



**PRESS RELEASE
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NICE STATE OF PREPAREDNESS FOR THE FRESH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

The National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE) has welcomed the Malawi Electoral Commission's release of an electoral calendar for the fresh presidential election on 02nd July 2020. This is following the nullification of the 21st May 2019 presidential election by the Constitutional Court through its ruling on 03rd February 2020.

NICE as a major stakeholder in governance and election is pleased to inform the nation that it is ready and geared to provide civic and voter education to all Malawians as it has always done in all the past elections. As an accredited institution with vast experience in mobilization and awareness raising, NICE will use its national wide presence with offices in all the districts and 9000 volunteers who will raise awareness to all Malawians regardless of their party and religious affiliation.

NICE will use all the strategies it has used in the past elections and will continue to use strategies that made impact in the 2019 elections. These include use of the media through airing of voter mobilization jingles on both national and community radios, airing of soapie opera's, loud hailing, night criers, developing IEC Materials – Stickers, Posters, door to door campaign and many others.

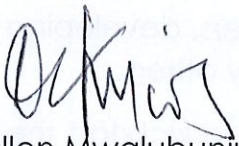
At present, NICE will use its resources both human and financial to kickstart the mobilization exercise which is registration. However, the Trust is still in negotiations with its traditional donors to support it with additional funds in order to effectively contribute through civic and voter education during this period.

NICE is also aware of the Corona Virus COVID 19 restriction of 100 people in a gathering. In order to mobilise and reach out to more people, but at the same time considering the safety of its staff and volunteers and also Malawi as a whole, the Trust will use effective and efficient ways of reaching out to Malawians through Loud hailing, Night criers, social media, jingles on community radios, radio programmes on community radios while observing measures put in place by the Government. NICE will also use letters to churches and mosques to reach out to

people. Furthermore, NICE will deploy long term and Election Day observers. As for voter registration, the Trust will release its mobilisation and awareness campaign, and election observation plan in due course.

However, in order to have a free, fair and credible elections, NICE would like to appeal to the President, Parliament and Political Parties to ensure that there is an enabling environment, where all parties will have a Trust in the process. In this regard, all critical issues as observed by the Constitutional Court should be resolved such as the issues of the Commissioner's as a referee of the game and unconcluded electoral laws reforms as ordered by the court. Just like in football, if the referee does not have the confidence and trust of the player, the outcome of the football match can likely be contested. Therefore, going forward with the electoral process when these issues are unresolved, will undermine the very same basis upon which the elections were nullified.

Finally, as the country is about to embark on the registration process for new registrants, there are allegations of snatching the National IDs by some unscrupulous people as well as allegation of registration of minors for National Registration, which is one of the requirement for an eligible voter to register. We therefore, strongly appeal to MEC, Political parties, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the general public to be vigilant, and the Police to timely investigate these matters and swiftly bring to book the culprits.



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