HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION-ZAMBIA
2026 GENERAL ELECTION REPORT



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and the Human Rights Commission Act, No. 4 of 2024

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ACRONYMS

ECES	European Centre for Elections Support
ECZ	Electoral Commission of Zambia
EU EOM	European Union Election Observer Mission
EWER	Early Warning and Early Response
HRC	Human Rights Commission - Zambia
NHRI	National Human Rights Institution
NPA	National Prosecution Authority
NRPUP	National Restoration Party for Unity and Progress
PR	Proportional Representation
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UPND	United Party for National Development
VAWE	Violence Against Women in Elections
ZNBC	Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Human Rights Commission - Zambia ("the Commission") monitored the human rights environment during the country's General Election held on 13 August 2026. The monitoring covered the pre-election, election-day and post-election periods, with the reporting cut-off date of 30 September 2026. The monitoring focused on respect for human rights, particularly the right to vote and participate in public affairs, together with equality and non-discrimination, freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and association, liberty and security of the person, access to information, equal protection of the law and access to effective remedies.

The Commission implemented an election preparedness plan, revitalised its Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) case management system, operated an Election Situation Room and received complaints through its offices and toll-free line 8181. Further, the Commission deployed fixed and roving monitors, visited police stations and detention facilities, and engaged the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ), the Zambia Police Service, political parties and other stakeholders. Approximately 175 monitors were deployed to constituency and district totalling centres and the National Results Centre. Commissioners and selected members of staff received national accreditation to access polling stations and results centres across the country.

Voting and counting proceeded in an orderly manner at most polling stations monitored. Several operational challenges were resolved through timely intervention and coordination, including extensions of voting hours following delayed opening, provision of missing polling materials and resolution of disputes at some polling and totalling centres. The Commission also observed socioeconomic rights concerns at some polling facilities, including inadequate lighting, water and sanitation, which affected the dignity, health and wellbeing of voters and polling staff.

However, the wider electoral environment was affected by incidents of political violence and intimidation, destruction of campaign materials, disruption of campaign activities, allegations of sexual coercion during candidate-adoption processes, and sexist and intimidating online content targeting women. The Commission also observed accessibility barriers affecting persons with disabilities and other voters requiring additional support, disputes at polling and totalling centres, weaknesses in the transparency and verifiability of aspects of results management, and election-related arrests and detentions. These concerns affected, among other rights, participation in public affairs, freedom of expression and association, equality and non-discrimination, security of the person, access to information and access to effective remedies.

The Commission's monitoring demonstrates that the credibility of elections depends not only on polling and the declaration of results, but also on the protection of human rights throughout the electoral cycle. Citizens must be able to campaign, access information, vote, observe electoral processes, seek remedies and express political views safely, freely and without discrimination.

This Report recommends stronger accountability for electoral violence and other violations; consistent and impartial enforcement of the Electoral Code of Conduct; transparent and verifiable results and custody-management systems; protection of the

due process of the law in election-related arrests and prosecution; access to justice and courts; accessibility for persons with disabilities and other voters requiring additional support; and measures to promote the equal and meaningful participation of women, youth and other underrepresented groups. It is further recommended that stronger mechanisms be created and implemented for equal access to public media, timely access to electoral information, and formal referral and feedback mechanisms among responsible institutions. Finally, it is recommended that sustainable financial resources be allocated to the Commission to strengthen its monitoring, case-management and EWER functions.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Commission is an independent National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) established under Article 230 of the Constitution of Zambia. Its mandate includes promoting and protecting human rights; investigating allegations of human rights violations and maladministration; recommending measures to prevent, address and remedy violations; undertaking research and civic education; and facilitating the resolution of human rights disputes through mediation, negotiation and conciliation. Its functions and powers are further provided for under the Human Rights Commission Act, No. 4 of 2024. The Commission also exercises statutory oversight and appellate functions under the Access to Information Act, No. 24 of 2023.

The General Election in Zambia was held on 13 August 2026. Elections are not merely administrative processes for selecting political representatives but are a fundamental means through which citizens exercise their right to participate in public affairs, choose their representatives and determine the governance of their country. Meaningful electoral participation requires an environment in which political rights and related freedoms are respected, protected and enjoyed without discrimination, intimidation or undue restriction. In the fulfilment of its constitutional and statutory mandate, the Commission monitored the electoral process from a human rights perspective, covering the pre-election, election-day and post-election periods. For purposes of this Report, the analysis draws on relevant electoral developments from the year 2025 and Commission monitoring and interventions undertaken during the 2026 electoral period, with the reporting cut-off date of 30 September 2026.

The monitoring examined both the conduct of the electoral process and the broader environment in which citizens, candidates, political parties, electoral officials, observers, journalists and civil society organisations exercised their rights and performed their respective roles. It considered, among other matters, political participation, equality and non-discrimination, freedom of expression, assembly and association, security of the person, access to information, accessibility, liberty, due process and access to effective remedies.

This Report presents the Commission's observations, interventions, findings and recommendations. It acknowledges positive human rights developments, identifies human rights concerns and institutional weaknesses, and proposes measures for corrective action. The Report is purposed to promote accountability, effective remedies,

institutional learning and reforms that strengthen respect for human rights and support inclusive, accessible, free, fair, transparent and credible elections in Zambia.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE MONITORING EXERCISE

The Commission undertook the monitoring exercise to assess and report on the extent to which human rights and fundamental freedoms were respected, protected and fulfilled throughout the electoral process; to monitor, verify and respond to alleged violations and emerging risks; and to identify measures required to strengthen human rights protection and effective remedies. Specifically, the exercise sought to:

i. Assess respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the electoral cycle;

ii. Monitor the exercise of the rights to vote and participate in public affairs without discrimination, intimidation or violence;

iii. Identify and respond to early warning signs of electoral conflict and human rights violations;

iv. Monitor the conduct of law-enforcement agencies, election officials, political parties, candidates and their supporters;

v. Receive, verify and investigate election-related complaints and facilitate access to appropriate remedies, while referring non-human rights matters to other relevant institutions;

vi. Assess the participation in, and accessibility of, the electoral process for women, youth and persons with disabilities;

vii. Document human rights-based lessons and make recommendations for legal, policy, administrative and operational reforms; and

viii. Monitor the legal and policy environment and its impact on the exercise of human rights during the electoral period.

3. LEGAL AND NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK

This section outlines the legal and normative framework under which the Commission conducted the election monitoring:

3.1 Domestic Framework

The Constitution of Zambia provides the principal legal foundation for democratic elections and the protection of electoral rights. Article 46 guarantees every citizen who has attained the age of eighteen years the right to register as a voter and to vote by secret ballot. Article 56(1) provides for the holding of general elections in accordance with the constitutional electoral cycle.

The right to vote is closely connected to other constitutional rights and freedoms necessary for meaningful participation in the electoral process. These include the rights to liberty and security of the person, protection of the law, freedom of expression, assembly and association, equality and protection from discrimination, and access to information. These rights must be respected, protected and fulfilled throughout the pre-election, election-day and post-election periods.

Article 230 of the Constitution establishes the Human Rights Commission and mandates it, among other functions, to promote and protect human rights, investigate allegations of human rights violations, recommend effective measures to prevent and remedy violations, and facilitate the resolution of human rights disputes. This mandate provides the constitutional basis for the Commission's monitoring of elections from a human rights perspective.

The broader domestic legal framework governing elections and related human rights obligations includes the Constitution of Zambia, as amended by the Constitution of Zambia (Amendment) Act, No. 13 of 2025; the Human Rights Commission Act, No. 4 of 2024; the Access to Information Act, No. 24 of 2023; the Electoral Process Act, No. 35 of 2016; the Electoral Process (Amendment) Act, No. 12 of 2026; and the Electoral Code of Conduct. It also includes applicable legislation governing criminal procedure, public order, online conduct and the rights of persons with disabilities.

Together, these constitutional and statutory provisions establish the standards against which the Commission assessed the conduct of the ECZ, law-enforcement agencies, political parties, candidates, media institutions and other electoral stakeholders, and monitored the protection of human rights before, during and after the 2026 General Election.

3.2 Regional and International Standards

The Commission's assessment was also informed by the regional and international human rights obligations to which the country is a party, and by other recognised standards governing democratic elections. Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognises the right of every person to participate in the government of their country, directly or through freely chosen representatives, and affirms that governmental authority must be based on the will of the people, expressed through genuine and periodic elections.

Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights guarantees every citizen the right and opportunity, without discrimination or unreasonable restriction, to participate in public affairs and to vote and be elected in genuine periodic elections conducted by universal and equal suffrage and secret ballot. Article 13 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights similarly guarantees every citizen the right to participate freely in the government of their country in accordance with the law.

The assessment also took account of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, particularly its requirements concerning women's equal participation in political and public life, and the Convention on the Rights of

Persons with Disabilities, which requires States to guarantee persons with disabilities political rights and the opportunity to enjoy them on an equal basis with others.

The Commission further drew upon the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance and the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections. These instruments promote regular, free, fair, transparent, credible and peaceful elections; equal and inclusive participation; political tolerance; impartial electoral administration; access to information; freedom of expression, assembly and association; and accessible and effective mechanisms for resolving electoral disputes.

The United Nations Paris Principles relating to the status of National Human Rights Institutions ("the Paris Principles") also informed the Commission's approach. The Paris Principles require NHRIs to operate independently, impartially and effectively under a broad mandate to promote and protect human rights. These principles reinforce the Commission's role in independently monitoring the electoral environment, documenting alleged violations, engaging responsible authorities and recommending corrective measures and institutional reforms.

In applying these standards, the Commission assessed restrictions on electoral rights and related freedoms against applicable principles of legality, legitimate purpose, necessity and proportionality. It also considered State obligations to prevent and respond to electoral violence and intimidation, protect persons exercising political rights, investigate credible allegations of human rights violations and ensure access to justice and effective remedies.

3.3 Recent Electoral Law Reforms

The 2026 General Election was conducted within a legal framework that had undergone significant reforms in the period preceding the election. Of particular relevance are the Constitution of Zambia (Amendment) Act, No. 13 of 2025 and the Electoral Process (Amendment) Act, No. 12 of 2026. The Commission considered these reforms insofar as they affected political participation, representation, equality, accessibility, voter information and the administration of the electoral process.

3.3.1 Constitution of Zambia (Amendment) Act, No. 13 of 2025

The Constitution of Zambia (Amendment) Act, No. 13 of 2025 ("Amendment Act No. 13 of 2025") introduced substantial changes to the composition of the National Assembly and the electoral systems governing parliamentary and local government elections.

Enacted on 18 December 2025, Amendment Act No. 13 of 2025 introduced a mixed-member electoral system for elections to the National Assembly and local government. Under this system, Members of Parliament representing 226 constituencies are elected through the first-past-the-post system, while an additional 40 seats are allocated through proportional representation to 20 women, 15 youths and five persons with disabilities. A similar mixed-member system applies to councils, combining the direct election of mayors, council chairpersons and ward councillors with proportional

representation for designated groups. The distribution of the reserved seats under proportional representation is based on the number of votes obtained in the presidential election. The procedures governing the preparation and submission of party lists, candidate nominations and allocation of seats are prescribed by the Electoral Process (Amendment) Act, No. 12 of 2026.

Amendment Act No. 13 of 2025 increased the number of constituency-based seats in the National Assembly from 156 to 226, resulting in the creation of 70 additional constituencies. It also increased the maximum number of Members of Parliament nominated by the President from eight to 11. The increase in the number of constituencies had implications for political participation, voter information and effective representation because voters, candidates and political parties needed timely and accessible information on the revised constituency structure, boundaries and polling arrangements. Future boundary changes should be accompanied by timely public information, stakeholder consultation and voter education.

