNIP party cadres, Kenneth Ngondo and his supporters had to flee from the site of the UNIP National Conference. As a result,

Kenneth Ngondo could not file his nominations papers and contest the hastily organized elections., thereby allowing Tilyenji Kaunda to win the elections unopposed.

Reports of intra-party violence were also reported during the FDD Convention held in September 2001. The violence reported during the FDD convention was as a result of a boisterous aspiring FDD Presidential Candidate by the name of Eddie Phiri, whose campaign was centered on attacking the senior founder members of the FDD who had served as Cabinet Ministers in the MMD led Government until their falling out with President Chiluba over his attempts to run for an unconstitutional third term of office. Zulu's incessant attacks on the former MMD leaders did not, however, go well with some supporters of the former Ministers and those of the former Republican Vice President, Lieutenant General Christon Tembo. As a result, Phiri was attacked upon his arrival at Mulungushi International Conference Centre, where the FDD Convention was held. He was only saved from being beaten severely by the alert police and the Interim Publicity Secretary of the FDD, Fisho Mwale. The police could not, however, guarantee his safety. Phiri was, therefore, advised to leave the site of the convention. In consequence, he could neither file his nominations papers nor participate in the elections even as an ordinary voter.

There have also been reports of some former Member of Parliaments who did not support Christon Tembo's election as President of the FDD being threatened by some FDD cadres believed to be loyal to Lieutenant General Christon Tembo. Nevertheless, there have also been a very active FDD Pressure Group, which has been criticizing the election of Lieutenant General Tembo as the President and Presidential Candidate for the FDD in the 2001 elections, but there have been no reports of the members of the pressure group being attacked by anyone. Thus intra-party violence does not seem to be very deeply rooted in the FDD.

On the whole intra-party violence seems to be perpetrated by supporters of politicians whom are seen as de facto leaders of certain political parties. It has also largely aimed at intimidating alternative leaders to the de facto leaders.

Inter-party violence has not been as common as intra-party violence. In this regard, three major incidents of inter-party violence have been reported since July 2001. The first incidence was reported during the by elections held in July in Mkushi North, Chama and Chawama. The inter-party violence involved MMD Cadres, who were reported to have been attacking supporters of the opposition political parties.

The second and third incidences of inter-party political violence have both involved MMD cadres, who were reported to have attacked Michael Sata, the President of the Patriotic Front. He was attacked in the studio of radio Ichengelo in Kitwe, because the MMD cadres were incensed by his criticism of the MMD during a live phone in radio program. In the most third incidence, which also involved MMD party cadres and Michael Sata, the MMD cadres not only attacked Michael Sata physically, but also destroyed property in the studio, which is owned by the Diocese of Ndola of the Roman Catholic Church. Although Michael Sata lodged a complaint with the police and mentioned the individuals who attacked him and destroyed the property in the studio of radio Ichengelo, the police have not made any arrests. Failure to arrest or at least question the assailants of Michael Sata and the Radio Station by the police has raised questions about their neutrality and commitment to maintenance of law and order in a fair and impartial manner.

Citizenship Status of Parents of Presidential Candidates

One of the contentious constitutional amendments of 1996 restricted the presidency to Zambians whose parents were both born in Zambia or the so-called Zambians by descent. At the time of making this amendment, it was seen as being aimed at the former President of Zambia, Kenneth Kaunda, whose missionary parents were both born in neighbouring Nyasaland, as Malawi was then called. However, this piece of legislation has bearing on many other Zambians. In the context of the 2001 Elections, for example, Vice President Economic Kavindele has argued that the FDD President and Presidential Candidate, Lieutenant Christon Tembo could be disqualified on account of his parents having

descended from Malawi. Opponents of Lieutenant General Tembo within the FDD called also called on the National Management Committee of the party to identify an alternative candidate in the light of the allegations of Lieutenant General Tembo not being eligible. However, General Tembo has dismissed these accusations as baseless and advised his counterparts in the FDD to press on with the campaign, because he was Zambian and qualified to contest the presidency. Similar accusations were also leveled at the MMD Presidential Candidate, Levy Mwanawasa by Michael Sata, the President of the Patriotic Front. However, the supporters of Mwanawasa have dismissed the allegations as false and pointed out a number of people who are still alive who were related to Mwanawasa's parents who do not have any connections with any other country.

