



## ZAMBIA

**Capital**  
(and largest city) Lusaka, 15°25'S 28°17'E

**Official languages** English  
**Recognised regional languages** Nyanja, Bemba, Lunda, Tonga, Nkoya, Lozi, Luvala, Kaonde, and about 65 other indigenous languages.

**Government** **Republic**  
– President Rupiah Banda  
– Vice President George Kunda

**Independence from the United Kingdom**  
– Date October 24, 1964

**Political Parties (election results 2006)**  
*Governing party*  
The Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) 73

*Opposition parties*  
Patriotic Front (PF) 43 seats  
United Democratic Alliance (UDA)\* 26  
United Liberal Party (ULP) 2  
National Democratic Forum (NDF) 1  
\* UDA is a parliamentary coalition between:  
Forum for Democracy and Development (FDD) 1  
United Party for National Development (UPND) 23  
United National Independence Party (UNIP) 2

*2 seats were allocated in subsequent by-elections, 3 seats were won by independent candidates, 8 seats are reserved for presidential appointees*

### State of Democracy Zambia

Although multi party democracy was introduced in Zambia more than 17 years ago, much of the political system still bears characteristics of the one-party era. Access to the state media is rather limited for opposition parties, and power is concentrated in the presidency to the detriment of other government branches, which hinders effective accountability. There is no public funding for political parties and the Public Order Act is occasionally used to ban opposition rallies.

### Political parties

Zambia's party system has evolved from a dominant party system to a more competitive two party system in recent years. Political parties, however, still display many of the characteristics of their counterparts in young democracies. They remain dominated by a national leadership, are undemocratic internally and poorly institutionalized, and have weakly developed political programs.

### Current political situation

In 2009 the political context in Zambia changed drastically. An electoral pact between two opposition parties (PF and UPND) threatens the chances of the ruling party (MMD) to stay in office after the 2011 elections. At the same time, the government is tightening its grip on civil society organizations and the media with restrictive laws and regulations. A series of corruption scandals have dominated the national debate in 2009, raising serious concerns about the executive's commitment to good governance.

### National Constitutional Conference

The political situation provided a window of opportunity for reform by

means of a constitutional review process. During the year, a National Constitutional Conference (NCC) regrouped stakeholders from political and civil society to discuss the content of a new constitution. However, the process evolved at a slower pace than expected. At the end of the year, president Banda granted the NCC an extension of four months (from January 2010 onwards) to achieve consensus on a new constitution.

### Internal Party Democracy

Although Zambian parties have intensified relations between national, regional and local party branches over the past few years, they remain dominated by the party presidents and a small number of their allies. Next to the top-down nature of the parties, there is a persistent lack of internal democracy. Parties such as UNIP, PF and MMD have failed to organize internal elections at the national level. There is a high level of dependence of the party on its leaders and a lack of a solid membership base.

### Relations between political and civil society

Relation between the political and civil society has been sour over the last decades. Many civil society organizations are disappointed about the lack of progress realized by the MMD in the area of democratic consolidation. Throughout the 1990s, opposition was not provided so much by political parties but first and foremost by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Yet the interparty dialogue fostered by the Zambian Center for Interparty Dialogue (ZCID) has resulted in a more prominent role for political actors, especially when a deal on the constitutional reform process was established. This change threatened the position of NGOs the governance in arena, raising tensions between political and civil society.

## NIMD Zambia Programme

### Interparty Dialogue

A lack of trust between political actors has been identified as one of the main obstacles for democratic consolidation and the delivery of public goods. NIMD initially invested much time and effort in bringing together the Secretary Generals of the parliamentary parties. As a result, dialogue between senior political actors was established in 2005. In that year, the political parties agreed upon a joint agenda for reform of various aspects of Zambia's emerging democracy. In the run-up to the 2006 elections NIMD supported the Secretary Generals to organize interparty policy debates in every province, to draft a political code of conduct, which was also used by the Electoral Commission, and to train hundreds of party agents who monitored the elections on behalf of their party.

### Establishment of Zambian Centre for Interparty Dialogue (ZCID)

The informal nature which had characterized the interparty dialogue thus far was formalized with the establishment of the Zambian Centre for Interparty Dialogue in 2007. A longer term strategic plan provided programmatic orientation, staff was employed, and parties committed themselves at the highest level to the democratic reform agenda as developed by the institute. Following fifteen consecutive days of negotiations at the ZCID office, political parties agreed upon a constitutional review process.

### Constitutional Review Process

ZCID particularly generated a lot of impact in Zambian society when an agreement on the constitutional review process was reached in 2007. The ZCID consensus was publicly endorsed by all party leaders,

including the late President Mwanawasa. A National Constitutional Conference (NCC) Bill was presented in parliament and subsequently enacted. As the NCC is ZCID's brainchild, an external evaluation recommended that the institute would play a central role in Zambia's democratic consolidation process.

### Internal Party Democracy

Following an in-depth study of the institutional challenges faced by political parties in Zambia in 2003, NIMD supported the parliamentary parties to further analyze their organization and develop a longer term strategic plan. Based on this plan, parties were assisted in efforts to improve internal communication, organizing elections at the local and regional level, and to train specific target groups. External monitoring reports indicate that local party representatives have used these platforms to hold their national leaders accountable and that internal party communication greatly improved in the period between elections. Progress in the area of internal party democracy is limited to the sub-national levels, with few parties organizing party conventions. Recently, policy development and basic management skills have become more prominent in NIMD support programmes.

### Political and Civil Society

Within the NIMD-ZCID programme, cooperation between political and civil society is stimulated in the area of policy development. ZCID provides a platform for civil society organizations with specific expertise to inform political parties on policy issues.



As a result of ZCID's involvement in facilitating a platform for all Secretary Generals of the political parties in Zambia, an agreement on the constitutional reform process was reached. The ZCID consensus was endorsed by all party leaders, which led to the National Constitutional Conference Bill, which was presented in parliament and enacted upon. In this way the institute plays a pivotal role in Zambia's democratization process.

#### Zambian Centre for Interparty Dialogue (ZCID)

NIMD's partner in Zambia has been setup by the Secretary-Generals of all parliamentary parties. After three initial years of informal inter-party dialogue, the centre was formally established and launched in July 2007. The non-parliamentary parties have one representative in the board.

#### National Partners

Zambian Centre for Interparty Dialogue (ZCID) – Foundation for Democratic Process (FODEP) (local NGO) – National Women's Lobby Group – OASIS Forum (local NGO) – Constitutional Awareness Network (CAN)

#### International Partners

Royal Netherlands Embassy – Department for International Development (DFID), United Kingdom – European Union (EU) – United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – Governance Group donor community – African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)