The distribution of proportional representation seats at the local government level is prescribed in the Electoral Process (Amendment) Act, No. 12 of 2026 discussed below.

The proportional-representation framework both at the parliamentary and local government levels has significant human rights relevance, particularly in relation to equality, non-discrimination and the right to participate in public affairs. By providing designated seats for women, youths and persons with disabilities, the framework creates an institutional mechanism for enhancing the participation and representation of groups that may otherwise be under-represented in elected local governance structures. Its effectiveness depends on transparent implementation, accessibility and the meaningful participation of the designated groups in local decision-making.

3.3.2 Electoral Process (Amendment) Act, No. 12 of 2026

The Electoral Process (Amendment) Act, No. 12 of 2026 (“Amendment Act No. 12 of 2026”) was enacted on 15 May 2026. The Act amended the Electoral Process Act, No. 35 of 2016 to provide procedures for implementing the electoral reforms introduced under Amendment Act No. 13 of 2025, including provisions relating to voter registration, candidate nominations, proportional representation, electoral administration, voting, counting and enforcement of the Electoral Code of Conduct.

3.3.2.1 Voter Registration and Inspection

Amendment Act No. 12 of 2026 allows registered voters to inspect the register electronically during a period determined by the ECZ. It also amended section 17(1) of the principal Act by reducing the prescribed period within which a registered voter may object to an error or omission in the provisional Voters Register from 90 days to 14 days.

From a human rights perspective, the shortened objection period places greater importance on timely access to voter information and effective public notification. However, the reduction of time for voters and stakeholders to identify and correct errors or omissions may affect the effective exercise of the right to vote and the

principle of equal participation. The Commission therefore considers that voter registration and inspection arrangements should provide sufficient time for voters and stakeholders to identify, challenge and correct inaccuracies before polling.

3.3.2.2 Candidate Nominations

Amendment Act No. 12 of 2026 introduced an adoption certificate as a mandatory nomination document for candidates sponsored by political parties. The certificate must be signed by the president and secretary-general, or, in the absence of the secretary-general, the president and the deputy secretary-general of the sponsoring political party registered with the Registrar of Societies and serves as formal confirmation that the candidate has been duly adopted and sponsored by that party. This requirement does not apply to independent candidates.

The Commission considers this provision relevant to political participation and freedom of association because nomination requirements should be applied transparently and consistently and should not create unreasonable barriers to participation in public affairs. The provision should, however, be analysed within the context of the law regulating the registration of political parties, which gives broad powers to the Registrar of Societies, a government appointee, to ensure that it does not disadvantage opposition political parties from adopting their preferred candidates.

3.3.2.3 Proportional Representation

The Amendment Act, No. 12 of 2026 prescribes specific requirements for the preparation and submission of party lists for proportional representation seats in the National Assembly and councils. Under section 36C (1), a political party is required to submit its party list within seven days after the distribution of seats in accordance with section 36B. Where a political party fails to submit its party list within the prescribed period, section 36C (9) requires the Electoral Commission of Zambia to redistribute the vacant seat to another political party that qualifies for a seat under the prescribed allocation formula. In addition, section 36C (10) provides that the votes obtained by the presidential candidate of the defaulting political party shall not be considered in the distribution of seats.

For the National Assembly, section 36D requires a participating political party to submit separate party lists for women, youths and persons with disabilities, corresponding to the number of seats obtained by that party in each category. A party list for youths must contain candidates who qualify as youths for the entire duration of the term of Parliament. A party list for persons with disabilities must contain candidates representing different classes of disability, and each candidate on that list must possess a certificate of registration issued in accordance with the Persons with Disabilities Act.

At the local government level, section 36E prescribes the calculation and distribution of proportional representation seats among women, youths and persons with disabilities. The number of proportional representation councillors is calculated by reference to eighteen per cent of the constituency-based seats in the National

Assembly, subject to the statutory provisions governing minimum representation and the distribution of seats among the designated categories. Under section 36F, a political party must submit separate party lists corresponding to the number of seats obtained by that party in each category. Youth candidates must qualify as youths throughout the term of the council, while party lists for persons with disabilities must reflect different classes of disability and include candidates holding the prescribed registration certificates.

These provisions have direct relevance to equality, non-discrimination and inclusive political participation. The allocation of proportional representation seats to women, youths and persons with disabilities establishes a legal mechanism intended to strengthen the representation of groups that may otherwise be under-represented in elected decision-making. The requirements concerning youth eligibility and the representation of different classes of disability are relevant to the meaningful inclusion of these groups. The Commission considers that transparent party-list preparation, submission, verification and allocation are important to public confidence in the electoral process and the effective enjoyment of political rights.

3.3.2.4 Human Rights Implications of the Electoral Law Reforms

The Commission considers that the 2026 electoral reforms should be assessed against their practical impact on the enjoyment of political rights. In particular, future reviews should examine whether the revised constituency structure and proportional representation system enhance equality and inclusion; whether voters and candidates receive timely and accessible information on the new arrangements; whether party-list processes are transparent and accessible; and whether women, youths and persons with disabilities are able to participate meaningfully in electoral and decision-making processes.

The Commission further recommends that future electoral reforms be accompanied by timely public information, adequate voter and candidate education, clear implementation guidelines, stakeholder consultation and sufficient institutional preparation. These measures are important to ensure that changes to the electoral framework strengthen, rather than impede, the effective exercise of political and electoral rights.

4. INSTITUTIONAL PREPAREDNESS

In preparation for the 2026 General Election, the Commission engaged stakeholders, provided human rights training to law enforcement personnel, conducted public education, strengthened its complaints-handling mechanisms and revitalised its Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) case management system.

On 18 June 2026, a Commonwealth-supported assessment and training programme on election monitoring and reporting was conducted for Commissioners and selected staff members. With technical support from the United Nations Development

Programme (UNDP) Deepening Democracy Project, the Commission also trained Human Rights Champions in election monitoring.

Further support was provided through the European Union-funded Strengthening Democracy and Electoral Governance Project in Zambia (PRO DEM Zambia), implemented by the European Centre for Electoral Support (ECES). This included the deployment of an Integrated Human Rights Case Management and Information System, a new server and system upgrade, and the procurement of mobile phones for Human Rights Champions to facilitate election monitoring. ECES also supported rights-based conflict prevention, community dialogue, peaceful political participation and the mitigation of electoral violence. In addition, it facilitated the Commission's participation in the Democracy Football Tournament, which incorporated human rights messages.

Together, these interventions strengthened the Commission's institutional and operational capacity to monitor human rights during the elections.

5. COMMISSION INTERVENTIONS AND INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION

(i) Development and implementation of an Election Preparedness Plan covering the full electoral cycle;

(ii) Deployment of approximately 175 monitors and national accreditation of Commissioners and staff;

(iii) Operation of the Election Situation Room and EWER mechanism;

(iv) Receipt of complaints through offices, field monitors and toll-free line 8181;

(v) Verification, investigation, mediation, conciliation, referral and follow-up;

(vi) Engagement with ECZ, police, prosecution authorities, political parties, civil society organisations, faith-based bodies, traditional leaders and disability stakeholders;

(vii) Engagement with regional, international and faith-based stakeholders, including the United Nations, ECES, Council of Churches in Zambia, Commonwealth Pre-election Assessment Mission, SADC Electoral Observation Mission and European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM), on the electoral environment, human rights concerns, peaceful participation and the post-election situation;

(viii) Independent monitoring and oversight of investigations into reported election-related human rights concerns, including the investigation into the killing of former Lunte Member of Parliament, Mutotwe Kafwaya;

(ix) Public statements on arrests, prolonged detention, court access, accountability and protection of children;

(x) Human-rights training, civic education and conflict-prevention engagement; and

(xi) Media engagement through radio, television and print outlets, including interviews, programmes and coverage of the Commission's election-related work.

The available records demonstrate the preventive value of real-time oversight. In several cases, rapid engagement helped restore access, clarify procedures or prevent further escalation. However, the Commission's effectiveness was constrained by logistical and human resources, incomplete reports, delayed institutional feedback and the scale of follow-up actions required after the election.

6. METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE

This section outlines the methodological approach adopted in this Report.

6.1 Scope of the Monitoring Exercise

The Commission's election monitoring exercise commenced in 2025 and continued through 30 September 2026, covering the pre-election period, election day on 13 August 2026, the management and announcement of results, and post-election developments.

The monitoring covered the following areas:

Phase	**Principal Focus**
Pre-election	The legal and political environment; candidate nominations; political rallies and campaign activities; voter registration; voter and civic education; hate speech; intimidation and violence; access to the media and information; institutional preparedness; and accessibility for women, youths, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups requiring additional support.
Election day and results	Accessibility of polling stations; opening and closing of polling stations; voting procedures; secrecy of the ballot; assistance provided to voters requiring support; lighting, water, sanitation and the general environment at polling facilities; conduct of security personnel and election officials; access for political party agents and observers; availability of election materials; counting and totalling of votes; management and announcement of

	results; and incidents requiring rapid intervention.
Post-election	Tensions and disputes arising from the results; political violence and public-order concerns; election-related arrests and detention; access to lawyers, families and the courts; compliance with due-process guarantees; complaints and investigations; access to effective remedies; and legal, administrative and institutional reforms arising from the election.

6.2 Deployment and Information Sources

The Commission drew information from several monitoring and verification channels to obtain a broad picture of the human rights environment throughout the electoral cycle.

Approximately 175 personnel participated in the Commission's monitoring arrangements, comprising 130 accredited Human Rights Champions, five Commissioners and 40 members of staff. The monitoring arrangements covered constituency and district collation or totalling centres, as well as the National Results Centre. Four Commissioners and three members of staff received national accreditation, enabling them to monitor polling stations and results centres across the country.

The Commission's provincial offices coordinated monitoring within their respective areas through fixed and roving teams. Human Rights Champions stationed in the districts were part of the 175 personnel and supplemented these efforts by observing developments at the community level and reporting incidents that required verification or intervention.

Information was also obtained from complaints submitted to the Commission's offices throughout the country and via the toll-free line 8181. The Commission also monitored human rights incidents reported by credible media institutions, subject to verification through the Commission's own monitoring and investigations. For instance, the Commission conducted several visits to police stations and detention facilities to verify reports of arrests and detention, establish the whereabouts and treatment of detainees, and assess compliance with constitutional and legal safeguards.

The Commission also engaged ECZ, Zambia Police Service, National Prosecution Authority, Drug Enforcement Commission, political parties and other relevant stakeholders. These engagements supported the verification of reported incidents, referral and follow-up of cases, clarification of institutional actions and, where possible, the resolution of emerging concerns.

During the monitoring exercise, the Commission also interacted with the Commonwealth Observer Group, the Electoral Commissions Forum of SADC (ECFSADC) Election Observation Mission, the European Union Election Observation Mission and other cooperating partners. These interactions provided opportunities to exchange general observations and experiences concerning the electoral process and monitoring activities, while each institution maintained the independence of its own mandate, methodology, findings and conclusions.

Additional information was drawn from field updates, case-management and follow-up records, and public reports. Information obtained through these sources was reviewed and cross-checked, where possible, before being used to inform the Report's findings and recommendations.

6.3 Verification and Evidential Caution

Reports received through the Situation Room and its reporting network were assessed and classified according to their nature, location, urgency, potential for escalation and human rights implications. These reports were subsequently categorised to facilitate monitoring, analysis, verification, investigation and appropriate response.

Unless otherwise stated, the inclusion of an incident in this Report does not necessarily mean that the allegation was independently verified or that a human rights violation was conclusively established. Rather, the data reflects reports and incidents brought to the Commission's attention during the period under review and should not be regarded as a comprehensive record of all election-related incidents.

