

KENYA

Date of Elections: October 14, 1974

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the popularly chosen members of Parliament on the normal expiry of their term of office.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Kenya, the National Assembly, is composed of 158 elected members; 12 nominated members appointed by the President of the Republic from among persons qualified to be elected as members of the Assembly; and the Attorney-General, who is an *ex-officio* member with no voting rights. The normal term of Parliament is 5 years.

Electoral System

All citizens of Kenya, of either sex, over the age of 18 are entitled to vote if they are registered as electors and have resided in the country for not less than one year immediately preceding the date of the elections, or for periods totalling not less than 4 years during the 8 years before the elections. To be qualified electors, persons must moreover have resided, carried on a business, been employed or owned land or buildings in the constituency where they apply to be registered for at least 5 of the 12 months preceding the elections. Those persons who are detained in lawful custody or who have been disqualified from voting after having been convicted or reported guilty of an offence connected with the elections may not vote.

Postal voting is permitted for election officers, certain employees who cannot have time off for voting, and persons who, on polling day, are travelling abroad or cannot get to a polling station by reason of ill-health or infirmity.

Qualified electors who are able to speak and read the English language well enough to take an active part in the proceedings of the National Assembly and who are nominated by a political party may be candidates for Parliament. Not qualified to be elected are persons under allegiance to a foreign State, those under sentence of death or imprisonment exceeding 6 months (except for failure to pay a fine), the insane, undischarged bankrupts, Government contractors, and those persons holding or acting in any office of the public service,

in the armed forces, in the East African Community, or in any local government authority.

Candidates are nominated at party primary, or preliminary, elections, which are held by secret ballot within the constituencies.

The 158 popularly chosen members of Parliament are elected in an identical number of constituencies by simple majority vote.

By-elections are held to fill parliamentary seats which become vacant between general elections.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The date of the general elections — the second since Kenya gained independence in 1963 — was announced on August 8, 1974, and Parliament was dissolved one day later.

In contention for the 158 elective seats of the National Assembly were some 740 candidates, all representing the ruling Kenya African National Union (KANU), the country's only political party since 1969. While the KANU election manifesto pointed to the party's record of achievements, especially in the social and economic field, since the time it had come to power in 1963, the campaign, in view of the lively competition within KANU, was to a great extent contested on grounds of personality and local issues.

Among the country's registered electorate of approximately 4 million figured, for the first time, 18-year olds. On polling day, a total of 88 incumbent members of Parliament (including 4 Cabinet Ministers) were defeated. Of the 16 female candidates, 4 were elected. President of the Republic Jomo Kenyatta — leader of KANU and President since the establishment of the Republic in 1964 — completed the membership of the National Assembly on October 31 with the announcement of its 12 appointed members.