In the wake of the accusations and counter accusations of some Presidential Candidates not being third generation Zambians, many people have come to the conclusion that the demand to have Presidents of Zambia who were at least third generation Zambians was divisive and unnecessary. In this regard, it has been argued that what counts most is one's contribution to the country rather the original citizenship of one's parents. Whether this sentiment has acquired enough support to warrant change of the constitution with regard to the qualifications of the Presidential Candidate remains to be seen.

VOTER EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

The major institutions and organizations involved in the education of voters in readiness for the 2001 Zambian General Elections are Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ), Foundation for Democratic Process (FDP) and National Organization for Civic Education (NOCE). In addition to these principal organizations, Women for Change, Law Association fo Zambia, Zambia Episcopal Conference, Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia and Christian Council of Zambia have taken various initiatives aimed at empowering the Zambian voters through active participation in democratic elections. The rest of the report discusses the strategies and issues involved in voter education in Zambia.

ECZ and the 2001 voter education

Sensitization and education of voters about voting practices in Zambia lies in the hands of ECZ in its capacity as the statutory body created for that purpose by the Zambian Government (cf. Electoral Act, 1973 amended 1991 and 1996; Republican Constitution, Article 76). This is also in line with the mission statement of ECZ, namely to “develop and maintain an effective and responsive electoral process in order to ensure the conduct of transparent, free and fair elections for the benefit of the people of Zambia” (2000 Annual Report Electoral Commission). Various activities falling under voter education have been initiated by ECZ so far. These include working in direct collaboration with different political parties, which constitute the political foundation of the nation over issues ranging from choice of presidential candidates, registration of voters and provision of information about election related activities. The ECZ has consequently among other things commissioned the playwright Kabwe Kasoma to direct theatrical performances involving dozens of actors and actresses on the elections related themes. It is an open secret that election time can bring about conflict and accentuate existing divisions in the community. Corrupt practices such as giving false information, offering gifts and other forms of bribery cannot be ruled out during the electoral period. In view of this threat to the conduct of proper elections, ECZ is justified in its anti-corruption or free-and-fair-elections crusades.

Apart from drama, ECZ employs various techniques aimed at educating the voters in the country about the value of democracy and the need to cast votes on voting day. One such technique is the presence of officials of ECZ at different forums where the spirit of good governance is cultivated. For instance, the Public Relations Department of ECZ conducts modest publicity campaigns on television and in newspapers to announce important dates in the election calendar, such as the registration of voters, meeting of political leaders with the ECZ, meeting with election monitors etc. The consultations between ECZ and political players in the country are thorough and exhaustive, thereby putting the country at the same level as other countries endowed with similar political character, personality and temperament within the African region.

The ECZ also maintains direct contact with Non Government Organizations (NGOs), which purport to represent the interests of the voters in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Charter. This is the reason that gives credence to the desire expressed by various NGOs such as FODEP, NOCE and Women for Change to promote a democratic culture in the country as a way to alleviate poverty among the vast majority of Zambians. As the election monitors become more active and numerous in the country, the ECZ has found it necessary to introduce fees for all election monitors seeking accreditation to different polling stations. The ECZ seem to believe that the introduction of fees would discourage individuals of questionable credibility and integrity from posing as election monitors and observers.

FODEP: Its mission and strategies

Unlike the ECZ, which depends on Government for budgetary allocations, FODEP has survived on donations from various international development agencies since inception in 1992 as a Voluntary Non-Governmental Organization under the Societies Act. Since the Zambian economy does not really meet the financial needs of its people as a poor developing country, FODEP gets its support essentially from the donor community e.g., European Union, US Agency for International development. Thanks to the generosity of the international community and the solidarity of the Zambian society, FODEP has built tentacles throughout the country with offices at every provincial center. Its National Secretariat is situated in Lusaka, the Zambian capital itself, FODEP also maintains a full-time staff, who include secretarial and qualified program managers. FODEP also has good communication facilities including telephones, computers and a fleet of vehicles. According to its mission statement, FODEP ought to act “As a watchdog over the democratization process and good governance in Zambia. It should also acts a pressure group on government (or any other institution or interest group) on fundamental issues relating to nurturing democracy” (p.1 *FODEP Monitors’ Manual for 2001 General Elections*).