6.4 Limitations

(i) Some reports contained incomplete information or unspecified locations and classifications;

(ii) Several matters required travel or further investigation and remained open at the time of reporting;

(iii) Feedback from referral institutions was sometimes delayed; and

(iv) The high volume of misinformation and disinformation during the electoral period posed verification challenges, as some claims required further checks to establish their source, location and factual basis before being relied upon in the Commission's analysis.

7. ELECTION SITUATION ROOM AND EWER FINDINGS

The Commission's Election Situation Room and Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) case management system provided a central mechanism for receiving, assessing and responding to information on emerging election-related human rights concerns. This section presents the reports received, emerging risks identified, verification and referral processes, and responses undertaken through these mechanisms during the electoral period.

7.1 Purpose and Operation

The Election Situation Room served as the Commission's central mechanism for coordinating election monitoring and managing information, referrals and responses. It received, recorded, analysed and, where possible, verified reports of election-related human rights concerns and facilitated appropriate follow-up by the Commission or referral to the relevant authorities.

The Situation Room complemented physical monitoring by enabling Human Rights Champions, provincial offices and field monitors across multiple provinces and districts to submit timely reports for assessment and action. It also supported the identification of emerging patterns and risks, the coordination of rapid responses, and the consolidation of information for the Commission's public statements, stakeholder engagements and post-election reporting. It also provided an institutional mechanism for receiving alerts, prioritising verification and documenting interventions, including the issuance of the Commission's Statements.

7.2 Statistical Overview

Summary of Election Monitoring Records

Overview of record status, assignment and priority

Indicator	Available figure	Interpretation
Total records	126 (100%)	Election-related records captured and validated within the selected reporting period.
Active records	93 (73.8%)	Most incidents remained under review or required further action before formal closure.
Terminal/closed outcomes	33 (26.2%)	These records had reached a final outcome and were formally closed.
Assigned records	92 (73.0%)	All records were assigned to the respective officers for review and appropriate action.
High or critical priority records	22 (17.5%)	These records required urgent attention and, where appropriate, escalation into formal cases.

Source: Election monitoring records for the selected reporting period.
Note: Percentages are rounded to one decimal place. Assignment and priority categories may overlap with record-status categories.

7.3 Categories

Recorded category	Number	Share of 126

Violence	37	29.4%
Voter intimidation	8	6.3%
Vandalism	7	5.6%
Electoral fraud	12	9.5%
Disinformation	6	4.8%
Misinformation	5	4.0%
Victimisation and discrimination	3	2.4%
Suppression of assembly	2	1.6%
Torture and inhuman treatment	1	0.8%

Restrictions	1	0.8%
Extrajudicial killing	1	0.8%
Violence against Women	3	2.4%
Other, unspecified or differently classified	40	32.0%

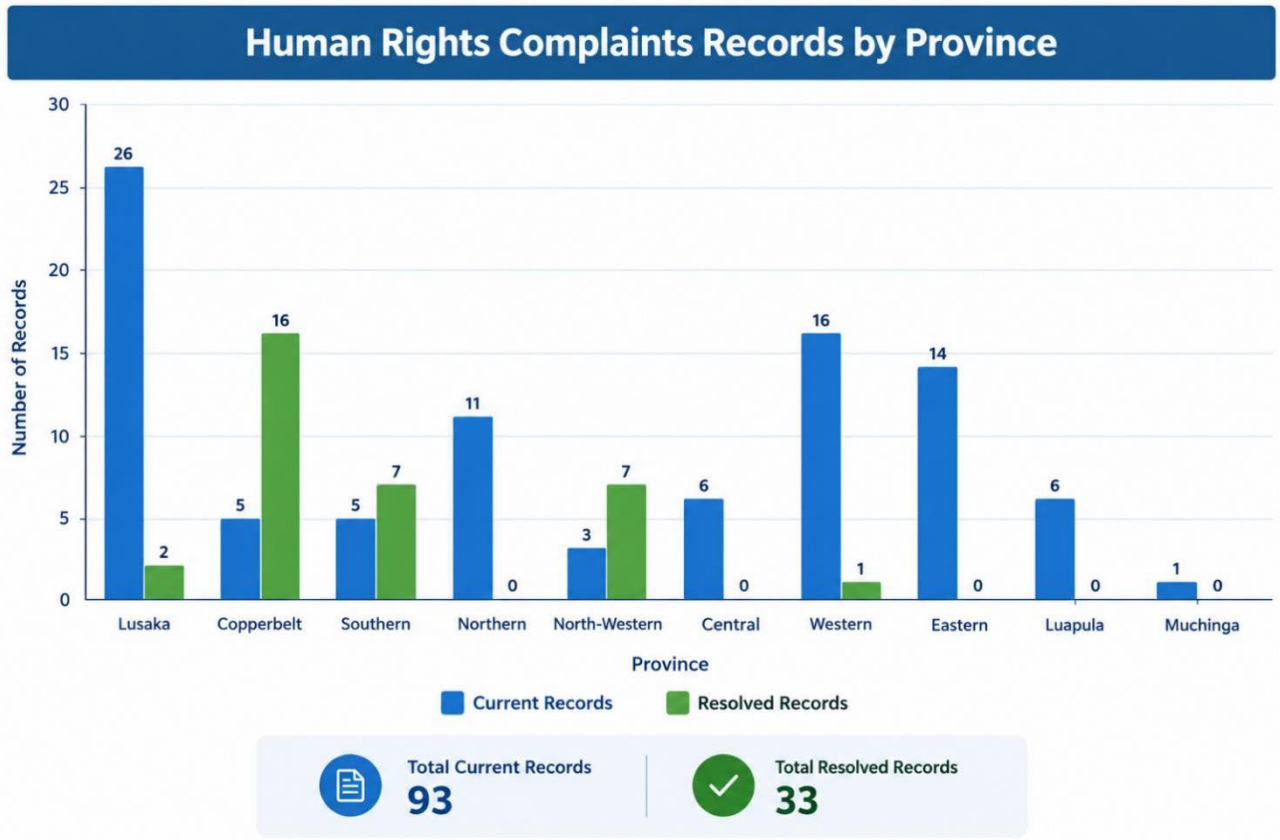
Other, Unspecified or Differently Classified Incidents

The 40 incidents recorded as "Other, unspecified or differently classified" could not be appropriately assigned to any of the categories within the Commission's existing incident-classification framework. Their inclusion in this category did not necessarily mean that the nature of the incidents was unknown or unclear. Rather, the available classification options did not adequately correspond to the matters reported.

These incidents included reports of voters' names missing from the voters' register, inadequate assistance for older persons at polling stations, voters allegedly being turned away despite arriving shortly before the close of polling, and the late delivery of ballot papers, among other election-related concerns.

The comparatively high number of incidents recorded under this category indicates the need to review and expand the Commission's classification framework to capture emerging and previously unclassified election-related concerns. A revised framework, supported by clear category definitions and consistent coding guidance, would improve the accuracy, consistency and analytical value of future incident recording and reporting.

7.4 Geographic Distribution



According to the geographical distribution, 93 incidents remain open, while 33 of the 126 incidents recorded in the system have been resolved. The remaining incidents are still under review and require continued monitoring and follow-up.

The geographic distribution shows that Lusaka Province recorded the highest number of incidents, with 28, followed by Copperbelt Province with 21 and Western Province with 17. Muchinga Province recorded the lowest number, with only 1 incident. All 126 incidents recorded in the system were assigned to specific provinces. Of these, 93 remain open and 33 have been resolved.

7.5 Response and Outcomes

The Commission responded to reported incidents through verification, referral, mediation, stakeholder engagement, continued monitoring and, where appropriate, investigation. Matters were referred to relevant institutions, including the Zambia Police Service, the ECZ, the Road Transport and Safety Agency, social welfare authorities and District Conflict Management Committees.

Several matters were resolved promptly through coordinated intervention. Outcomes included the restoration of access to campaign venues, extension of voting hours following delayed commencement of polling, provision of polling booths, clarification of voting and ballot-handling procedures, and police intervention to restore order and enable electoral processes to continue.

However, a substantial proportion of the recorded incidents remained open at the time of reporting. Some required additional information or verification; others were being handled by the police or other responsible institutions, while some required further inquiries, field visits or formal investigation by the Commission. Delayed feedback from referral institutions, incomplete documentation and resource constraints affected the Commission's ability to conclude and formally close matters within the reporting period. These challenges demonstrate the need for clearer referral and feedback mechanisms, systematic case follow-up and adequate resources for timely verification, investigation and documented closure.

8. ELECTORAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONTEXT

The 2026 electoral process took place in a highly competitive and polarised environment. During its preparatory work, the Commission identified several risks with potential human rights implications, including political violence, intimidation, political intolerance, hate speech, misinformation and disinformation, cyberbullying, arbitrary arrest and detention, selective enforcement of the law, violence against women in elections and barriers to the effective participation of women, youth and persons with disabilities.

The proportional-representation arrangements introduced for the 2026 election represented an important step towards more inclusive political representation. However, nomination data showed that women remained significantly underrepresented in candidacies for parliamentary and local government positions.

This demonstrated that, notwithstanding the legal measures adopted to promote inclusion, substantial barriers to equal political participation have persisted.

9. PRE-ELECTION HUMAN RIGHTS ENVIRONMENT

This section outlines the chronological pre-election human rights monitoring approach undertaken by the Commission starting from the launch of the election roadmap and other activities in the run-up to 13 August, 2026.

9.1 Launch of the 2026 General Election Roadmap

Section 28 of the Electoral Process Act, No. 35 of 2016 requires the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) to prepare and publish an election timetable setting out the principal stages of the electoral process. These include voter registration, inspection of the Provisional Register of Voters, nominations, the campaign period, polling day, voting hours and applicable deadlines. The Act also requires the election timetable to be published in the Gazette.

The ECZ launched the roadmap for the 2026 General Election on 19 July 2024 at the Mulungushi International Conference Centre in Lusaka. The roadmap set out key milestones and timelines for the electoral process and was subsequently revised as preparations progressed. The Commission observed continued engagement by the ECZ with political parties and other stakeholders on significant electoral developments.

Such engagement provided stakeholders with information on electoral processes and developments.

9.2 Voter Registration and Inspection of the Register

Article 46 of the Constitution guarantees every citizen who has attained the age of 18 years the right to be registered as a voter and to vote by secret ballot.

Following continuous voter registration conducted between 2021 and 2024, the ECZ undertook a mass voter-registration exercise from 13 October to 29 November 2025. The exercise targeted 3.5 million additional voters and was supported by 2,141 voter-registration kits distributed across the country.

The Provisional Register of Voters initially reflected 1,818,912 additional registrations. Verification and data-cleaning identified 101,439 duplicate applications and 1,173 records belonging to deceased persons. Following the removal of these 102,612 ineligible records, the certified register contained 8,786,300 voters, compared to 7,023,499 in 2021, an increase of 1,762,801, or approximately 25%.

Of the registered voters, 4,665,431 were women and 4,120,869 were men. Compared to 2021, the number of registered women increased by 914,391, or approximately 24%, while registered men increased by 848,410, or approximately 26%. According to ECZ registration data, the proportion of registered voters classified as youths declined from 54% in 2021 to 46% in 2026,

Inspection of the Provisional Register of Voters was conducted physically and online from 22 February to 8 March 2026. The Electoral Process (Amendment) Act, No. 12 of 2026 reduced the period for lodging objections concerning errors, omissions or registration details from 90 days to 14 days. The change was relevant to the Commission's assessment of the time available to voters to identify and seek correction of errors or omissions in the register.

The Commission identified challenges during the registration and verification processes, including limited civic education, breakdowns of registration equipment and power outages.

During the pre-election period, the Commission also received allegations that underage persons had been registered as voters. The allegations were not supported by any documentary evidence available to the Commission and are therefore not presented as established findings.

