



**DECLARATION OF RESULTS FOR THE 17<sup>TH</sup> MARCH  
2026 BY-ELECTION SPEECH BY JUSTICE ANNABEL  
MTALIMANJA, CHAIRPERSON OF THE MALAWI  
ELECTORAL COMMISSION**

**Mvuu Room,  
Bingu International Convention , Lilongwe**

- Fellow Commissioners,
- The Chief Elections Officer, Mr Andrew Mpesi and management from the Commission secretariat
- Representatives of various political parties and independent candidates here present
- Representatives of various Civil Society Organizations
- Distinguished Invited Guests
- Members of the Press
- Ladies and gentlemen

Good afternoon,

I am grateful to God, the Almighty that this afternoon I can present to you the results of the by-election, held on Tuesday, 17 March 2026 in four constituencies and nine wards.

The Commission has since the closing of polling been meeting and doing the following:

1. Reviewing complaints submitted to it regarding the electoral process;
2. Reviewing void votes brought to the national tally centre by the Returning Officers; and

3. Determining on the results brought to the national tally centre by the Returning Officers

Before I announce the final results and declare the winners allow me to give a brief background of the process.

### **Background to the vacancies**

This was the first set of by-elections after the 16 September 2025 General Election. Vacancies in three constituencies and eight wards were a carryover from the preparation of the General Election. One Constituency and one ward fell vacant after we had conducted the General Election. In total we had four constituencies and nine wards. These vacancies arose for the following reasons:

- 1) ***Rumphi Central Constituency:*** This constituency became vacant because the Alliance for Democracy (Aford) candidate who won in the September 2025 Parliamentary Election was appointed Second Vice-president. As per provision of the law, he could not retain the position of Member of Parliament.
- 2) ***Nkhotakota Liwaladzi Constituency:*** The election could not take place on 16 September 2025 because there was a

court case. Mr Daniel Binda applied to the court for a review of the Commission's decision rejecting his nomination for paying less than the prescribed nomination fee for Parliamentary Election. The Supreme Court upheld the Commission's decision.

- 3) ***Dedza Mtakatika Constituency***: the elections could not take place because there was a case in the High Court. Mr Charles J. Sandram applied to the court for a review of the Commission's decision rejecting his nomination for paying less than the prescribed nomination fee for Parliamentary Election and the court ruled that he should be added on the list of candidates at a time when ballot papers had already been printed
- 4) ***Blantyre West Constituency***: the elections were postponed following the death of late Michael Izeki Chisala who duly nominated to contest as a candidate for the Malawi Congress Party candidate on 16 September 2025.
- 5) ***Ighembe Ward, in Karonga Songwe Constituency***: The elections were nullified by the Commission after it was discovered on the polling day that names of two candidates were omitted on the ballot paper. These were Adrian

Masimbi, an independent candidate, and Margret Mwakalinga of MuviwaChilungamo Revolutionary Party.

- 6) ***Luwinga Ward, in Mzuzu City North constituency:*** The elections were postponed because of the death of Mr Isaac Henry Singini who was a duly nominated candidate for the United Democratic Front (UDF).
  
- 7) ***Linthembwe Ward, in Dowa Ngala constituency:*** The Court ordered postponement of the elections after one of the aspirants, Mr Brian Khumbeni applied to the court for a review of the Commission's decision rejecting his nomination for paying less than the prescribed nomination fee. When the Court ordered that that he should be accommodated, the by-election was subsequently postponed because ballot papers had already been printed.
  
- 8) ***Chilobwe Ward, in Lilongwe Chilobwe Constituency:*** the elections were postponed because of the death of Mr Mandaachepa Kamwendo who was nominated to contest as a candidate for the Malawi Congress Party.
  
- 9) ***Msitu Ward, in Mchinji South constituency:*** the elections were suspended following death of late Edison Josiah who

was nominated to contest as a Malawi Congress Party candidate.

- 10) ***Mikongo Ward, in Mangochi North East Constituency:*** The elections were postponed following the death of Mr Allan Jemusi on 28 August 2025 who was duly nominated candidate.
  
