

First Pre-Election Survey Mission Statement

The Carter Center of
Emory University

National Democratic Institute
for International Affairs

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A pre-election monitoring delegation organized by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and the Carter Center of Emory University announced its findings in Lusaka on August 25. The delegation visited Zambia to assess preparations for the October elections. From August 18 to 24, the monitoring group consulted with Zambian political leaders, candidates, government and election commission officials, journalists, and representatives of churches, business and civic groups.

In addition, on August 24 to 25, NDI and the Carter Center organized a training program for members of the Zambian Independent Monitoring Team (ZIMT), a nonpartisan Zambian organization recently formed to monitor the elections. International participants in the training program advised 175 ZIMT organizers on how to recruit volunteers, organize a nationwide network of pollwatchers, conduct a parallel vote tabulation, investigate pre-election complaints and carry out a national civic education campaign.

Both multinational teams were present at the invitation of Zambian government and opposition leaders in order to help ensure the integrity of the elections and, by doing so, build public confidence and encourage participation in the electoral process.

The multinational delegation was encouraged by the dedication of the people of Zambia to holding free and fair multiparty elections. It found a constructive atmosphere in which all parties were participating in a spirit of compromise and cooperation.

At the same time, the delegation found a few problems that remain to be addressed.

1. The team noted a few concerns about the parties' ability to communicate their messages to the voters. Among other things, there were complaints about publishing of advertisements, and there was widespread concern about unbalanced media coverage. Concerns were also expressed about the government funding only one of the political parties and about difficulties in obtaining permits for rallies.
2. The team observed potential problems with the election law and administration. Most notably, the team identified the need to guarantee the secrecy of balloting and security measures to ensure the integrity of the ballot counting process. Also, the team was concerned that some citizens cannot participate because they did not register during the last registration period in October 1990, which took place at a time when some potential voters might not have anticipated the possibility of multiparty elections.
3. The team noted that the new constitution and the new election law have not yet been made public and the date of the elections is still to be announced.

The delegation, however, expressed confidence in the will and ability of the Zambian authorities to overcome these problems and to administer the elections in a fair and impartial manner.

The pre-election mission included Maria Leissner, a member of parliament from Sweden; Albert Tevoedjre, a deputy of the national assembly of Benin and a candidate for president in the 1991 elections in Benin; and Ronald Gould, assistant chief electoral officer of Elections Canada. Accompanying the delegation were Jay Taylor, diplomat-in-residence at the Carter Center; and Eric Bjornlund, NDI senior program officer. The election monitor training team included Mariano Quesada, former executive director of NAMFREL in the Philippines; Monica Jimenez, executive director of Participa in Chile; Vero Mbahuurua, director of the legal aid unit of the Council of Churches in Namibia; and Larry Garber, NDI senior counsel for election processes.