

"PSM18"



SOUTH AFRICA

National Party Liaison Committee (NPLC) Meeting

Draft Minutes

Date: Thursday, 27 May 2021

Venue: Zoom Online Meeting

Time: 09H00

1. Opening and Welcome

The chairperson opened the meeting and welcomed all members present. He indicated that Justice Moseneke will join the meeting at 10h00 to discuss the process for investigation whether elections will be free and fair under Covid 19.

2. Apologies

The following apology was noted:

- Wouter Wessels (VF Plus)

3. Confirmation of Agenda

The agenda for the meeting was confirmed with the following addition:

- Unintended Consequences

The ACDP proposed adoption and seconded by the IFP.

4. Consideration of minutes

Minutes of 18 March 2021 were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting. The IFP proposed adoption of the minutes and the ANC supported.

Electoral Commission

Ensuring Free and Fair Elections

Commissioners: Mr V.G. Mashinini (Chairperson) | Ms J.Y. Love (Vice-Chairperson) | Dr N.P. Masuku | Mr M. Moepya | Judge D. Pillay
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Minutes of 15 April 2021 were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting. The VF Plus proposed adoption of the minutes and the ACDP supported.

5. Presentation by Information Regulator

Advocate Strom from the Information Regulator delivered a presentation on Promotion of Access to Information Amendment.

6. Report back meeting held with political party leaders

The meeting held with political party leaders on the 22nd of April 2021 has led to the request to assess process as it became clear that there were opposing views on whether elections should be held or not.

The Commission has exercised their right to appoint Judge Moseneke to preside over a team that will be doing a finding on the matter. The Judge gave a brief presentation to the meeting to describe his scope.

Comments by Parties	
EFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The timelines for the completion of the report is the end of July which is only two months before elections. • Is there a possibility of bringing back the date.
ACTION SA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent will the process look at the pandemic and the IEC measures separately?
ANC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the situation is not ideal all parties are in the same position. Planning should be for October or early next year, we should make the best of the situation.
VF Plus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We should draw lessons from the by-elections held in the past months, as they have not been challenged as not being free and fair.

IEC Responses

- The targeted date is in mid July 2021 in order that the IEC will have the final registration followed by the proclamation not later than 2 August 2021.
- The timeline will take into account the early submission by the IEC in order to demonstrate their readiness to safeguard the decision to hold elections.
- The political parties will have to submit their responses to confirm whether this is sufficient.
- The judge will then weigh these up in term of the Constitution and the pandemic to determine whether this threatens the free and fairness of elections.
- The timetable that will be issued is going to be very tight where each day will be utilised effectively.
- Parties will have to deal with some level of uncertainty
- The issue is narrow as there is a pandemic, we will get the research evidence and projections.
- Will there be measures which may arrest the threat
- The outcome of the investigation will not equate to a court order, should the IEC consider the report and decide to proceed with elections.
- Parties will still have the right to approach the courts
- The by –elections held will be taken into account
- Also the experiences of other countries that held elections during pandemic and those that postponed elections
- The research is very much intense as is on a large scale.

7. Preparations towards LGE2021

7.1. Amendment to Regulations

Mr Sheburi delivered a presentation on the proposed changes to voter and party registration regulation.

Parties should forward their submission by 04 June 2021 in writing for consideration.

Comments by Parties

DA

- Voters roll should be given with the reduction of voter details as there is a disconnect between advice and what was affected by the changes.

ANC

- The applicability of increasing the number of signatures
- Does the leader refer to the President of the Secretary General of the party.
- What does the other modalities of registration mean? Is it online registration and what else?
- Should look into the signatures of support and the deposit as it became an issue in the past elections where on 14 parties out of ...won seats in elections.
- There should be a level of consistency as there are many independent candidates interested in contesting the upcoming elections.
- Should apply a rule of consistency for the LGE and NPE to have it related to the quota of a seat, i.e. 1% of the quota to prevent legal actions

IEC Responses

- The regulations are not intended to prescribe the party structures; a party will submit a detailed information when applying for registration.
- What does the party use as their hierarch, a leader vs authorised contact person.
- New parties are referred to for additional information.
- The reduction is not as a result of the regulation, but this is in terms of the Electoral Act.
- Initially we only catered for in person registration, now other ways to facilitate this also contemplates online voter registration.
- The regulation for deposit is still in draft form and will be served in the PLC.
- Parliament has made decision to test intent.

