

NEWS

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ONE COPENHILL, ATLANTA, GA 30307

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Contact: Carrie Harmon
Director, Public Information
404/420-5107

CARTER CENTER, NDI TO MONITOR ELECTIONS IN ZAMBIA

ATLANTA, GA....Former President Jimmy Carter has accepted an invitation from Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda and leaders of the country's opposition parties to lead an international team to observe the electoral process and the general elections expected before October 31, 1991 in Zambia.

President Carter accepted the invitation on behalf of the Zambia Voting Observation Team (Z-Vote), a coalition formed by the Atlanta-based Carter Center of Emory University (CCEU) and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), based in Washington, D.C. President Carter will serve as chairman of Z-Vote, and NDI president J. Brian Atwood will serve as vice chairman. The first pre-election mission, lead by Swedish Member of Parliament Maria Leissner, will take place during the week of August 18-24. A second mission is planned for mid-September.

"The people of Zambia will take a momentous step forward when they have a multiparty presidential vote for the first time in almost two decades," said President Carter. "The upcoming elections represent a special opportunity for Zambia to make a successful

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transition from a single-party state to a multi-party democracy," he said.

Z-Vote has established an office in Lusaka that will maintain close contact with government officials, leaders of all political parties, representatives of non-governmental organizations, the media, and electoral officers. Z-Vote members will also consult with the diplomatic representatives of those nations that are supporting the electoral process and the international observation efforts, including Canada, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United States. After the elections, Z-Vote hopes to play a role in supporting the transitional process, providing a basis upon which to build a sustainable pluralist democracy.

"The movement for increased democratization and pluralism is sweeping through the African continent, and the Zambian people can provide an example that will be helpful to all Africans," said Richard Joseph, CCEU fellow for African Governance and executive secretary, with NDI's Larry Garber, of Z-Vote. "There are many factors in the Zambian context that bode well for the success of this process, including the strong Zambian sense of national unity and pride," he said.

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