9.3 Political Violence and Intolerance

The Commission observed and received reports of political violence and intolerance during nominations and the campaign period. These included assaults, threats, disruption of campaign activities and destruction of campaign materials.

Incidents involving loss of life included:

- Mr. Humphrey Lwisha, a United Party for National Development (UPND) supporter, suffered fatal stab wounds during skirmishes between supporters of the UPND and the National Restoration Party for Unity and Progress (NRPUP) in Kaputa. Twelve (12) suspects were arrested and charged with murder.
- Mr. Stanley Sakala, a driver to Mr. Confucius Mweene, an independent candidate for the Magoye East seat, was killed in his sleeping quarters at a campaign campsite. Police investigations ruled out political motivation.
- Mr. Kwesha Ng'onga, a 25-year-old UPND supporter, was killed during a clash in Kaputa District allegedly involving suspected NRPUP cadres. Police arrested ten (10) people in connection with his death. On 3 July 2026, the ECZ Chief Electoral Officer indefinitely suspended all NRPUP campaign activities in Kaputa, citing the party's involvement in the violence. The suspension was lifted on 22 July 2026.

Other cases included reported incidents of violence during campaign activities in Western Province, in which a law-enforcement officer was reportedly injured, and the reported assault on musician Clifford Dimba, popularly known as General Kanene, during a campaign event in Shibuyunji District.

Campaign posters and billboards were reportedly torn down, burned or otherwise vandalised in several locations, including Solwezi, Lusaka, Mansa, Chifunabuli, Mwense, Mwansabombwe and Milenge. These incidents constituted further forms of political intolerance monitored by the Commission during the pre-election period.

9.4 Freedom of Assembly and Campaigning

Reported concerns included cancellation or disruption of rallies, competing campaign schedules, and allegations that candidates were intimidated or prevented from campaigning or filing nominations. These concerns had implications for the rights to freedom of assembly, association, expression and participation in public affairs.

In Mazabuka, alleged supporters of the ruling UPND reportedly attempted to prevent independent parliamentary candidate, Gary Nkombo, from filing his nomination at Mazabuka Municipal Council. Police intervened, and those involved were subsequently arrested and released. Eventually, Mr. Nkombo was able to successfully file his nomination.

In some cases, engagement through ECZ structures or District Conflict Management Committees helped restore campaign access or resolve scheduling disputes. The Commission emphasises that restrictions on peaceful assembly and campaigning should have a lawful basis and be applied consistently, without discrimination, and only to the extent necessary and proportionate to the legitimate objective pursued.

9.5 Intimidation and Inflammatory Communication

The Commission received early-warning reports concerning threats against voters and persons attending opposition political activities, bullying and intimidation of candidates, and online content encouraging violence or threatening adverse consequences in connection with election outcomes.

Where online content raised potential criminal or human rights concerns, the Commission considered or initiated appropriate referral and response measures within its mandate. The Commission emphasises that measures taken to combat incitement must not be used as a pretext for suppressing legitimate criticism, political debate or other forms of lawful expression.

On 20 March 2026, the Commission publicly expressed concern over reports alleging that aspiring female candidates were being asked to provide sexual favours in exchange for adoption by political parties. The Commission called on victims and persons or organisations acting on their behalf to report such allegations to the Zambia Police Service or the Commission to facilitate investigation and appropriate redress.

The Commission identified the reported conduct as a form of gender-based violence affecting women's rights to equality, non-discrimination, dignity and participation in public affairs.

The Commission also worked with other stakeholders and partners on violence against women in elections (VAWE), including awareness, prevention, reporting and response efforts. As at March 2026, the Commission had received three VAWE-related cases, all involving women aspiring for political office. The cases were reported from Central, Eastern and Lusaka Provinces and involved cyberbullying, intimidation, threats and gender-based harassment. The Commission continued to work with relevant partners to strengthen referral, support and response mechanisms.

In the same statement, the Commission condemned sexist commentary and the circulation of gender-based misinformation on social media platforms. Such content can damage women's credibility, reinforce discriminatory stereotypes and discourage or intimidate women from seeking public office. Depending on its nature and whether the applicable legal requirements are satisfied, such conduct may also fall within the scope of section 22 of the Cyber Crimes Act, No. 4 of 2025, relating to cyber harassment or humiliation.

These allegations are included in this Report as an institutional early-warning concern. Their inclusion does not constitute a finding that any identified person or political party engaged in criminal conduct.

10. ELECTION-DAY MONITORING AND OBSERVATIONS

This section presents the Commission's election-day monitoring and observations outcomes:

10.1 Voting and Polling Operations

Available monitoring records indicate that voting and counting proceeded in an orderly manner at most of the polling stations monitored. Polling generally opened and closed at or around the prescribed time, subject to extensions necessitated by delays or other operational challenges. The Commission nevertheless recorded specific operational and security-related challenges at some locations, as detailed below.

The Commission observed delayed opening of polling stations in several provinces. In Muchinga, only 4 of 11 monitors reported opening at 06:00 hours, compared with 3 of 17 in Luapula. Delays were also recorded in Western, Southern, Central, Lusaka and Eastern provinces, mainly due to late arrival of agents, security concerns, delayed transportation of ballot boxes and other logistical challenges. Delays ranged from 10 minutes to 1 hour 44 minutes, with Muchenje polling station in Central opening at around 08:00 hours. The Commission notes that stations that opened late generally extended voting beyond 18:00 hours to compensate for lost time.

Some operational challenges were resolved in real time. At North Park Polling Station in Chisamba, the late delivery of ballot papers was addressed by extending voting hours. At Katongo Polling Station in Mongu, missing voting booths were subsequently delivered.

10.2 Violence, Intimidation and Security Incidents

Voting and counting proceeded in an orderly manner at most polling stations monitored. However, the Commission recorded isolated incidents of violence, disorder and disruption that temporarily affected voting, counting or the announcement of results.

At Nkampumbu Polling Station in Isoka District, a physical confrontation shortly after polling commenced temporarily disrupted voting. Police arrived and used tear gas to restore order. The Commission could not independently establish the political affiliation of those involved. At Bwacha South, Central and North Totalling Centres in Kabwe, the announcement of results was temporarily suspended following disorder, with police using tear gas to disperse the crowd. At Solwezi South Constituency Totalling Centre, tensions arose following allegations of vote manipulation after an independent candidate was observed to be leading. In Petauke, a voter was reportedly manhandled by police for causing confusion at a polling station. At Malota Shaba Open Space in Livingstone and Mpezeni Park in Chipata, tensions arose after some voters were allowed to bypass queues, affecting orderly and equal access to voting.

These incidents affected, to varying degrees, the exercise of the rights to participation in the electoral process, personal security and equal access to voting. The Commission therefore underscores the obligation of security personnel and other actors to maintain law and order through necessary, proportionate and nondiscriminatory measures, while safeguarding the rights and dignity of voters, election officials, monitors and political participants.

10.3 Voter Verification and Polling Procedures

10.3.1 Verification and Identification

At the School of Continuing Education Polling Station in Mukuyu Polling District, Ndola Central Constituency, a voter reportedly attempted to proceed without producing a National Registration Card. A Zambia Police Service officer intervened and directed the voter to obtain the required identification before proceeding.

The Commission also observed uncertainty concerning voter verification and the validity or replacement of voters' cards. At Mount Makulu Polling Station in Chilanga District, cases involved voters presenting old voters' cards or reporting lost replacement cards. These observations highlighted the need for clear and consistent guidance to voters and polling officials on voter identification and the procedures applicable where voters' cards are lost, replaced or otherwise unavailable.

At Arthur Wina in Kabwata Constituency, some voters reportedly had their names in the electronic voter register but not in the physical register. The Commission observed that there was no clear guidance on resolving such discrepancies, and some affected voters reportedly abandoned their attempt to vote. This raised concerns regarding effective access to the right to vote and timely assistance in resolving voter-verification problems.

The Election Situation Room also received reports concerning mismatched voter information, voters being unable or not permitted to vote, the certification of polling agents, alleged possession of multiple National Registration Cards and misinformation about voting materials. Some matters were clarified or referred to election officials, while others could not be conclusively determined because the information available was insufficient. These observations underscore the importance of accessible and timely mechanisms through which voters can obtain clarification and seek assistance in resolving verification-related concerns.

10.3.2 Transparency in Polling Procedures

The Commission observed transparency measures at some polling stations, including announcements on the opening and closing of polling, showing of empty ballot boxes, voter verification and showing of ballots during counting. In Muchinga and Luapula provinces, all monitors reported that ballot boxes were displayed as empty, sealed and colour-coded before voting commenced. In Western and Eastern provinces, the process was also observed to be conducted transparently in the presence of observers and political agents. These measures supported transparency and access to electoral information.

At the School of Continuing Education Polling Station in Mukuyu Polling District, Ndola Central Constituency, monitors did not hear an announcement concerning the number of unused ballot papers. Political party agents were, however, permitted to photograph the sealed presidential ballot box.

At Sefula Secondary School Polling Station 01 in Western Province, the Presiding Officer reportedly asked monitors to sign the GEN 20 for presidential results before the count was concluded and before the number of votes had been entered. One monitor declined and requested to sign only after the results had been recorded. Following the count, a completed GEN 20 was presented for signature, but the earlier version was subsequently provided as the copy for monitors to record the results. The Presiding Officer reportedly explained that the later form contained errors. The incident raised concerns about the accuracy, transparency and integrity of the documentation of polling results.

The Commission emphasises that electoral records should be completed accurately and transparently, with monitors and political party agents able to verify the recorded results before signing or receiving copies of the relevant forms.

10.4 Accessibility and Assistance

10.4.1 Assisted and Priority Voting

The Commission observed arrangements for assisted and priority voting for persons requiring assistance, including persons with disabilities, older persons, expectant mothers, persons who were ill or physically frail, and voters requiring assistance because of limited literacy. In Muchinga, Luapula, Central, Eastern, Lusaka, NorthWestern and Western provinces, monitors generally reported that persons with disabilities, older persons and expectant mothers were accorded priority and assisted where necessary. ECZ guidance provides for persons with disabilities and other voters requiring assistance to be assisted by a friend, relative or Presiding Officer, and provides priority arrangements for persons with disabilities, older persons and expectant mothers.

At Christ Mission Assembly Polling Station in Lusaka Constituency, Lusaka Province, Commission monitors observed a person using a wheelchair being assisted by polling agents into the polling room due to the slightly elevated entrance. The voter was also allowed to proceed ahead of the queue. At Kashibo 01 Polling Station in Masaiti District, Copperbelt Province, persons with disabilities were assisted to vote and to place their ballot papers in the appropriate ballot boxes. At Mundawanga Basic School, Musamba Primary School and Mount Makulu polling stations, older persons, pregnant women, persons with disabilities and persons who were ill or physically frail were generally accorded priority and assistance where necessary.

Voters with visual impairments at Mundawanga Basic School and Mount Makulu polling stations were assisted by relatives or other persons of their choice. Some voters at Mundawanga Basic School reportedly declined to use the available Braille voting materials, indicating that they had not received prior training or familiarisation on their use**.** This highlights the need for voter education and practical familiarisation with accessible voting methods for both voters and polling staff, while respecting the voter's preferred form of assistance.

At one of the correctional facilities visited, a significant number of voters, including first-time voters and persons with limited literacy, appeared to require assistance. In one instance, a polling official appeared to assist a voter without clearly explaining the applicable procedure and safeguards. Assisted voting should protect the voter's dignity, voluntary choice and secrecy of the ballot. Inconsistent or poorly explained assistance arrangements may affect the effective exercise of the right to vote, particularly for voters who require assistance to participate.

