

## KENYA

Date of Elections: December 6, 1969

### Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Kenya consists of a National Assembly composed of 158 elected members and 12 co-opted members. All members have a mandate of 5 years.

The elections of December 1969 were held to renew all the members of the National Assembly elected in May 1963, whose mandate had been extended by one year.

### Electoral System

Every Kenyan citizen of either sex and over the age of 21 may vote, provided he has resided in the country for not less than 1 year before the date of the elections or for periods totalling not less than 4 years during the 8 years before the elections. Moreover, to be eligible to vote, a person must have resided for at least 5 of the 12 months preceding the elections in the constituency where he wishes to vote, or have resided there as an employer or employee for the same period of time, or possess land or immovable property there. Those persons not registered on the electoral lists of a constituency and those deprived of their right to vote following a sentence for, or accusation of, electoral fraud are not able to vote.

The electoral lists are revised no less than every 8 years and no more than every 10 years, or when Parliament so decides.

Members of the electorate of either sex, over 21 years old and capable of speaking and writing English sufficiently well to take an active part in the work of the Parliament, are eligible for the National Assembly.

Persons who, by virtue of their own act, are under allegiance to any foreign power or State, are under sentence of imprisonment of or exceeding 6 months (except for failure to pay a fine) or who are declared to be of unsound mind, are ineligible, as are undischarged bankrupts, public officers, government contractors and those who hold or act in any office on the staff of a local government authority.

The Parliament can declare ineligible any person who, at the date of his nomination for election, holds or is acting in any office created by the Parliament and which involves responsibility for the conduct of the elections or the compilation of a register of voters, or any person convicted of electoral fraud by a court. Finally, Parliament can declare eligible public officers and persons holding or acting in an office on the staff of a local government authority.

A member whose candidature was supported by a political party and who resigns from that party while it is represented in the Parliament, loses his seat in the National Assembly.

Kenya is divided into 158 constituencies whose boundaries are fixed by an Electoral Commission composed of the Speaker of the Assembly, 2 members appointed by the President and 1 member representing each province, also appointed by the President.

One member is elected from each of the 158 constituencies by simple pluralistic system.

### **General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections**

Kenya's President, Mr. Jomo Kenyatta, dissolved the National Assembly on November 7, 1969, and announced 4 days later that elections would be held on December 6. On October 30, Mr. Kenyatta had banned the left-wing opposition party, the KAPU (Kenya African People's Union), on the grounds that it was subversive.

On November 26, 600 candidates, all members of Mr. Kenyatta's Government party, KANU (Kenya African National Union), were registered for the elections. These candidates had had to sign a loyalty oath; to pay the party treasurer a deposit of £ 50, returnable to successful candidates only; to resign from any office, civil or governmental, sponsored by the party; and were required not to have been a member of another political party during the 6 months preceding nomination day. However, President Kenyatta exempted from this last condition Mr. Bildad Kaggia, former deputy leader of the opposition, who had crossed the floor to KANU a few months before, and Mrs. Grace Onyango who had formerly belonged to KAPU and was, moreover, the only woman elected to the National Assembly.

On November 18, KANU published its election manifesto in which it declared that Kenya's economic independence and growth were its fundamental objectives. It was in favour of a just redistribution of the national income, planning priority for rural development, free education, control of primary education and health services, vocational training and increased bank loans for small farmers and businessmen.

10 candidates were returned unopposed, including President Kenyatta, Vice-President Moi and one Minister in the previous Government. In the constituencies contested, the number of candidates varied from 2 to 10.

The elections passed off without incident, and were notable for the defeat of 77 members of the previous Assembly, amongst whom were 5 Ministers and 15 Assistant Ministers. 50 members of the previous Assembly were re-elected, including 14 Ministers, and 108 new members were elected.

Mr. Kenyatta reformed his Cabinet on December 22, and the new Assembly met on February 6.