- 11) ***Chanda Ward in Zomba Chikomwe constituency:*** The election results were nullified by the Commission after it was discovered that one candidate, who had duly withdrawn from the 2025 Local Government Election, still appeared on the ballot paper.
  
- 12) ***Chirunga Ward in Zomba City North constituency:*** The by-elections were postponed following the death of Abraham Elliams Nyondo who was nominated to contest as a candidate for the Liberation for Economic Freedom Party (LEFP)
  
- 13) ***Muonekera Ward in Thyolo Goliati constituency:*** The ward became vacant following the death of Councillor Elisha Joel Milanzi on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2025 in an accident.

## **Registration of voters**

The Commission launched the by-elections activities on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026 and planned to conduct voter registration from 31 January to 6 February 2026 in all the by-election areas except in Nkhotakota Liwaladzi where the court ruled that only those that registered for the 2025 General Election should be the ones to vote in the by-election. The voter registration aimed at giving a registration opportunity for people that have just attained the voter registration age and those that failed to register last time to do so now.

At the end of the voter registration exercise a total of **7,756** new valid voters were registered. This excludes the **716** multiple registrants who were detected during the standard post-acquisition data quality control. The combined total number of voters across all the by-elections was **243,588**. Of the total registered voters, a total of 137,357 representing 56 percent were female while 106,231 were male representing 44 percent.

### **Inspection and verification of the voters register**

The Commission opened all registration centres on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> February 2026 for all registered voters, both from 2025 General Election and those registering ahead of this by-election, to go and

inspect their details in the voters register. We also provided an opportunity for replacement of lost or damaged voter certificates.

In addition to physical verification at centres, registered voters had an opportunity to verify their details in the voters' register by dialling \*2509# on both TNM and Airtel networks. This service was free of charge and one phone handset could be used multiple times by different users.

### **Nomination of candidates**

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, for candidates who were duly nominated ahead of the 2025 election, they needed to collect sign and submit a letter of intent to contest to the Constituency Returning Officer starting from 20 January 2026 up to 20 February, 2026. For those that were joining the race during the by-election period and those who changed affiliations, they had to collect nomination papers from 20 January 2026. As per practice the Commission dedicated 20 February for pre-inspection of the ballot papers and presentation was on 21 February 2026.

The Commission received a total of 83 nominations of which 61 were male, 22 female, 5 belonged in the Youth category (those less than 35 years of age on the day of 21 February 2026) and 1

in the Persons with Disability category. After reviewing the nomination papers all the candidates were eligible to contest and were approved to be duly nominated.

The Commission notes that out of the 24 registered political parties, six political parties contested parliamentary elections while 10 contested on local government elections.

### **Official campaign period**

The official campaign period started on 15 January 2026 when the by-elections were initially launched. As per requirement of the law, campaign ended at 06.00AM on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2026 which is 48 hours to the polling day.

The Commission wishes to commend the people in the by-election areas for maintaining law, order, peace and calm during the entire campaign period. We never received any complaint in relation to issues of violence or intimidation.

### **Polling, counting and results**

Polling took place on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026. All polling stations opened and remained operational for people to vote. Stations that delayed opened or experienced a disruption

compensated for the time loss through an equivalent extension at the end.

Counting of results began immediately after close of the polls in the same polling stations. Results from the polling stations were taken to the Constituency Tally Centre where they were tabulated and transmitted electronically and physically to the National Tally Centre in Lilongwe.

I should thank all parties and candidates who sent their representatives to monitor polling and tallying of the results. Their presence enhanced the transparency and credibility of the process.

### **Civic and Voter Education**

To fulfil its mandate of conducting voter education, the Commission produced and distributed civic and voter education materials such as posters, brochures and voter information letters to all chiefs and religious leaders in the areas concerned.

In addition, the Commission deployed loudhailer vehicles to conduct voter awareness and mobilise voters to patronize their polling centres on the polling day. On the other hand, the National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE) Trust and other

CSOs complemented the Commission by conducting public mobilisation that also helped inform the voters about manifestos of the candidates. The Commission commends the NICE Trust for this important role.