7.2. Targeted Communication and Registration

The voting districts have been reviewed and 564 were identified where boundaries changed and this impacts on these VD's. Must make contact with the voters to re-register in correct wards. Details were shared with PLC members. TCR must be done differently, mostly in noncontact ways, SMS's and contacting directly and individually about the changes. Where no progress, the IEC will drop pamphlets. In contact only where we could not obtain the information any other way. We are narrowing the registration gap to target young persons by online voter registration.

Comments by Parties	
DA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There seems to be a lack of a uniform way to deal with these matters.• In some instances S12 was sent out and other times there was another version that voters are only affected by boundaries and then feedback was that ultimately the IEC locally will depend on the registration weekend.• Is National Office giving guidance and following up on this matters?.
EFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kindly forward the maps as we require them, they can be forwarded via google drive in order to be organised.• How will TCR be conducted, will you visit the affected areas and drop pamphlets• Misalignment between the National resolutions and the decisions at MPLC level• May the decision of the NPLC be communicated to the local level so that they can know what must be done• When will the notices indicating what will take place in terms of the election timetable be published.
ANC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Would like to require the total number of the VDs• Request the breakdown of temporary VDs?

IEC Responses

- Once the process of contracting landlords is concluded of will issue a list of VS indicating which are temporary or permanent
- The information is being circulated via NPLC, will provide
- There is a mixture of initiatives applied in context of the environment.
- The Chief Electoral Officer is bound in terms of the law to change the details of voters
- Briefing will be conducted with the provinces before the start of the project
- The plan is adjusted to accommodate different environments
- Will avail the shape maps for all the VDs electronically
- The total number of VDs is 23 151

7.3. Online Self Registration

An additional modality to target the youth voters

Once the testing are complete, we will be communicating with all matriculants by direct SMS indicating he process to register in order to participate in elections.

The process will be the same for the tertiary students.

Party Submissions
<p>ANC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online registration opens up the possibility of cheating for by-elections • What extent will the IEC have checks and balance what safeguards is build into that • Only targeting youth with access to technology, how are you going to target those without access and never reached matric
<p>DA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the past it has been possible for IEC officials and Party Agents to observe people travelling together to by-elections but not knowing where they are from in the ward • What is contemplated to allow oversight over the groups of peoples who have registered? • Will the cellphone number be linked to a specific profile, will it be allowed to receive OTP for more than one profile?
<p>ACTIONSA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many mechanism to which the system can be manipulated

- Concerned that, heard in newspaper of introduction of system in the middle of June, it was not said to be a concept
- There need to be more thorough

EFF

- The exclusion of the poor, the IEC should check to what extend they will be excluding those without data and access
- May consider backcharging or registration using an SMS
- Are you goihng to do away with manual registration, should keep all the registration modalities active as it will cause problems
- Should set up the meeting to look at the registration device
- Clarity on geocoding in terms of address
- Are you not concerned with the signal in terms of network and what must happen

UDM

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VF Plus

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IEC Responses

- Access issue - with back charging to the IEC
- Security issues – there's a view that the introduced system is not secure and is open to manipulation
- Will forward the issues to the Commission in order to deal with them
- We will be harvesting the IP addresses and monitor
- Have to be in a position of a copy ID in order to submit
- Have not explained how we set up the application in our environment and other security features that comes with it.
- Did not show what can be done if the address is not found on google
- The geocoding is accurate if it pick it up on the google search, have to add the street number.

7.4. Presentation on the VMD

Party Submissions
DA <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How will the contact number and cellphone number be captured?• Will the device assist to eliminate double voting
DA <ul style="list-style-type: none">••
ACTIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none">•
EFF <ul style="list-style-type: none">•
UDM <ul style="list-style-type: none">•
VF Plus <ul style="list-style-type: none">•

IEC Response <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The voter or the operator will type the information in the presence of the voter on a touch screen• The zip was driven by the barcode of the VD map, the VMD is driven by the address that the voter provide.• The voter can present themselves in any voting station across the country but but voter where their address locates.

7.5. Recruitment of Registration Staff

The presentation was delivered by DCEO Akhtari Henning on the trends / statistics of electoral staff.

