

CONGO (DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF)

Date of Elections: November 15, 1970

Reason for Elections

The Congolese people had to provide the Democratic Republic of the Congo with a unicameral National Assembly, whose creation had been foreseen by the Constitution of June 24, 1967. Since that period, the legislative work had been carried out by a legislative delegation *.

The legislative elections of 1970 followed shortly after the presidential election that took place on November 1.

Characteristics of Parliament

The Parliament of the Democratic Republic of the Congo consists of one chamber only, the National Assembly. It is composed of one Deputy to every group of 50,000 inhabitants, plus one to every group of at least 25,000. In the current legislature, there are 420 Deputies. They are elected for a period of 5 years.

Electoral System

All Congolese men, and, since 1970, all women, aged at least 18 years, are entitled to vote. Those who, on polling day, are under arrest, interned or put into hospital owing to mental alienation, or are abroad, may not take part in the voting.

Electors are registered on the electoral rolls of the local community or commune where they reside, provided they have been domiciled for more than a year in the district in question. The rolls are drawn up by the chiefs of the local communities or by the mayors of the communes.

To be eligible for election to the National Assembly, a voter must be aged 25 and belong to the People's Revolutionary Movement (National Party).

The parliamentary mandate is incompatible with the mandate of President of the Republic, the office of Councillor to the Constitutional Court or to the Court of Accounts, the Magistracy, Provincial Governor, Provincial Commissioner, Town Governor, Town Commissioner, agent of public administration as well as with the mandate of an appointed member of a local community and any other elective public office.

* See *Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections IV (1969-1970)*, p. 8.

In all constituencies, the candidates' lists must be put forward by the political bureau of the National Party.

The 9 provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo are divided into 35 constituencies. Deputies are elected under the party-list system.

In each constituency the National Party places a list consisting of one third more names than the seats to be filled. The voters can decide by means of two different ballot papers, either for the list or against it. Candidates at the top of the list are declared elected if the number of positive votes is greater than that of the negative votes or that of void ballot papers. If the opposite is the case, a new vote is held.

Those next in line act as substitutes should a seat become vacant during the legislature.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The campaign for legislative elections opened on October 1, 1970; this date had been fixed by decree.

Lists were put forward by the People's Revolutionary Movement. Candidates had been chosen from 2,500 applicants by the political Bureau of the National Party, during the Congress of the People's Revolutionary Movement, on September 19, 1970.

President Joseph Mobutu formed a new cabinet on December 7.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the National Assembly

Voters	9,854,517
Blank or void ballot papers.	91,007
Valid votes.	9,763,510
<i>Votes in favour of the People's Revolutionary Movement.</i>	9,691,132
<i>Votes against.</i>	72,378

Political Group		%	Number of Seats in the National Assembly
People's Revolutionary Movement	9,691,132	98.34	420

2. *Distribution of Deputies according to Sex*

Men	408
Women	12
	420