

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA  
**THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION**

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Date: **16<sup>th</sup> June 2020**  
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### **Press Statement**

## **Resumption of Electoral Activities under the Revised Roadmap for 2020/2021 General Elections**

### **Introduction**

- Dear esteemed members of the Press,
- Members and staff of the Commission,
- Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

It is my privilege and pleasure to welcome you back to the premises of the Electoral Commission after almost three months of low-key electoral activity. I thank you for responding to our invitation, and the support you have rendered to the Commission during the period when electoral activities have been suspended due to public health safety concerns, arising out of the corona virus (COVID-19) pandemic, which has affected the whole world, Uganda inclusive.

I further welcome you to this Press Conference, where the Commission is launching a revised Roadmap for the 2020/2021 General Elections.

On behalf of the Members of the Commission, the Management and Staff of the Commission, I wish to extend our sincere appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Uganda, under the leadership of His Excellency, the President, Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, for the courageous and wise management of the corona virus pandemic.

I further convey our deep appreciation to the various agencies and task force teams at the national and district/local levels, under the leadership of the Ministry of Health, for their tireless efforts in guiding the nation in public health safety, which has helped to keep infection levels low and preventing the loss of lives due to the pandemic. The Commission sincerely salutes all the people of Uganda and our partners for working together stem the sporadic spread of Covid-19

As you are already aware, the corona virus pandemic has had an effect on some electoral activities under the Roadmap for the 2020/2021 General Elections.

On the 23rd day of March, 2020, when Government declared a nationwide lockdown, the Commission was already implementing preliminary activities under the Roadmap for the 2020/2021 General Elections. Namely; update and display of the National Voters Register and Registers of Special interest groups

The Commission was particularly carrying out activities for the conduct of elections for the Special Interest Groups (Persons with Disability, Older Persons, Youth) Committees from Village to National Levels. This was to be followed by other preparatory activities for elections of Local Government Councils, Members of Parliament and the President.

The Electoral Commission postponed the above activities under the Roadmap, in response to measures introduced by Government to prevent the spread of the deadly Coronavirus. This is because electoral activities involve public gatherings and hence pose high COVID-19 risk of person-to-person and object-to-person transmissions.

As a result of the postponement, the Commission has lost three months of critical Roadmap activities. The postponement of Roadmap activities also caused inconvenience to various stakeholders in the electoral process. This includes political parties and organisations, which were preparing internal primaries to identify persons to contest as candidates at various elective levels, as well as individuals who are aspiring to contest as independent candidates at various levels. All the inconvenience is regretted, but as we all know, the postponement was inevitable.

The Commission recognises the constitutional right of citizens to vote and choose their leaders, as well as our duty to facilitate the exercise of those rights. The Commission is further mindful of the need to ensure a healthy and safe environment for all stakeholders during the electoral process.

Accordingly, after consultations with, and expert guidance from the Ministry of Health, the Commission has considered and approved a revised Roadmap for the 2020/2021 General Elections as indicated here in

This Revised Roadmap highlights the dates for commencement of various key electoral activities, namely, nominations, campaigns and polling for various elective positions, that is, Presidential, General Parliamentary and Local Government Councils. The Roadmap also highlights the period for conduct of elections for Special Interest Groups (Persons with Disability, Older Persons and Youth) Committees from Village to National Levels.

A copy of this Revised Roadmap has been availed to each one of you to enable you study the details and identify the necessary action to take. A soft copy of the same document has been uploaded on the Electoral Commission website: [www.ec.or.ug](http://www.ec.or.ug) for easy access by other stakeholders.