### **Appreciation to stakeholders**

The Commission wishes to extend its appreciation to the Government through the Ministry of Finance for timely release of funds to conduct the by-election. The by-election operations have run without challenges and uninterrupted because funding was available.

The Commission also appreciates the efforts by traditional and faith leaders, and Civil Society Organisations that helped in voter education by mobilizing their followers.

The Commission continues to appreciate the role the Malawi Police Service plays in providing security throughout the electoral process.

The Commission also appreciates the media for sensitizing and mobilising the public on these by-elections and publishing accurate and correct information.

The Commission recognizes and appreciates the District Commissioners and members of the District Election Supervisory Teams (DEST) who managed the elections on the ground. The Commission also commends the Multiparty Liaison Committees, and various political party leaders for the collaboration we had in preparation and conduct of these by-elections.

A fitting word of high and hearty commendation to my fellow Commissioners and the MEC staff for their dedication, professionalism, commitment and selflessness in managing the electoral process so well. To you I say well done and keep it up!

Finally, I should also express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to all registered voters in the by-elections areas for turning up for voting despite the rains that most of the by-election areas faced on 17 March 2026.

### **Analysis of Complaints**

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen. It is a requirement that at the beginning of the determination of election results the Commission must resolve all matters that have been subject of complaints.

In accordance with section 86 of the Presidential, Parliamentary and Local Government Elections Act, the Commission provided all polling stations with Complaints Logbooks. All complaints, any irregularity must be submitted at the polling stations and should be resolved by the Presiding officer. If the complaints are not satisfactorily resolved at that level of authority, the complaints should be examined and decided upon by the Commission. Where an irregularity has been confirmed, the Commission must take action to correct the irregularity and the effect of the irregularity on the election outcome.

In respect of these by-elections, the Commission retrieved and reviewed all the Complaints Logbooks placed in all polling stations and Complaints and Incident Logbooks from all Constituency tally centres. It was observed that all complaints that had been recorded were resolved at the Polling Stations and the Constituency Tally Centres except for Blantyre West Constituency.

### ***Complaints in Blantyre West Constituency***

In respect of Blantyre West Constituency, the Commission considered a written complaint received through the Constituency Returning Officer alleging that campaign activities were conducted outside the official campaign period. The

complaint included a link to a **YouTube** video said to show a vehicle allegedly engaging in campaign activities in favour of *one of the candidates* outside the prescribed campaign period, and it was further alleged that the vehicle was visibly branded with campaign materials.

The Commission reviewed the complaint and examined the video. After careful assessment, the Commission found that the video did not constitute sufficient evidence to substantiate the allegations. The footage does not contain a date stamp or any indication of when and where it was recorded.

Further, although it was alleged that the vehicle was branded and that campaign materials were being distributed, the video does not provide evidence to support these claims. The absence of a date or verifiable context renders the video inconclusive for purposes of determining whether an electoral offence occurred.

In view of the above, the Commission resolved that the complaint be dismissed. Consequently, no further recommendations or referrals to law enforcement agencies will be made.

The Commission's written response has been sent to the Complainant.

The Commission has also received a complaint from Dexton Gunsalu. In this complaint, it has been alleged that there were discrepancies between biometric and manual records. The Complainant had demanded that there should be a recount of the votes.

The Commission has considered this complaint and after due consideration, the Commission resolved to dismiss the complaint. The Commission examined both the physical and electronic results and records and did not come across the complained discrepancy.

### **Examination of void votes**

It is also a requirement that the Commission must examine all the votes that have been classified as void in accordance with 96 of the Presidential, Parliamentary and Local Government Elections Act where the total of the void votes is greater than the difference between the first and second placed candidates.

The Commission did not examine any void vote because there was no by-election area where the void votes were greater than the difference between the candidate with the highest number of valid votes and the one with the second highest number of valid votes.

## **Declaration of Results**

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I will now proceed to declare the results.

The Commission monitored the voting that took place on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March 2026. We are satisfied that it was conducted in an environment where the electorate were free to elect a candidate of their choice without fear and intimidation. We are also confident that the results we are about to announce reflect the will of the voters. The Commission, therefore, declares this election as a credible one that has met legal requirements and international best practices generally.