The Commission further observed that voters accompanied by infants or young children were not consistently accorded priority. Although some Presiding Officers exercised discretion to assist them, the practice was not uniform and was occasionally challenged by other voters. Prolonged waiting periods exposed children to crowded

and, in some instances, unsuitable conditions and could discourage some caregivers from exercising their right to vote. Future election arrangements should provide clear guidance on priority arrangements for voters accompanied by infants or young children, considering the best interests and wellbeing of the child.

10.4.2 Physical Accessibility and Reasonable Accommodation

Physical accessibility of buildings used for elections was a recurring concern across the polling stations monitored by the Commission. The concerns included narrow entrances, lack of ramps, uneven ground, high verandas, inaccessible pathways and other physical barriers affecting persons with disabilities, particularly wheelchair users.

Specific concerns were recorded at Mununga Day Secondary School, Mfuwe Constituency, Shiwang'andu District, Muchinga Province, where the entrance was reportedly too narrow to comfortably accommodate persons using wheelchairs; Kanyonyo Primary School Hall Polling Station 01, Mongu Central Constituency, Mongu District, Western Province, where the entrance was not conducive to persons with disabilities; Peter Singogo Correctional Facility, Lusaka District, Lusaka Province, where polling rooms were reported to be congested and not readily accessible; and Chibolele Combined Polling Station, Chipulukusu, Ndola District, Copperbelt Province, which was reported to be inaccessible.

At Solwezi College of Education Polling Station, Solwezi District, North-Western Province, pathways were reported to be inaccessible to persons with disabilities, particularly wheelchair users. At Chainama, Munali Secondary School and Kaunda Square Primary School polling stations in Lusaka District, Lusaka Province, monitors reported insufficient attention to the needs of persons with disabilities, with no clearly designated officials to direct or assist older persons and persons with disabilities.

At Mount Makulu Primary School in Chilanga District and Munkolo Primary School polling stations in Lusaka Province, the polling streams were not labelled in clear and intelligible writing, causing confusion among voters. This made it more difficult for voters, particularly those requiring assistance, to identify the correct queues and polling streams.

The Commission notes that physical accessibility, clear identification of polling streams and appropriate assistance are important safeguards for the equal and effective exercise of the right to vote. Where polling facilities are physically inaccessible or adequate assistance is not available, persons with disabilities may face barriers to participating independently and with dignity.

10.5 Suitability of Polling Facilities, Supplies and Signage

The Commission observed that some facilities selected for polling were unsuitable or inadequately equipped. The principal concerns included overcrowding, insufficient lighting, inadequate access to water and sanitation facilities, shortages of essential polling materials, insufficient secrecy booths and unclear identification of polling streams.

In Muchinga and Luapula provinces, some polling stations had only one voting booth, contributing to congestion and slower voter flow. In North-Western Province, Solwezi College of Education reportedly had no voting booths, while at Kikombe Primary School each of the classrooms had only one booth despite long queues. In Western Province, some stations received only one booth, with desks improvised as voting booths at some locations.

Concerns regarding water, sanitation and lighting were recorded at several polling stations, including Showgrounds VIP Stand, Mandanga Combined School and Kanyonyo Primary School in Western Province, and Kashibo 01 and Mount Makulu in Copperbelt Province.

Shortages of essential materials were also reported. These included a shortage of the official 'Rejected' stamp at Mulwani Primary in Livingstone, delayed GEN 20 forms at Lubanga in Namwala, lack of ink pads at Mansa Teachers College and rejected ballots reportedly resulting from unstamped ballots at Kandundu in North-Western Province.

Clear identification of polling streams was also a recurring challenge. At Chibolele Combined and Kashibo 01 polling stations, there was no clear alphabetical labelling to guide voters to the correct streams. Similar concerns were recorded at Chainama Polling Station, where stream labels were not displayed in clear and intelligible writing. At Rainbow Primary Stream 2 in Southern Province, voters reportedly did not know where to queue, and no one directed them.

These conditions affected the efficiency and accessibility of polling and, in some instances, the dignity and wellbeing of voters and polling staff. Adequate facilities, essential materials, clear signage and reasonable accommodation are important safeguards for the effective exercise of the right to vote.

10.6 Security Presence and Conduct Around Polling Stations

At Kansenshi Secondary School Polling Station in Ndola District, the Commission observed a group of uniformed security personnel congregating near the polling station. Upon inquiry, the Commission was informed that they were members of the security services or special forces who were on duty and had come to exercise their right to vote.

Although their presence may have had a legitimate explanation, the congregation of uniformed security personnel near a polling station could be perceived by voters as intimidating or as undue influence, potentially affecting their sense of safety and the free exercise of the right to vote.

In Eastern Province, police recruits were reportedly deployed at some locations, including Katete, where confusion arose after one recruit affiliated with the ECZ was known in the community as a teacher. The situation reportedly caused confusion and almost resulted in unrest at Katete Primary School. In Central Province, at Mukando 01 in Chitambo District, police recruits were reportedly not registered at the polling station, causing confusion and tension.

The Commission emphasises that security personnel deployed around polling stations should be clearly identified, appropriately positioned and guided by clear rules that protect the neutrality of the polling environment. Security arrangements should maintain public order without creating fear, confusion or perceptions of undue influence, and should respect voters' rights to security, equal treatment and free participation in the electoral process.

11. RESULTS MANAGEMENT AND IMMEDIATE POST-ELECTION ENVIRONMENT

This section outlines the election day phase that focused on result management and other events that followed the close of voting.

11.1 Immediate Post-Election Environment

The immediate post-election period was characterised by disputes relating to counting and totalling, reports and allegations of discrepancies, disturbances at some totalling centres, and heightened public tension following the ECZ's temporary suspension of the counting and announcement of results on 14 August 2026.

The Commission publicly condemned the reported violence against electoral officials and theft of marked ballot papers. Such conduct endangered electoral officials, compromised the security and integrity of electoral materials, and threatened citizens' right to have every lawfully cast vote securely handled, counted and accounted for. The Commission called upon law-enforcement agencies to protect electoral officials and materials, promptly and impartially investigate the reported incidents, and ensure that those responsible were held accountable in accordance with the law.

Following the national suspension of the announcement of results, the Commission called upon the ECZ to provide clear, authoritative and regular public information on the reasons for and scope of the suspension, the areas affected, the measures being taken to address the security concerns and the anticipated timeframe for resuming the process. The Commission recognised the responsibility of the ECZ under section 67(3) of the Electoral Process Act, No. 35 of 2016, to respond to genuine security threats, but emphasised that any suspension or related restriction should be necessary, proportionate, time-bound and limited to the affected areas.

A further concern was reported regarding the disruption of activities at centres following the national suspension of the announcement of results. Information received by the Commission indicated that activities had stopped at some centres and that Commission monitors stationed at the Civic Centre in Lusaka left following the arrival of soldiers. The reported incident raised concerns regarding the security and continuity of the totalling process, as well as the ability of accredited observers and authorised oversight institutions to safely undertake their monitoring functions. The Commission considers that any deployment of security personnel at centres should be undertaken in a manner that maintains public order and security while ensuring that the lawful functions of electoral officials, monitors, observers and other authorised stakeholders are not disrupted.

Where security incidents were confined to particular constituencies or districts, the Commission encouraged the adoption of targeted measures to enable counting and the announcement of results to continue safely in unaffected areas. It further emphasised that timely and consistent official communication was essential to prevent an information vacuum that could fuel speculation and misinformation, erode public confidence and heighten political tension.

At Chifubu Totalling Centre in Ndola, engagement among the ECZ, the Zambia Police Service and political party representatives contributed to the resolution of disputes and enabled the electoral process to continue. In Kabwe, the Zambia Police Service restored order following the disruption, allowing the announcement of results to proceed.

These developments demonstrate the importance of transparent, verifiable and accessible results-management processes. Accredited political party agents, election observers and authorised oversight institutions should be afforded appropriate access to the relevant stages of counting, verification, totalling and the announcement of results. Electoral authorities should also adopt proportionate contingency measures that safeguard public safety without unnecessarily restricting access to information or disrupting the electoral process.

11.2 Monitoring of the National Results Centre

As part of its election-monitoring mandate, the Commission deployed accredited monitors to the National Results Centre to observe the verification, aggregation and announcement of election results. The monitoring focused on transparency and stakeholder access, the accuracy and verifiability of results, the operating environment, and the mechanisms for addressing disputes and alleged discrepancies.

The Commission observed that its accredited monitors, together with other domestic and international observers, were granted access to the results announcement room. The ECZ announced the results publicly and audibly, while the screen displaying the aggregation of results was visible to those present. The figures announced were also reflected in the cumulative national tally displayed at the Centre.

However, monitors and other accredited stakeholders were unable to observe and independently verify the entire results-management process. This is because they were not granted access to the verification room, where constituency results were verified before being publicly announced. Consequently, they could not ascertain whether signed constituency results forms were consistently used as the basis for the national tally or fully cross-check the announced figures against records obtained from the field. Allegations of discrepancies involving results from some constituencies were brought to the attention of monitors but could not be independently verified.

During the monitoring period, the results portal was not populated, making it difficult for monitors, observers, political party agents and the public to independently follow the aggregation of results. Monitors were also not permitted to ask questions or seek clarification immediately after results were announced. Concerns were further

recorded regarding delays in announcing results and adherence to the announced timetable.

Election officials at the National Results Centre were generally able to perform their duties without observed threats, harassment or interference. The Commission did not observe any interference with, or tampering with, the electronic systems and display screens used at the Centre.

Monitors also received a report that Mr. Enock Roosevelt Tonga, reportedly affiliated with the Tonse Pamodzi Alliance, was removed from the National Results Centre following an incident during the announcement of presidential results and was subsequently arrested. Public reports also identified Tonga as having been removed from the National Results Centre on 17 August 2026 and subsequently detained. The Commission monitored this incident as part of its post-election human rights monitoring and has yet to draw its conclusions.

Overall, the public announcement and display of results provided a measure of transparency. Nevertheless, significant stages of the verification and aggregation process took place outside the view of accredited monitors, observers and political party agents. This limited their ability to verify how constituency results were incorporated into the national tally, observe how alleged discrepancies were resolved and obtain timely clarification on matters arising during the process.

ECZ should ensure transparency throughout the results-management process, from constituency-level verification and national aggregation to the announcement and publication of results. Subject to appropriate security and procedural safeguards, accredited monitors, observers and political party agents should be afforded meaningful access to the relevant stages of the process. The timely publication of results, maintenance of a functional and regularly updated results portal, and establishment of clear procedures for raising concerns and obtaining clarification would strengthen accountability, verifiability and public confidence in the electoral process.

12. ARRESTS, DETENTION, VIOLENCE AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE

The Commission monitored the arrest and detention of at least 85 people in connection with the election and its aftermath. The allegations against them ranged from riotous behaviour and unlawful drilling to sedition, treason, murder and other offences. The seriousness of an alleged offence alone does not remove the State's obligations to ensure lawful arrests, prompt charging, access to legal counsel, judicial oversight and humane treatment in custody. The Commission's role in this regard was to assess whether the manner of arrest, duration and conditions of detention, treatment in custody, access to legal representation and family members, charging and court appearances, and decisions concerning police bond or bail complied with applicable constitutional and international human-rights standards.

The Commission publicly expressed concern about prolonged detentions, delays in bringing suspects before the courts, difficulties in establishing the whereabouts of some detainees, abrupt transfers between police stations, restricted access to lawyers

and family members, and delays in decisions on police bond or bail. The Commission accordingly continued monitoring these matters through visits to detention facilities, engagements with the responsible authorities and public advocacy. *(See Annex 1 for illustrative matters followed by the Commission)*

Article 13 of the Constitution of Zambia, Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and Article 6 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights protect the right to liberty and security of the person. Arrested persons must be promptly informed of the reasons for their arrest, brought before a court without undue delay, afforded access to legal representation and permitted appropriate contact with family members. Where continued detention has no lawful basis, they must be released. Election-related tension does not suspend these safeguards, nor does the seriousness of any alleged offence justify departure from due process safeguards.

