Twitter Thread by Electoral Commission- Uganda

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@UgandaEC

Guidance on Use of Cameras and Other Recording Devices Inside Polling Stations. THREAD;

The Electoral Commission has noted the concerns expressed by various stakeholders over the Commission's restriction on use of cameras and other recording devices inside polling stations on polling day.

The Electoral Commission wishes to guide candidates, their agents, voters and the general public, on the above matter as follows:

1. Given the nature of our polling booth, which is an open basin, the presence of cameras in side polling stations may jeopardise the secrecy of the ballot, due to uncontrolled use of cameras and other recording devices;

2. Please note that the secrecy of the ballot is aimed at ensuring that a vote is anonymous and cannot be traced back to the person who cast it. A secret ballot is, therefore, fundamental in achieving peaceful, free and fair elections;

3. While phones are not prohibited at polling stations, they must not be used for recording purposes or taking photographs inside the polling stations (the cordoned-off area);

4. A voter must not display his/her choice of a candidate on polling day by taking a photograph, including a selfie, or recording a video of his/her marked ballot paper;

5. Similarly, a voter must not display his/her choice of a candidate on polling day by marking his/her choice on the ballot paper in the open, outside the basin which has been provided for secrecy.

6. These measures are in line with Article 68(1) of the Constitution which provide that all public elections (Presidential, General Parliamentary and Local Government Councils) shall be by secret ballot, save for Administrative Units (LC 1 and LC II) Elections;

7. Media personnel, who have been accredited to cover the elections, will be permitted to access polling stations and may take photographs of the voting process, but outside the cordoned-off area in a manner that protects the privacy of voters and the secrecy of the ballot.

8. The counting of votes cast at each polling station will be conducted openly, and a voter or candidate’s agent may take photographs or recordings of the counting process and/or take a photograph or record the issued Declaration of Results Form.