For the 2001 Zambian General Elections, FODEP has been holding regular meetings with people interested in serving as volunteers to monitor elections. To make the election

monitoring exercise effective, the volunteers have received training in various aspects of electoral practice. The trainers consist of individuals who have served as election monitors not only in Zambia, but the region as a whole. Most of the trainers have, for example, been monitors in countries ranging from Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe to Kosovo and East Timor. The officials of FODEP have thus acquired experience and expertise in monitoring elections. In consequence, it is not easy to challenge FODEP even when it displays zeal and an exaggerated air of self-importance. However, FODEP also supports nearly the entire spectrum of activities associated with elections including such diverse activities as facilitating voters registration, monitoring awareness campaigns; training of trainers for election monitoring. FODEP is also involved in the provision of civic and voter education at the community level. During the 2001 Elections FODEP is involved in raising civic and political awareness through the media. It would also be involved in monitoring the political campaign, polling, and counting the election results (p.2 *FODEP Monitors' Manual for 2001 General Elections*).

Without necessarily placing recognized universal centers of learning and enlightenment above FODEP and other NGOs, it is the finding of the present study that in matters of voter education in poor developing countries such as Zambia, the role of the national university needs to be strengthened. It is creating a dangerous precedent to force the electorate to listen to the voices of election monitors of dubious qualifications and experience at the expense of highly qualified social scientists and technocrats with in-depth knowledge of the issues at hand. It is therefore surprising that the expertise available in the University of Zambia is not extensively used in election issues ranging from voter education to analysis of election programs and policies.

NOCE: Between Secrecy and Government Advocacy?

The only NGO in Zambia involved in civic education without enjoying a relatively high level of community support and sympathy is NOCE. Unlike FODEP, which has built a network of sympathizers among people fighting for the development of good governance through out the country, NOCE is looked at scornfully because it is, wrongly or correctly,

perceived as a government surrogate. How did NOCE end up with such a negative image in the eyes of the people? Is it too late for NOCE to transform its bad image into a more positive image? The trouble with NOCE lies in the lack of managerial capability at various levels. Although some officials at NOCE are clearly doing a highly commendable job, their efforts fall on hard ground because some of the basic ingredients of good management are missing. Take for instance the creation of an effective secretariat with reception services, telephones and fax machines, as well as computers and appropriate transport. This level of material and human resources is not available at the NOCE premises. Promises are not respected, phone calls are not returned, discussions are held openly without regard to the feelings and status of the visitors to the premises as if suspicion and secrecy have been mixed up and as if the technology to do the job was not available.

Before any claim to represent the interests of the Zambian people can be made, it is essential to instill a sense of dignity and integrity in the reception of all the visitors to NOCE premises, regardless of previous experiences. It serves no purpose to avoid university professors and researchers from various walks of life when the same organization exists to assure and re-assure the people that democracy is a worthwhile investment. Part of the problem lies in the fragmentation and suspicion with which organizations involved in the promotion of democracy view each other. Some form of working relationship, however, ought to be established between these organizations. They should in particular work with the ECZ as their partner. Furthermore, there should be no room for secretive organizations in the promotion of democracy.

The Role Of The News Media in the 2001 Zambian Elections

This section provides a brief analysis of the role of the news media in the 2001 Zambian Elections. It also provides a general overview of the Zambian news media.

Zambia has both print and electronic news media. The former consists of two daily newspapers, which are Government controlled and owned and about three main private

newspapers. Of these one is owned and controlled by consortium of Christian Churches, while the other is owned by a number of private individuals and a Non Governmental Organization respectively.

The electronic media consists of the State-Owned Television and Radio Stations, as well television and radio stations controlled and owned by religious organizations. Those who can afford satellite television are also able to access the international television broadcasts, particularly the Cable News Network (CNN) and the British Broadcasting Corporation Programs. The latter, however, hardly cover the 2001 Zambian Elections and in that sense hardly play any role. Besides, they are accessible to only a few people, particularly those who can afford to subscribe to the satellite television companies, such as M-Net and CASAT. The former transmits digital programs, while the latter transmits analogue programs.

The Zambian news media is extremely polarized as far reporting political events and activities is concerned. The Government owned media thus tends to be biased towards the ruling political party, while the privately owned reports more favorably about the opposition political parties than about the ruling political party. This extremely polarization of the news media makes it difficult for analysts not familiar with the people and the country to effectively assess the political mood in the country. The ruling political party is, however, covered more often by both the Government and privately controlled news media.