

CSOs demand immediate release of election results and launch national campaign for peace and respect for the voices of the people

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Civil Society Organizations in Zimbabwe represented by a Working Group composed of thirteen umbrella Organizations from all sectors met on Monday the 6th of April to map out a strategy for Civil Society to respond to the ongoing election challenges.

The meeting raised concerns over the incomprehensible explanations on delay in the announcement of results and perceived these explanations as intolerable, insofar as they have precipitated socio-economic paralysis. The organizations therefore unequivocally reiterated the demand for the immediate release of the presidential election results and for tangible displays of commitment by the ruling elites to respect the will of the people.

It is worrisome that ZANU-PF as an interested party continues to unduly interfere with the timely release of the results by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission [ZEC]. Civil Society therefore urges the ZEC to assert itself as an independent and impartial election management body.

Noting that the ongoing anxiety and uncertainty around election results is a breeding ground for civil unrest, Civil Society has launched a massive national campaign to call for peace and respect for the voices of the people. Communities from all over the country will from now on be encouraged to converge in their local areas to conduct different non violent social actions such as marches, prayer meetings and public meetings. The color white will be used as a show of support for the campaign and citizens are encouraged to wear white ribbons, scarfs and apparel as a sign of support for peace in Zimbabwe.

The 18th of April being Zimbabwe's Day of Independence from colonial rule, has also been identified as an opportunity for all Zimbabweans to collectively speak out in support of peace, fundamental freedoms and respect for the people's will.

In the event of a Presidential election run off Civil Society has put in place mechanisms for a coordinated and grassroots based civic campaign to make the peoples' votes larger, to make the peoples' votes count and to make the peoples' votes last.

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