### **1. Rumphi Central Constituency**

Rumphi Central Constituency had five candidates. With a total of 25,880 registered voters, a total of 14,510 voters turned up for polling. This represents 56.07 percent voter turnout. There were 51 void votes. This represents 0.35 percent of the total votes cast. The results of the voting are as follows:

1. Licy Nkosi Kamwendo (F) INDEPENDENT got 113 votes

2. McDowel Aaron Chidumba Mkandawire (M)  
Malawi Congress Party (MCP) got 112 votes
3. Moir Walita Mkandawire (M) Democratic  
Progressive Party got 5,378 votes
4. Matthews Chinombo Mtumbuka (M) UTM got 6,395
5. Paul Nyirenda (M) AFORD got 2,461 votes

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Commission,

I, Justice Annabel Mtalimanja now declare **Matthews Chinombo Mtumbuka**, who contested as UTM candidate, the winner in the Rumphi Central Constituency by-election.

## **2. Nkhotakota Liwaladzi Constituency**

Nkhotakota Liwaladzi Constituency had six candidates. With a total of 25,663 registered voters, a total of 11,168 voters turned up for polling. This represents 43.52 percent voter turnout. There were 90 void votes. This represents 0.81 percent of the total votes cast. The results of the voting are as follows:

1. Zelita Tankhuleni BANDA (F) Independent got  
2,134 votes

2. Alexander Billy CHAZIYA (M) INDEPENDENT got 699 votes
3. Pascal Alfred CHITUNDU (M) Peoples' Development Party (PDP) got 49 votes
4. Overstone Frank KONDOWE (F) Malawi Congress Party (MCP) got 508 votes
5. Thokoziire LUNJI (F) Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) got 4,742 votes
6. Aisha SILVER (F) Independent got 2,946 votes

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Commission,

I, Justice Annabel Mtalimanja now declare **Thokoziire LUNJI**, who contested as DPP candidate, the winner in the Nkhotakota Liwaladzi Constituency by-election.

### **3. Dedza Mtakataka Constituency**

Dedza Mtakataka Constituency had five candidates. With a total of 24,471 registered voters, a total of 12,943 voters turned up for polling. This represents 52.89 percent voter turnout. There were 185 void votes. This represents 1.43 percent of the total votes cast. The results of the voting are as follows:

1. Patrick Siyabonga Bandawe (M) Malawi Congress Party (MCP) got 7,080 votes
2. Hyacinta Palingana Chikaonda (F) INDEPENDENT got 598 votes
3. Davie Kupempha (M) INDEPENDENT got 257 votes
4. Nancy Stella Kaendera Maluza (F) Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) got 4,735 votes
5. Charles John Sandram (M) INDEPENDENT got 88 votes

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Commission,

I, Justice Annabel Mtalimanja now declare **Patrick Siyabonga BANDAWE**, who contested as MCP candidate, the winner in the Dedza Mtakatika Constituency by-election.

#### **4. Blantyre West Constituency**

Blantyre West Constituency had ten candidates. With a total of 23,359 registered voters, a total of 9,084 voters turned up for polling. This represents 38.89 percent voter turnout. There were 80 void votes. This represents 0.88 percent of the total votes cast. The results of the voting are as follows:

1. Mavuto Mapongo Gulo (M) INDEPENDENT got 5,178 votes
2. Dexton Mphatso Gunsalu (M) Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) got 2,688 votes
3. Stella Tinenenji Jamu (F) INDEPENDENT got 33 votes
4. Nicholas Kachingwe (M) INDEPENDENT got 155 votes
5. Turnson Kaliza (M) PPM got 11 votes
6. Jason Isaac Kaneka (M) INDEPENDENT got 244 votes
7. Annie Exildah Kazembe (F) AFORD got 49 votes
8. Vinniey Kunitete (F) INDEPENDENT got 261 votes
9. Lista Masamba (F) INDEPENDENT got 181 votes
10. Dija Magret Mussa (F) INDEPENDENT got 204 votes

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Commission,

I, Justice Annabel Mtalimanja now declare **Mavuto Mapongo GULO**, who contested as an Independent candidate, the winner in the Blantyre West Constituency by-election.

