

AN

INTERIM REPORT

OF

**PAN AFRICAN WOMEN PROJECTS
A FOREIGN OBSERVER GROUP**

AT

MALAWI TRIPARTITE MAY 21ST 2019 ELECTION

PREAMBLE

Democracy in Africa especially in Malawi

has almost always been hijacked by politicians who play politics without principles and conscience , thus, always going extra miles to win elections even if it is to frustrate, maim or kill the opponents physically, spirituality and otherwise

Sadly, the Malawian populace and environment also have been affected negatively.

This negative trend has permeated all crannies of Malawi Society including the ethno religious sides, security and even the judiciary which ordinarily supposed to be last hope of the common man. It is our prayers that for the sake of the Malawian women, youths and the persons with disabilities the political class will in this election play politics with principles and allow the mandate of the people to stand in due course.

Our post election observations is only a summary of some of our reports as at now as a detailed report will be submitted to the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC).

ORGANIZATION

Pan African Women Projects is an international nongovernmental organisation of African women from the fifty four (54) nations of Africa and the diaspora. Our head office is situated in Johannesburg, South Africa and regional offices in the five (5) regions. Our primary mission amongst others is to promote good governance and sustainable democracy in Africa through our developmental projects for women, youths and persons with disabilities in Africa.

INTRODUCTION

Our organization PAN AFRICAN WOMEN PROJECTS was accredited and invited as one of the INTERNATIONAL OBSERVER GROUP by MALAWI ELECTORAL COMMISSION (MEC) to observe the 21st May,2019 Malawi Tripartite Election.

We have observed several elections in about seventeen (17) countries of Africa in the past.

We have a mission team comprising many women from various African nations that are already deployed to various provinces for election and observations.

PREPARATION

Our Observation Mission arrived into the capital Lilongwe on the 8th of May,2019 and on the 14th of May,2019 we held a SENSITIZATION WORKSHOP in partnership with Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) at Golden Peacock Hotel and Resort in Lilongwe to sensitize the stakeholders (MEC MALAWI ELECTORAL COMMISSION ,SECURITY OPERATIVES,MEDIA,YOUTH ASSOCIATIONS,WOMEN GROUPS,FAITH BASE ORGANISATIONS, MEMBERS OF POLITICAL PARTIES ,TRADITIONAL SOCIETY , AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS).

During the workshop various speakers exposed and condemned all forms of electoral violence and manipulations during election and strongly admonished the stakeholders and indeed the electorate to strictly adhere to the globally accepted tenets of democracy.

Furthermore, the resource persons also encouraged the electorate to vote peacefully and shun Vote Buying, Rigging, Intimidation, Thuggery and any form of political violence before, during and after the elections.

Above all, the resource persons strongly appealed to the respective candidates in the election to conduct themselves in compliance with the electoral laws of Malawi in other to sustain peaceful atmosphere, before, during and after the elections. They also appealed to the potential winners of the said election to be magnanimous in victory and the losers to be gallant in defeat.

POLLING DAY

We observed that polls commenced on the 21st May, 2019 at nearly every Polling centre we visited between 0600 hours to 0700 hours for the Malawi Tripartite Election.

Voters queued anxiously in large numbers to cast their votes, and the turn up was very impressive.

Although many Polling Centres had a peaceful electoral process it is also on record by some political parties agents and civil society organisations that a few Polling Centres experienced Vote Buying, Intimidation and Rigging.

The Tally Centre was open on the 21st May, 2019 at the Comesa House in Blantyre where we also observed a professional display of result collation and updates to all stakeholders at intervals by the Malawi Electoral Commission led by the Chairperson Justice Jane Ansah.

DECLARATION OF RESULT

Professor Peter Mutharika the candidate of Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) was declared winner of the May 21 presidential poll after a court vacated an injunction placed on the Malawi Electoral Commission, MEC.

The two main opposition candidates had lodged judicial complaints of electoral irregularities.

Mutharika secured a narrow margin of victory over the opposition candidate Dr. Lazarus Chakwera of the Malawi Congress Party (MCP). The final records indicated that Prof. Peter Mutharika got 1,940,709 (38.57%) with Dr. Lazarus Chakwera getting 1,781,740 (35.41%). Former VP Dr. Saulos Chilima got 1,018,369 (20.24%).

SECURITY

We observed that at all Polling Centres we visited they were heavy presence of Police men.

VOTERS REGISTRATION

We observed a voter's roll of 6,859,570 persons (80% of eligible voting population); 3,818,578 female (56%) and 3,045,992 male (44%) voters. The number of registered voters for the 2014 polls was 7.5 million. The 2019 register shows a major decline from the 2019 figure. A total of 3,729,588 (54.37%) registrants are youth (aged between 18 and 35 years).

WOMEN PARTICIPATION

Although Malawi Government had passed the Gender Equality Act (2013), women continue to be significantly underrepresented at all levels of elected government as well as in nominations by parties at the Presidential, Parliamentary and Local government levels. Only 22% of the nominees for parliamentary seats and 23% of the local government candidates are women. This is in a context where there are 3,813,578 women and 3,045,992 men registered to vote in the 2019 elections.

Women participation in this past Malawi 2019 Tripartite Election is a concern to our organisation especially when Malawi had produced in 2012 to 2014 the second and powerful Female President in Africa. Also, observed for the legislative elections, 1,329 candidates (295 women and 1034 men) had their nominations confirmed. For the Local Government elections, 2709 nominees were confirmed (645 women and 2,064 men).

SUMMARY

The Malawi 2019 Tripartite Election though free, peaceful and was expected to be in tandem with international best standard practices but was indeed dramatic and left more to be desired in terms of credible electoral processes.

Our Final Report will be forwarded with recommendations to the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) .

Pan African Women Projects (PAWP) commend the Malawi Electoral Commission for their practical commitment and amazing steadfastness to entrenching laudable and enduring democracy in Malawi vis a vis Africa.

We commend the Malawi Electoral Commission(MEC) and indeed the government of Malawi for the privilege accorded us (PAN AFRICAN WOMEN PROJECTS) to observe the Malawi 2019 election, we are indeed grateful.



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