**Some of the key dates in the revised Roadmap are highlighted here below:**

<b>No</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Period</b>
1.	Political Party and Organisations to identify flag bearers	22 <sup>nd</sup> June - 21 <sup>st</sup> July 2020
2.	Deadline for resignation by public servants wishing to participate in Special Interest Groups (SIGs) Committees Elections	29 <sup>th</sup> June 2020
3.	Nomination of Village SIGs (Older Persons, Persons with Disability and Youth) Committees candidates ( <i>detail for progressive levels up to National to be provided in due course</i> )	29 <sup>th</sup> July - 5 <sup>th</sup> August 2020
4.	Deadline for establishment of academic papers with Electoral Commission by aspiring candidates for Local Government	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2020
5.	Deadline for establishment of academic papers with Electoral Commission by aspiring candidates for Parliamentary Elections	11 <sup>th</sup> August 2020
6.	Deadline for establishment of academic papers with Electoral Commission by aspiring candidates for Presidential Elections	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2020
7.	Deadline for resignation by public servants aspiring to contest for Parliamentary Elections	12 <sup>th</sup> July 2020
8.	Deadline for resignation by public servants aspiring to contest for Local Government Councils Elections	6 <sup>th</sup> August 2020
9.	Deadline for resignation by public servants aspiring to contest for SIG Representative to Parliament	7 <sup>th</sup> August 2020
10.	Deadline for resignation by public servants aspiring to contest for Presidential Elections	31 <sup>st</sup> October 2020
11.	Period for nomination of candidates for Local Governments, including SIGs	7 <sup>th</sup> - 17 <sup>th</sup> September 2020
12.	Nomination of Candidates for Parliamentary Elections	12 <sup>th</sup> - 13 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2020
13.	Nomination of Candidates for Presidential Elections	2 <sup>nd</sup> - 3 <sup>rd</sup> Nov 2020
14.	Harmonisation of Campaign Programme and Signing of Memorandum	4 <sup>th</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup> November 2020
15.	Conduct of candidates' campaigns digitally for Local Government	28 <sup>th</sup> September 2020- 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
16.	Conduct of candidates' campaigns digitally for Parliamentary Elections	20 <sup>th</sup> October 2020 – 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
17.	Conduct of candidates' campaigns digitally for Presidential Elections	10 <sup>th</sup> November 2020- 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
18.	Polling period for General Elections ( <i>exact polling dates to be appointed in due course</i> )	10 <sup>th</sup> January - 8 <sup>th</sup> February 2021

A detailed Roadmap can be obtained from the Electoral Commission website: [www.ec.or.ug](http://www.ec.or.ug) or the offices of political parties and organisations.

The Commission wishes to assure our esteemed stakeholders that this Roadmap has been revised with careful consideration of the operational requirements for the electoral activities and the legal framework governing the conduct of elections, however, under reduced timeframes.

Given the Covid-19 pandemic, and health risks involved and the expectations during the electoral activities, preparations and conduct of these elections will take different modes.

The Commission has done a risk analysis, the implications and instituted mitigation measures in line with the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health. We have also considered the need to preserve the health of the Citizens vis a vis their constitutional and democratic right to elect leaders of their choice as guaranteed under the Constitution, and come up with a plan that ensures minimal person-to-person contact during the implementation of the electoral process. For example;

The Commission will avail nomination forms on its website that can be printed by those with access to the internet. However, for those with no access to internet, hard copies will be availed. Important to note is that we will only allow an aspiring candidate with only two (2) people; the nominator and a seconder.

Mass rallies will not be allowed but campaigns will be conducted mainly through media. **The Commission will issue specific guidelines for each electoral activity under this revised Roadmap in due course and will engage with various stakeholders on the same. This includes detailed information on specific requirements for nomination as a candidate, access to nomination forms, nomination fees and venues and conduct of campaigns and polling process.**

Furthermore, the Commission in consultation with the Ministry of Health considered and adopted Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to facilitate safe participation by all stakeholders in the electoral process. These emphasise safe practices, which have been customised to elections and electoral process include;

- i. Practicing social distancing;
- ii. Wearing face masks in public; and
- iii. Regular washing of hands.

### **Appeal**

The Commission calls upon all stakeholders in the electoral process to take note of the various activities that will be conducted under the Roadmap, and especially the respective timelines, so that they participate accordingly.

The Commission further appeals to political parties and organisations as well as individuals aspiring to contest as independent candidates, to utilise the limited time provided in the

revised Roadmap, and prepare to participate in the respective activities. More appeal goes to media owners to avail opportunities to all the candidates for fair coverage

### **Conclusion**

The Commission advises political parties and aspiring independent candidates to ensure safe practices during primaries and other preparatory activities. Candidates, their agents and supporters are urged to strictly follow the guidelines on public meetings as issued by the Ministry of Health.

Finally, we call upon all Ugandans to work together to ensure safe and healthy participation in the elections.

I thank you,

For God and my Country,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mugenyi Simon', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Justice Byabakama Mugenyi Simon  
**Chairperson, Electoral Commission**