



Electoral Commission of Namibia

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Chief Electoral & Referenda Officer



Date: 14th November 2019

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON SPECIAL VOTING – 13th NOVEMBER 2019

The Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN), hereby wishes to inform the electorate and all Namibian citizens inside the country and abroad, that the Special Voting day operations conducted yesterday, 13th November 2019 went remarkably according to plan, in line with the 2019 Electoral Calendar Implementation Plan as adopted by the Commission.

In terms of section 64(2)(a-c) of the Electoral Act, Act 5 of 2014, the special voting day is determined to facilitate voting for persons who are on board any vessel, any persons who are members of the Police Force, Defense Force and Correctional Services and who are required to be on duty within or outside of Namibia. Similarly, the special day of voting is determined to enable

Namibians abroad to be able to cast their votes in the 2019 Presidential and National Assembly elections.

The ECN established a total of 34 polling stations at Namibia's' foreign missions abroad. The ECN is pleased to inform the Namibian nation that polling stations at all the foreign missions opened on time with the exception of Dar es Salaam and Stockholm where the opening was slightly delayed due to the late arrival of election materials. The actual polling process was conducted, without any hiccups, in accordance with the provisions of the Electoral Act and all stations closed on time at 21h00 pm local time in the respective countries. The ECN hereby extends a word of gratitude to all the polling staff who contributed to the successful conduct of the foreign voting process for doing a sterling job often under challenging circumstances.

Furthermore, the ECN established a total of 154 polling stations across the 121 constituencies in the country to facilitate the voting process for seafarers and members of the police force, defence force and correctional services who are required to be on duty within or outside of Namibia on 27th November 2019. The ECN also wishes to inform the electorate and the nation at large that the process was conducted successfully despite the low turnout observed at some polling stations. All polling stations across the country closed on time at 21h00pm.

The ECN has experienced a few challenges during the process, relating to the late provision of lists to presiding officers containing names of people that were eligible to vote during the 13th of November 2019. The ECN also noted an incident at a polling station //Kharas region where the ballot unit had to be disconnected from the control unit to be re-attached after it fell while a voter was trying to get behind the voting booth. A number of other administrative errors relating to handling of election forms and technical issues related to the EVM's were noted by Presiding Officers at a few polling stations. The ECN is carefully analyzing all relevant issues noted by respective Presiding Officers in the Occurrence book with a view to improve business processes and systems as part of preparations for the all-important national elections slated for 27th November 2019.

Processing of Election Results of Special Voting Day

The ECN wishes to inform the electorate that in terms of section 105 (8) of the Electoral Act, No. 5 of 2014, when the counting of votes has been completed in or outside Namibia, the presiding officer at any given polling station, must amongst other duties; count the votes and announce in the prescribed manner the result for that polling station. The Presiding Officer is further obligated by the Electoral Act to post a copy of the result at the polling station. We are pleased to note that all Presiding Officer have complied with this important obligation during the Special Voting day polling process.

In terms of the management of foreign votes, once the presiding officers have posted the results at their respective polling stations they are required to seal the ballot boxes and place them in diplomatic bags for return to Namibia. The Returning Officer in charge of the foreign voting operations will arrange for police escort and safekeeping. The ballot boxes shall be opened at the ECN Head Quarters in Windhoek and counted under the supervision of the Chief Electoral and Referenda Officer after the polling stations have been closed on 27th November 2019 for collation with votes cast inside the country both for the Presidential and National Assembly elections.

In terms of the special voting process in-country, the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) Units used during 13th November 2019 will be placed in the safe custody of the Namibian police in the different constituencies. After the close of polls on 27th November 2019, the EVM units used during special voting will be transported to the collation centers in the constituencies in order to tabulate and collate results for a specific constituency. The ECN will work very closely with all political parties and candidates to ensure that all votes are accounted for in an open and verifiable manner.

Election Results on Social Media

The ECN is fully aware of tabulated “results” and pictures of posted polling station results currently being shared and circulated on social media platforms. The ECN wish to inform the Namibian public that election results are managed and processed strictly in accordance with the

provisions of the Electoral Act. As sequel to this, **the ECN did not collate any results and will not publish any election results** until and unless such results are officially announced by Returning Officers as contemplated in Sections 109 and 110 of the Electoral Act, Act no 5 of 2014.

Finally, the ECN will soon announce the official channels through which election results will be disseminated and hereby wishes to discourage the electorate and the general public from trusting results shared on social media platforms due to the menace fake news and misinformation.
