

## Chapter 3

# Preparations for the Elections

### Registration of Voters

The right to register as a voter is conferred on every citizen of Tanzania who has attained the age of eighteen years and who is not disqualified from doing so under any law. Each Returning Officer of a constituency is required to prepare and maintain a register of voters for each polling district. The register contains the number of the certificate of registration issued, the gender and address of each person.

We did not observe the registration exercise undertaken prior to the conduct of these, the first multi-party presidential and parliamentary elections since 1961, but were informed by the NEC that approximately 80 per cent of the estimated 11 million voters were registered. The Commission felt that the registration exercise was conducted satisfactorily and that the number of persons registered was a good achievement.

During our discussions with political parties, a number of complaints about the registration process were brought to our attention. One of the Opposition parties expressed dissatisfaction with the number of persons registered and suggested that the registration period, which commenced on 6 August 1995 and which was extended once for a period of 10 days on mainland Tanzania, should have continued until a few days before the elections. It was also suggested that the initial poor response to the registration exercise was due to the fact that candidates had not been identified or declared, and that the nomination of candidates which took place three weeks into the registration exercise stimulated interest in the elections and resulted in more people coming forward to register.

Related to this, we heard complaints from all the political parties that the voter education campaign conducted by the NEC had not been dynamic enough and had failed to make effective use of the only national broadcasting network, state-owned Radio Tanzania.

The late payment of registration assistants in some parts of the country reportedly slowed down the collation of the voters' register. A few areas also appeared to have experienced late delivery or an insufficiency of registration materials.

In a transition process such as this, the pervasiveness of CCM party members within the ranks of the electoral officials was only to be expected. However, it did cause some suspicion that the electoral process would not be impartially administered. It was alleged in a number of areas that CCM party activists attempted to purchase the registration cards of Opposition supporters. We heard allegations that relatives of ruling party officials who were both partisan and unqualified were recruited to be registration assistants. In a few regions, the ruling party's ten-cell leaders were reported to be telling prospective voters that the registration exercise was being conducted for CCM members and supporters only. We were not in a position to verify these allegations, and the CCM also voiced concerns regarding some aspects of the organisation and conduct of the registration process.

There were complaints from some parties (including the ruling party) of multiple registrations, which had resulted in the offenders being charged. Information received from some Returning Officers did suggest that incidents of multiple registration took place and that some minors had been registered.

### Nomination of Candidates

Thirteen political parties contested the parliamentary elections fielding between them a total of 1,336 candidates, as follows:

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|---|---------------------------|-----|
| • | Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) | 232 |
| • | Civic United Front (CUF)  | 177 |

• Chama Cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA)	157
• The Union for Multi-party Democracy (UMD)	47
• National Convention for Construction and Reform (NCCR-Mageuzi)	196
• National League for Democracy (NLD)	44
• Tanzania People's Party (TPP)	39
• United People's Democratic Party (UPDP)	34
• National Reconstruction Alliance (NRA)	78
• Popular National Party (PONA)	34
• Tanzania Democratic Alliance Party (TADEA)	118
• Tanzania Labour Party (TLP)	55
• The United Democratic Party (UDP)	125

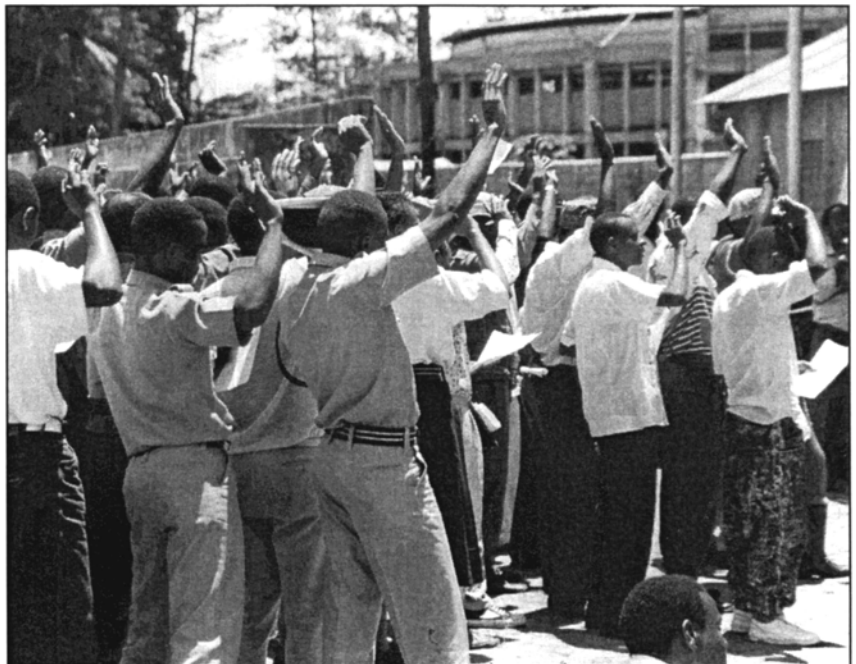
The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania requires that the parties' Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates each come from different parts of the Union. For the October 1995 elections, Presidential candidates were nominated by four parties, namely: CCM, CUF, NCCR-Mageuzi and UDP. The process of registering their nominations went smoothly in all cases, except for that of NCCR-Mageuzi whose initial Vice-Presidential candidate, the returned exile Professor Abdul Rahman Babu, was not accepted by the NEC because of an alleged previous criminal conviction.

