

MALAWI

Dates of Elections: 27 and 28 May 1987

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the elective seats in Parliament following premature dissolution of this body on 15 April 1987. General elections had previously been held in June 1983.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Malawi, the National Assembly, is composed of 112 members* elected for 5 years and any number (currently 11) of additional members appointed by the President of the Republic in order to enhance the representative character of the Assembly, or to represent particular minority or other special interests in the Republic.

Electoral System

All citizens at least 21 years of age who have resided in Malawi for a continuous period of two years and who are ordinarily resident in a constituency, or were born, are employed, or carry on a business there, may vote in this same constituency for members of the National Assembly, if registered. The insane, persons convicted of crime, undischarged bankrupts and persons owing allegiance to a foreign State are disqualified from registration as voters.

Electoral registers are drawn up at the constituency level. Voting is not compulsory.

Citizens having attained the age of 25 years who are able to speak and read the English language well enough to take an active part in the proceedings of the National Assembly, registered electors, and members of the Malawi Congress Party (MCP) are qualified to be elected as members of the National Assembly. Persons holding public office and members of the armed forces may not stand for election.

To be nominated, a candidate must be supported by at least two voters registered in his constituency. There is a limit of five candidates per constituency. District conferences of the Party prepare the lists of candidates. Whoever receives the largest number of votes in each of the 112 single-member constituencies is declared elected.

A by-election is held to fill any elective seats of the National Assembly falling vacant between general elections.

* See section *Parliamentary Developments*, p. 14.

General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

In preparation for the elections. Parliament was dissolved on 15 April 1987 by the Life President of the Republic, Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda. More than 200 candidates contested the enlarged Assembly's 112 elective seats. All of them belonged to the country's only political organization, the Malawi Congress Party (MCP). No campaigning took place.

On polling day, 38 MCP candidates were returned unopposed and 53 incumbents lost their seats. The final results were announced on 31 May and the new Parliament was sworn in the next day. Of the further 11 members appointed by the President, five were women. On 3 June, he named a new 11-member Cabinet.

Statistics

I. Distribution of Seats in the National Assembly

<u>Political Group</u>	<u>Number of Seats'</u>
Malawi Congress Party (MCP).112

* Elective seats only.

2. Distribution of Members of Parliament according to Sex

Men113
Women10
	T23