The Commission also expressed concern about the closure of courts on 24 August 2026, which coincided with the final day of the constitutional period for filing a challenge to the presidential election results. Public reporting indicates that the closure affected the Constitutional Court, Supreme Court and High Court premises in Lusaka and other locations. Reportedly, the reason for the closure was officially communicated as security concerns. The courts subsequently reopened on 27 August, 2026. The human-rights concern in this regard is the effect of the interruption on access to justice, judicial remedies and the timely resolution of electoral disputes. The closure particularly affected persons in custody awaiting their first court appearance or seeking bail, as well as litigants requiring urgent judicial remedies in relation to electoral disputes.

In effect, the closure had implications for access to electoral dispute resolution, effective remedies and other human rights. While recognising the need to protect judicial officers, court users and court premises where genuine security threats existed, the Commission emphasised that any interruption of court services should be necessary, proportionate, time-bound and limited to the affected areas.

The judiciary should adopt contingency measures that protect judicial officers, court users and court premises while preserving access to justice. Where temporary closure of judicial premises may be unavoidable in limited circumstances, prompt alternative arrangements, including designated courts, duty judicial officers or other lawful mechanisms, should be established to ensure that arrested persons are brought before a court without undue delay and that urgent applications, including applications for bail and time-bound applications for election disputes, are processed and heard.

In the post-election period, the Commission investigated the alleged abduction and severe assault of Mr. Trust Kahale in Namwala District on 20 September 2026. Mr. Kahale reportedly sustained serious injuries after being attacked with machetes. The investigation also raised concerns about threats against individuals perceived to have supported independent candidates and the adequacy of the police response to those threats. The Commission is engaging the Zambia Police Service on the need for further investigations into the incident and related threats, as well as protective measures for

persons at risk. The Commission continues monitoring this matter for other possible legal interventions.

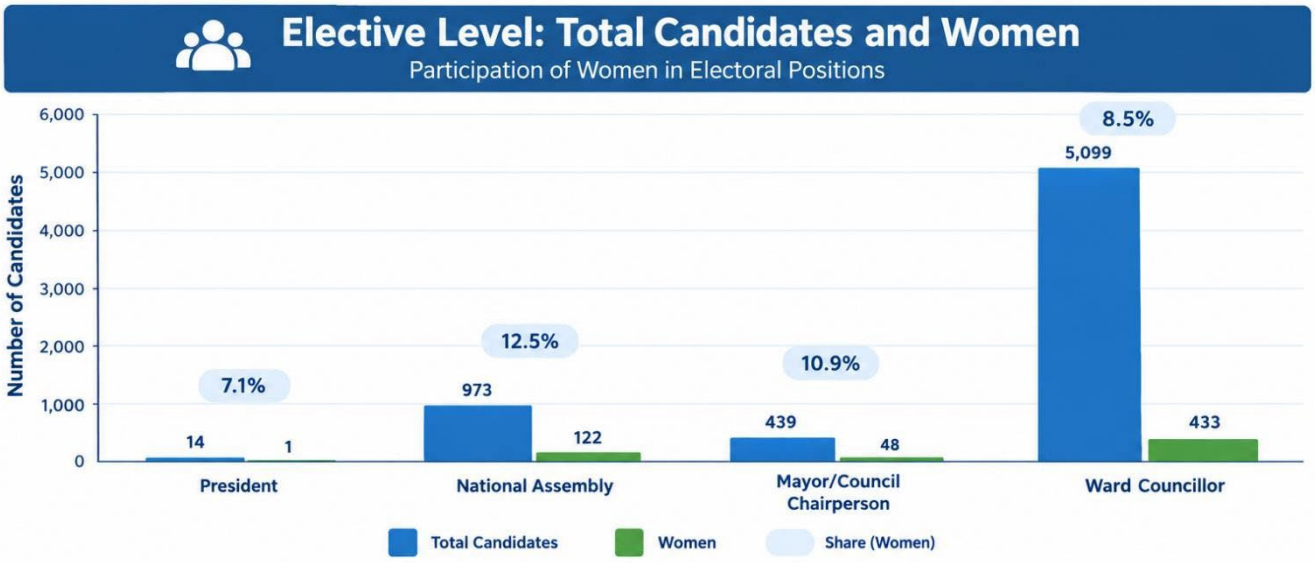
13. PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSION

This section addresses matters related to participation of women, youth, persons with disabilities (PWDs) and other vulnerable groups.

13.1 Participation of Women

Women remained substantially underrepresented at all levels of elective office. Of the 14 presidential candidates, only one was a woman, representing 7.1%. Available nomination data further indicated that women constituted 122 of the 973 parliamentary candidates (12.5%), 48 of the 439 mayoral and council-chairperson candidates (10.9%), and 433 of the 5,099 ward-councillor candidates (8.5%).

Following the election, 40 proportional-representation (PR) seats were filled, comprising 20 women, 15 youth and five persons with disabilities. Of the 40 PR seats, 26 were allocated to women.



Elective level	Total candidates	Women	Share
President	14	1	7.1%
National Assembly	973	122	12.5%
Mayor/Council Chairperson	439	48	10.9%
Ward Councillor	5,099	433	8.5%

Key takeaway: Women's representation ranges from **7.1%** (President) to **12.5%** (National Assembly), with an overall inclusion of **8.5%** at the Ward Councillor level.

13.2 Youth and Persons with Disabilities

The introduction of proportional-representation seats for youth and persons with disabilities constituted a positive measure towards more inclusive political representation. However, formal representation alone is insufficient to secure equal and meaningful participation in the electoral process.

Meaningful participation requires accessible nomination procedures, equitable opportunities within political parties, safe and inclusive campaign environments, information in accessible formats, appropriate transport arrangements, and polling premises and voting procedures that accommodate diverse needs. Reports of inaccessible polling facilities, inadequate assistance and unclear signage demonstrated that legal recognition and institutional commitments must be matched by consistent practical implementation, reasonable accommodation and the removal of physical, communication and procedural barriers.

13.2.1 Participation and Accessibility of Vulnerable Voters

The Commission observed both positive practices and continuing barriers affecting the participation of older persons, pregnant women, persons with disabilities, persons who were ill or physically frail and voters accompanied by infants or young children.

Although priority access and assistance were provided at several polling stations, these measures were not applied consistently. Physical barriers, inadequate signage, limited familiarity with Braille voting materials and inconsistent assisted voting practices affected the ability of some voters to participate independently and safely, with their dignity and the secrecy of their ballots protected.

The Commission further noted that voters accompanied by infants or young children were not consistently recognised as requiring priority assistance. Prolonged waiting periods could discourage their participation and expose both caregivers and children to crowded or otherwise unsuitable conditions.

These findings demonstrate that physical admission to a polling station does not, by itself, ensure equal and meaningful electoral participation. Future electoral planning should include accessibility audits, accessible infrastructure and information, reasonable accommodation, consistent priority-voting arrangements, appropriately trained polling staff and improved voter education on accessible and assisted-voting procedures. The corresponding measures are set out in the Recommendations section of this Report.

13.3 Equality and Non-Discrimination

Election management bodies, security agencies, political parties and other electoral stakeholders must ensure that no person is excluded from or disadvantaged in the electoral process on the basis of sex, disability, age, political opinion, ethnicity, economic status, geographical location or any other prohibited ground.

Discrimination may arise not only through formal restrictions but also through inaccessible procedures and facilities, unequal access to information and resources, intimidation, harassment and selective application of electoral rules. Targeted online abuse, threats and gender-based harassment may have a particularly chilling effect on women, persons with disabilities, youth and other underrepresented groups, discouraging them from standing for office, campaigning or participating in public debate. As at March 2026, the Commission had received three cases relating to violence against women in elections, involving cyberbullying, intimidation, threats and gender-based harassment.

Electoral institutions and political parties should therefore adopt effective measures to prevent and respond to discrimination, intimidation and abuse, while ensuring equal, safe and meaningful participation throughout the electoral process.

14. MEDIA, ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

Timely, accurate and accessible information is essential to informed political participation, electoral transparency and public confidence. The Commission monitored reports of misinformation and disinformation, inflammatory political speech, cyberbullying, online harassment and disputed claims concerning polling and results-management processes. At least one widely circulated claim alleging the detention of a political figure was investigated and found to be untrue.

Information gaps and delayed official communication created conditions in which speculation and unverified claims could spread rapidly. Public authorities and the ECZ should therefore communicate proactively, accurately and consistently, particularly when polling operations, counting or the announcement of results are delayed, disrupted or suspended. Official information should be made available through accessible formats and multiple communication channels.

Media monitoring during the election period identified disparities in the coverage of political actors, particularly in state-owned media. Coverage by state-owned media was heavily weighted towards the ruling party and the President, with limited coverage of other political actors. Media institutions should verify information before publication, clearly distinguish facts from allegations or commentary, promptly correct inaccurate reports and provide fair and equitable electoral coverage, including equitable access to public media such as ZNBC, Zambia Daily Mail and Times of Zambia for political actors. Political actors and their supporters should refrain from hate speech, incitement, threats and coordinated online harassment.

Measures taken to address unlawful online conduct must have a clear legal basis and be necessary, proportionate and subject to appropriate oversight. Such measures should not be used to suppress lawful criticism, political debate, journalism or other legitimate forms of expression. Responses to harmful online conduct must therefore protect both public safety and the rights to freedom of expression, access to information and political participation.

The Access to Information Act, No. 24 of 2023, reinforces the principle that access to information is a legally protected right rather than a matter of administrative

discretion. Proactive disclosure of timely and verifiable electoral information can counter misinformation, reduce speculation, enable independent scrutiny and strengthen transparency, accountability and public confidence in the electoral process. The Commission also received and processed access to information requests relating to the electoral process, underscoring the importance of timely disclosure during electoral processes.

15. KEY FINDINGS

The findings and statistics in this Report reflect information verified or available to the Commission as at the reporting cut-off date of 30th September, 2026. Outstanding cases will remain subject to continued monitoring, investigation and appropriate follow-up actions. The findings can be summarised as follows:

(i) The election engaged a broad range of human rights. The right to vote depended on respect for expression, assembly, association, equality, security, information, liberty and access to an effective remedy.

(ii) Political violence and intolerance remained serious concerns. Assaults, killings, intimidation, campaign disruption and destruction of political materials were recorded or reported across the electoral cycle. Many operational incidents were capable of prompt resolution. Engagement by election officials, police, monitors and conflict-management structures allowed voting, campaigning or results processes to continue in several locations.

(iii) Accessibility was inconsistent. Physical barriers and difficulties obtaining voting assistance affected persons with disabilities and risked undermining independent and secret voting.

(iv) The digital environment amplified both risk and confusion. Incitement, misinformation and unverified claims required rapid verification and authoritative public communication.

(v) Post-election detention presented major human-rights risks. Prolonged custody, delayed court access, restricted contact and difficulties tracing detainees weakened due-process safeguards and public confidence.

(vi) Women remained underrepresented. Nomination rates were low across parliamentary, local-government and mayoral or council-chairperson contests. The Commission also received cases relating to violence against women in elections, including cyberbullying, intimidation, threats and gender-based harassment.

(vii) EWER strengthened prevention and coordination. The Situation Room improved central visibility and referral, but inconsistent classification and unresolved records limited final analysis.

(viii) Institutional cooperation was essential but uneven. Resolution depended on timely responses from ECZ, police, local committees and other authorities; delayed feedback left many matters open.

