

VERY URGENT

WE CAN, WE SHALL ALWAYS WIN WITHOUT VIOLENCE, SAYS PRESIDENT LUNGU

LUSAKA, (Thursday, 28th March, 2019) -- His Excellency Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia has used the occasion of the victory of Patriotic Front (PF) in Kafue to again call the nation to peaceful conduct during elections and emphasized the ruling party's entrenched values of tolerance.

In a message of congratulations to party activists through the PF Secretary-General Mr. Davis Mwila today, President Lungu said the Kafue victory has shamed merchants of violence who want to impose an alien culture on the rather peaceful people of Zambia.

"This victory represents the triumph of the enduring power of peace over violence. We have won, and we shall continue to win in a peaceful manner. But this particular poll is a clear example of the supremacy of ideas over falsehoods," President Lungu says.

"Secretary-General, please accept, on behalf of all our hardworking party cadres, my heartfelt congratulations on this well deserved victory, and pass on the message of peace and my instruction that none of our youths must be ferried into campaign areas to commit violence."

The President says violence must never be used as the currency of political exchange, which is why on its part, the PF will continue to believe in ideas as a means to the political ends it seeks.

"Those who resort to violence have no place in our dispensation. As I have stressed in recent days, violence will not be tolerated in any election as long as I remain President."

"In the forthcoming parliamentary and local by-elections on April 11, I expect police to be more proactive and forestall any possible incidents of violence."

Regrettably, the President notes, some supporters of the opposition UPND have been arrested for possession of offensive weapons linked to electoral violence unleashed on PF supporters in the early hours of voting yesterday. The President expects decisive police action to bring all perpetrators of these acts to justice.

"We formed government without using violence because we are a peaceful party. We shall continue to use the strength of ideas, civil messages, and continuous political mobilization informed by virtues of tolerance and co-existence."

He said those who think violence will get them into government were mistaken because the greater majority of our people reject such illiberal values. Instead, the President says, the PF party shares the aspirations of the moral majority, which believes in the values of co-existence amid diversity.

"In addition to public rejection, plotters of violence will face the full force of the law. Given a chance, people will always reject violent parties and the signs of this are written all over our political landscape."


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Violence, the President says, cannot be deployed as a means to a democratic end. Violence exposes the core elements undemocratic behavior in those who practice it. "But the majority of the people reject violent parties because the majority of the people of this great republic are non-violent and inherently democratic in character. That is why we in PF are irrevocably resolved to upholding the values of non-violence and the promotion of peaceful co-existence."

Electoral violence is always an ugly stain on the country's plural democratic credentials and a scar on the collective conscience of the nation. "As President of this country, I won't tolerate this and I therefore call all political leaders to condemn violence and work together with the Electoral Commission of Zambia to deliver peaceful elections."

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