

## SOUTH AFRICA

Dates of Elections: April 24, 1974 (House of Assembly)  
May 30, 1974 (Senate)

### Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the members of the House of Assembly, which House was dissolved one year before the normal expiry of its term.

General elections for the Senate, which may be dissolved anytime within 120 days of the dissolution of the Assembly, were subsequently held.

### Characteristics of Parliament

The bicameral Parliament of South Africa consists of the House of Assembly and the Senate.

The House of Assembly is henceforth composed of 171 Deputies (up from 166) \* elected for 5 years. Of these, 6 represent the Territory of South-West Africa.

The Senate consists of 54 members. Of these, 10 are appointed by the State President: 2 from each of the 4 provinces of the Republic and 2 from the Territory of South-West Africa. The remaining 44 are elected by electoral colleges consisting of members of the House of Assembly and provincial councillors from the country's 4 provinces and, in the case of the 2 Senators elected from South-West Africa, members of the House of Assembly and members of the Legislative Assembly of South-West Africa. Senators hold office for 5 years.

### Electoral System

In order to be eligible to be registered as a voter in any electoral division, a person must be a South African citizen at least 18 years of age who is actually resident in that division on the date of completion of his application for registration. He must in addition be a white person of sound mind. Persons convicted of treason (after 1950) and murder, as well as certain persons convicted of a corrupt or illegal practice under the Electoral Act, of an offense under the Suppression of Communism Act (1950) or the Terrorism Act (1967), or of any other offense in respect of which imprisonment has been imposed and such sentence has not expired are not entitled for registration.

\* See section *Parliamentary Developments*, p. 7.

Electoral registers are drawn up at the constituency level and are kept up to date by means of a system of continuous registration of voters and supplementation of voters' lists; general registrations of voters take place at intervals of not more than 5 years. Voting is not compulsory.

In order to be eligible for either House, it is necessary to be a white person and South African citizen who has resided for 5 years within the territory of the Republic. A person must be 30 years old to be elected Senator and 18 to be elected Deputy.

Undischarged bankrupts, persons declared of unsound mind by a competent court, certain persons holding an office of profit under the Republic, as well as certain persons who have at one time been sentenced to imprisonment for at least 12 months are ineligible to be candidates to Parliament.

Nominations must be supported by 2 electors (proposer and seconder) from the division concerned and be accompanied by a deposit of US \$840. This sum is returned to the candidate if he polls more than 1/5 of the number of votes received by the successful candidate.

Deputies in each of the 171 single-member constituencies are elected by simple majority. Electors vote for a single candidate to the exclusion of all others.

By-elections are held to fill elective parliamentary seats which become vacant between general elections. Seats of appointed Senators are filled by persons likewise appointed until the end of the term concerned.

### General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

Prime Minister John Vorster announced the date of the Assembly general elections on February 4, 1974, one year before required by law. This announcement came at a time when the ruling National Party (NP) held more than two-thirds of the parliamentary seats and when the opposition United Party (UP) was internally divided between liberal and conservative factions over racial questions.

The NP, which had held office for 26 years, was opposed mainly by the UP and the Progressive Party (PP). The NP enforces the policy of "apartheid", or separation of black and white races within the country. The UP, led by Sir de Villiers Graaff for the past 18 years, stood for a federal structure of black-white power-sharing, with the blacks gaining the power by stages; reform-minded elements (the "Young Turks") and the conservative wing (the "Old Guard") within the party, however, differed significantly on the timetable for such participation, the former seeking more rapidity therefor

and the formulation of a clear alternative to the Nationalist policy. The PP favoured immediate racial equality, except for limitations on voting rights.

More than 330 candidates contested the newly-increased 171 seats of the House of Assembly. Of these, 43 candidates were unopposed in their constituencies. As a result, only 1.1 million of a white electorate of 2.2 million cast votes (the country's 18 million black, coloured and Asian peoples are not franchised to vote in national elections).

The election outcome for the Assembly proved to be a clear setback for the UP, while the liberal PP and the NP both increased their representation. Mr. Vorster formed a new Government on April 29.

Pursuant to the electoral colleges' choice of Senators, effected on May 30, NP picked up one additional seat, from the province of Natal.

Statistics

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

|                                      |            |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| Number of registered voters. . . . . | 2,203,349  |
| Voters. . . . .                      | 1,133,642* |
| Blank or void ballot papers. . . . . | 20,823     |
| Valid votes. . . . .                 | 1,113,819  |

\* Results within the 125 contested constituencies.

| Political Group                  | Number of Candidates | Votes obtained * | %    | Number of Seats obtained | Number of Seats won at Previous Elections | N<br>D |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|------------------|------|--------------------------|---|--------|
| National Party (NP)              | 105 »                | 636,586          | 57.1 | 123 <sup>3</sup>         | 118                                       |        |
| United Party (UP)                | 96 «                 | 363,459          | 32.7 | 41 <sup>3</sup>          | 47  |        |
| Progressive Party (PP)           | 22                   | 58,768           | 5.3  | 7                        | 1   |        |
| <i>Herstigte Nasioncde Party</i> | 48                   | 39,568           | 3.6  |                          |   |        |
| Democratic Party                 | 7                    | 10,449           | 0.9  |                          |   |        |
| Others                           | 15                   | 4,990            | 0.4  |                          |   |        |
|                                  |                      |                  |      | 171*                     | 166                                       |        |

2. *Distribution of Seats hi the Senate*

| Political Group              | Number of Seats |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| National Party (NP). . . . . | 32 (+1)         |
| United Party (UP). . . . .   | 12 (—1)         |
|                              | <b>44*</b>      |

\* 10 additional Senators are appointed by the President.

3. *Distribution of Deputies according to Professional Category*

|                            |     |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Farmers. . . . .           | 47  |
| Lawyers. . . . .           | 30  |
| Politicians. . . . .       | 23  |
| Company directors. . . . . | 18  |
| Doctors. . . . .           | 10  |
| Businessmen. . . . .       | 10  |
| Teachers. . . . .          | 8   |
| Representatives. . . . .   | 4   |
| Consultants. . . . .       | 3   |
| Salaried clerks. . . . .   | 3   |
| Journalists. . . . .       | 3   |
| Others. . . . .            | 12  |
|                            | 171 |

4. *Distribution of Deputies according to Sex*

|                |     |
|----------------|-----|
| Men. . . . .   | 170 |
| Women. . . . . | 1   |
|                | 171 |

5. *Distribution of Deputies according to Age Group*

|                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| 30-39. . . . .       | 26  |
| 40-49. . . . .       | 53  |
| 50-59. . . . .       | 65  |
| 60 and over. . . . . | 27  |
|                      | 171 |

6. *Average Age of Deputies: 50 years and 4 months*