(ix) The Commission requires sustained operational capacity. Nationwide monitoring, urgent travel, detention visits, data management and investigation require predictable and adequate resources.

(x) Access to justice and effective remedy was affected during the post-election period. The closure of the Constitutional Court, Supreme Court, High Court and other courts on 24 August, during the period for filing presidential election petitions, created a significant interruption to access to judicial remedies at a critical stage of the electoral process.

(x) Equal access to the media and campaign space was a significant concern. Although the regulatory framework provided for fair, balanced and equitable election coverage and reasonable access to airtime for political parties and candidates, monitoring indicated substantial disparities in the coverage of political actors by public media. Concerns were also raised about equitable access to campaign opportunities, including the practical ability of political parties to reach voters across the country within the five-day provincial campaign schedule.

16. CONCLUSION

The Commission's monitoring of the 2026 General Election documented substantial citizen participation and instances of effective institutional cooperation. It also identified significant human rights concerns across the electoral cycle, including violence, intimidation, political intolerance, misinformation, tensions surrounding results management, and election-related arrests and detention. Unequal access to public media and electoral information, inaccessible polling facilities, and barriers to the participation of women and other underrepresented groups further affected the exercise of electoral rights.

The credibility of an election depends on the integrity of the entire electoral cycle. Citizens must be able to organise, campaign, access information, vote, observe electoral processes, express political views and seek lawful remedies safely, freely and without discrimination. State institutions must exercise their powers lawfully, impartially, proportionately and accountably, including when responding to alleged electoral offences, security threats or public disorder.

The Commission calls upon all responsible institutions and stakeholders to implement the recommendations in this Report and ensure that outstanding complaints and alleged violations are addressed promptly, independently and effectively. This requires thorough investigations, accountability for violations and access to appropriate remedies for affected persons.

The lessons from the 2026 General Election should guide legal, institutional and operational reforms that strengthen electoral integrity and public confidence. Priority areas include transparent and timely access to electoral information; equitable access

to public media; meaningful participation of underrepresented groups; accessible polling facilities for persons with disabilities and caregivers with children; and respect for due process, access to justice and effective remedies in election-related arrests and detention. Sustained action in these areas is essential to ensure that future elections uphold the rights, dignity and democratic participation of all citizens.

17. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings presented, this Report makes the following recommendations:

17.1 Government and Parliament

(i) Ensure sustainable funding and institutional support for nationwide election monitoring and EWER, including adequate human, operational, technical and financial resources.

(ii) Review electoral, public order and criminal procedure laws to strengthen compliance with human rights standards, accountability and access to effective remedies.

(iii) Adopt and implement measures to substantially increase the representation of women, youth and persons with disabilities in elected office.

(iv) Ensure that electoral infrastructure and public services supporting elections meet applicable accessibility, health, sanitation and safety standards, with appropriate safeguards for children and priority assistance for persons who require it.

(v) Changes to electoral law reforms should be undertaken through a participatory process and should not be enacted in close proximity to election dates.

17.2 Electoral Commission of Zambia

(i) Strengthen transparent and timely communication on delimitation, polling, counting, totalling and results-management disruptions, including by developing and implementing a clear crisis-communication protocol requiring prompt and regular public updates whenever counting, totalling or the announcement of results is delayed or suspended. Any suspension should be necessary, proportionate, time-bound and, where practicable, limited to the affected electoral areas.

(ii) Ensure consistent enforcement of the Electoral Code of Conduct against violence, intimidation, campaign disruption and the destruction of campaign materials.

(iii) Require accessibility audits of polling and totalling centres and provide reasonable accommodation that preserves voter independence and ballot secrecy.

(iv) Strengthen District Conflict Management Committees, including through clear escalation and feedback mechanisms.

(v) Improve voter education on assisted voting, Braille voting materials, voter verification, and the validity and replacement of voter cards.

(vi) Ensure that all polling stations are physically accessible to persons with disabilities.

(vii) Apply priority-voting arrangements consistently to persons with disabilities, older persons, pregnant women, persons who are ill, and voters accompanied by infants or young children.

(viii) Ensure that polling stations have adequate lighting, water, sanitation, voting equipment and supplies such as indelible ink and basic emergency-support arrangements.

(ix) Strengthen the collection of disaggregated data on the participation of persons with disabilities and other vulnerable voters while protecting voter privacy.

(x) Ensure equal and timely access to public electoral information, including clear communication on campaign timetables, counting and results management disruptions, and publish information in accessible formats.

(xi) Strengthen child-sensitive and caregiver-sensitive polling arrangements, including consistent priority procedures where voters are accompanied by infants or young children.

17.3 Zambia Police Service and other Law Enforcement Agencies

(i) Apply the law impartially and ensure that all election-related security measures are lawful, necessary, proportionate and accountable.

(ii) Investigate electoral violence, killings, assaults, intimidation, vandalism and incitement promptly and communicate procedural outcomes appropriately.

(iii) Maintain a central, accurate and verifiable custody register and promptly disclose the location and legal status of every detainee to authorised persons.

(iv) Ensure prompt access to lawyers, family members, medical care and oversight bodies; bring arrested persons before court without undue delay; and grant police bond where legally appropriate.

(v) Uphold due process of the law, including by ensuring that suspects are released on police bond as provided for by law.

(vi) Conduct prompt, thorough and impartial investigations into reported election-related abductions, assaults and political intimidation, including the case of Mr. Trust Kahale and related incidents in Namwala District. Ensure that those

responsible are held accountable, victims, witnesses and other persons at risk are protected, and reported threats receive a timely and effective response.

(vii) Strengthen command responsibility, evidence preservation and public reporting on complaints against officers.

(viii) Full cooperation in the investigations and monitoring of human rights by the Commission in line with the Commission's constitutional mandate.

17.4 National Prosecution Authority and Judiciary

(i) Ensure prompt review of the lawfulness and necessity of continued detention of suspects in election-related matters.

(ii) Promote timely prosecutorial decisions and avoid delays that prolong uncertainty for accused persons, victims and the public.

(iii) Ensure continuity of access to courts during politically sensitive periods, subject only to demonstrably necessary and proportionate safety measures.

(iv) Ensure due process safeguards remain continuously available in election-related cases, including prompt judicial oversight of detention, access to legal representation, family contact and effective remedies.

17.5 Political Parties, Candidates and Supporters

(i) Publicly reject violence, intimidation, hate speech, destruction of campaign materials and interference with electoral processes.

(ii) Use lawful electoral dispute-resolution mechanisms and cooperate with investigations and conflict-management structures.

(iii) Adopt transparent and merit-based candidate-adoption procedures and enforce a zero-tolerance policy against sextortion, sexual harassment and all forms of gender-based violence, including confidential reporting channels, protection against retaliation, prompt investigation and sanctions where misconduct is established.

(iv) Increase the number of women, youth and persons with disabilities as candidates and decision-makers and provide safe, supportive and non-discriminatory conditions for their participation.

(v) Prevent and sanction targeted online abuse, sexist content, cyberbullying and gender-based misinformation by members and supporters.

17.6 Media and Digital Platforms

(i) Ensure equitable access to state-owned/public media for political contestants during elections, consistent with constitutional and electoral obligations, and

publish transparent information on the allocation of election-related coverage and airtime.

(ii) Verify election-related claims, clearly distinguish allegations from established facts and provide balanced, conflict-sensitive coverage.

(iii) Strengthen rapid responses to incitement, coordinated harassment, sexist or humiliating content, cyberbullying and demonstrably false election information while protecting legitimate expression and applying safeguards consistently.

(iv) Provide information in accessible formats and languages.

17.7 Human Rights Commission

(i) Adopt a controlled election-incident classification system and mandatory minimum reporting fields.

(ii) Formalise liaison and referral protocols with ECZ, police, prosecution authorities and conflict-management structures.

(iii) Institutionalise training for monitors in verification, risk assessment, evidence preservation, disability inclusion and digital monitoring.

(iv) Publish periodic implementation updates on accepted recommendations and unresolved systemic concerns.

(v) Maintain continued monitoring and follow-up of outstanding election-related arrests, detention, court proceedings and reported human-rights concerns, including cases involving at least 85 persons currently reflected in the Commission's monitoring.

(vi) Undertake a post-election review of the Election Situation Room and EWER to document lessons, response times, referral outcomes, resource gaps and system improvements required for future electoral cycles.

18 ANNEXES

Annex 1: Illustrative Matters Followed by the Commission

Matter	Available Status or Concern
Xavier Chungu	Presidential candidate arrested on 28 May 2026 on state security and related allegations; committed to the High Court on 23 July 2026. His detention and bail proceedings were monitored by the Commission. He subsequently withdrew from the presidential race, citing his inability to campaign effectively while detained. The matter raised concerns regarding personal liberty, due process, access to bail and the impact of detention on the right to participate in public affairs. The Commission continued to monitor the matter, including the timely progression of the case.
Daniel Makina and others	An independent parliamentary candidate and others were arrested on 30 July 2026 in connection with alleged theft of copper cathodes in Mufulira District. This offence was added to the list of non-bailable offences under the Criminal Procedure Code (Amendment) Act, No. 4 of 2026, which was assented to on 31 March 2026, and published on 8 April 2026, shortly before the National Assembly was dissolved in readiness for the general elections. The matter raised concerns regarding the right to personal liberty, prompt notification of charges and timely access to judicial processes. It is worth monitoring to evaluate the potential human rights implications of amending laws shortly before the elections. The Commission continued monitoring the matter and engaging relevant authorities regarding the status of the suspects and the applicable legal process.

Moses Ng'andwe (Chester) and 16 others	Musician Chester and 16 others were arrested in Kalabo District on 5 August 2026 and transferred to Mongu. They were charged with riotous behaviour and conduct likely to cause a breach of the peace. The Commission monitored their continued detention and advocated for police bond and prompt appearance before court. The prolonged detention raised concerns regarding personal liberty, timely access to court and due process. The group subsequently appeared before the Kalabo Chief Resident Magistrate's Court on 28 August 2026, pleaded not guilty to riotous behaviour and were granted bail pending trial.
Valden Findlay and others	The Commission received allegations concerning the alleged abduction, arbitrary arrest and unlawful detention of Mr. Valden Findlay. The allegations raised concerns regarding personal liberty, access to legal representation, family contact, due process and the prohibition of arbitrary or incommunicado detention. The Commission's investigation established that the persons concerned had been arrested in connection with criminal allegations and were subsequently detained at recognised State detention facilities, including Ibex Police Station and Mwembeshi Correctional Facility. The Commission continued to monitor the matter and the treatment and legal status of the accused persons.
MacPherson Mukuka	ZNBC journalist Mr. MacPherson Mukuka was arrested on 17 July 2026

	and charged under the Cyber Crimes Act in connection with the alleged recording and publication of a private conversation relating to the electoral process. He was subsequently charged with seditious practices. He remained in police custody for 14 days before commencing habeas corpus proceedings. The Commission joined the proceedings in support of his application, and on 31 July 2026 the Lusaka High Court declared his continued detention unlawful and unconstitutional and ordered his release on bail. The matter raised concerns regarding personal liberty, freedom of expression, due process and judicial oversight of detention.
Post-election treason cases	The Commission monitored the case involving 18 persons formally arrested and charged with one count of treason. They include NRPUP presidential candidate Mr. Brian Mundubile; his running mate, Mr. Makebi Zulu; Mr. Valden Findlay; and several other persons previously arrested during the security operation conducted in Kabulonga on 14 August 2026. These include Mr. Brazil Soko, Mr. Jackson Mutyoka, Mr. Bernard Chewe, Mr. Simon Phiri, Mr. Richard Banda, Mr. George Kangwa Chisanga, Mr. Trevor Mwamba, Mr. Francis Mulenga, Mr. Emmanuel Mulenga, Mr. Patrick Mwansa, Mr. Darius Mwila. Others include, Mr. Davies Chisopa, Mr. Ezra Tolopa, Mr. Dickson Tembo and Mr. Victor Muzyamba. Mr. Findlay, Mr. Tolopa, Mr. Muzyamba and Mr. Tembo also face additional charges of prohibition of terrorism. The Commission remains concerned about compliance with due

