

Statement

13 October 2026

ERC AFRICA STATEMENT ON THE TRANSFER OF VOTER REGISTRATION AND VOTERS' ROLL FUNCTIONS FROM ZEC TO THE REGISTRAR-GENERAL.

The Election Resource Centre Africa (ERC Africa) acknowledges the transfer of voter registration and the custody and maintenance of the voters' rolls from the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission to the Registrar-General in line with the Constitution of Zimbabwe (Amendment) Act (No. 3), 2026.

ERC Africa recognises the coordination and collaborative efforts demonstrated by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) and the Registrar-General thus far in facilitating the timely and orderly transfer of responsibilities. Notably, ZEC has maintained regular communication throughout the transition period, including through the effective use of social media, which has contributed to keeping the public informed of developments in the process..

While the integration of the civil registry, voter registration and the voters roll presents opportunities to improve access and strengthen the efficiency of registration processes, the change must be implemented with safeguards that protect the integrity of the electoral process and rebuild public confidence in voter registration and the voters' roll.

For ERC Africa, the key question is not simply who is responsible for voter registration and the voters roll, but whether the new administration enables every eligible citizen to have access without unnecessary barriers, and whether the new administration addresses previous concerns raised by electoral stakeholders including addressing recommendations made by Election Observer Missions.

ERC Africa urges the Registrar-General, the ZEC and other institutions involved in the transition to ensure that the transition and conduct post transition be guided by the following principles:

**ERC Africa Statement on the Transfer of Voter Registration and Voters' Roll Functions
from ZEC to the Registrar-General.**

- **Accessibility** - All institutions involved in the transition must ensure that voter registration and the voters roll remains accessible to all eligible citizens without undue barriers.
- **Accuracy** - All institutions involved in the transition must ensure that electoral records, voter information, and data transferred between institutions must be accurate, complete, properly verified, and securely maintained.
- **Transparency** - The transition and post transition period should be conducted through clear, and publicly understandable processes. Relevant information should be communicated in a timely manner to stakeholders and the public.
- **Inclusion** – All institutions involved in the transition and beyond must ensure that relevant stakeholders, including civil society organisations, political parties, and other electoral stakeholders, are afforded meaningful and timely opportunities to participate in and contribute to the transition process and beyond. Stakeholder engagement should ensure that diverse perspectives are considered in decisions affecting the administration and conduct of electoral processes.
- **Certainty** - The legal and policy framework must provide clarity and certainty to citizens, political parties, civil society, and other stakeholders. Any changes to laws, regulations, policies, procedures, or administrative arrangements should be clear, consistent, and well communicated to the public.
- **Accountability** – Changes to laws, regulations, procedures, or administrative arrangements should be clearly communicated to citizens, political parties, civil society, and other stakeholders, with mechanisms in place to enable oversight, raise concerns, and seek redress where institutions fail to meet their obligations.

These principles should not only guide the transition period and beyond but should serve as benchmarks against which the change is assessed going forward.

In light of the above, the ERC Africa makes the following recommendations;

TO THE REGISTRAR-GENERAL

1. ERC Africa calls on the Registrar-General to publish and regularly update a comprehensive list of all centres at which voter registration services are available. The information should include the location of each registration centre, operating days and hours, and the requirements for registration. This information should be

**ERC Africa Statement on the Transfer of Voter Registration and Voters' Roll Functions
from ZEC to the Registrar-General.**

widely disseminated through accessible channels to ensure that citizens can easily identify and access the registration services available to them.

- 2.** The Registrar-General's Office should also undertake a nationwide voter registration blitz and public awareness campaign in order to provide clear information on the transfer of the voter-registration mandate, increase familiarity with the new registration arrangements and encourage eligible citizens to register to vote. Particular attention should be given to young people and first-time voters, whose registration rates have been declining. Previous ERC Africa research on youth participation has identified barriers to voter registration as a key hindrance to youth participation in electoral processes.
- 3.** The Registrar-General must take steps to address the longstanding practical barriers that have negatively impacted on registration rates, such as the distance prospective voters are required to travel to access registration, as well as any direct or indirect costs associated with voter registration.
 - 3.1.** Particular attention should be given to persons with disabilities, communities in remote areas, and other groups that face additional barriers to participation.
- 4.** The Registrar-General must also immediately conduct a voters' roll inspection campaign to ensure citizens have mechanisms to confirm their voter registration status and verify voter and polling station details following the transfer. This is to mitigate against any discrepancies arising from the transfer and ensure that any potential inaccuracies are immediately identified. Such measures are essential to building public confidence in the accuracy and integrity of the voters' roll post transfer.
 - 4.1.** This should include leveraging technology to provide continuous and accessible voter verification and inspection platforms, including the restoration of the 265# USSD and the online BVR Inspection platforms, to enable citizens to access and verify their voter registration information remotely.

TO THE ZIMBABWE ELECTORAL COMMISSION

- 5.** Given the central role of ZEC in the administration of elections as defined by section 239 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, ERC Africa calls on ZEC to clearly define and communicate its updated role and responsibilities following the transfer of voter registration functions and the voters' roll to the Registrar-General. This is particularly important in relation to ZEC's continued central role in administering elections general and more specifically administering the voters'

ERC Africa Statement on the Transfer of Voter Registration and Voters' Roll Functions from ZEC to the Registrar-General.

roll for the purposes of elections and by-elections, and ensuring broad-based understanding of the new roles and responsibilities.

TO THE PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE

6. The ERC Africa recommends that the Parliament of Zimbabwe, the Ministry of Justice, and other relevant institutions immediately undertake a comprehensive review and alignment of the legal and regulatory framework governing elections following the enactment of Constitution of Zimbabwe (Amendment) Act (No. 3), 2026. This should ensure consistency between the Constitution, Electoral Act and any other relevant act regulations, policies, and procedures governing voter registration, the compilation and maintenance of the voters' roll, and the respective mandates of institutions involved in the electoral process.

ERC AFRICA'S CALL

ERC Africa calls upon the Registrar-General, ZEC, Parliament, the Government of Zimbabwe, Political Parties and Civil Society Organisations to ensure that the implementation of the Registrar-General's voter-registration and voters' roll mandate strengthens, rather than weakens, public confidence in Zimbabwe's electoral system. Citizens must be recognised not merely as beneficiaries of the electoral system, but as key participants in Zimbabwe's democratic and electoral processes.

END//

ABOUT ELECTION RESOURCE CENTRE (ERC) AFRICA

The ERC Africa is a think tank and advocacy organisation on electoral issues in Africa. The organisation was formed following the need to deepen electoral research work that would inform effective citizen participation, strengthen policy engagement towards the improvement of the quality of electoral and democratic practices.

For more details or clarification, please contact the ERC Africa
erczimbabwe@gmail.com

Subscribe to the ERC Africa newsletter on:
<https://ercafrica.beehiiv.com/>