

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION

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Press Statement

Programme for By-election of Member of Parliament for Arua Municipality, Arua District

1. Introduction

Dear esteemed members of the press, it is my privilege and pleasure to welcome you to this press briefing.

Today the Commission will brief you on the electoral programme for by-election of Member of Parliament representing Arua Municipality in Arua District.

2. Programme for Parliamentary By-elections Arua Municipality in Arua District

The vacancy of the Directly-elected Member of Parliament for Arua Municipality in Arua District occurred following the death of the former Member of Parliament, Hon. Ibrahim Abiriga.

On behalf of the Electoral Commission, and on my own behalf, I wish to extend heartfelt condolences to the family, the people of Arua Municipality, all friends and fellow citizens of Uganda, on the bereavement caused by his untimely death. I request that we observe a moment of silence. May his soul rest in eternal peace, Amen!

As required by law, the statutory deadline for conducting a Parliamentary by-election is sixty (60) days after notification from Clerk to Parliament on the occurrence of the vacancy. The Commission received the notice on 15th June 2018, and therefore, the statutory deadline for holding the by-election is 16th August 2018.

Accordingly, the Electoral Commission has approved the electoral programme for this by-election.

Stakeholders in Arua Municipality are urged to take note of the following key activities and dates:

a. Banning of Fundraising Activities in Arua Municipality Arua District

During this by-election programme, no fundraising activities shall be allowed in Arua Municipality. The purpose of this ban is to allow a leveled-ground for candidates in the race.

For avoidance of doubt, this ban takes effect from Monday 9th July 2018, which is the cut-off date for registration of voters and transfer of voting location in Arua Municipality, and will continue until polling day.

Those found to be contravening the law shall be dealt with accordingly.

b. Stakeholders Meeting: Friday 6th July 2018

The Electoral Commission will hold a stakeholders meeting on Friday 6th July 2018, at Arua District Council Hall, to discuss any issues of concern that should be addressed by the Commission to ensure a free and fair by-election.

This meeting will also help to foster collaboration between the Commission and stakeholders in Arua Municipality, in order to achieve high participation in the various activities, in accordance with the laws.

The stakeholders who have been invited to the meeting include the constituency leadership, representatives of political parties and organizations, representatives of civil society organizations, security officials, religious leaders, opinion leaders, sub county supervisors and members of the press.

c. Update of the National Voters' Register: 5th – 9th July 2018

Arua Municipality currently has a total number of 45,184 registered voters (as of 20th June 2018) and 65 polling stations.

An update of the Voters' Register will be conducted from 5th – 9th July 2018, at update stations within each of the six (6) Wards in Arua Municipality, starting at 8:00am till 6:00pm, on each of the appointed dates, including weekends.

This exercise will enable Ugandan citizens of 18 years and above, who either reside or originate in parishes/wards within Arua Municipality, and who have not had their photographs and bio-data taken before by the Electoral Commission for purposes of registration for elections, to do so.

All registered voters who wish to transfer to new voting locations shall be able to do so during this update exercise.

The Electoral Commission has appointed Monday 9th July 2018 as the cut-off date for registration and/or transfer of voting location in for Arua Municipality.

d. Display of the Voters' Register and Issuance of Voting Location Slips: 18th - 27th July 2018

The Electoral Commission has appointed 18th – 27th July 2018, as the period for display of the National Voters' Register in Arua Municipality.

The display of the Voters' Register shall begin at 8:00am and end at 6:00pm at all the sixty five (65) polling stations in the Municipality, on each of the appointed dates, including weekends.

During the display, voters are urged to turn up in large numbers and check for the correctness of their particulars, and confirm that photographs appear against correct particulars.

Voters are further urged to report to the display officer: the dead, the non-citizens, the under-aged, and those who belong to another Parish, so that they are removed from the Register.

During this display period, the Commission will also issue temporary Voter Location Slips (VLS) to voters, to enable them conveniently locate their respective polling station on polling day.

There will be a display of lists of persons recommended for deletion from the Register for a period of eight (8) days, from 30th July – 6th August 2018, at the respective Ward headquarters.

The purpose of this supplementary display is to enable any person who may have been wrongly recommended for deletion to raise an objection to the Parish/Ward Tribunal.

The Parish/Ward Tribunal may reinstate the person if convinced of the genuineness of the objection.

e. Nomination of Candidates, Inspection of Nomination Papers, Campaigns & Polling Day

The nomination of candidates shall be conducted for a period of two days, Thursday 19th July and Friday 20th July 2018, at Arua District Headquarters.

The nomination will be followed by a period of five (5) days, that is, from 19th – 23rd July, 2018 during which members of the general public will have access to the candidates' nomination papers, and will be able to lodge complaints, if any, on suitability of the candidates to contest in the by-election.

Campaign meetings for candidates for Member of Parliament shall be held for a period of twenty two (22) days, that is, from 23rd July to 13th August 2018.

The campaign meetings or public rallies shall be conducted only within the stipulated time, that is, from 7:00am until 6:00pm on each of the campaign days.

All candidates are urged to observe law and order during this exercise and to conduct their campaign meetings in accordance with the harmonized programme. Hate language will not be tolerated at all.

Polling for by-election of Member of Parliament shall take place on Wednesday 15th August 2018 at all the sixty five 65 polling stations in Arua Municipality and (polling) shall start at 7:00am and close at 4:00pm.

f. Accreditation of Election Observers

Section 16 (1) (a) of the Electoral Commission (Amendment) Act, provides for accreditation of representatives of political parties, civil society organizations and any other duly registered institution to observe electoral activities.

For purposes of transparency, the Electoral Commission shall accredit observers to the various activities which will be undertaken during this electoral process. Accordingly the Commission

invites written expressions of interest from political parties, individuals and duly registered organizations and institutions who wish to observe the said processes.

Interested political parties, individuals, organizations and institutions should submit their applications with two (2) recent passport photos to the Office of the Chairperson, Electoral Commission, Plot 55, Jinja Road, Kampala, P.O. Box 22678 Kampala, or to the Office of the District Returning Officer, Arua, not later than 8th August 2018.

Please note that political parties and independent candidates shall be permitted to deploy not more than five (5) observers per sub-county, and two (2) persons at the Results Tally Center.

The Commission shall accredit election observers from 23rd July to 14th August 2018, and shall provide all those accredited with identification tags for the purpose of observing the various activities of the electoral process.

Please note that media personnel will be required to present valid identification cards from their media houses in order to access polling stations and the Results Tally Center.

Any individuals purporting to perform duties of or act as an observer or agent without due accreditation, will be prosecuted in accordance with the law.

g. Compliance with the Law

The Electoral Commission urges all aspiring candidates and stakeholders to acquaint themselves with the relevant laws, in order to appreciate and comply with their respective roles and responsibilities before, during and after the by-election.

4. Conclusion

The Commission urges all stakeholders in Arua Municipality in Arua District to turn up in large numbers and participate in the above electoral programmes, and to do so in accordance with the guidelines for each activity. This will ensure a smooth electoral exercise.

I thank you,



Justice Byabakama Mugenyi Simon
Chairperson, Electoral Commission