

1993

# Independent Electoral Commission Code of Conduct for Observers

Independent Electoral Commission

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## INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Code of Conduct for Observers in terms of section 24(1)(b) of the Independent Electoral Commission Act, 1993 (Act No. 150 of 1993)

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### PRELIMINARY

1. This Code shall be binding upon all Observers registered with the Commission.
2. The object of this Code shall be to ensure that the activities of Observers are facilitated by the Commission, conducted with integrity, and contribute to public confidence in the electoral process.

### THE CODE

All registered Observers undertake that their observer activities throughout the election period shall be conducted in accordance with the following principles, viz:

- (a) Observers shall maintain strict impartiality in the conduct of their duties, and shall at no time indicate or express any bias, or preference with reference to any registered party or nominated candidate.
- (b) Observers shall when so requested immediately identify themselves to any interested person, and shall, during the conduct of their activities, at all times carry, wear or otherwise prominently display the prescribed identification badges or cards issued by the Commission to registered observers and their vehicles.
- (c) Observers shall refrain from carrying, wearing and displaying any electoral material or any article of clothing, emblem, colours, badges or other item denoting support for or opposition to any party or candidate, or with reference to any of the issues in contention in the elections.
- (d) Observers shall refrain from the carrying or displaying of arms during the conduct of their observer duties or while wearing the insignia issued by the Chief Director: Monitoring.
- (e) Observers shall ensure that their conduct strictly conforms to the laws and regulations, including the Electoral Code of Conduct pertaining to the elections, and they shall both acknowledge the overall authority, and abide by the decisions of the Commission, and its sub-structures, in relation to their conduct as Observers.
- (f) Observers shall immediately comply with any direction issued by or under the authority of the Commission with reference to the elections including any request to leave or refrain from entering a particular area or venue, or to depart from a voting or counting station, or any specified area thereof.

- (g) Observers shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that any material, information or reports which they receive and any event, occurrence, or statement of which they may be notified or which they may have directly experienced or observed, which indicate the possible commission of an offence or infringement of the Electoral Code of Conduct or of this Code, including allegations involving dishonesty, corruption, intimidation or violence, are brought to the attention of the Chief Director: Monitoring or the Commission's other designated representatives, in the first instance, and at the earliest possible opportunity. Save as provided herein, Observers shall refrain from intervening to address such commission or infringement.
- (h) Observers shall refrain from giving direct or indirect assistance to any party in connection with the elections, and on polling day(s) they shall specially refrain from communicating with voters, with a view to influencing them how they vote, or attempting to establish how they have voted, or in any other manner interfering with the secrecy and orderly conduct of the voting and counting process.
- (i) Observers shall whenever so requested by or on behalf of the Commission, attend special observers briefings, training workshops and other meetings convened in order to co-ordinate their activities, convey relevant information, impart skills, and with a view generally to promote the effective deployment of resources and the conduct of free and fair elections.
- (j) Subject to the duty to report all relevant matters to the Commission and their respective Observer Organizations, all Observers shall maintain due secrecy with reference to any matters affecting voting and counting, in respect of which the disclosure of information would constitute an offence in terms of the Electoral Act.
- (k) Observers shall be refrained from making any public statement in respect of any matter which has a bearing on the election.