## **5. Ighembe Ward in Karonga Songwe Constituency**

Ighembe Ward had eight candidates. With a total of 10,750 registered voters, a total of 4,438 voters turned up for polling.

This represents 41.28 percent voter turnout. There were 14 void votes. This represents 0.32 percent of the total votes cast. The results of the voting are as follows:

1. Moshi Muludini Fundi (F) Peoples' Party (PP) got 4 votes
2. Teleza Kamunyowe (F) National Development Party (NDP) got 195 votes
3. Benedicto Kaonga (M) Alliance for Democracy (AFORD) got 33 votes
4. Thumbiko Eddu Kaonga (M) UTM got 1,458 votes
5. Adrian Masimbi (M) Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) got 2,243 votes
6. Ephraim Junior King Mvula (M) Malawi Congress Party (MCP) got 453 votes
7. Magret Mwakalinga (F) MRP got 8 votes
8. Cheyo Nyasi (F) Peoples' Transformation Party (PETRA) got 30 votes

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Commission,

I, Justice Annabel Mtalimanja now declare **Adrian MASIMBI**, who contested as DPP candidate, the winner in the Ighembe Ward Local Government by-election.

## **6. Luwinga Ward in Mzuzu City North Constituency**

Luwinga Ward had seven candidates. With a total of 7,207 registered voters, a total of 2,388 voters turned up for polling. This represents 33.13 percent voter turnout. There were 9 void votes. This represents 0.38 percent of the total votes cast. The results of the voting are as follows:

1. Thomas Kaunda (M) Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) got 586 votes
2. Wanangwa Wilson Kumwenda (M) INDEPENDENT got 238 votes
3. Clavel Dapalapa Mhango (M) Odyza Zake Alibe Mlandu (Odyza Zake) got 1,119 votes
4. Arthur Multher Symon Mkumbwa (M) Malawi Congress Party (MCP) got 216 votes
5. Mafunase Mphepo (F) INDEPENDENT got 52 votes
6. Pachalo Fwasani Nyoni (M) AFORD got 130 votes
7. Elines Judith Sakala (F) Peoples' Party (PP) got 38 votes

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Commission,

I, Justice Annabel Mtalimanja now declare **Clavel Dapalapa MHANGO**, who contested as Odyza Zake candidate, the winner in the Luwinga Ward Local Government by-election.

## **7. Linthembwe Ward in Dowa Ngala Constituency**

Linthembwe Ward had seven candidates. With a total of 16,918 registered voters, a total of 4,282 voters turned up for polling. This represents 25.31 percent voter turnout. There were 35 void votes. This represents 0.82 percent of the total votes cast. The results of the voting are as follows:

1. Blessings Steven Chaguza (M) INDEPENDENT got 1,102 votes
2. Gideon Chiwasa (M) Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) got 2,331 votes
3. Brian Khumbeni (M) INDEPENDENT got 296 votes
4. Racheal Meke (F) Malawi Congress Party (MCP) got 353 votes
5. Emily Mwale (F) INDEPENDENT got 78 votes
6. Richard Mkhata (M) INDEPENDENT got 60 votes
7. Nephtary Zikamera (M) INDEPENDENT got 27 votes

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Commission,

I, Justice Annabel Mtalimanja now declare **Gideon CHIWASA**, who contested as DPP candidate, the winner in the Linthembwe Ward Local Government by-election.

## **8. Msitu Ward in Mchinji South Constituency**

Msitu Ward had six candidates. With a total of 16,376 registered voters, a total of 3,404 voters turned up for polling. This represents 20.79 percent voter turnout. There were 30 void votes. This represents 0.88 percent of the total votes cast. The results of the voting are as follows:

1. Spesha Jasten Fungulani (M) INDEPENDENT got 1,070 votes
2. Artson Arthur Kambalanje (M) INDEPENDENT got 165 votes
3. Louis Masanjula (M) Malawi Congress Party (MCP) got 757 votes
4. John Levison Mkuleza (M) Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) got 1,192 votes
5. Benjamin Pallian (M) INDEPENDENT got 162 votes
6. Zidoni Banda Soft (M) UTM got 28 votes

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Commission,

I, Justice Annabel Mtalimanja now declare **John Levison MKULEZA**, who contested as DPP candidate, the winner in the Msitu Ward Local Government by-election.