One feature of the electoral process which drew criticism within Tanzania, from human rights organisations and other international bodies, was the enactment, in December 1994, of a constitutional provision which prohibited independent candidates from seeking election to the Union Presidency and Parliament. A petition on this issue had earlier been filed in the Court of Appeal which had ruled that the prohibition against independent candidates was unlawful, and that the right of the individual to seek election was an inalienable right properly upheld by the country's Constitution. In the event, Parliament was prorogued before it could address this issue again.

### Preparations for Polling

In the run-up to polling day, it appeared to us that considerable efforts had been made on the part of the NEC and Regional and District officials to ensure that all arrangements for the elections were in place on time. The print and electronic media were used to explain the procedures to the electorate.

However, it was noted by many of the people who briefed us that efforts in civic/voter education on the part of the Government and the NEC were inadequate. Initiatives to deal with this concern had been taken by a number of bodies including the opposition parties, the Tanzania Election Monitoring Committee (TEMCO) and its constituent groups (including the Zanzibar Elections Monitor and Observer Group (ZEMOG)), religious bodies such as the Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT), the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania (ELCT), the



*Mass swearing in of election and security officials before election day in Bukoba*

Tanzania Episcopal Council (TEC), and the Eastern and Southern African Universities' Research Project (ESAURP).

Polling sites and voters' lists were generally well-publicised in advance of polling day, and were usually at, or very close to, the sites where voter registration had taken place. In order to bring the electoral process geographically closer to the people and to limit the voter rolls at each polling station to a maximum of between 300 and 350 people, a total of some 40,000 polling stations were established. Inevitably, given this huge number, the type and nature of polling stations varied considerably. This was due in part to the need to identify neutral sites, discounting those CCM premises which had in the past been used for election purposes.

Where available, public and community buildings such as schools or health centres were used, but in many instances small business premises were pressed into service (examples observed included small carpenters' workshops, cafés, and butchers' shops). Local election officials indicated that the party neutrality of the owners of these premises had been a prime consideration, and evidently some previously used locations had been rejected as a result of objections raised by local party activists. As a result, many of the locations finally used were less than ideal, physically, for the purpose. In a number of areas – both urban and rural – temporary makeshift constructions of palms, wood, and polythene sheeting, were erected.

In most cases, the names or the sequential numbers of those registered to vote at a particular station had been pasted to the structure or at a point adjacent to it, well in advance of polling day, although some of these had been defaced by the elements. The NEC printed and published sample ballot papers as posters which were widely distributed throughout the country. Late changes in the final arrangement of the ballot papers which were designed to improve the secrecy of the ballot, unfortunately led to a discrepancy with some of the sample posters already distributed. Nevertheless, these posters were well-publicised, allowing parties and voters to familiarise themselves with the ballot papers and the method by which they should indicate their choice.

The political parties who came to brief our Group in Dar es Salaam complained about the layout of the ballot papers for both the presidential and parliamentary elections. Their concern was that the presentation of the pictures of the parties' Vice-Presidential candidates on the presidential ballot paper was confusing to the voters, crowded the ballot paper, and could result in a relatively large number of spoilt ballots. With regard to the ballot papers for the parliamentary elections, the parties were concerned that in each constituency the candidates appeared in alphabetical order *according to their surnames* and therefore parties did not have a fixed place on the ballot papers across the country. The parties firmly believed that these concerns, together with the absence of any party symbols on either of the ballot papers, would present difficulties in educating their supporters on voting procedures.

In the areas covered by our teams in the three days immediately preceding the poll, we observed Returning Officers conducting seminars for the instruction and swearing-in of Presiding Officers and their Assistants, polling agents (representatives of political parties) and security personnel. Regional and District Election Co-ordinators, and Returning Officers had attended earlier seminars. It was noted however that the NEC's Supplement to the Guidelines for Presiding Officers was issued only days before polling. As late as 28 October 1995 some Presiding Officers were not aware, for example, that the times for the opening and closing of polls had changed. Whilst all those involved – trainers and participants – confirmed the value of these training seminars, our observations on polling day suggest that not enough time was allowed for the officials to develop a sufficient understanding of the process to implement it as efficiently as might have been the case.

Our teams encountered some problems concerning the payment of allowances to Presiding Officers, polling agents and other officials attending these training seminars. Some officials believed that as operations were likely to extend into the day following polling, they should be paid, in advance, for three days rather than two. Another view expressed to us was that to pay for three days would encourage officials to extend their work into the third day whether it was necessary or not. Events on polling day reinforced the importance of the payments issue, with polling in some of the constituencies we observed opening very late in the day as a result of threats by officials not to start work until full payment was made. These instances were, however, the exception, not the rule.

Officials held last minute meetings with representatives of political parties, and in some cases with the police, to help ensure the peaceful conduct of elections on the day. Political parties were requested to urge their supporters to conduct themselves in an orderly fashion on election day: to vote and go home to await the results.

Preparations on the part of the security personnel charged with ensuring the maintenance of public order and the security of ballot boxes and returns during transit, appeared to have been well-organised.

### **Distribution of Election Materials**

Arrangements for the distribution of election materials to most of the regional centres we observed appeared to have been satisfactorily handled, with significant exceptions such as the Dodoma and Mbeya Regions, and most notably in the capital itself, Dar es Salaam. In the last instance this has necessitated a re-poll. For the rest of the country, including Zanzibar, ballot boxes, ballot papers and other materials were received in regions and districts in time for their distribution to polling stations. Returning Officers generally had election materials in their custody about 48 hours before polling day, and their storage was secured by a police presence.

In many parts of the country where timely delivery of election supplies had taken place, polling day revealed considerable shortages of ballot papers, particularly for the presidential election. This would have had an impact on the final results of the presidential election, although the nature and extent of this impact will never be known.