	process, the protection of personal liberty, access to legal representation and timely appearance before a competent court. As at 14 October 2026, the 18 petitioners were challenging the legality of their detention and alleged violations of their constitutional rights, including the alleged denial of access to legal counsel and deprivation of medication. The hearing of the constitutional petition is scheduled for 26 October to 6 November 2026. The Commission is also monitoring the application for constitutional bail filed by the 18 accused persons. The matter is scheduled for hearing before the High Court in Lusaka on 19 October 2026. In a separate development, Mr. Mundubile and Mr. Zulu face two counts of seditious practices. The matter came before the Solwezi Subordinate Court on 26 September and 5 October 2026 for the hearing of a preliminary objection raised by the accused persons, challenging the court's jurisdiction. On 13 October 2026, the court delivered a ruling referring the matter to the High Court for determination of the subordinate court's territorial jurisdiction. The Commission continues to call for the cases to proceed in accordance with the law and for the rights of all accused persons to be respected.
Kennedy Kamba	The Commission monitored concerns regarding continued detention, bail and the whereabouts of Mr. Kennedy Kamba after he was reportedly granted bail. The matter raised concerns regarding compliance with court

	orders, personal liberty and due process. The Commission called for compliance with the reported bail order or his timely appearance before court.
Mutotwe Kafwaya	The Commission continued to follow up with the Zambia Police Service on investigations into the death of Mr. Mutotwe Kafwaya, who died in a shooting incident in Kabulonga, Lusaka, on 14 August 2026. Police investigators indicated that investigations were ongoing but cited the sensitivity of the matter and did not provide further details on their progress, the postmortem findings or the anticipated timeframe for completion. The Commission will continue engaging the Zambia Police Service to obtain further information and assess the circumstances surrounding the death and any accountability concerns. Further, the Commission is considering other possible legal avenues, including the need for an Inquest.
Six persons arrested in Ng'ombe Township	Mr. Newton Miti, Mr. Joseph Phiri, Mr. Collins Kavwali, Mr. Kennedy Chimfwembe, Mr. Emmanuel Banda and Mr. Fredrick Machali were arrested during a security operation in Ng'ombe Township on 13 August 2026. As at 1 September 2026, they had remained in custody for 19 days without charge. The prolonged detention raised concerns regarding personal liberty, prompt charging and appearance before a competent court. The Commission continued to monitor their detention and engage relevant authorities. Treated as a protection-of-the-law matter; persons visited at

	Chelstone Police Station were granted police bond pending the NPA's decision on charges.
Alphonso Daka and 42 others	Forty-three persons, most reportedly bus drivers from Matero Constituency, were arrested on 14 August 2026 in connection with a commotion in Roma Township. They were warned and cautioned. As at 1 September 2026, they remained in custody despite investigations at Chelston Police Station reportedly having been concluded and recommendations submitted to Police Headquarters. The continued detention raised concerns regarding personal liberty, timely charging, access to court and due process. On 11 September 2026, the Lusaka High Court ordered their immediate release, ruling that their continued detention was not justified. The Commission called for the legal status of each detainee to be reviewed and for appropriate action to be taken in accordance with the law.
Enock Roosevelt Tonga	Mr. Enock Roosevelt Tonga was apprehended at the National Results Centre on 17 August 2026 and formally arrested for sedition on 21 August. He remained in police custody without appearing before a court, prompting his wife to seek a writ of habeas corpus from the Lusaka High Court to challenge the legality of his continued detention. He was released on 18 September 2026 following High Court intervention, after spending more than a month in detention. The Commission monitored his detention and legal status, with particular attention to personal liberty, due

	process and timely access to judicial processes.
Post-election political rhetoric involving children	On 20 August 2026, the Commission addressed social media videos involving insulting and derogatory political language, including the involvement of a child. The Commission highlighted concerns relating to freedom of expression, dignity, privacy and the protection of children, and called for child-sensitive measures and an end to further circulation of the material.

Annex 2: Selected Principal Situation Room Records

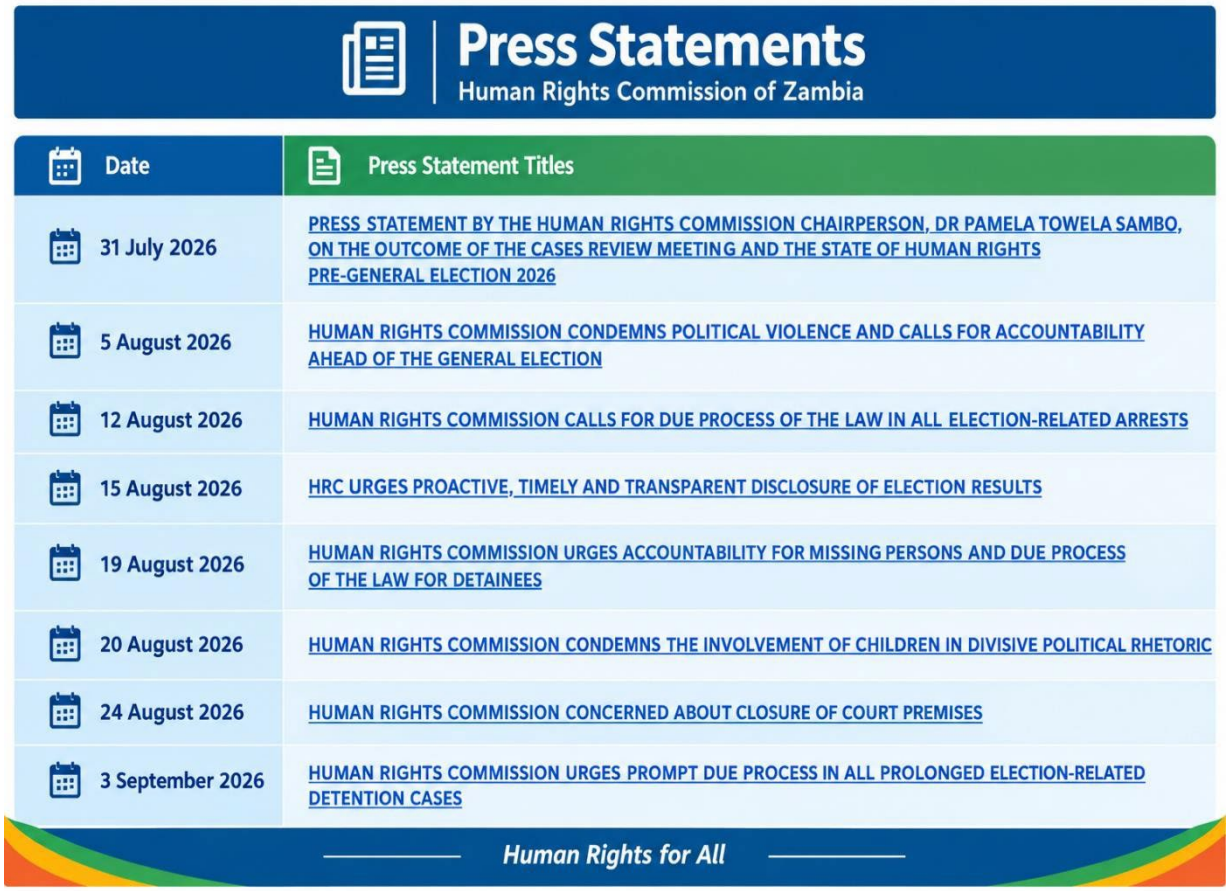
This table summarises selected records of human-rights or operational significance. It preserves the evidential status reflected in available working records and does not constitute a final finding of liability.

Election Incidents and Responses

Summary of Reported Incidents During the Electoral Process

#	Reference	Issue	Location	Available action/status
1	ELEC-INC-LSK-2026-000081	Reported killing of a polling agent after clashes	Matero	Police handling criminal matter; Commission monitoring.
2	ELEC-INC-NOR-2026-000015	Reported politically motivated killing	Kaputa	Law enforcement confirmed arrest of suspects.
3	ELEC-INC-LUA-2026-000038	Reported attack and assault on political-party members	Milenge	Under investigation.
4	ELEC-INC-SOU-2026-000027	Rally cancellation and use of tear gas	Mazabuka	Investigated; campaign suspension lifted and activity permitted under timetable.
5	ELEC-INC-NWE-2026-000022	Political violence/assault	Manyinga	Police intervened and apprehended parties.
6	ELEC-INC-CEN-2026-000066	Delayed ballot delivery	Chisamba	Resolved through extension of voting time.
7	ELEC-INC-WES-2026-000048	No polling booth	Mongu	Booths were delivered and voting proceeded.
8	ELEC-INC-WES-2026-000018	Polling-station accessibility for persons with disabilities	Mongu	Officials assisted voters; record closed.
9	ELEC-INC-EAS-2026-000017/16	Campaign access/scheduling disputes	Chipata	Scheduling issue addressed.
10	ELEC-INC-LSK-2026-000053	Six suspects reportedly found with offensive weapons	Lusaka	Treated as a protection-of-the-law matter; persons granted police bond pending NPA's decision on charges.
11	ELEC-INC-NWE-2026-000138	Interference with returning officer/process	Solwezi	Parties and ECZ officials engaged at police station; record closed.
12	ELEC-INC-COP-2026-000107	Confusion over a missing presidential result form at Chifubu Totalling Centre in Ndola.	Ndola	Security officers intervened to restore order.
13	ELEC-INC-CEN-2026-000119	Attack/disturbance at Bwacha North Totalling Centre	Kabwe	Police restored control; ECZ announcement proceeded.
14	ELEC-INC-CEN-2026-000118	Mob interruption of results announcement	Central Province	Police restored order and announcement continued.
15	ELEC-INC-LSK-2026-000106	Claim that Brian Mundubile was detained at Ibex Police Station	Lusaka/unspecified	Verified and found to be untrue.
16	ELEC-INC-LSK-2026-000115	Unverified theft of ballot boxes	Lusaka	Under police investigation; Commission monitoring.

Annex 3: Press Statements



Press Statements
Human Rights Commission of Zambia

Date	Press Statement Titles
31 July 2026	PRESS STATEMENT BY THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON, DR PAMELA TOWELA SAMBO, ON THE OUTCOME OF THE CASES REVIEW MEETING AND THE STATE OF HUMAN RIGHTS PRE-GENERAL ELECTION 2026
5 August 2026	HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION CONDEMNS POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND CALLS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY AHEAD OF THE GENERAL ELECTION
12 August 2026	HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION CALLS FOR DUE PROCESS OF THE LAW IN ALL ELECTION-RELATED ARRESTS
15 August 2026	HRC URGES PROACTIVE, TIMELY AND TRANSPARENT DISCLOSURE OF ELECTION RESULTS
19 August 2026	HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION URGES ACCOUNTABILITY FOR MISSING PERSONS AND DUE PROCESS OF THE LAW FOR DETAINEES
20 August 2026	HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION CONDEMNS THE INVOLVEMENT OF CHILDREN IN DIVISIVE POLITICAL RHETORIC
24 August 2026	HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION CONCERNED ABOUT CLOSURE OF COURT PREMISES
3 September 2026	HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION URGES PROMPT DUE PROCESS IN ALL PROLONGED ELECTION-RELATED DETENTION CASES

Human Rights for All



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