### **9. Chilobwe Ward in Lilongwe Chilobwe Constituency**

Chilobwe Ward had four candidates. With a total of 29,287 registered voters, a total of 11,038 voters turned up for polling. This represents 37.69 percent voter turnout. There were 91 void votes. This represents 0.82 percent of the total votes cast. The results of the voting are as follows:

1. Gradwell Samuel Chiwaya (M) INDEPENDENT got 459 votes
2. Saili Gwede (M) Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) got 237 votes
3. Davie Kamwendo (M) Malawi Congress Party (MCP) got 10,088 votes
4. Zindo Mavuto Ndembo (M) INDEPENDENT got 163 votes

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Commission;

I, Justice Annabel Mtalimanja now declare **Davie KAMWENDO**, who contested as MCP candidate, the winner in the Chilobwe Ward Local Government by-election.

### **10. Mikongo Ward in Mangochi North East Constituency**

Mikongo Ward had six candidates. With a total of 15,254 registered voters, a total of 4,439 voters turned up for polling. This represents 29.10 percent voter turnout. There were 46 void votes. This represents 1.04 percent of the total votes cast. The results of the voting are as follows:

1. Aisha Chikoloni (F) INDEPENDENT got 143 votes
2. Lackson Mustafa Jagaji (M) INDEPENDENT got 188 votes
3. Arthur M'dala Kunje (M) Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) got 1,063 votes
4. Ruth Makwinja (F) United Democratic Front (UDF) got 246 votes
5. James Royidi (M) INDEPENDENT got 2,624 votes
6. Lackson Simba (M) INDEPENDENT got 129 votes

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Commission, I, Justice Annabel Mtalimanja now declare **James**

**ROYIDI**, who contested as an Independent candidate, the winner in the Mikongo Ward Local Government by-election.

### **11. Chanda Ward in Zomba Chikomwe Constituency**

Chanda Ward had six candidates. With a total of 16,899 registered voters, a total of 2,976 voters turned up for polling. This represents 17.61 percent voter turnout. There were 24 void votes. This represents 0.81 percent of the total votes cast. The results of the voting are as follows:

1. Stephano Amosi (M) INDEPENDENT got 101 votes
2. Jailosi Brown (M) Malawi Congress Party (MCP) got 153 votes
3. Bonnex Chingwalu (M) INDEPENDENT got 41 votes
4. Timothy Raphael Makaitisa (M) UTM got 804 votes
5. William Muthipa (M) Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) got 823 votes
6. Christopher Nankhwenya (M) INDEPENDENT got 1,030 votes

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Commission, I, Justice Annabel Mtalimanja now declare **Christopher NANKWENYA**, who contested as an Independent

candidate, the winner in the Chanda Ward Local Government by-election.

## **12. Chirunga Ward in Zomba City North Constituency**

Chirunga Ward had seven candidates. With a total of 9,332 registered voters, a total of 2,047 voters turned up for polling. This represents 21.94 percent voter turnout. There were 3 void votes. This represents 0.15 percent of the total votes cast. The results of the voting are as follows:

1. Benson Bulla (M) INDEPENDENT got 29 votes
2. Christopher Kriss Chakah (M) UTM got 263 votes
3. Edward Chingani (M) Alliance for Democracy (AFORD) got 136 votes
4. Chikhulupiliro Jimu (M) Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) got 377 votes
5. Farida Malida Karah (F) United Democratic Front (UDF) got 139 votes
6. Chisomo Harry Lemani (M) INDEPENDENT got 957 votes
7. Hudson Divaison Mwangalika (M) INDEPENDENT got 143 votes

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Commission, I, Justice Annabel Mtalimanja now declare **Chisomo Harry LEMANI**, who contested as an Independent candidate, the winner in the Chirunga Ward Local Government by-election.