It was emphasised that the criteria was put up for review. If there are any specific issues the will be discussed.

The IEC will on a range of dates have meetings to look at the lists of staff at the various PLC's.

Comments by Parties	
DA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move the requirement to have registered as a tax payer to be considered after a person has been called by the IEC
EFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also include the union affiliation as part of the recruitment specification • Uniformity in terms of training
ACTIONSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any remarks in terms of the Area Managers as they are also involved in the election process.
ANC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be a member of a union is the freedom of association •
ACDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In respect of not allowing IEC officials who have held a political office in the last five years is good. • Include party membership and party staff in the category of 5 years.
GOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also, consider employing matriculates who just passed and are not employed.

IEC Responses	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will share the detail of the legal opinion with regard to union affiliation in the next meeting

- Will present the list to the NPLC, if there is any member who have behaved in a manner that is unacceptable parties will be able to identify and remove
- Training for area managers and all staff at Voting Station they are being trained in terms of the code of the conduct
- They assist with any matter that needs to be handled at the Voting Station
- The Presiding Officer remain the main candidate responsible for the station
- The summary will be provided
- Those without experience are being used in other positions in order to gain experience to be moved to the level of PO and Supervisors

7.6. Launch of LGE2021

Normal we launch the theme of the elections before the registration weekend, the message, the theme and logo are ready. The Commission has set the 09th of June 2021 as the date of the launch.

- All NPLC members are invited to be in the launch
- It will start at 10am and conclude at 11h30
- The invitations have been sent, please indicated members who will attend.
- It will be a hybrid launch

8. By-Elections

8.1. Draft Timetable and Ward List 30 June 2021.

The meeting noted that 8 wards are scheduled for 30 June 2021 by-elections, this is the last by-elections ahead of LGE2021

Proclamation is scheduled for Friday, 28 June 2021.

EFF

Request that after the proclamation and the certification of the voters, can we adopt to get the voters roll via e-mails. Can the link be forwarded so that parties can check before the VR can be certified? Request the VR on both PDF and CSV format.

Request the review of seating arrangements at the VS, please allow the Party Agents to seat behind the PO

ACTIONS

NPLC members to facilitate the bilateral between parties.

UDM

The layout of the VS should be standardised, as currently it is the discretion of the PO

IEC Response

Will re-emphasise with the training teams

Convenient methods of disseminating the VR

9. Party Funding Matters

- The meeting noted that Online Party Funding System is up and running
- Queries with regard to registration on the online party funding system
- So far the IEC have assisted 2 donors
- One has successfully declared their donations to a political party of their choice
- The system is functional and parties should use it
- The system is being simplified and the process of online declaration and donor
- Have received the contribution to the Multi Party Democracy fund from the member of public, it took place on the 18 May 2021
- 5 million rands donation have been promised
- Are not donations to political parties but strengthen the funds even though it will end up in all represented parties.

DA

The IEC has provided two e-mail addresses where donors with more than 100 thousands should submit.

VF Plus

The team has been helpful in assisting with registration, we are thankful for the assistance given

ACTIONS

Sourcing funds for the multi democracy fund is not the responsibility of the IEC

10. Date of the Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is 17 June 2021.

11. Closure

The meeting concluded at 13:35

Signed on: _____

(Mr. S. Mamabolo) (Chairperson) _____
Chief Electoral Officer

Name	Organization/ Political Party
S Mamabolo	IEC
M Sheburi	IEC
A Henning	IEC
M Mosery	IEC
G Mahlangu	IEC
G Abrahams	IEC
L Maphanga	IEC
R Raath	IEC
B Heuvel	IEC
S Murphy	IEC
M Du Plessis	IEC
M Nkoko	IEC
K Tshoke	IEC
K Molefe	IEC
A Mushwane	IEC
T Lubbe	IEC
M Beaumont	ACTION SA
R Tlaeli	ACDP
G Haskin	ACDP
B Hofmeyr	ANC
M Dlamini	ANC
N Jeku	ATM
V Coetzee	COPE
T Abell	DA
W Horn	DA
M Tshwaku	EFF
B Herron	GOOD
S Shabane	GOOD
A Mncwango	IFP

A Ngobese	IFP
C Sibisi	NFP
Obed	NFP
B Msomi	UDM
P De Necker	VF Plus
P Ackermann	VF Plus