

Good Morning. I address you today as the Head of ICGLR Electoral Observation Mission deployed across Zambia to observe the conduct of the national elections held on the 13th August 2026. We have monitored polling and counting processes and sought to assess the extent to which elections were conducted within the parameters of Zambian Constitutional standards and international commitments.

We have been closely monitoring recent developments including the suspension of vote counting and announcement of results. I begin by expressing deep concern at this suspension and its effects on the credibility of the process and the confidence of voters. The right to have one's vote counted is fundamental to democratic representation. Any interruption of counting undermines that right and must be addressed transparently and urgently. The confirmation of the suspension was made public on 14th August 2026. It was reported that suspension was a result of incidents of violence and logistical breakdowns.

Suspension of counting of votes and announcement of results has the potential to damage public trust. It raises risks over dispute of results. It increases the potential for rumours and disinformation that can inflame tensions and so this why we, had to seek clarification from the Electoral Commission of Zambia on the 14th August 2026.

The Electoral Commission of Zambia immediately provided clear explanations for the suspension. They also shared measures taken to secure ballots and the timeline and conditions required for resumption. As Heads of Missions, we were reassured by the explanation offered by ECZ

I wish to underscore that a credible election is not solely the technical act of counting ballots it is the public assurance that every lawful vote will be respected and that procedures are followed transparently. Based on this understanding, the ICGLR Mission remains committed to impartial observation and to assisting with technical recommendation where requested. We will continue to monitor developments on the ground, verify information about suspended counts and report our findings. We therefore urge all to act with restraint, prioritise peaceful process and support transparent solutions that protect the integrity of the vote.