### **13. Muonekera Ward in Thyolo Goliati Constituency**

Muonekera Ward had six candidates. With a total of 22,192 registered voters, a total of 4,272 voters turned up for polling. This represents 19.25 percent voter turnout. There were 47 void votes. This represents 1.10 percent of the total votes cast. The results of the voting are as follows:

1. Isaac Chiseko (M) INDEPENDENT got 1,283 votes
2. Goliath Nsulupi Chisowa (M) INDEPENDENT got 40 votes
3. Peter Lingani (M) INDEPENDENT got 79 votes
4. George Molesi (M) Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) got 2,327 votes
5. Stanford Mukiwa (M) INDEPENDENT got 72 votes
6. Foster Tobias (M) INDEPENDENT got 424 votes

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Commission, I, Justice Annabel Mtalimanja now declare **George**

**MOLESI**, who contested as DPP candidate, the winner in the Muonekera Ward Local Government by-election.

## **Commission observations**

### **1. Voter turnout during by-elections**

The Commission has noted the low turnout in the by-elections. Considering that there were heavy rains we would attribute partly to that but this is the conversation that we the Commission need to have with stakeholders as we prepare for the next by-elections.

### **2. Participation of women in elections**

The Commission has noted that there is still low participation of women as candidates in elections with four wards namely, Msitu, Chilobwe, Chanda and Muonekera having no female candidates.

### **3. Void Votes**

The Commission has observed that the number of void votes has reduced compared to other past elections. You will notice that during these elections, the examination of void votes did not become necessary. This means that in all election areas, the number of void votes was less than the difference between the winner and the runner-up.

Therefore, the Commission would like to commend the implementation of civic and voter education and the voters for efforts made to reduce the number of void votes.

#### **4. Candidates shying from pre-inspection**

The Commission has noted that some candidates shy away from pre-inspection exercise for their nomination papers. We need to emphasise that this is a very critical element as it ensures smooth flow on the nomination day. For errors and omissions detected before nomination, the candidate always has more time to rectify them unlike when discovered on the nomination day.

#### **Existing vacant constituencies**

Now that we have concluded the by-election in this quarter, the Commission will be looking forward to holding the next set of by-elections to fill the current constituencies that have fallen vacant as follows:

- 1. Lilongwe City Bwaila:** The Commission nullified the process because there was tampering with the results process that rendered the Commission unable to determine a winner. For the record it should also be mentioned that

the Commission had initially included this constituency in the current set of by-elections, but the processes were postponed because of legal cases commenced by one of the contestants. Since the case was dismissed the Commission will now proceed with its plans.

2. ***Machinga Mikoko:*** This constituency has fallen vacant following the death of Hon Jaffalie Mussa who was elected as Member of Parliament for the area in the 16 September 2025 election.

### **Concluding remarks**

I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to all the candidates who have emerged victorious in these by-elections. The people in your respective constituencies and wards have placed their trust and confidence in you through the ballot, and it is now your responsibility to honour that trust. I encourage you to work diligently and to strive to fulfil the commitments and promises you made to the electorate during the campaign period. By-elections provide communities with an opportunity to restore representation when vacancies arise, and your election now places upon you the duty to represent the interests of your constituents faithfully and to contribute meaningfully to the development of your areas.

To those candidates who did not succeed in this contest, I would like to encourage you not to be discouraged. Elections, including by-elections, are an important part of democratic competition, and not every contest results in victory. What is important is the willingness to participate, to offer leadership and to give voters a meaningful choice. I therefore encourage you to take this experience as an opportunity to reflect, learn and continue engaging with the people you sought to represent. There will always be future opportunities to serve, and the lessons learned today can help shape stronger campaigns and leadership in the future.

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate that the Malawi Electoral Commission remains prepared and committed to smoothly delivering successful and transparent, free, fair and credible elections in this country. The Commission will do this in conformity with the law which provides for its independence in its decision.

May God bless you

Bless our land of Malawi