



"Maintaining Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace" – Eph. 4:3

PRESS STATEMENT

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Towards Peaceful Electoral Results Discourse

Malawi Council of Churches call for Peaceful Conduct and Credible Results

LIWONDE, MALAWI. 27th May 2014. The Malawi Council of Churches (MCC) is an ecumenical Main Protestant Churches Mother Body in Malawi with membership of 27 member churches spread across the country.

MCC Concern

It has been seven days since Malawians went to the polls on 20th May 2014. The delay of the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC), to release results as expected has created hopelessness among Malawians. This situation has brought with it anxiety and fear amongst the Malawian population, and has other negative connotations to their welfare. Productivity has slowed down due to uncertainty, the economy is threatened to fall, and ordinary people are not sure about what will transpire the following day due to the growing tension.

MCC Action

The Malawi Council of Churches realises with deep concern that people have lost hope and that there is fear and uncertainty in the country. Therefore the Council called for the Council's Executive Board to urgently meet and seek to add its voice to the on-going impasse at Hippo View Lodge in Liwonde District on 26th May, 2014. The core objectives are to advocate for peace; remove fear and uncertainty; and give direction to all stakeholders especially politicians who also belong to our member churches and other faith groupings.

MCC Citations

The Council is watching closely events unfolding since polling day and wishes to acknowledge:-

1. Malawians for turning out in large numbers and in time to cast their vote on 20th May 2014, which is the official voting day. Malawians conducted themselves peacefully during this process

2. The patience demonstrated by all Malawians since Polling Day as they eagerly wait for official announcement of the results. This perseverance cannot be taken for granted
3. The Malawi Electoral Commission's (MEC) bold move to accept that they indeed faced overwhelmed challenges which culminated from inadequate polling materials and thereby led to anomalies to the process. Irregularities include electoral results exceeding the number of people registered at a polling centre, inadequate polling materials, and untimely handling of complaints lodged by political parties
4. Political parties and other contesting leaders for asking their followers to exercise the utmost patience and maintain peaceful coexistence during this standoff

MCC Stand

The Malawi Council of Churches therefore wishes to call on all stakeholders across the country to:-

1. Let the Malawi Electoral Commission to freely exercise its mandated role and work to the best interest of all stakeholders within the law, as they conduct an audit count, and move to release results. MEC must continue their commendable work including conducting an Audit Count and ensure to operate within the parameters of their mandate
2. Stop any political interference to the work of MEC. Only MEC is mandated to run elections in Malawi and political parties and all other stakeholders should respect this fact. MEC must work to serve Malawians and not political parties or leaders
3. Ensure that MEC will be honest, trustworthy and credible in its conduct so that results will be accepted by all stakeholders. The Council holds that MEC will also periodically announce the findings in the Audit Count as they also announce the results of the polls
4. Leadership is sanctioned by God and therefore Malawians must not depart from continued prayer so that God guides the nation on the right path
5. Credibility is the most important issue at hand, and MEC must ensure that Malawians are given a true reflection of their vote, having freely and peacefully voted themselves

MCC Appeal

The Malawi Council of Churches therefore calls upon all electoral stakeholders, MEC; political leaders and their parties; all contestants in the Presidential, Parliamentary and Council elections; all people of good will; and all Malawians to continue to exercise high levels of patience and maturity, NOT TO interfere with the work of MEC and to pray continuously for God to give guidance to the process.

The Council also calls upon all its Member Churches and all other faiths to continue to hold prayers so that Malawi remains peaceful and that all stakeholders act with continued level headedness. Everyone must pray that results be arrived at and that everyone accepts the results when they finally are officially announced.

The Bible urges us all to *"Pray continually without ceasing,"* (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

We are one nation. We are one people. We are all Malawians.

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:28).

Signed this day on 27th May 2014 at Hippo View Lodge, Liwonde.

(Malawi Council of Churches Executive Board Members)

Rev. Alex Benson Maulana (Chairperson)

Bishop Gilford Matonga (Member)

Rev. Dr. Timothy Nyasulu (Member)

Bishop Brighton Malasa (Member)

Rev. Moreen Tchuwa (Member)

Rev. Nelson Nyangáma (Member)

Mrs. Yasinta Mtambo (Member)

Rev. Dr. Osborne Joda-Mbewe (General Secretary)