



Electoral Commission of Namibia

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MEDIA RELEASE

(for immediate release)

5th March 2020

ECN PREPAREDNESS FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL BY ELECTIONS FOR THE OTJIWARONGO AND OPUWO RURAL CONSTITUENCIES

The preparations for the conduct of the Regional Council by elections for the Otjiwarongo and Opuwo Rural constituencies scheduled to take place on 9th March are well on course. A vacancy occurred on 10th December 2019 in the Otjiwarongo constituency as a result of the death of the then sitting councilor, the late Hon. Julius. Similarly, a vacancy also occurred in the Opuwo Rural constituency councilor on 12th December 2019 after the resignation of Hon. Kazeongere Tjeundo from his position.

Supplementary Registration of Voters

To this end, a Supplementary Registration of Voters was conducted from 23rd - 24th December 2019 for the Otjiwarongo and Opuwo Rural constituencies. The Provisional Voters Registers for public scrutiny and objections against the names included therein was conducted on 30th December 2019 and no objections were received by the Commission during this period. The final voters register for the two constituencies was published on 14th February 2020 in the Government Gazette.

Registered Voters and Polling stations

The total number of registered voters for the Otjiwarongo and Opuwo Rural constituencies as at 14th February 2020 is 21 786 and 7391 respectively. The ECN has recruited 132 polling officials and established 35 polling stations for Otjiwarongo and 150 polling officials and 79 polling stations for the Opuwo rural constituency.

Nomination Period

The period of submission of nominations for the two constituencies commenced on 14th January 2020 and was concluded on 29th January 2020.

Training of polling officials and Party Agents

The training of polling officials for the by elections commenced on 28th February 2020 and will be concluded on 7th March 2020. The deployment of teams to duty stations in the constituencies is on 8th March 2020. The training of political party agents was conducted on 27th February 2020 in the two constituencies.

Distribution of Election materials

The ballot papers for the two constituencies were printed on 21st February 2020 after the approval and signing off of the sample paper ballot by authorized representatives from contesting political parties and Independent candidate on 20th February 2020.

The dispatching of election materials to the two constituencies is between the period 4th and 5th March 2020. All sensitive election materials will be kept at the police station in the respective constituencies for safe keeping until deployment of teams commences.

Casting of votes by Paper Ballot

Following the Supreme Court Judgment on the 2019 Presidential and National Assembly elections, the ECN had convened a meeting with the Political Party Liaison Committee (PLC) authorized representatives on 14th February 2020 to discuss the method of vote casting during the Otjiwarongo and Opuwo Rural constituencies by elections. The thirteen political party representatives present on the day unanimously agreed to the usage of manual ballot papers for the elections of the two

constituencies on 9th March 2020. This placed the preparation of the elections onto a different trajectory in terms of preparation of electoral activities including voter education and a number of logistics that would have to be accomplished in time for the by elections.

Voter Education

The ECN developed an extensive voter education strategy in an effort to increase efficiency and deliver effective electoral messaging to inform the public about the use of the paper ballots, promote understanding of electoral process and increase voter turnout in the upcoming by-elections in the Otjiwarongo and Opuwo Rural constituencies. Materials have also been developed explaining the voting process, how to vote using ballot papers and the correct marking of ballot papers.

Finally, the ECN would like to assure the electorate of the Commissions unwavering commitment to the delivery of free, fair, transparent and credible elections in the forthcoming by elections and herewith implore all registered voters in the Otjiwarongo and Opuwo Rural constituencies to take this opportunity to cast their votes at their nearest designated polling stations.

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