

ZAMBIA

Date of Elections: 31 October 1991

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for the 125 elective seats in Parliament following premature dissolution of this body on 4 September 1991. General elections had previously been held in October 1988.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Zambia, the National Assembly, consists of 159 members : 150 elected, 8 appointed as nominated members by the President of the Republic, and the Speaker. The normal term of the Assembly is 5 years.

Electoral System

Every Zambian citizen who has attained the age of 18 years is entitled to be registered as a voter, unless he owes allegiance to a foreign State, is insane, under sentence of death or imprisonment or does not possess a national registration card issued under the National Registration Act. No person is moreover entitled to vote who has been convicted of a corrupt or illegal practice within five years preceding the subject election, who has been found guilty of such practice upon the trial of an election petition, or who is in lawful custody on election day. There is a general registration of voters every five years and voters' registers are normally revised annually. Voting is not compulsory.

Any person is qualified to be elected or nominated as a member of the National Assembly if he is a citizen of Zambia who has attained the age of 21 years and is literate and conversant in the official language of Zambia. The insane, undischarged bankrupts, persons under allegiance to a foreign State, persons under court-imposed sentence of death or imprisonment, and those who have been restricted in movement or detained pursuant to certain laws may not be elected or nominated.

No person moreover qualifies as a candidate to the Assembly unless his nomination is accompanied by a monetary deposit of 100 *kwacha* (approximately US\$ 10) and supported by no fewer than nine persons registered as voters in the particular constituency.

Elected parliamentarians who are at the time of their election in the civil service, police, defence forces or other public services must resign from their posts.

* See *Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections and Developments XXV* (1990-1991). p.25.

For purposes of elections to the National Assembly, Zambia is divided into 150 single-member constituencies. In each, an elector votes for a single candidate associated on the ballot paper with a symbol selected from among the list prepared by the Director of Elections. Such candidate is declared elected if he gains a simple majority of the votes cast.

By-elections are held to fill National Assembly seats which become vacant between general elections.

Background and Outcome of the Elections

On 4 September 1991, the National Assembly was prematurely dissolved and the election date set. Polling (also for President of the Republic) was held to usher in a system of political pluralism after 17 years of one-party (United National Independence Party -UNIP) rule .

In this context, the election campaign was described as lively but generally peaceful. Economic issues figured most prominently therein, with the main opposition Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) calling for a departure from what it labeled as the ruinous socialist policies pursued since the country's independence, towards a free market economy marked by wide-scale privatization to combat acute problems such as inflation, unemployment and the foreign debt. UNIP countered by claiming to be the only party able to maintain "peace and stability". Altogether 330 candidates from six parties contested the 150 Assembly seats.

Voting procedures were monitored by foreign observers. Final results gave the MMD 125 seats, with UNIP winning the remaining 25. Mr. Frederick Chiluba (MMD) won the presidential race by a 76% majority vote over Mr. Kenneth Kaunda (UNIP), Head of State since 1964. He was sworn into office on 2 November and, five days later, named the new Cabinet.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the National Assembly

Number of registered electors.	2,900,000 (approx.)
Voters.	1,318,526
Blank or void ballot papers.	45,093
Valid votes.	1,273,433

See *Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections and Developments XXV* (1990-1991), p.25.

Political Group	Votes obtained	%	Number of Seats
Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD)	952,528	74.8	125
United National Independence Party (UNIP)	308,743	24.2	25
Other parties	2,618	0.2	-
Independents	9,544	0.7	
			150*

2. Distribution of Members of Parliament according to Sex

Men . . .	143
Women . . .	7
	150

* Elected members only.