



# **PRESS RELEASE**

## **Break in at MEC Regional Offices in Lilongwe**

On the eve of April 30, 2019 there was a break in at the Malawi Electoral Commission Regional Offices located in Area 3 in Lilongwe.

The burglars managed to open a window and cut bars. There were footprints indicating that they entered inside but did not get away with anything noticeable. All tempting items like computers, unmounted television screen, radio and small items were found intact. On this the Commission would categorically dispel rumours and media reports that three computers and cameras (CCTV) have been stolen. However, the burglars disengaged the cables to the CCVT system but did not steal the cameras. We suspect they might have pulled off the cables to avoid being captured on cameras.

The Commission has engaged the Police to investigate and interrogate the security officers who were on duty. On this night there were two armed police officers from the Malawi Police Service and two from SWOOP security. The Commission will be seeking explanations on how the officers missed this burglary until it was noticed by MEC staff in the morning.

The Commission is treating this an ordinary break-in incident by petty thieves because there are no critical electoral preparation activities taking place within Lilongwe office. The Commission is tempted to suspect that the burglars thought that there was huge cash at the MEC regional office considering that the previous day there was payment of allowances for accounts officers that are involved in paying poll staff that MEC is currently training.

The Commission is urging all electoral stakeholders to restrain from touting unfounded allegations of rigging unless they have substantiated evidence.

Should there be any need for clarification or further information, please do not hesitate to contact our Director of Media and Public Relations, Mr Sangwani Mwafulirwa on 0 999 274 304 or email [smwafulirwa@mec.org.mw](mailto:smwafulirwa@mec.org.mw) .

Dated this 1<sup>st</sup> day of May 2019 at Blantyre



Sam Alfandika

**Chief Elections Officer**